

1. Agenda Packet

Documents:

[FEBRUARY 15, 2019 AGENDA PACKET.PDF](#)

2. Meeting Materials

Documents:

[CITY OF LENOIR 2018 IN REVIEW.PDF](#)

**Lenoir Planning Retreat
February 15, 2019
Blue Ridge Electric Community Room
Breakfast at 8:00am and Discussion Begins at 8:30am
Agenda**

Call to Order, Introductions and Opening Comments by Mayor Joe Gibbons [8:30am]

Customer Service Team Update [8:35am]

Mission Statement & Vision Review - Review current mission statement and vision and affirm with any noted changes. [9:00am]

State of the City Presentation [9:15am] – Mayor Gibbons/City Manager Hildebran

Break [10:15am]

Review of 2018-19 Strategic Priorities/2019-20 Areas of Focus Discussion [10:30am]

Identification of Future Items/Issues by Council & Staff (3-5 Year Timeframe) [11:30am]

Lunch Break [around 12:30pm]

Future Items/Issues - Prioritization and Ranking [12:50pm]

- A. What new items/issues should be included as priorities in the 3-5 Year Timeframe? [20 minutes]
- B. Which of these issues are the most important for the City to invest effort and resources in during the 3-5 Year Timeframe? [20 minutes]
- C. Ranking Exercise [10 minutes]

Review of the both continued priorities and the newly identified issues [1:40pm]

Wrap-up and take-away discussion [1:55pm]

Adjournment [2:00pm]

Enclosures

- 2019 Customer Service Update
- Customer Service Keys
- City of Lenoir Mission/Vision Statement
- 2018 Department Updates/2019 Department Focus Areas
 - o Communications
 - o Finance/Administration
 - o Fire Department
 - o Main Street
 - o Parks & Recreation
 - o Planning & Community Development
 - o Police Department
 - o Public Utilities
 - o Public Works
- 2018-19 Strategic Priorities
- Potential Future Items/Issues (3-5 Year Timeframe)
- State of City Slide Show

Review of 2018-19 Strategic Priorities & 2019-20 Areas of Focus

Customer Service Team 2018 Report



In 2018, the Customer Service Team continued to boost employee morale and equip City staff to provide "Service Beyond Measure."

- CST held regular monthly meetings to discuss ways to improve customer service.
- CST delivered coffee and doughnuts to police, public utilities, and fire staff to thank them for going above and beyond the call of duty.
- CST held new employee Customer Service Training every quarter. During training, CST reviews the customer service keys, sets expectations for new employees, and gives an overview of city departments and services.
- With the assistance of CST and department heads, Public Information Officer Joshua Harris coordinated an Employee Litter Sweep in April. Employees from Administration, Finance, Fire, Main Street, Parks and Recreation, Planning, Police, Public Utilities and Public Works tackled several streets in the city including Main Street, Old North Road, Hospital Avenue, US 321, Wilson Street, Creekway Drive, Finley Avenue, Virginia Street, Fairview Drive, Mulberry Street, and Norwood Street. City employees picked up 125 bags of litter, one tire, and one toilet!
- CST hosted the annual employee Appreciation Night at BO's Bodacious Entertainment in August. Employees and their immediate families were treated to free food, games, bowling, fellowship, and fun.
- CST manned a City of Lenoir information tent at several events including Blackberry Festival and Smoking In The Foothills. Team members use the opportunity to share information about city services, answer questions, and promote the City of Lenoir.
- With the help of CST, Joshua Harris published 12 Team Talk employee newsletters. Team Talk is an opportunity for employees to share good news with one another. The newsletter

The mission of the City of Lenoir Customer Service Team is to encourage and equip all city employees to work together to exceed the expectations of our residents, businesses, and visitors, and to motivate our coworkers through support and recognition of a job well done.
– Adopted December 2018

includes upcoming birthdays, announcements, promotions, employee profiles, and more. CST members nominate employees for spotlights, help gather photos, and share story ideas. In 2018, Team Talk shared 136 announcements, one new birth, 319 birthdays, 30 employee spotlights, 48 positive stories about employees, 16 promotions, and three thank yous.

- City employees gave out 27 Golden Ticket nominations to their coworkers. Golden Tickets are given to employees who go above and beyond to provide service beyond measure. To reward Golden Ticket Nominees, CST hosted a quarterly lunch for everyone that was nominated per quarter.
- CST wrapped up 2018 with a planning retreat Dec. 12, 2018. During the retreat, CST adopted a mission statement, reviewed current initiatives and discussed ways to improve efforts in 2019. This year, CST plans to help quip employees and boost morale with the following programs.
 - **New Employee Training:** All new employees, including those in seasonal and part-time positions, should receive departmental-level customer service training.
 - **Quarterly Employee Training:** CST would like to develop regular customer service training for all city employees. Training sessions could include topics such as body language, answering difficult questions, management, hospitality, intergenerational dynamics, and more. CST hopes to collaborate with CCC&TI to develop training opportunities.
 - **Golden Ticket:** CST will improve the Golden Ticket program. All Golden Ticket nominees will receive a certificate. Their name will be read at a council meeting and appear in the Team Talk Newsletter. CST will name a quarterly Customer Service Award winner who will receive a framed certificate and gift. During the annual Service Awards Banquet, CST will name the overall Customer Service Award winner.
 - **Take A Break On Us:** CST will replace "Everyday Heroes" with "Take A Break On Us." CST members will bring refreshments to various departments and divisions throughout the year and say thank you for a job well done.
 - **Employee Appreciation Night:** Due to the positive reception, CST will continue Employee Appreciation Night.
 - **Booth at City Events:** CST will continue to staff an information booth at NC Gravity Games, NC Blackberry Festival, and Smoking In The Foothills.
 - **Regular Meetings:** CST will continue to meet on the second Tuesday of the month at Mulberry Rec at 9:30.

Lenoir's Customer Service Keys

Key #1 Personable

- Be approachable and make a positive first impression
- Demonstrate caring and patience
- Be friendly and outgoing
- Provide polite and helpful service

Key #2 Pro-Active

- Anticipate customer needs
- Make customers feel important
- Go above and beyond – exceed expectations

Key #3 Effective Communication

- Demonstrate positive body language
- Be a good listener
- Keep people updated and informed

Key #4 Professionalism

- Know your job
- Create and maintain a customer friendly atmosphere
- Pay attention to detail
- Be knowledgeable about city services
- Take time and show interest in our customers
- Treat others as you would like to be treated

Key #5 Timely and Efficient

- Be consistent
- Fulfill commitments in a timely manner
- Respond to phone calls and emails promptly

Key #6 Teamwork

- Develop and know your community partnerships
- Provide seamless service between departments
- Deliver good value

Key #7 Equitable Service

- Treat everyone with respect
- Apply policy evenly and fairly
- Be sensitive to the situation

Key #8 Successful Service Recovery

- Listen effectively
- Show empathy and concern
- Take responsibility
- Try to resolve customer concerns
- Follow up promptly



CITY OF LENOIR MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the City of Lenoir is:

- to serve our citizens and the community by providing a clean, safe, healthy, attractive living and business environment, through the efficient delivery of essential city services in a fiscally responsible manner
- to identify, plan and act on opportunities for preserving and improving the quality of life of all of our citizens and co-workers.

VISION FOR THE CITY OF LENOIR

We aspire to be the city of choice in western North Carolina for current and future generations—beautiful, clean and safe.

We will achieve our vision through:

- *a healthy economy*
- *strong businesses*
- *vital neighborhoods*
- *a vibrant downtown*
- *extensive recreational and cultural opportunities*

We will preserve Lenoir's friendly, small town atmosphere and celebrate the diversity of our people.

We require a city government that is:

- *accessible and engaged with the public*
- *accountable*
- *efficient & responsive*
- *an employer of choice*
- *forward thinking*
- *inclusive, innovative, collaborative*
- *transparent*
- *fiscally responsible*

with funding that is fair, affordable, and stable.



2018 Communications Snapshot



Joshua Harris, Public Information Officer, 1/28/2019

2018 was a great year for City of Lenoir communications. We revamped our online presence. We created more content, and staff collaborated on cross promotion. Below are some communications accomplishments for the past year.

- Rebranded our social media accounts to City of Lenoir, NC Government and used City seal as profile pic. Social media is about relationships and trust. Users should know when they are interacting with a local government agency. Prior to last year, our social media accounts were branded as "Connect Lenoir". That's not a bad brand, but it wasn't clear that the accounts belonged to the City of Lenoir government.
- Launched our YouTube Channel. Now, residents can watch past meetings on YouTube. We also post event videos, promo videos and more to YouTube and Facebook.
- I created a Communications Team. The Communications Team meets to talk about upcoming events and discuss ways to cross promote our festivals and programs. We brainstorm about better ways to reach the public with our messages. The meetings also help keep staff from different departments aware of what's happening.
- With the help of the IT Department, I launched the CITYLINK Employee Intranet. I built CITYLINK in-house, and IT set up the server to host the site. Employees can access the employee handbook, forms, insurance information, policies, and more. Currently, CITYLINK is accessible only from the City network.
- We created A LOT of content in 2018 including:
 - 98 news releases
 - 2,429 photos
 - 76 videos that received 18,300 views
 - 35 city alerts about council meetings, trash pickup, recreation programs, and more
 - 48 messages on the electronic sign at the LFD Station 1
 - 12 employee newsletters
- With the help of staff in Fire, Main Street, Parks and Recreation, and Police, we finished up 2018 with a much stronger online presence. We currently operate accounts on Facebook (5), Twitter (2), Instagram (2), YouTube (1), and Nextdoor (1). We also publish the "Connect Lenoir eNews" and the "Downtown Lenoir Newsletter." We closed out the year with:
 - 8,635 new followers for a total of 21,541 followers across all social media platforms
 - 3,031 total posts on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram
 - 23 newsletters sent to about 700 subscribers

- Our news releases, photos, videos, and social posts helped drive media coverage in 2018. The News-Topic published about 80 stories related to the City. Websites including the News-Topic, Caldwell Journal, WBTV, WHKY, WSOC, published more than 90 stories related to our news releases, videos, and social posts.
- We also receive a lot of traffic to our City website, www.cityofleoir.com. We averaged 31,446 pageviews each month, with about 60% of those views on mobile devices. Our top 10 pages for the year were (not including the home page):
 1. Jobs
 2. Online Services
 3. Pay Online
 4. Water Service
 5. Police
 6. LAFC
 7. Contact Us
 8. Departments
 9. July 4th
 10. Trash Pickup
- We continued Public Engagement efforts in 2018.
 - Foothills Radio Group went through some reorganization in last year. In December, I started up Radio PSAs again with announcements about city closing and Dollar Days at LAFC in January.
 - I updated our Community Presentation for the Mayor and City Manager who spoke to both Rotary Clubs. I also created a presentation for Chief Phelps, Chief Hair, and Mr. Wright's presentation to Lenoir Rotary.
 - Greg Icenhour gave an update about the City's Brownfields Program to City Council and the Rotary Club
 - I responded to 163 questions via our Contact page on the City website. People asked about our cemeteries, how to get rid of paint, what to do about fallen trees, water service, and more. I also answers dozens of questions on Facebook.

Coming in 2019

I plan to build on our current communications efforts and public outreach in 2019 with a new website, new tools, and more video.

- At the end of 2018, we contracted with CivicPlus to redesign the City's website. CivicPlus has 60+ clients in the state, and several peers recommended the company. I created a Website Team to get more input on the design and direction for the new site. The team includes Donna Bean, Jenny Wheelock, Kyle Case, and Councilman Rohr. We have met three times so far, and the team has provide a lot of excellent input. We go live July 1.

- I plan to switch our emergency and civil alerts tool to CodeRed. Like CivicPlus, CodeRed has a very good reputation and is being used by Caldwell County and Granite Falls. The switch should not impact residents.
- I plan to produce public education videos in 2019. I would like to create short, informative videos about our services. We could highlight our greenways and trails. We could remind residents about our recreation programs. We could talk about city services and tell residents who to call about outages. We could do a answering our top 10 frequently asked questions.

Keep up with our content online at:

- CityofLenoir.com
- DowntownLenoirNC.com
- [P2C Police 2 Citizen](#)
-  [City of Lenoir, NC Government](#)
-  [Downtown Lenoir](#)
-  [City of Lenoir Fire Department](#)
-  [Lenoir Parks & Recreation](#)
-  [Lenoir Police Department](#)
-  [City of Lenoir, NC](#)
-  [Downtown Lenoir, NC](#)
-  [cityoflenoirnc](#)
-  [downtownlenoir](#)
-  [City of Lenoir, NC Government](#)
-  [City of Lenoir](#)



CITY OF LENOIR FINANCE DEPARTMENT
801 West Avenue
Lenoir, NC 28645

Donna Bean
Finance Director
828-757-2180

Below is a list of goals and objectives the Finance Department was able to accomplish in 2018;

- During 2018, the Collections Department processed over 100,000 transactions totaling over \$24,900,000. The largest percentage of the transactions was water and tax payments. The majority of the transactions were in the form of checks (88%) with cash making up 4% and credit cards being 7%. The dollar amount of credit card and check transactions both increased by 4% over the prior year while the use of cash decreased by 12% compared to last year. The use of cash for transactions has steadily declined over the past five years. Cash transaction amounts declined by 13% compared to five years ago while amount of credit card transactions has increased by 384% compared to five years ago. The installation of credit card machines in the Collections Department has been well received over the past year. 2019 will bring the installation of credit card machines at the Aquatic Center (LAFC) and Mulberry Recreation Center in response to customer requests.
- The Purchasing Policy for the City of Lenoir was updated in 2018 to reflect current practices and provide additional clarification regarding the purchasing process.
- During 2018, IT installed a new firewall for the City's systems. This was a laborious task that required much preplanning. By preplanning, IT was able to work around the Police Department's Communications Department and avoid interruptions. The IT department customized the program to keep some basic communications services up for Police Communications while IT worked in and around their subnets. The customizations allowed the 911 telephone system to run through its own back-up so that the 911 phone system would be redundant and would not experience interruptions. During the preplanning, the IT Department studied how all these tools connected and was able to re-route these subsystems through Verizon while they did the changeover to the new firewall.

As a result of installing this new firewall, the City reaped immediate benefits. Most importantly, security for the City of Lenoir was greatly improved.

- The cost of using a big box software system would have been approximately \$15,000 for three years as opposed to the \$2,600 paid for support and hardware warranties for the upgraded Firewall.
- The IT Department installed and/or upgraded 30 security cameras at several facilities city-wide including the Collections Department. These cameras have increased security for our facilities as well as the public. The cameras have proven to be beneficial for identifying and

resolving problem situations numerous times since their installation. By upgrading and increasing the number of cameras at Mulberry Recreation Center, the MLK Center and the LAFC, staff has increased security and improved their ability to prevent and/or cut down on vandalism. This has saved the City money in repair work and replacements.

- IT managed the project in partnership with other City Departments for installing fiber at the LAFC which will provide improved service, monthly utility savings, and the ability to offer Wi-Fi to patrons.
- With the help of the Public Works Department, a plan for the renovations for the Collections area of City Hall has been developed. It is hoped that these renovations will take place in the spring of 2019. Plans were developed in late 2018 to improve the security of the IT Department. Renovations will begin in early 2019 which will allow for the City's IT equipment to be housed on one floor in a secured area and will allow for a back-up generator to be installed to avoid any system outages due to a power failure.
- Arrangements have been made to scan Council minute books as well as Planning Board minutes to promote efficiency and record preservation. This will allow old minutes to be searched electronically and save countless hours of reviewing old minute books for information.
- The Finance Department continues to work with newly formed programs such as efficiency teams and fleet service initiatives. As the Fire Department's report read, "both of these programs were designed by our Finance Department to bring forth ideas and initiatives to better improve efficiencies for the City departments so that we could find ways to be cost effective and still provide a better quality of life for our citizens. Both initiatives proved, as you can see from cost savings documents, through collaboration ideas from individuals from each department to improve efficiencies, reduce cost, sustain equipment and improve all departments." Savings for the year are still being identified but the initiative has increased awareness and grown into a culture where cost savings are encouraged and embraced. Employees are routinely discussing alternatives to save money and often self-perform many tasks that were previously outsourced. A few examples of the savings measured have saved the City approximately \$248,987. Those identified are:
 - Savings due to utilizing other departments and self-performing resulted in a conservative estimate of approximately \$187,000.
 - Switching cell phone providers allowed for staff to upgrade of 120 flip phones to smartphones. The upgrade provided new opportunities for officers to use apps to identify pills, identify common places in each model vehicle where drugs are often hidden, do minimal background checks in seconds, and identify hazardous materials upon arrival on the scene. Most departments report that communications have improved. To date, \$12,487 in savings in phone charges has been realized. This amount should double by year end.
 - Departments are working to utilize technology and reduce paper usage. They have also eliminated some of the paper products in restrooms by installing hand drying machines. Total savings is estimated at \$5,000.

- Re-negotiating the GDS solid waste contracts resulted in approximately \$10,000 in savings for the Parks and Recreation Department.
- The Street and Water Departments purchased a Hot Box to recycle pavement. To date, the cost savings is just over \$4,500 in asphalt and fuel. This does not include the value of improved efficiency.
- The City changed medical insurance providers in July of 2018 that resulted in a cost savings of 6% per month and an additional cost avoidance of 6% per month for the previous carrier's proposed increase. The City has also retained the services of a consultant who will be examining all the City's other insurance policies in the coming year to determine if cost savings can be identified.

Below is a list of projects, concerns, and impacts the Finance Department plans to focus on in the calendar year 2019;

- With the retirement of the Risk Manager/Purchasing Agent, there are several changes that will take place in 2019. As a department, the coming year will bring a reorganization which will result in improved processes that will focus on streamlining, reducing redundancy, and utilizing technology.
- The financial software used by the City of Lenoir needs to be upgraded. Due to the implementation of the new electronic meter reading system, plans for the upgrade have been postponed until after the new meter system is in place. Once the meter system is in place, plans for the software change/upgrade will proceed.
- Finance plans to continue to provide department heads with additional financial information to help them manage their budgets. This will allow department heads the ability to see their budgets in real time.
- In 2019, IT will continue to look for ways to improve the data infrastructure and identify ways to be as cost efficient as possible. Off-site storage is a high priority in the coming year.
- Finance plans to work with other departments to identify process improvements in the areas of billing, collections, and work flow.
- Work will continue with the Cost Savings and Fleet Management groups to identify additional opportunities for cost saving and cost avoidance.
- Compensation remains a priority. Salaries are still lagging compared to other municipalities in the region but the 4.8% COLA allow some closing of the pay gap. Several surrounding counties and municipalities have recently completed salary studies which showed local government's pay is still lagging behind market rates. Salaries have been ranked as a priority for several years by Council and the City Manager and slight improvements have been made towards making pay more competitive over recent years. On a positive note, feedback from department heads indicates that employees feel positive about the recent attention this item has received from Mr. Hildebran and City Council. Specifically, the bonuses given over the past three years and the COLA percentage appear to have improved morale.
- The City, just like many local employers, is feeling the effects of workforce shrinkage and low unemployment rates which have led to recruitment and retention issues in most City departments. Paying competitive salaries is critical to recruiting and retaining quality employees. New hires seem to be more concerned with immediate return rather than the

value of benefits. This is especially true for the millennial generation. Being unable to compete with other municipalities' salaries coupled with low unemployment, has led to some issues filling vacant positions. City staff is continuing to review the City's current pay plan and hiring practices, with the goal of identifying opportunities to "rearrange" the starting pay and probationary raises to become more competitive while staying within the framework of the current pay plan.



Lenoir Fire Department

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Deputy Fire Chief
Kenneth D. Nelson
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Below is a list of goals and objectives Lenoir Fire Department was able to accomplish in 2018;

- We were able to successfully go through a transition of leadership. With our Fire Chief retiring last year the department was able to promote from within a new administration and leadership team. The department has been able to continue to provide the best quality of service for emergency responses for our City without missing a beat. According to the staff, we have been able to provide seamless responses and customer service for all citizens and whoever has contact with our department. This accomplishment is what has driven all other accomplishments for the year and a chance at a new start for varying programs with empowerment from all employees.
- We were able to update our communications equipment. Our VIPER emergency radios had become obsolete and hard to repair so with the help of our Finance Department, we were able to purchase new VIPER radios for every seated position. To extend the life of the radios, shoulder harnesses were purchased to strap the radio to the fire fighter rather than continuing to hand carry the devices which resulted in the radios being dropped and damaged.
- We were able to continue our smoke alarm campaign. We continued to install smoke alarms to our citizens that could not provide their own to better improve their chance to survive a fire in their residence. The State currently provides the smoke alarms to us at no cost for distribution but they are becoming more scarce so I can see our department taking the initiative to try and figure a way to purchase them through our budget so we may distribute more in the future for our citizens.
- We were able to purchase a building that will be transformed into our new Fire Station 3 facility. We accepted bids for building a new facility but the numbers came in more expensive than expected and felt that if we continued in this means could put a burden on the taxpayers. We were able to purchase an existing building that should be below the anticipated initial expense of trying to create a new Station 3 facility. This acquisition should allow us to have a quicker response for citizens in our "Lower Creek" area while providing safer response from our department.
- We were able to initiate new Information Technology programs that would allow our department to transform into a virtually paperless department. These programs have allowed our department to reduce the amount of paper and supplies to effectively perform our jobs while providing efficiency for our department and personnel. We were able to establish information televisions for our staffing, work assignments, information, and emergency response. We also have made all paper documents electronic to improve efficiency and reduce storage of hard copies. We have found that with these initiatives, our

department is doing a better job of keeping personnel informed with various aspects of our duties and City information.

- We were able to install security cameras at both of our facilities. The addition of these cameras has allowed us to provide better security for our facilities while adding safer dynamics for our personnel. Before the camera system was installed our personnel had no means of identifying someone at the doors, now they can visually see persons at the door and to see if they have something on them before we are opening the doors and it is too late. We can also keep a better check on their personal vehicles and our grounds from the threat of breaches and risks.
- Our department staff participated in newly formed programs such as, efficiency teams and fleet service initiatives. Both of these programs were designed by our Finance Department to bring forth ideas and initiatives to better improve efficiencies for the City departments so that we could find ways to be cost effective and still provide a better quality of life for our citizens. Both initiatives proved, as you can see from cost savings documents, through collaboration ideas from individuals from each department to improve efficiencies, reduce cost, sustain equipment and improve all departments.
- We were able to apply and receive a license for our ambulance. According to NCOEMS we had been not in compliance. The County, as a whole, thought that we could effectively operate our ambulance to back the County's EMS service by simply operate under their license. This was actually false information and the State advised us that since we own and operate the ambulance solely, we would need to apply for our own license. We did achieve this and it was at no cost to our department or taxpayers. We are now in compliance with North Carolina Office of EMS.
- We were able to create our own social media pages. This program allowed us to do a better job of promoting our department and letting the public have a better vision of who we are and what we are about. It also seemed to assist in recruitment efforts while providing a better image of our department and personnel. We will continue to utilize these social media outlets to provide transparency to the citizens for our department.
- This year also proved to be our busiest year to date for emergency responses. For the 2018 year, our department responded to over 3,100 calls for service and emergencies. This total far exceeded our next highest year for response which was set at 2,994. Just to give you an example of where our department is headed, when I was hired in 1991 our department was responding to approximately 1,200 calls a year. As you can see, we have increased our responses by approximately 160% in 27 years and I am sure it will steadily increase with our aging population and the probability for increased weather related emergencies.
- Council recently approved the staffing re-organization and necessary personnel moves to maintain effectiveness in anticipation of Fire Station 3 coming on-line somewhere between May and June of 2019. The addition of Station 3 will result in the department moving personnel based upon recommended resource demands. Once Station 3 is operational, we will promote 3 additional firefighters to Driver/Operator positions to meet the needs for the new station. These promotions are necessary due to the resource moves which will split crews at HQ's and move a position at Station 2.

Below is a list of concerns and impacts Lenoir Fire Department may incur in the calendar year 2019;

- Station 2 building maintenance issues. Currently we are in need to replace the HVAC and the roof at our Fire Station 2 facility. First, the HVAC system has been looked at by 3 various HVAC companies and all have suggested replacement of the current unit. A bid for a new HVAC system was awarded in early 2019. By researching various vendors and recruiting new vendors to bid, the new system will come in \$8,000 below original estimates. Secondly, the roof at the facility is in need of replacement due to leaks. We are awaiting bids for replacement and the existing roof has been in place since 1996. We have had the forethought that this was coming soon and roof replacement has been on the CIP for the last three years. **NOTE:** We plan to replace both of these items once all bids have been received and awarded. This could be as soon as February or March.
- Station 1 building maintenance issues. Currently we have been monitoring movement of our outer walls and this is of great concern for the future of this facility. In 2008, we had the exact same thing happening to this facility and we had an agency to mitigate the situation but it obviously has not lasted. We spent over \$100,000.00 for the repairs but they have not been sufficient and something further will need to be done as according to Catawba Valley Engineer firm, our walls are still active. They are researching to see what is the cause of the activity but as of yet no plan of action has been identified since they have not figured out the source of the cause. This facility has been used since 1969. **NOTE:** We will mitigate this once the source has been identified and a plan has been developed by the engineering firm.
- A new Fire Apparatus. In accordance with the CIP we are in line for a new apparatus to replace an aging fleet. In the CIP another Quint apparatus is scheduled but we are in the midst to determine if this is the most appropriate vehicle we need for our community. Further evaluation will continue to ensure the citizens' and our infrastructure needs are met and sustained for years to come. This proposal may include replacing an Engine or to upgrade the current Rescue vehicle. Either way, Lenoir Fire Department should be able to reduce the cost associated with the current plan of apparatus replacement in the CIP. **NOTE:** This apparatus will take approximately a year to build and deliver so even if we order it in 2019, it will not be delivered until 2020.
- Bids for Fire Station 3 will be evaluated on February 4th and will be awarded on February 5th. If the project progresses as planned, Fire Station 3 should be operational in the second quarter of 2019. Fire Station III will allow for reduced response times for areas east of US 321, which include three public schools, because congestion at Smith Crossroads can slow the response time from the City's main fire station downtown. Staff has completed plans for staffing and logistics for the new station and will be ready to begin operations immediately once the building is complete.

Submitted by:

Kenneth W. Hair
Fire Chief, City of Lenoir



Downtown Main Street Revitalization

Below please find a list of goals and objectives the COL Main Street Program and Economic Development Department was able to accomplish in 2018

Downtown Main Street Revitalization

- The Economic Development Department has successfully created and hired a new staff position Lenoir Main Street Coordinator. With the additional human resources, the department has been able to expand our Downtown Lenoir website and increase social media presence further informing the public about Downtown and our initiatives. We have been able to engage numerous social media platforms and launch a new E-newsletter all of which now reach thousands. This branding campaign has helped to expand and enrich our events Downtown. These additional resources have also allowed for other initiatives, such as *Moving Lenoir to the Second Floor*, to receive additional staff attention.
- The Lenoir Main Street Program (LMStP) continues to expand the new branding campaign which has been quite well received. We have identified and produced four new Downtown Ambassador Vignettes and have added additional points of interest to our Downtown website. The new marketing and branding campaign has taken great strides in helping the general public recognize Downtown Lenoir as a unique destination. Discussions with Planning staff continue to support the shared perspective that this campaign could be extended to "Phase 2" as a citywide branding campaign enabling us to present a consistent image/brand to the public, yet maintaining and recognizing downtown as a unique destination.
- To further engage the public, the LMStP established the annual *I HEART Main Street Gathering* held in February to communicate the initiatives and accomplishments of the Lenoir Main Street Program, the new happenings in Downtown, celebrate the Downtown Main Street Volunteer efforts and further promote the *Be a Part of What Makes THIS WORKS Volunteer Recruitment Program*. Efforts to increase the number of Main Street Volunteers continue. Numbers now exceed 120 and this number is expected to continue to grow in the coming year. With additional staff in the department, a greater focus has been made regarding electronic communications and website promotion which aided in this increase.
- Our department was able to assist and advance the *NC Gravity Games* event by introducing and organizing the *Feet Off the Street Fun Fest* which compliments the *NC Gravity Games*. Numerous activities that defy gravity were added and the *Reboot and Repurpose Sculpture Competition* was launched and co-sponsored with the Caldwell Arts Council.
- Our department was able to assist and advance the *Smoking in the Foothills KCBS BBQ Competition and Festival* by introducing a new brand – *Smoking Up Great BBQ in the Furniture Capital of the South*. WOOD. FIRE. SMOKE. By doing so, we were able to bring to the table major corporate community sponsors, volunteers, events within the festival that we had never enjoyed before. Activities included BBQ Competition, Smokey Barrel Beer & Beverage Garden, the Fling the Wing Cornhole Tournament, the Playful Piglet Kids' Zone, the Burnin' Rubber Poker Run, the Cash Cow 50/50 Raffle, and top live music, like Jim Quick, throughout the event. New additions for the 2018 festival included the Wood Crafters' Showcase

and Wood. Fire. Smoke. Workshop Series. Making a return in 2018 was the Peoples' Choice BBQ Competition.

- Main Street program will continue to support other Downtown events sponsored &/or co-sponsored by the City such as the *NC Tattoo and Arts Gathering*, the newly rebranded *NC Christmas Tree Festival*, *Light Up Lenoir*, *NC Blackberry Festival*, *Lenoir Cruisers* and several others. Our Downtown events continue to grow and expand. Main Street program will continue to evaluate the feasibility and sustainability of Downtown events and how to best support them. We will continually strive to maintain a balance of support and consideration for Downtown businesses regarding Downtown events. In addition, the Main Street & Parks and Rec Music Madness Summer Concert Series - Moon in June, Under the Sky in July, After Dusk in August will continue to celebrate all genres of music and talented artists within Caldwell County. With the additional staff in the department, Main Street is committed to solidifying and supporting the growth of our Downtown events.
- To continue spurring interest in Downtown revitalization, the LMStP, in collaboration with COL Planning Dept., organized educational sessions focused on existing financial tools such as Historic Tax Credits. "Making Cents of Historic Tax Credits" was co-presented with the State Historic Preservation Office in Downtown in September, 2018.
- To date, with the implementation of *Moving Lenoir to the 2nd Floor initiative*, Main Street has toured 23 properties and initiated conversation with numerous Downtown property owners interested in renovating their properties. Numerous property owners have worked with historic rehabilitation architects to evaluate the feasibility of their projects and several of these are continuing to move forward. Continued efforts will be made to update the property inventory and evaluate the current condition of the Downtown buildings. To date, 17 properties have changed hands and 21 businesses have opened. With the addition of several new property owners and new businesses, as well as anticipated additions, staff believes we could see several additional businesses open and business expansions in the coming year. Staff continues to collaborate with Planning and Code Enforcement to educate and help property owners get their historic structures placed back into service. Staff continues to engage with developers whose focus is providing market-rate apartments in the Fairfield South Area which borders the Downtown Core.

RECENT PROPERTY ACQUISITIONS:

Rhythm and Booz, LLC	1018, 1019 Harper Ave
Building Laboratory, LLC	1001 West Ave
Building Laboratory, LLC	122 Boundary
Katie and Taylor Brummett	1048 Harper Ave
Keystone Properties, LLC	130 Main St

RECENT BUSINESS OPENINGS / EXPANSIONS / RELOCATIONS

CrossFit Lenoir	1001 West Ave
DPS Antiques & Emporium	810 West Ave
Cookies & Cream	808 West Ave
Shake-n-Dog	209 Main Street
Tybrisa Books	210 N. Main St

K&K Sparkle Boutique	122 / 1 Boundary St
NC Business HUB	912 West Ave
Liquid Roots Brewery Project	1048 Harper Ave
Teacher Treasures	110 Church St
Blue Blanket Project	626 Harper Ave

- The LMStP and the Economic Development Staff made a conscious effort to raise the awareness across the State about the Lenoir Main Street Program accomplishments and Downtown Lenoir growth and development. Staff accepted invitations to present at NC Main Street State and Regional meetings. In addition, many of the initiatives and events listed in this report have received statewide recognition. More information regarding this recognition will be presented during this quarter.

Below please find a list of initiatives/projects the Economic Development Department plans to address in 2019;

- Efforts to re-establish the nonprofit arm of Main Street are underway and this goal should be reached in the coming year.
- In order to communicate goals and objectives to the community and parties interested in downtown development, Main Street will explore the possibility of securing a consultant to develop a Master Plan for Downtown Lenoir based on infrastructure and the Economic Action Plan recently completed. The Economic Development Department will explore engaging the WPCOG to discuss the development of such a plan taking into account and incorporating research and discover data already acquired through our branding campaign and the downtown two-way traffic study.
- To continue spurring interest in Downtown revitalization, Main Street will organize additional educational sessions focused on existing financial tools currently in use by the City, such as the LBAB BUILD Grant. Sessions will also look at tools currently in use in Main Street communities including such tools as P3s, low interest loans, and regulatory waivers.
- Through invitations to present at conferences and award applications, the LMStP and the Economic Development Staff will continue with efforts to raise the awareness across the State about the Lenoir Main Street Program and Downtown Lenoir accomplishments and growth.
- To continue to enhance and grow our festivals, the LMStP and the Economic Development Department is exploring ways to improve and enhance our Downtown music system, stage sound and power capabilities and increase power and water for vendor needs.
- The LMStP and the Economic Development Dept. are currently in conversation with the program administration at the ASU Government and Justice Studies Graduate Dept. regarding establishing the COL Economic Development Dept. as an ongoing internship site.
- One of the issues associated with Main Street's success is the need for special event security, which has become a significant hit to the Police Department's budget. Staff will need clear guidance on when we are to provide law enforcement and security services through payroll and when we are clear to hold event sponsors accountable for the cost of extra-duty Officers. Police, Parks & Rec, Public Works and the Fire Department assist not only in staffing certain details, but also in providing heavy equipment to block vehicular access when streets are closed and occupied by pedestrians. Security has become a high priority

and must be considered when budgeting for these events, especially in terms of traffic control, equipment, design, and personnel.

Tourism:

Center Theater

- Main Street staff has identified two committed 'Angel Investors' and conversations continue with current property owners. Meetings have taken place recently with property owners, stakeholders and architects and talks have focused on the various options of the projects organizational structure. Walk-throughs with the property owners, architects, and historic consultants and investors have all taken place. A low-key engagement strategy has been intentional in the first stages of developing and re-establishing a relationship based on collaboration and a mutual desire for the property owners to achieve their vision. With additional staff in the department, steps toward project development have continued and we have arranged for a small group to visit both the Appalachian Theater in Boone and the Gibson Theater in Shelby. We hope to schedule those invitations during this quarter.

Charters of Freedom

- Foundation Forward, Inc., located in Morganton, is an organization that works to build Charters of Freedom Monuments in communities across the country. The Charters of Freedom are our country's founding documents: The Declaration of Independence, The United States Constitution and The Bill of Rights. Projects have been completed throughout the country and NC, with the first project installed at the old Burke County Courthouse in Morganton. The following NC counties have Charters of Freedom - Cherokee County, Buncombe County, Jackson County, Pitt County, Henderson County, etc. Discussions have been had with Foundation Forward about working to bring a Charters of Freedom project to Caldwell County, with hopes of locating one in downtown Lenoir. This initiative has been assumed by the County to administrate this program. Latest discussions proposed that the monument be placed near the Court House downtown.

Sister Cities

- Our Sister Cities program has languished for several years. Also, the Western Piedmont Sister Cities Association, which was organized in the early nineties as an area non-profit organization, has struggled in maintaining a viable program as well. The original intent of the program was to exchange ideas and develop friendships with other cultures. There has been discussion to dissolve the program and the board is currently still suspended.

Retire NC

- As part of Lenoir's participation in the Retire NC program, staff has access to excellent demographic data and marketing trend data which is being utilized by our Communications Director and the LTDA. The Caldwell Chamber of Commerce is assisting in this endeavor.



Recreation Administrative Offices (828)757-2165 - Fax (828)758-1315
 W.B. Stronach Lenoir Aquatic & Fitness Center (828)757-2196
 Mulberry Recreation Center (828)757-2165
 Martin Luther King Center (828)757-2170
www.cityoflenoir.com



Below is a list of goals and objectives Lenoir Parks & Recreation were able to accomplish in 2018;

- We were able to install additional security cameras at MLK, LAFC and Mulberry. With the addition of these cameras it has allowed us to provide better security for our facilities and staff. Also, it has helped identify some issues that involved patrons along with property damage.
- We installed the new tennis court at Mulberry Recreation Center. This is part of the PARTF grant the city received for the Mulberry/Optimist Park project.
- We were able to successfully promote some employees in our Parks & Grounds division. This has helped to provide the best quality of service to our citizens and staff.
- We were able to install new lane lines for the indoor pool at LAFC. This was a major improvement for this facility because it helped with the overall appearance of the indoor pool and also has helped in recruiting new members.
- We were able to install new computers in the computer lab at MLK with the help of Google. Google is a great community partner for the city. They also painted the computer lab and put in new furniture as well.
- We were able to install a walkway from the Broyhill Foundation parking lot up to the Broyhill Walking Park. This was built so when we have special events at the park, such as the Sculpture Celebration, people can have better access to the park. Also a new rock wall was built at the Walking Park to replace an old railroad tie wall that had become unsafe from deterioration. These two projects were funded with the help from the Broyhill Family Foundation.
- Several of our department staff participated in newly formed programs designed by the City Finance Department to learn and share ideas how to become more cost efficient and still provide top quality service to our citizens.

Optimist Park Improvements

The Lenoir Optimist Club donated the Optimist Park, containing 12.15 acres, to the City of Lenoir in late 2015. The appraised value of the property was \$227,200. The city applied for a PARTF grant for the Mulberry Recreation Center/Optimist Park Expansion Project and was awarded the grant in August 2016. The PARTF Grant is in the amount of \$327,200 with the city putting up \$100,000 as a match. Improvements completed to date include: New fencing and repairs of old fencing, new ball field lighting for Mulberry Rec Field #1, minor repairs to the Park Club House, tennis court at Mulberry Rec, renovation of the maintenance Building (which now houses the Parks and Recreation Parks and Grounds division). Other

upcoming amenities included in this project are two new shelters, playground equipment, restrooms, lighting, and a new parking lot. This project will be completed by October 31, 2019.

JE Broyhill Park Improvements:

Phase 1 of the JE Broyhill Park Improvements is completed with the exception of some grading and planting grass. The new additions to the park include three new shelters, new picnic tables, trash cans, grills, restrooms, basketball court, sidewalks and resurfacing of the upper parking. This project was funded with approximately \$200,000 from CDBG monies. The grading and grass seeding will be complete this spring once the weather improves.

Phase 2 of the JE Broyhill Park Improvements include a regenerative storm water conveyance system to address some of the water issues in the park and beautify the area. NC State University has been assisting with grant application and storm water project design, which has an estimated project cost of \$230,000. The City would be asked to provide \$100,000 match that can include "in kind" labor. The City was awarded the grant after applying a second time. The funding for the project should start in early 2019. One bonus, the removal of the community building and some of the other site improvements have had a positive impact on the flow of water through the park. However, the stream at the bottom of the park is experiencing erosion and both functional and aesthetic enhancement is still desired.

- **Disc Golf:**
Staff is continuing to explore areas within the city to place a course.
- **Dog Park:**
Staff has met with a private group to discuss their operating a park on the City's property. Lack of interest and problems in locating a desirable site were issues. Staff will continue to explore this opportunity.

Below is a list of concerns and impacts Lenoir Parks & Recreation may incur in 2019;

- **LAFC building maintenance issues:** Currently we are in need to replace two HVAC units and the steam room boiler. First, the HVAC units have been looked at by 3 various companies and all have suggested replacement of the current units. We are currently awaiting the bids from 2 of the companies before moving forward with this. Secondly, the steam room boiler is in need of replacement. It has been in place for about 15 years. We are waiting for the bids to come in before moving forward with this. **NOTE:** We plan to replace both of these items once all bids have been received and awarded.
- **MLK building maintenance issues:** We are in need of replacing the gutters on the gymnasium because of the heavy snow that we had. They have broken apart and are causing leaks inside the gym. The gutters on the gym are the original ones that were put up when the gym was built. We are getting bids now to see what the cost would be to replace them. **NOTE:** Once we get the bids in we will make a recommendation to replace them.

Highlights for future projects:

- Lighting Mack Cook Stadium as well as the Rotary Soccer Complex.
- Replace and upgrade the lights on the tennis courts at Mulberry Recreation Center.
- Replace or upgrade the Whirlpool at LAFC.
- Interior Renovations to LAFC (Paint, Removal of Tile Flooring & Replace with New Tile).
- Interior Renovations to Mulberry Recreation Center (Removal of Tile Flooring & Replace with New Tile, Sand/Paint & Refinish gym floor. Upgrade basketball goal systems in gym.
- Renovations to MLK (Paint outside of the facility, Removal of Tile Flooring & Replace with New Tile).
- New Basketball goals at LHS gym.
- Interior Renovations at LHS Auditorium (Paint, Sand & Refinish stage area.
- Update shelter at West End (Paint, add new picnic tables, etc...)

Submitted by:

Kenny Story

City of Lenoir

Parks and Recreation Director



2019 Strategic Planning Retreat Planning & Community Development Initiatives & Projects

Accomplishments in 2018

- Awarded grant for Phase 2 stormwater improvements for JE Broyhill Park. Effective January 1, 2019, we will have 2 years to complete the work. NC State is taking the lead on coordination and design.
- The City applied for (and has received unofficial notice that we were selected for funding) an ARC grant to fund the debris removal from this site, in order to finalize the environmental testing needed to enter into a Brownfield agreement with the state, which should allow us to market the property for clean-up and redevelopment (all risks will be known, and mitigated). Using both the ARC money and the EPA assessment grant money, plus the property as a match, the City's cash match for this project will be \$216,000 (overall project budget is \$616,000).
- Adopted ordinance amendments to make it easier to place infill manufactured homes.
- Adopted ordinance amendments to make it easier to renovate and reconstruct single-family homes in their existing footprints.
- Finalized a comprehensive historic architectural survey for Lenoir working with the State Historic Preservation Office. The result of that project was over 400 records on the historic elements of various properties in the City, along with a recommendation for 10 individual properties and 2 neighborhoods to be included on the study list for National Register listing.
- Created a neighborhood map for the City of Lenoir, which reflects both historic place names and current planning efforts.

Ongoing/Updates to Current Projects/Next Steps

- **Stormwater Utility Fee/Stormwater CIP:** Freese and Nichols has been engaged by the City to create an inventory of SW capital needs as well as help the City establish a system for tracking SW-related issues between various departments.
- **NCDOT Transportation projects:** Staff is working with the MPO and DOT staff to submit projects for a feasibility study for both an eastern and western bypass for US321 and a congestion management study for the area from Smith Crossroads north to Valmead and from Smith Crossroads East to Taylorsville Road, for scoring in this year's SPOT process.
- **Watershed Property:** This property, while annexed, still has no city zoning. At one time, we had contemplated a Conditional Zoning district on this property that would basically implement the conditions of the conservation easement as the only zoning standards for the property.
- **Comprehensive Plan Updates/Implementation:** Planning staff continues to work on implementing the recommendations of the comprehensive plan (most notably with a major code re-write, described in

more detail in the next bullet). A handful of Small Area Plans are proposed (West End, Whitnel) as well as an overhaul to the zoning maps based on creating more context-specific corridors that share appropriate development regulations. This continues to provide good long-range planning for the City as well as help implement the vision described in the plan; however, in the next couple of years a more comprehensive update is going to be needed.

- **Moderate-Income Housing Demand/“Missing Middle Market”** : Planning Board is currently workshopping and anticipates to send to Council in late March 2019 for review and adoption a major overhaul to the zoning district permitted use chart, which creates allowances for multi-family projects as “by right” projects, as well as expands allowances for accessory apartments and townhomes. The EDC is currently studying the housing market in Caldwell through the UNC Development Finance Initiative, which should also give us more information on the challenges to market rate housing. The next steps will be to look at the zoning maps and propose re-zonings as appropriate to facilitate more “by right” projects in areas of the City that can support more housing with the existing available infrastructure (roads, adequate water/sewer capacity, school capacity, available land, etc.), as well as remove regulatory barriers to the development housing as recommended by the DFI housing study results.
- **Zoning Use and District Regulation Overhaul:** This omnibus ordinance has been drafted and is working its way through the approval process. It focuses on creating standards that are easy to navigate for infill developments, as well as modernizes and streamlines the provisions of the zoning ordinance. It includes the following changes that have been on our “wish list” of code fixes for the past few years:
 - Modernizes ordinance, reduces text, easier/more transparent to navigate
 - Eliminates duplicative code references, which helps limit the potential for future conflicts
 - Sets up a “tiered” system of zoning districts, that can then be used to adopt more context-specific zoning design standards
 - Adds “by right” multi-family residential to certain districts, creates a new “residential commercial district,” and expands allowances for infill units such as accessory apartments
 - Adds “Boutique Industrial” uses (i.e., makerspace, hackerspace, woodworking, printmaking, glassblowing, pottery, screenprinting) in the Downtown and several other appropriate districts
 - Fixes conflicts and ambiguities related to accessory structures, decks, porches, setbacks, etc.
- **Minimum Housing Enforcement:** The need for city abatement of dilapidated houses continues to exceed the budgeted amount for demos each year. Planning staff is exploring options to self-perform some of these demolitions, as well as to reduce our tipping fees for these demos, in order to stretch the budgeted amount further. However, additional funding would help us eliminate these structures sooner. We also continue to send properties for tax foreclosure, which is proving to be a useful tool but also a very slow-moving process. We expect to see several more structures sold at auction in 2019.
- **Sign Enforcement/Zoning Administration:** We continue to struggle with staff resources to achieve the level of service desired by the public. We need to be able to balance the enforcement of existing ordinances, the review and permitting of new projects, and the long-term planning work that really makes the biggest difference in how our community grows. The day-to-day administration of the Code can result in important long-term projects getting pushed to the back burner, in this climate of a high level of development activity. One option to relieve some of this pressure is to hire a contract planner

to work in Lenoir one day a week. This person would work under the direction of the Planning Director and the Zoning Inspector, and would help review and issue permits for new development, review plats, and do zoning enforcement in the field (inspections, sign enforcement, etc.).

- **Neighborhood Branding/Signs:** Lenoir, like all cities, is a city of neighborhoods, and many times neighborhoods are more cohesive and inspire more loyalty than the city as a whole. However, the historic names of many neighborhoods are not a part of the collective conscious of many residents, especially as new residents are attracted to the City. Using the recently created neighborhood map and input from the public at the neighborhood map meeting, staff proposes an inexpensive project to add historic neighborhood markers to the street signs around the downtown neighborhoods (at least as a “phase 1”. These are little “love notes” that help communicate that these neighborhoods are unique and special places within Lenoir, and can stand alone or as a part of a larger branding effort.
- **Creation of Two National Register Districts:** A high level of community interest in finalizing the two National Register Districts that were study-listed as a result of SHPO’s survey in Lenoir. This would make homeowners in two neighborhoods – Fairfield (west of Downtown) and Maehill Park/Oak View (south/east of Downtown) – eligible for historic preservation tax credits.
- **Historic Preservation Commission:** Currently in the process of designating the Lenoir Planning Board as the Lenoir Historic Preservation Commission. This would allow for another “tool” in our toolbox to designate certain projects that are of such outstanding historic significance to our community that we want to provide local tax incentives to see them preserved (the tradeoff is that property owners requesting such a status have to comply with the secretary of interior standards for historic preservation, buildings are protected from “demolition through neglect,” and new projects are reviewed by the Planning Board for compliance). Staff anticipates that very few projects will actually try to utilize this, but creating the local HPC means that legally we have this option in the future should we choose to pursue it. This may be especially relevant for properties on the National Register and also in an Opportunity Zone.
- **Strategic Property Acquisition:** In addition to continuing to use strategic tax foreclosure to get properties back into private hands, staff also has several properties that would be strategic for the City to acquire:
 - Former Knotty Pine Grill property and neighboring property in Freedman (340/342 Finley Avenue) – Currently going through foreclosure for delinquent taxes
 - Current Perez Tire site in Fairfield (two parcels; south of Gibbon’s Electric) adjacent to OVT rail trail
 - Former (recently demolished) service station on N. Main adjacent to OVT rail trail (709 N. Main Street)
- **Small Area Plan Updates:**
 - North Main: 2nd phase JE Broyhill park improvements (SW grant) recently funded and design work will begin soon. A strategic foreclosure recently closed at 701 Conley Place, and we’ve been working with the buyer on plans to secure and improve the exterior of the structure prior to interior renovations being completed. The box factory at 705 North Main Street recently changed hands, and we’ve been working with the new owner on a phased plan for exterior improvements – proposed use is an architectural salvage company. The former service station

at 709 N Main Street has been demolished as a result of nuisance enforcement – staff recommends this to Council as a strategic property to acquire as it is adjacent to the OVT rail bed. In the Freedman community, two structures on Finley Avenue have been demolished (including the Knotty Pine Grill building), and the properties have been submitted to Kania for tax foreclosure. Staff anticipates an opportunity for a sculpture or pocket park/memorial of some kind to serve as a “love note” for this community here in this historically significant and highly visible location, once the property is owned by the City.

- Fairfield South/Funky Town: We have received grant funding to assist in the clean-up of the former Broyhill tract we own at College/Virginia. Many historic properties have changed hands, with redevelopment anticipated. One abandoned structure is in final stages of tax foreclosure. Work continues to implement the OVT plan, as well establishing a local Historic Preservation Commission to add to the redevelopment toolbox available to Council to help incentivize projects.

Challenges/Upcoming Projects

- **Stormwater Program:** The City was audited in late-2018 by the EPA and the NC DEQ related to our stormwater program and deficiencies were noted. In order to come into compliance with the Clean Water Act, the EPA and DEQ want the City and each of the co-permitted municipalities to have their own adopted Stormwater Management Plan and stormwater ordinance, as well as be permitted under separate NPDES permits. Previously, the program had been transferred to the City from the County and the City had been holding one permit for all of the municipalities and enforcing the ordinance/plan adopted under the County. Top priority will be to work with DEQ and the other co-permitted municipalities to come into compliance and adopt jurisdiction-specific plans and ordinances.
- **Technical Review Committee:** It is becoming increasingly important to adopt a standardized process of sharing information between departments and allowing for technical comments from all departments prior to Planning Board and/or permitting approval. Items that need to be routed through the TRC:
 - Driveway permits/cross-access standards (COL street dept, NCDOT, driveway separation zoning standards)
 - New subdivisions (roads, fire, utilities, zoning)
 - Conditional Use Permits (roads, fire, utilities, zoning, CPTED/LPD)
- **Business Friendly/Transparency/“One Stop Shop”:** Using enhanced online presence, updated websites, interactive maps, and printed materials, Planning Staff would like to increase our ability to provide coordinated information in enhance customer service. This includes a “one stop shop” to walk new business owners/developers through the various approvals and codes they will need to be aware of.
- **Future Small Area Plans:**
 - West End: We’d like to do a housing “deep dive” in the West End community, with public input, to try and understand the pattern of disinvestment and use all strategic tools available to us to help those who would like to invest in this community do so. Initial conversations have started with Pete Kidder as well as Councilman Perkins. We anticipate using an approach similar to the

one taken in Kinston, NC, which is a parcel-by-parcel analysis. Depending on available staff time, we would like to start this project with a community input neighborhood walk on a Saturday morning sometime before Oct 2019 (need to do during a nice weather month).

- Whitnel: I would like to look at Whitnel within the next 5 years, in particular related to design standards and the re-use of properties that have been severely impacted by DOT ROW acquisition (that may or may not ever actually be used). Sidewalk connections to Whitnel Elementary, as well as looking at leveraging the investment in the Whitnel interchange are also important to explore. Street name changes may also be proposed, related to the re-alignment of Connolly Springs Rd and Hibriten Dr for the interchange, which has created some confusing duplicates.

Department Budget Requests

- **Historic Preservation Consultant for NR District Nominations:** The estimated cost of preparing the necessary research and reports to finalize these districts is approximately \$30,000 – this assumes doing both districts at once to realize efficiencies in consultant travel expenses. Planning staff applied for a grant to help fund this project through the Covington Foundation, and have had some promising conversations with local charitable organizations. The Covington Foundation has given us \$5,000 towards this project, and Fairfield Chair has also committed \$5,000. If we could get equal commitments from Broyhill Foundation and Bernhardt (historic preservation cannot be removed from the history of a community, and in Lenoir, that history is furniture – these three companies have roots in helping to develop these historic neighborhoods and have been interested in a partnership to help preserve that history), we would still be \$10,000 short of meeting this goal.
- **Building Demolition/Legal Fees for Foreclosures:** Continue to fund at current levels or ideally increase funding for demolishing structures as well as legal fees related to foreclosing on abandoned houses that are still salvageable.
- **Contract Planner:** In order to allow planning staff to focus on the “big picture” needs of the community, I am requesting that the Council fund a contract position for my department to have a one-day-a-week planner in Lenoir to help with zoning administration – plat review, plan review, issuing minor permits, and doing zoning code enforcement in the field. A contract position is desirable, because the work demand of “current” planning/zoning administration fluctuates with the market – it may be that for the next few years we need this help, but an economic downturn or a decline in permit applications would change this need. I like the flexibility of the contract planner, as well as being able to attract better expertise/qualifications than trying to hire someone local as a part-time employee (not a high likelihood of finding the “right fit” experience for a position like that in our community).
- **Neighborhood Branding Signs:** We can do these in-house, with some equipment upgrades. This was ranked as a high priority last year, I’d like to see an actual budget line item for these so that we can determine which neighborhoods we can implement these in first. We’ve done the neighborhood maps so we are ready now to implement this item if it is funded.



Brent Phelps
Chief

CITY OF LENOIR POLICE

1035 West Avenue NW
Lenoir, NC 28645
828-757-2100



Scott Hildebran
City Manager

The below information is broken down into two main areas, items accomplished in 2018 and potential obstacles for the Police Department to work thru in 2019.

Accomplishments:

- **Facility security:** We completed the fencing project for the department. This was a major investment and improvement in increasing our security at the facility. The fence is constructed to enclose the rear parking lot area of the building. It has two motorized gates with remotes for staff and a key pad at each gate. This restricts citizens from having access to vehicles and safety equipment along with allowing a safer controlled area for staff exiting the rear of the building.
- **Facility security:** Along with the assistance of the IT department and building maintenance we were able to upgrade our camera system for the department. We were able to upgrade from 8 to 14 cameras that are HD quality and cover several areas of the building that were not covered before.
- **Technology upgrades:** We have worked thru our body-worn camera program with the transition from Digital Ally to Getac and this move has greatly improved efficiency with the individual units. All uniform officers are equipped with BWC's this has been extremely vital in incident documentation, and has greatly reduced the time spent for supervisory staff in incident follow ups.
- **Technology upgrades:** The department has switched from UCR reporting to the National Incident Based Reporting System (NIBRS). This will have an impact in the coming year with how our stats are reported to the state and will be some different in the information that is collected for data purposes.
- **Equipment upgrades:** The department worked to secure an armored rescue vehicle thru Law Enforcement Support Services (LESS). It has been up fitted for civilian law enforcement use. This item of equipment is not used on a routine basis but when needed provides protection for responding officers and protection for citizens that are being evacuated from an incident. Our special response team has utilized the vehicle on several high risk search warrants since getting the vehicle operational.
- **Equipment upgrades:** The department purchased a UAV (Unmanned Aerial Vehicle). Currently we have three officers that have completed the necessary training. One (1) officer is

certified with the other two (2) scheduled for the test. This enables our department to be able to capture and photograph large scale crime scenes and crash scenes more efficiently. It has been utilized on one traffic fatality since getting a certified operator.

- **Equipment upgrades:** The department purchased two chainsaws and obtained certification training by the NC Forest Service for approximately ten officers. This is not a normal law enforcement function but our agency realized during the tornado event this was a need we could provide to aid in storm damage removal for citizens and our other responding departments.
- **Personnel items:** In 2018 our agency experienced a major transition with staff specifically in command level positions. Chief Scott Brown retired and the city performed a hiring process and selected the internal candidate. This created a trickle-down effect thru our entire rank structure. The organizational structure was also modified with approval by council and to date eight individuals have been promoted since August 1st, 2018. This has allowed for a lot of movement inside the agency for staff. The department thru the transition has been able to meet the needs of our citizens and partners without interruption.
- **Personnel items:** During 2018 all of our Sergeants completed the first course in Leadership training in the FBI-LEEDA program. Several of the Sergeants have completed the second course in the program. All Lieutenants have completed the Trilogy certification with this leadership program. Our goal is to push for all supervisory staff to complete the Trilogy program.
- **Community engagement and training:** Along with all of our daily required duties employees were also involved in the following: National Night Out, K-9 Academy Graduation, Cruise-In, Touch-a-Truck (Chick-fil-A), FBINAA Board, Smoking in the Foothills, Robin's Nest Golf Tournament Fundraising, Caldwell Is Hiring (JEBCC), Downtown Trick or Treat, Explorers Open House, Medicine Drops (Foothills Pharmacy, Bernhardt Furniture – 3 locations), Lenoir Church of Christ BBQ Luncheon, Davenport & MLK Carnivals, Mikeal ½ Marathon (LAFC), Brookdale Appreciation Breakfast, Veterans Day Memorial, 5th Annual Turkey Giveaway, ALE Operations, Security Clearance Event (UNC Health), Rotary Christmas, Christmas Parade, BLET Graduation, Harassment Training (Public Works), Radio Spotlights, GHSP Task Force events, Safety Seat Diversions, Check Stations, K-9 Training and Demos, Oral Boards & Promotional Processes, NIBRS conversion, Project Lazarus, Communications Team, Lenoir Police Community Partners, Christmas Parade, Shop with a Cop (FOP), DARE Graduations, Luminary, Regional Investigators meeting, Customer Service, MLTF and Explorers Post meetings, CORE and Crime Stoppers Meetings, Robins Nest, ABC, Shelter Home and Hospice Board Meetings.

Potential obstacles for the Police Department to in 2019.

- **Recruitment and Retention issues:** In talking with other Chief's and senior law enforcement across the state one of the number one obstacles that departments are facing is recruitment and retention of qualified employees. There are many factors making this a complex issue for law enforcement agencies, as many times the factors are different depending on the dynamics of the

community and agency. One specific factor for our agency is the distance of our starting salary and current market rate. Our City leaders have worked the last several years to make steps in improving this issue, with the most recent COLA being 4.8%, which is the largest COLA in my 22 ½ years with the City of Lenoir. However the majority of other agencies have made steps in increasing their salaries levels which has left us still in about the original starting place with surrounding departments. I am not in favor for us to do a pay study with a company such as the MAPS group or other similar organizations. We have data that we have researched and obtained from other organizations that show the pay levels. There is no need to spend city money to be told what we already know. Currently our morale is very positive but my fear is within 6 to 8 months especially some of our 1 to 5 year employees will be recruited by these surrounding agencies and could stand to get estimated increased salaries from 5,000 to 9,000. This is hard to fight against with an officer trying to provide for his family. This is by far our biggest priority to work with City leaders to try and improve.

- **Departmental evidence issue:** Our evidence room is reaching max capacity. This has occurred for several reasons. The first reason is the drastic increase of digital media in the last 5 years. As we have gotten our BWC program running effectively our digital media takes a large amount of time for our evidence investigator. She spends the majority of her time processing the flow in and out of evidence for cases and citizens. The backlog of evidence that can be destroyed is a time consuming process, in which she alone cannot focus on due to the daily flow. Also state law has changed in regards to weapons. They are no longer allowed to be destroyed once the case is completed in court. Some agencies have decided to begin to sell them to local pawn shops, but we have declined to currently do that, which may be something that we have to change our stance on at some point. We are working with our IT staff to look for programs to stream line the process for our investigator. However with our current count being over 37,000 pieces of evidence we may have to look at increasing staff in this area.
- **Departmental equipment cost:** Other than personnel one of our biggest expenditures is our yearly fleet vehicle cost. This coming year our estimated cost percentage increases at 3-5% from information gathered from manufactures. A fully equipped, marked Patrol vehicle cost \$51,240 each, and one (1) fully equipped, unmarked vehicle cost \$35,700 for use by Investigations/Support Services. It is becoming more difficult to fund the number of vehicles we need on a yearly basis with all of the needed equipment for staff to do their job safely and efficiently.
- **Departmental facility needs:** Several of these items have been listed on our CIP for several years. We have several areas of the building that has on-going maintenance concerns. Our roof leaks on a normal basis during periods of heavy rain. We have had building maintenance and private roofing contractors do patch work to help with this problem. The last quote that we received to have a new roof on the building was \$41,000. Our front handicap ramp is not in compliance and needs to be replaced. The other three areas of the building that are in need of remodeling are the lounge, training room, and records. These locations are functioning at the current time, but are outdated and used every day by employees and sometimes by visitors.
- **Department Initiatives:** The last six months the Department has been working thru the trickle down promotions. By the end of December we have all of our supervision team set and in

place. We have our first supervisors planning session on February 7th for the Department. We will review our Mission, Vision, Core Values, and Principles. Then we will set goals for our agency and begin the planning process for this coming year and future years. I anticipate several initiatives to come out of this planning process for us to focus our attention and efforts.

Memorandum

To: Mayor, City Council Members and City Manager

From: Radford L. Thomas – Director of Public Utilities

Date: January 25, 2019

Re: Public Utilities Department Projects Update

Water

Water Treatment Plant Rehabilitation Project # 1 – The Bernhardt Water Treatment Plant Project # 1 is approximately 98% complete. The major components of the project include the renovation of the filters with new controls, lab renovations, replacement of the vacuum system in the settling basins, construction of a building to house the chemical storage tanks and improvements to the chemical feed system. These items have been completed. Improvements to the Cahah's Mountain pump station are another major component of this project. The project was funded with a 0% interest loan from the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) in the amount of \$6.5 million. The project was scheduled to be substantially complete in May 2018 however issues with the Cahah's pump station, equipment delivery times and other construction delays have us still working on final punch list items at this time. Plans are to have these remaining items complete by mid-February 2019. Water Treatment Plant Rehabilitation Project # 2 – The Bernhardt Water Treatment Plant Project # 2 began in February 2018. It involves adding two new filters, the construction of a mechanical pre-treatment facility and other appurtenances to facilitate the addition of the two filters and mechanical pre-treatment. These structures have been constructed and the equipment for the facilities is now being installed. The cost of the construction is approximately \$8.1 million, with a total project budget of just over \$10 million. It is scheduled for completion in late spring 2019. Once completed, the Plant can operate at a firm capacity of 12 MGD year-round.

Maehill Water Line Replacement – This project has been completed however in a different way than planned. The original plans were to replace approximately 500 feet of 6" water line on Maehill to address flow and potential water quality concerns at an expected cost of \$250,000. However, after further evaluation the project scope changed and approximately 750 feet of line was constructed along Hwy 321 North between McLean Drive and Claron Place. This allowed the city to complete a loop and improve water movement in this area to address our concerns. The cost was significantly less with the total project being completed for approximately \$50,000 vs. the \$250,000 original estimate.

Joyceton Water System – Inquiries have been received concerning the City acquiring the Joyceton Waterworks distribution system. There are no current discussions underway at this time.

Water Meter Replacement (Residential) – This project was put on hold as the metering practices study being conducted by MeterSys was initiated.

Metering Practices Study – The Utilities Department engaged the services of MeterSys to undertake an evaluation of our meter reading practices and procedures. Phase 1 of the study looks at our current technology, meter reading costs, the types of meters we are currently using, a financial analysis of our reading and billing services and an analysis of the technologies available to the city and what is the most economical metering system for our community. At the completion of phase I of the study, City Council directed staff to move forward with phase II which involved the development of system specifications, advertising and securing bids from qualified vendors and developing a metering solution recommendation to be presented to City Council for approval. The results of phase II were presented to Council on January 22, 2019 and the staff recommendation was to pursue an agreement with Mueller Systems for our AMI remote meter reading project which includes 100% remote disconnect meter installation. The agreement is planned to be presented to Council at the February 19, 2019 City Council meeting for consideration. Once approved, the next phase will include the building of the AMI network, billing software integration and meter replacement. This phase is scheduled to be completed in approximately 16 months from the notice to proceed.

Water Meter Replacement (Wholesale Customers) – The Collection and Distribution Division has continued a program to evaluate and replace the larger meters for wholesale customers such as Baton Water Corporation and Caldwell County. The goal is to replace up to five of these meters in the coming year starting with those that currently have the highest consumption or are in need of replacement due to age or maintenance history. The Baton meters have been replaced and approximately half of the Caldwell County meters have been replaced or are scheduled to be replaced. This project will now be integrated into the comprehensive project with MeterSys and Mueller once the service agreement is approved and in place. It will also include 2 inch and 4 inch meters as well.

Water Plant Capacity Expansion Study – There is currently study underway with McGill Associates to evaluate the requirements for expanding the treatment capacity of the water treatment plant. Current capacity is 12 MGD. The study is looking at the construction, permitting and site requirements for expanding to 13.5 MGD and in the future to up to 18 MGD. Project #2 currently underway, will improve the treatment capabilities at the plant with the addition of the mechanical pretreatment and the two new filters. This study will evaluate the needed improvements for the next step to 13.5 MGD and develop a site masterplan to accommodate those improvements. This study is scheduled for completion in late February 2019.

Water Distribution System Evaluation – This evaluation is currently underway to review the distribution system for improvements that may be needed to accommodate the potential new flow being distributed as a result of the improvements/expansion at the water plant and increased customer demands. The study is reviewing pumping capacity, pipe sizes, storage capabilities and potential pressure restrictions/ medium pressure zones. The analysis will also investigate options for additional water availability including future plant expansion, partnering with other utilities and interconnections with neighboring utility systems. The results will be beneficial in planning future system improvements and provide information that will address projects that are currently on the CIP.

- Sewer

Bio-solids System Improvements - The City received an SRF loan in the amount of \$6.6 million for the design and construction of a new bio-solids treatment process and facility. The interest rate on the loan is 1.53%. This project was scheduled to begin construction around February 2019. However in order to allow more time to review the sludge drying technologies that are available, the City received a 10 month extension of the project time line from NC DEQ. During this time, city staff has had the opportunity to make site visits to learn more about the various drying systems available. Council received a report from McGill Associates recommending the Gryphon Drying system. The recommendation will be presented to the Council for final approval at the February 5, 2019 Council meeting. The engineering and design, permitting and bidding will be completed once this equipment is approved for purchase and designs specifications can be finalized. The new schedule sets the beginning time construction for January/February 2020.

Smith Crossroads Sewer Line Project – An application was submitted to NC Division of Water Infrastructure in October of 2018 for an SRF loan to fund the sewer line replacement and rehabilitation from the manhole behind Kimbrells to the golf course. As we continue to have manholes in this location that will overflow during heavy and extended rain events, this project is a portion of a larger project in the CIP along Harper Avenue. Due to the continued problems, it was decided to move more quickly with a project to address the concerns associated with the overflows. We expect to hear from NC DWI regarding the approval of our loan application in late February 2019. The design of the sewer line relocation or replacement will take into consideration options to accommodate the extension of the greenway through Smith Crossroads towards the golf course. The bridge area brings into question whether or not the line location will complicate being able to extend the path under the bridge or even if the line can be relocated at all due to the bridge structure.

- Water/Sewer

Water And Sewer Arc Flash Studies – Conducted Arc Flash analyses on both the water and wastewater facilities including the treatment plants, sewer pump stations and water pumping stations. The purpose was to determine and assure that these facilities meet current electrical codes and standards and the risk for an electrical arc flash is mitigated. These studies were completed in the spring of 2018.

Asset Inventory Assessments – The City has received grant funding from NCDEQ to undertake an asset inventory assessment of the utilities department. The Water Assessment (\$80,000) and Wastewater Assessment (\$140,000) will identify the current assets of the department including the age of the facilities (this includes water and sewer piping), inspection of facilities to determine replacement schedules and cost. It will help us identify valves, fire hydrants, manholes, and equipment needed to maintain the collection and distribution systems. The completion of the assessments will be valuable to the development of future Capital Improvement Programs and in seeking funding for future projects. The AIA assessments will be completed the spring of 2019.

IWorQ Work Order System – The utilities department is currently in the process of implementing a new work order system called IWorQ. This is an automated system that will replace the current paper work order system currently being used. It should improve productivity and improve the accuracy of the data being gathered through our work orders. Through the use of tablets, desktop computers or smart phones, staff can receive or generate work orders for needed repairs to the water or sewer systems. The employee can view an asset like a fire hydrant on a location map on the tablet and

create a work order or view maintenance history for that asset. It can also track the work assigned and whether or not a work order has been completed or is still pending. The system can assign labor cost, equipment cost and inventory cost to the work order to track the expenses in more detail. IworQ is currently being used by the Street Department and the Vehicle Services department. It is planned to have full deployment of the system by late winter or early spring 2019.

R-5745 (Taylorsville Rd widening/turn lane plus intersection improvements to US64/NC90/NC18 intersection)

This NCDOT project consists of intersection improvements at the intersection of US 64/NC 90/NC 18 (Wilkesboro Boulevard) and US 64/NC 90 (Taylorsville Road). It is proposed as a “complete streets” project, because of the close proximity to the schools, and the opportunities to tie in with existing and planned sidewalk and greenway networks. Water and Sewer line relocation is estimated at \$54,294. **The utility relocation for this project was completed in November 2018.**

Brownfields/EPA Assessment Grant

The city was awarded an EPA Brownfield Assessment Grant in April of 2018. Work will continue with Greg Icenhour, our consultant with Mid Atlantic Engineering and Environmental Solutions, to implement the grant through the execution of Phase I and Phase II environmental assessments on identified sites. The evaluation of several sites has begun including the old City Service Cleaners location on Harper Avenue. The purpose of the funding is to conduct environmental assessments on approximately 19 local sites (as funding will provide) that were once manufacturing facilities or properties such as the former dry cleaning service locations. A grant was submitted to the EPA in mid-November 2016 requesting \$300,000, but not funded. In November 2017, the City submitted a new grant request seeking \$300,000 in funds. The grant will enhance the city’s ability to market and reuse some of the existing properties located in Lenoir. This funding is a key strategy to the implementation of the Funkytown/Fairfield South small area plan.

Bost Lumber Sewer Replacement (Steele Street to College Ave.)

This project involved the replacement of approximately 1100 feet of sewer line between Steel Street and College Avenue around the old Bost Lumber building. The Project was funded through a grant the city received from the Appalachian Regional Commission in the amount of \$300,000. **This project was completed and closed out in 2018.**



Public Works Department

510-B Greer Circle SW
Lenoir, North Carolina 28645



Public Works Director
Jared Wright
(828) 757-2183

Public Works Department – Summary of activities and accomplishments for Calendar Year 2018:

Engineering Division (2 FTE)

- Continued work on development of the Hospital Avenue Sidewalk project: The City's design consultant continued work on plan development, including 90% plans for horizontal and vertical alignments, Right-of-Way, traffic signals, and storm drainage. Using a cloud-based project portal maintained by NCDOT, these plans were submitted throughout the year for review and approval. Staff also hosted a public information meeting to discuss right-of-way impacts to neighboring properties. The meeting also included a visual preference survey for retaining wall types to be incorporated into construction. The project has currently moved into the right-of-way acquisition and utility relocation phases. The project is expected to be advertised for bid in Q4 of 2019.
- Advertised, received bids, and awarded the City's biennial asphalt resurfacing contract. This process included advertisement of the bid solicitation, a pre-bid conference, and a public bid opening. A total of three (3) bids were received, and a recommendation for award was made to Council. Resurfacing work has continued through Q3 and Q4 of 2018.
- Continued work on finalizing the Harper Avenue/West Avenue 2-way Traffic Study. The City's consultant continued work on study development, including two (2) presentations and a final phasing plan. Project deliverables include conceptual designs for each street, construction estimates, and a phasing plan that includes three (3) phases.
- Assisted with property procurement and modifications to the new Fire Station 3 building and property. This complex project required additional site and building modifications to ready the property for the City's purchase. Staff coordinated with a consultant for site plan development, review, and permitting, as well as provided project management for the site work and building modification.
- Coordinated with consultants to begin development of the Harrisburg Drive/Highway 18 portion of the greenway. The City purchased property on Morganton Boulevard to facilitate this project, which requires a pedestrian bridge over Lower Creek. Staff, along with consultants hired by Google, reviewed and determined horizontal and vertical alignments for this portion of greenway. The project is currently undergoing a flood study to determine floodplain impacts.
- Worked with Duke Energy to determine financial impacts of retrofitting all City streetlights to LED. Following a rate adjustment from Duke Energy, staff asked the City's account representative to determine a total estimated cost for upgrades. The total cost was

dependent on the number of existing fixtures (approximately 2,500), existing fixture type (mercury vapor, high pressure sodium, older style LED), and billing structure.

- Worked with the City's legal counsel to review and modify the City's right-of-way encroachment agreement process. This included drafting a revised application and agreement that serves as a "Master Agreement", featuring a longer term, requires more defined scope of work descriptions, and blanket bonding options. This draft agreement is currently still under review by one (1) third party utility company.
- Began work with a consultant to complete a City-wide stormwater study. The study includes additional system mapping and inventorying, development of a concern-tracking database, ranking criteria to determine the City's level of response to issues, and the creation of a capital improvement plan specifically for stormwater-related projects. The study is approximately 50% complete.

Street Division (15 FTE)

- Supervised resurfacing of thirty-one (31) streets in the City. Duties included monitoring and inspection of the work as it's performed, measuring asphalt temperature as the product arrives on-site, collecting and monitoring in-place tonnage, and reviewing contractor's applications for payment.
- Performed site work on the JE Broyhill Park renovation, including demolition of the existing parking lot, site grading, and construction of the stone subgrade. This self-performance of the work saved the City approximately \$50,000.00.
- Performed demolition of the car wash structure on Morganton Boulevard. This property was recently acquired by the City for use as a greenway trailhead. This self-performance of the work saved the City approximately \$15,000.00.
- Using equipment purchased during 2018, performed pothole and utility cut patching using 100% recycled asphalt. The recycling equipment was used approximately fifteen times, eliminating the purchase of hot-mix asphalt, and allowing patching to occur when hot-mix may not have been available. Cost savings for the 2018 calendar year were approximately \$5,000.00.
- Assisted with Downtown events: placed barricades for street closures, provided staffing during events, performed street cleaning and refuse removal after events.
- Continued with standard operations: street and storm drainage maintenance, right-of-way tree trimming, brush collection, street and traffic control sign installation and maintenance, snow and ice removal, and street closures during storm events.

Sanitation Division (13 FTE)

- Conducted two (2) trash bash events (Spring/Fall)
- Administered the roll-off dumpster rental program
- Assisted with Downtown events: provided staffing during events and performed street cleaning and refuse removal after events.
- Continued with standard operations: performed residential garbage collection, sold and delivered rollout carts, performed seasonal leaf collection, and operated the City's recycling drop-off facility.

Building Maintenance Division (6 FTE)

- Assisted with maintenance and reconstruction of Beall Street and Unity Park Community Gardens.
- Provided project management for JE Broyhill Park restroom building construction.
- Worked extensively with staff for coordination of Downtown events: vendor location, electrical and water needs, event preparation, and staffing during events
- Continued with standard operations: assisting other departments as necessary with building and facility maintenance, repair, and construction needs.

Cemeteries Division (6 FTE)

- Coordinated with Master Gardeners and Downtown staff to host the “Bloom Blast” Downtown beautification event.
- Hosted the annual Luminary Display at Blue Ridge Memorial Park
- Assisted with Downtown events: provided staffing during events, performed street cleaning and refuse removal after events.
- Continued with standard operations: seasonal maintenance of City cemeteries (Blue Ridge, Bellview, Fairfield – approximately 30 acres total), managed grave site and monument sales, performed regular Downtown grounds maintenance, street and sidewalk cleaning, tree and shrub pruning, and refuse removal

Vehicle Services Division (4 FTE)

- Continued implementation of a more structured preventative maintenance plan for all City-owned equipment and vehicles.
- Worked with specific divisions and departments for specialized equipment training.
- Assisted with vehicle and equipment capital purchases
- Continued with standard operations: maintenance and repair of over five hundred (500) pieces of equipment and vehicles

Public Works Department – Calendar Year 2019 Concerns and considerations:

- Capital purchases and equipment needs: The Public Works Department has an aging fleet of specialized vehicles and equipment. The largest and most significant of the vehicles includes the knuckle-boom brush truck and garbage trucks. Each of these activities (brush and garbage collection) requires the vehicles to be available and work-ready on a daily basis. Frequent breakdowns have impacted these City-provided services during 2018. Near-term priorities include an additional knuckle-boom to assist with brush collection. The department’s intent would be to procure an additional truck instead of replacing the current unit (providing 2 in-service trucks). For Sanitation Division needs and potential truck replacement, staff recommends considering a systematic, programmed move to automated collection trucks (one-arm bandits). Due to the collection method and truck operation,

automated units may not be suitable for use on all City streets and routes. A move to automated pick up may require modification to current routes and considerable public interface during schedule and route changes.

- Staffing (seasonal): Several services provided by the City are performed on a seasonal basis (mowing and leaf collection). Each of these activities requires seasonal employees during the peak seasons. During 2018, the department saw a continuation of the trend of declining interest in seasonal labor, with fewer than expected applications for employment. Compounding this issue, several potential seasonal employees could not pass pre-employment drug and alcohol screening. Staffing changes were made within the Cemeteries Division to permanently assist with division responsibilities, but a different approach may be warranted with leaf collection. Staff considerations currently include equipment purchase (one-man collection versus three-man collection method), and/or implementing scheduled pick-up limited to three (3) pick-ups during the season.
- Project expenditures:
 - Hospital Avenue Sidewalk Project: This project is expected to be advertised for bidding in Q4 of 2019.
 - Arrowood Street Bridge: The biennial inspections for the City's seventeen (17) bridges were completed in 2018. One bridge, the Arrowood Street bridge, was cited as having a degrading substructure. Staff met with NCDOT and consultants from the inspection firm to ensure the load rating would remain current with the existing posting, but ultimately this bridge will need replacement in the near future. This is a timber-frame bridge with timber abutments, and each of these components is showing considerable wear.
 - Harper Avenue and West Avenue 2-way Traffic Conversion: Depending on Council's desire to proceed with phased construction of the Harper and West Avenue 2-way traffic conversion, funding will need to be allocated to begin work on this project.
 - FNI Stormwater Study: The results of the ongoing stormwater study may necessitate immediate attention on capital projects. Currently, without a dedicated funding mechanism for stormwater maintenance or improvements, any expense beyond standard maintenance activities must be borne through the General Fund or financed;
 - Stormwater Program: As a result of EPA and DEQ's recent audit of the City's stormwater program, it was determined that the Public Works and Public Utilities facility must apply for coverage under the nationwide *General Industrial Stormwater Permit*. This decision was based on the size of our municipal operations center and the volume of motor oil handled by the City's Vehicle Services Division. Compliance with permit mandates will require a Stormwater Management Plan for this facility, along with the potential for structural stormwater control measures, conveyances, and outfall (discharge) monitoring. This, in addition to any further

program mandates resulting from the audit, may require immediate attention and have financial impacts.

- Cemetery Needs: Blue Ridge Memorial Park is quickly approaching current capacity for gravesites. We do have two (2) additional sections available that need final layout and lot marker placement. With sale rates of approximately three hundred (300) graves per year, opening these additional sections will allow sales of the remaining property for the next five (5) years. Beyond these sections, a master plan needs to be developed for the remaining acreage at the park. Also, the existing columbarium at Blue Ridge Memorial Park is full. We get regular requests for niche space and have received quotes for columbarium construction. Staff recommends strong consideration for additional columbarium construction.
- Facility Asset Inventory Development: The City currently utilizes over forty (40) facilities. It has become apparent that the overall condition and maintenance needs of these facilities vary greatly. Staff plans to develop a dedicated asset inventory for facilities, which will include pertinent facility information such as age and condition of the following critical systems: foundations, floor coverings, roof coverings, mechanical systems (HVAC, electrical, plumbing), doors and windows, and any specialized equipment specific to each facility. Ideally, work will be coordinated with other departments to source and secure documentation for equipment and repairs made on each facility. This will allow a more programmatic and proactive approach to facility maintenance and repair.

Submitted by:

Jared Wright
Public Works Director

2018 Council Budget Priorities

1. Employee Compensation:

- Continue efforts to offer competitive compensation and benefits for employee recruitment and retention

2. Healthy Infrastructure:

- Street Paving
- Downtown Traffic Study
- Bike Plan (Pennton Avenue)
- Maintain City Facilities
- Water/Sewer Improvements
- Stormwater
- City Hall
- Fire Station #3
- Sidewalks/Greenway/OVT (also downtown sidewalks)
- Optimist Park/Mulberry Improvements/JE Broyhill Park Improvements
- Information Technology

3. Housing:

- Minimum Housing Enforcement
- Pursue Market Rate Housing
- Market City-owned Properties to Sell
- Encourage Downtown Living (Moving Lenoir to the 2nd Floor)
- Communicate building “spec” homes in shovel-ready areas such as Hibriten Mountain, Stonecroft, Huntington Woods & Summerhill
- Work with WPCOG Vacant & Substandard Housing Task Force

4. US 321 Beautification

- Neighborhood Branding Signage
- Work on Commercial Blight (city-wide & downtown)
- Address Major Visibility Issues (Smith Crossroad, Old Mall, etc.)
- Implement North Main Area Plan & Fairfield South Plan

5. Public Engagement

- Neighborhood Meetings
- Walk-through's
- State of the City Presentations

6. Economic Development:

- Explore what other local governments are doing with public/private partnerships
- Maintain Healthy Infrastructure
- Continue Work with EDC
- Market Quality of Life Amenities (Greenway, OVT, Bike Plan, etc.)

COUNCIL & STAFF POTENTIAL FUTURE ITEMS/ISSUES (3-5 YEARS TIMEFRAME)

- **3 R's of Workforce – Recruitment, Retention, Retirement**

Recruitment

Recruitment is a complex issue with many factors (especially in times of low unemployment) and has resulted in a steady decrease in the number of qualified candidates applications. Early development of career interest must be a focus.

Retention

Having a competitive compensation package is obviously a huge factor in helping to retain employees. We have made some progress in this area in the last couple of years, but we have to continue working toward being closer at market rate. The City will have to continue to look at multiple policies, benefit packages, and extra items to retain staff.

Retirements

There are a number of employees in key positions in the city that have 30+ years of service to the city that may retire in the next 3 to 5 years.

- **Quality of Life - good infrastructure and facilities, good neighborhoods, good downtown, and good business climate**

Public Perception of Community Reinvestment

There is a general attitude among some property owners that the community is simply “not worth investing in.” Negativity breeds negativity and then it becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. Some owners continue to rent their spaces way below market value, delay investments, donate properties to churches/non-profits who then just tear down the buildings or hold onto them keeping them off the tax rolls, or the failure to take action results in “demolition by neglect”.

Zombie Properties

“Zombie Properties” are properties that are essentially “dead” to the market due to unpaid taxes/liens/environmental contamination/federal restrictions/etc. These properties will continue to be a drag on our neighborhoods and our economy, and we need to think about how reduce the number of these properties to encourage redevelopment and/or reuse.

Development Pressure on 321/Lower Creek/Wilkesboro Blvd

The City faces the most development pressure for new commercial and multi-family developments along US 321 and Wilkesboro Blvd east of Smith Crossroads. This is a positive thing for our community, as it is “infill” development that intensifies areas that are already served by infrastructure. However, with increased development there will be increased traffic, as well as additional demands on the schools in that area. This is going to require that the City coordinates better with the agencies that help provide the infrastructure for this growth – namely NCDOT and Caldwell County Schools. Establishing a process to be able to review and permit new development within a context of an overall capacity of what our infrastructure can handle will be important. Also, the City must explore ways to make developers pay their fair share of impacts (or know how much is too much) before the area is over-built.

Zoning for the “By-Pass”

As NCDOT contemplates moving traffic through Smith Crossroads, a “by pass” for US 321 around Smith Crossroads may happen. If US 321 does relocate to the outskirts of town, the City must provide safeguards against all of the highway-oriented development from moving with it. Highways/by-passes should be for moving traffic, not for accessing individual businesses. Having appropriate regulations in place to limit development to those areas that can provide access roads, limited access points for the highway, and more office park/industrial type development rather than fast food/retail will be important to achieving long-range mobility goals for the region. (We also don’t want to create a ‘greyfield’ ghost town through the middle of town as new development follows the “trips” predicted by the DOT.)

Stormwater

Lenoir has aging stormwater infrastructure. This includes conveyance systems that have reached or well-exceeded their designed lifespan. Corrugated metal pipe (CMP), terra cotta clay pipe (VCP), and handmade brick and mortar structures are prevalent in our stormwater conveyance system. Each material type or component is prone to failure, especially given the age of much of the system. Repairs to the system can be as simple as replacing a pipe for a few hundred dollars, or closing streets, performing massive excavation, and replacing entire drainage basin systems. Repairs of this magnitude can easily exceed hundreds of thousands of dollars and have tremendous public impacts. The City is currently engaged with a consultant to complete a stormwater study and master plan. The study has the potential to identify areas of the system that need immediate attention. Beyond being reactive to issues as they arise, moving forward the preferred approach to addressing stormwater infrastructure

upgrades is through proactive, systematic capital improvement planning and implementation.

Street Maintenance and Resurfacing

Budgeted spending on annual resurfacing has increased for the past several years, and based on the current CIP will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. Given the price of placed asphalt (including price fluctuations over the past 6 years), we are currently able to resurface approximately four (4) miles per fiscal year. With over one hundred twenty five (125) miles of paved City streets, the replacement schedule for a single street exceeds thirty (30) years. The expected lifespan of asphalt pavement is around twenty (20) years. In order to meet the replacement schedule, the total amount of centerline miles resurfaced annually needs to exceed six (6) miles.

The general street maintenance budget also funds asphalt and concrete pavement (street) repairs, curb and gutter repairs, and drainage system improvements. Many of the streets in need of resurfacing also exhibit symptoms of significant subgrade degradation, excessive potholes or utility patches, and/or multiple layers of asphalt. Each of these issues requires additional preparation prior to resurfacing, including full depth removal of the existing asphalt or excessive milling.

Sanitation Automated Residential Collection

Automated residential collection uses one-arm style side-loading trucks. These trucks offer several benefits, including but not limited to only requiring a single operator (instead of a 3-man collection team), but they are considerably more expensive than traditional rear loaders and require use of specific trash carts. Public compliance with cart placement location would also be necessary to ensure the truck arm can physically access the cart.

Public Works Fleet

Much of the Public Works fleet is aging, with several vehicles and pieces of equipment ranging from 10-20+ years old. This includes single-axle dump trucks, motor graders, wheeled loaders, and also light duty service trucks.

Funding Sources for Capital Improvements

The availability of low interest funding (or no interest) sources for the capital needs in the future may be challenging. And, how the projects are financed may also impact the ability to maintain affordable tax and utility rates while generating revenues needed to meet future debt service requirements.

City Facilities/Public Infrastructure

The City must take action to address current and long-term city facilities/public infrastructure needs that serve as the backbone of the quality of life for our citizens. The first step is the establishment of an inventory of facilities and public infrastructure that addresses maintenance and rehabilitation. And then, if necessary, the next step is the establishment of a plan for replacement. Some future items potentially include City Hall Renovation, LHS Auditorium Rehabilitation, Mack Cook Stadium and Rotary Soccer Complex lighting, general facility maintenance (HVAC, Roof, Plumbing, etc.)

Changes in Rules/Regulations/Mandates

In the next few years, the City faces possible changes in rules, regulations and mandates which can dramatically increase the cost of city operations. Possible items include National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards on Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), water/wastewater environmental regulations, OSHA requirements, stormwater regulations, retirement contributions, etc.

• Technology/Innovation & Governing

Digital Government

City staff is regularly working to reduce paper and provide more services online. Today, residents can pay utility and tax bills online. We also have many forms available. But what if residents could register and pay for youth sports online, or rent and pay for a picnic shelter? What if we could recruit, hire, and evaluate employees online in one central location?

Social Media

Most local governments have adopted social media as a way to inform and engage citizens. NC law is broad and includes electronic records as public records. Many cities and counties are turning to private companies such as ArchiveSocial to archive government social media accounts.

Financial Software

Changing financial software will provide opportunities to automate many processes such as billing, payroll, budgeting, accounts payable and purchasing thus eliminate duplicative efforts. While the initial change will be labor intensive, the end result should make all city departments more efficient.

Robust Employee Portal

The goal for the Employee Portal is to have a robust site where employees sign-in and gain access to their virtual machine anywhere. Employees would have access to all their software, files, and email as well as all their pay information including pay stubs and W-2 forms, vacation and sick leave balances, access to forms and policies, and other pertinent information. It would basically be a one-stop shop to house all data the employees would need to perform their jobs.

Digitizing Data

As we move forward with digitizing data, it is hoped that most, if not all files could be electronic and searchable within this time frame. Personnel, accounts receivable and payable, planning, etc. would be available and searchable.

• Miscellaneous Items

OPEB/Retirement Costs

The increase in OPEB costs is a continued concern as retirement contributions continue to rise. The rise in cost coupled with fairly flat tax growth is cause for concern especially as we try to reduce the pay gap for the City compared to other municipalities and the private sector.

Wayfinding

Lenoir is a great place to live, work and play. New companies are moving in and current businesses are expanding. The City is building more trails and improving parks. We also host many great events. Wayfinding is an excellent way to create a sense of place and tell residents and visitors about our amenities. Investing in wayfinding would demonstrate the City's commitment to public investment, create a stronger sense of place in Lenoir, and encourage travelers on 321 to make a turn at Smiths Crossroads and head downtown.

Opioid/Heroin Crisis

Increase in addiction and the community related issues that come with this type of problem. With the opioid epidemic at alarming rates nationwide, staff will play increasing roles in addressing the issue.

Mental Health Issues

Local governments throughout the country are dealing with a variety of mental health related concerns. 1 in 5 adults in America experience a mental illness. Our city workers are seeing an increase of individuals experiencing mental health related problems; and many times, we are their first point of contact when in need of

assistance. Local facilities are overloaded with mental health cases which can be extremely time-consuming for responding employees and others trying to meet the needs for these individuals. It is important to work with other agencies/partners to acquire additional training on crisis identification and resources availability in order to better service the community. Currently, there is not one licensed, practicing psychiatrist in Caldwell County. To begin to address this need, Caldwell UNC is constructing Jonas Hill Hospital & Clinic (a 27-bed inpatient and out-patient facility).

Water/Sewer Consolidation/Mergers/Regionalization

Increase effort by the state to reduce the number of water system and wastewater system permits that NCDEQ has to manage and regulate.

- **3G Goals - Grow Population, Grow Jobs, Grow Tax Base**



CITY OF LENOIR 2018 IN REVIEW

New business, new investments, new improvements

Economic Growth

3.5% increase in wages, Caldwell County ranks 25th in the state

Unemployment decreased to 3.1% in October

Companies are expanding in Lenoir

New businesses opened across the city



Exela Pharma Sciences

Exela acquired the old expo building, invested \$25 million and added 50 jobs. The average salary exceeds \$50,000.



Caldwell UNC Health Care

Renovations continue at Caldwell UNC Health Care. The hospital is investing \$24 million to renovate the facility and add services.



Katz Sandwich Co.

Opened on Harper Avenue in March 2018.



The Shake-N-Dog

Opened on Main Street in April 2018.



Workout Anytime & Mariner Finance

Workout Anytime opened on Blowing Rock Boulevard in June 2018. Mariner Finance relocated to the adjacent space in the Lenoir Festival Center on Blowing Rock Boulevard.



Dunkin' Donuts

Opened on Wilkesboro Boulevard in July 2018.



Tybrisa Books

Opened on West Avenue in September 2018 and moved to a new location on the square in January 2019.



K&K Sparkle Boutique

Opened on Boundary Street in October 2018.



Big Lots

Moved to new location on Blowing Rock Boulevard in October 2018.



DPS Antiques

Opened on West Avenue in November 2018.



Liquid Roots Brewing Project

Opened on Harper Avenue in November 2018. “Life’s short. Beer happy.”



CrossFit Lenoir

Moved to new location on Boundary Street.



Lenoir Printing Solutions

Purchased by ICON, Lenoir Printing Solutions reopened on Harper Avenue in January 2019 adding 15 jobs. The company also has an operation in Bakersfield, California. The company does business online at www.printdirtcheap.com.



Rockhaven by Delicate Touch

Opened on Harper Avenue.



Camp Coffee Roasters

Camp Coffee moved their roasting headquarters, “to go café” training facility, and corporate headquarters to Mulberry Street. The owners plan to open their coffee shop this Spring.



Hampton Inn & Suites

Expected opening in March.



Whitnel Mini Storage

Nearing completion on Connelly Springs Road.



Blue Ridge Energy Corporate Headquarters

Blue Ridge Energy started construction on its \$18 million corporate office located on Blowing Rock Boulevard.



Jonas Hill Hospital & Clinic

Caldwell UNC Health Care broke ground in January on the \$10+ million Jonas Hill Hospital and Clinic. The facility will bring psychiatric care and enhanced behavioral health services to Lenoir and Caldwell County. It's expected to create 50 jobs with an average salary \$50,000+. The City helped the hospital apply for a \$500,000 HOPE Grant to help fund the project.



Future Medical Offices

The old Lowe's grocery on Hickory Boulevard is being repurposed for medical offices.



Southern Crossroads Restaurant

Southern Comforts of Blowing Rock is opening a sister restaurant in old Bud's Diner on Wilkesboro Boulevard. Southern Crossroads is planned to open in March.



Fumiyoshi Restaurant

Moving into the old New York Pizza on Harper Avenue.



Gragg Orthodontics

Construction continues at Gragg Orthodontics on Harper Avenue.



Comfort Inn Renovations

Comfort Inn is remodeling 19,902 square feet, including changing 78 tubs to showers.



Development Opportunities

Brownfields Grant

Opportunity Zones

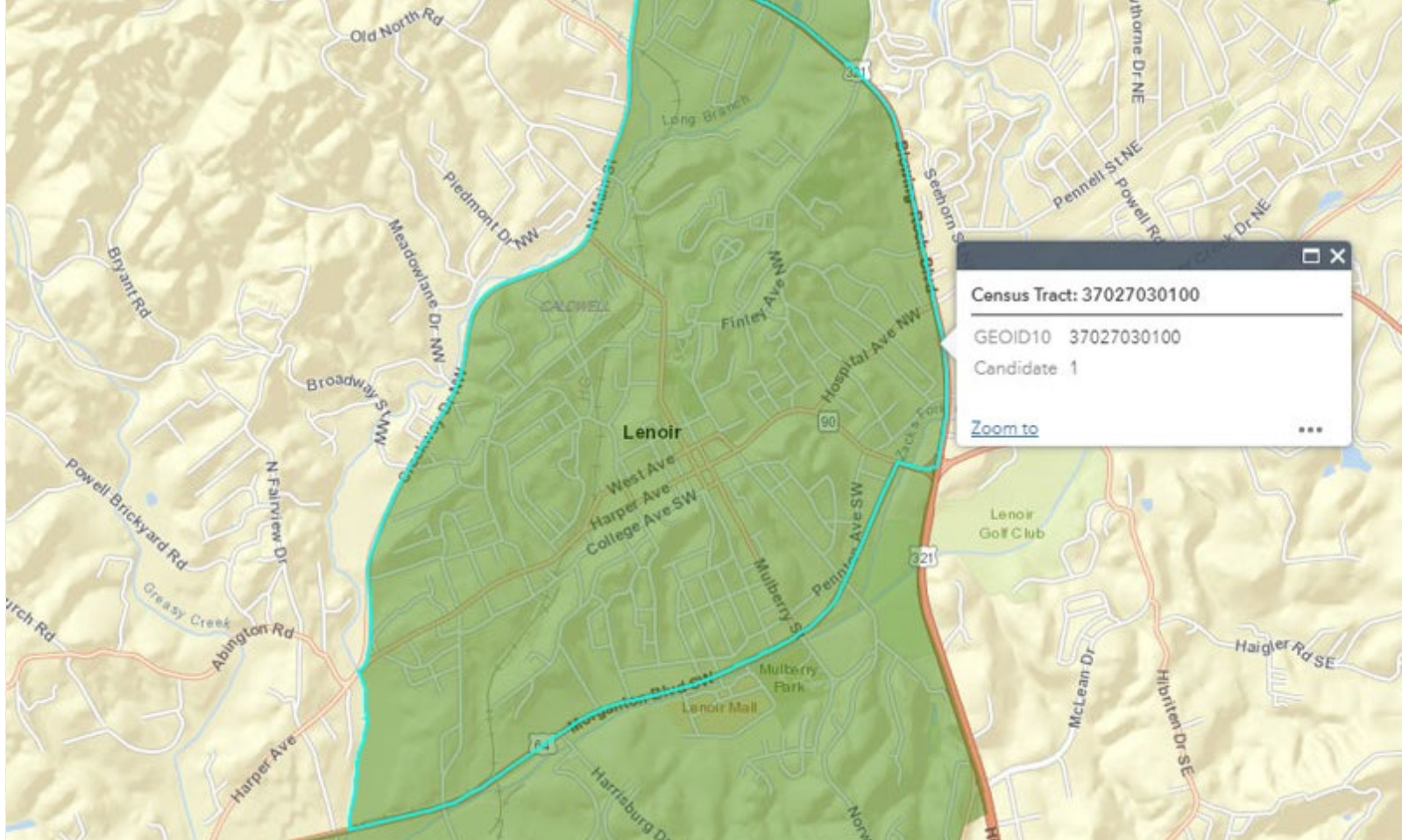
Historic Designations



Brownfields Grant

In the Spring of 2018, the City received a \$300,000 Brownfields grant to promote redevelopment and economic growth in Lenoir.

Staff has completed Phase 1 on the old City Service Cleaners in downtown.



Opportunity Zones

The City received three NC Opportunity Zone designations, Census Tract 301, 303, and 311. Included in the federal Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (H.R.1), the legislation creates a tax benefit for qualified investors who wish to reinvest realized capital gains into Opportunity Zones, avoiding standard capital gain tax obligations.



Comprehensive Architectural Survey

In March 2018, the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office's released its Final Report on its Comprehensive Architectural Survey of the City of Lenoir. Following an extensive planning phase and a systematic fieldwork effort, SHPO prepared survey files on more than 350 resources in the city.



Historic Preservation Commission

The City is establishing a Historic Preservation Commission to identify potential historic resources in our community and encourage preservation.

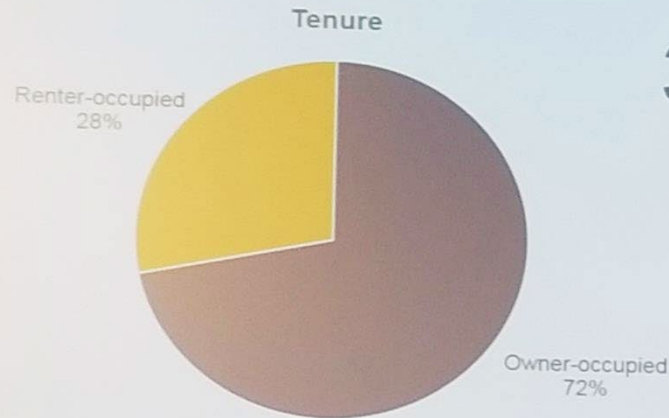
Housing

Vacant housing dropped to 16%, down 2% from 2010 - U.S. Census Bureau's 2017 American Community Survey

Council adopted ordinances making it easier to place infill manufactured homes and easier to renovate single-family homes

Submitted draft ordinance to Planning Board to accommodate by-right multi-family development

Housing Fast Facts



38,000
Total Housing Units

85%
Occupied

40
years old
Median Age of Housing

dfi

Source: American Community Survey

DFI Housing Study

The Development Finance Initiative (DFI) at the School of Government presented their preliminary report on housing in Caldwell County Feb. 12. By May, DFI should complete the market and demand study.



Education Foundation Town Homes

In November 2018, Council approved a Conditional Use Permit for 1015 Ashe Avenue allowing a 3-unit multi-family townhome.



Crescent Pointe Senior Living

In March 2018, Council extended the Conditional Use Permit for the 60-unit multi-family senior living development known as Crescent Pointe for one year.



Habitat Development

Habitat for Humanity has completed four houses at their Statement Court development. Two more homes are under construction.



Public Investments

New Directors

Infrastructure

Services

Parks

New Directors



Jared Wright
Public Works
March 2018



Ken Hair
Fire
March 2018



Brent Phelps
Police
August 2018



North Main Street Improvements

Last year, City staff completed improvements to North Main. Contractors paved North Main from downtown to Creekway Drive and staff improved the intersection at Creekway Drive.



Water Tank Maintenance and Branding

As part of regular maintenance on the City's water tanks in 2018, staff took the opportunity to update the Public Utility Department's logo. The new logo was painted on city tanks and has been added to several Public Utilities Vehicles.



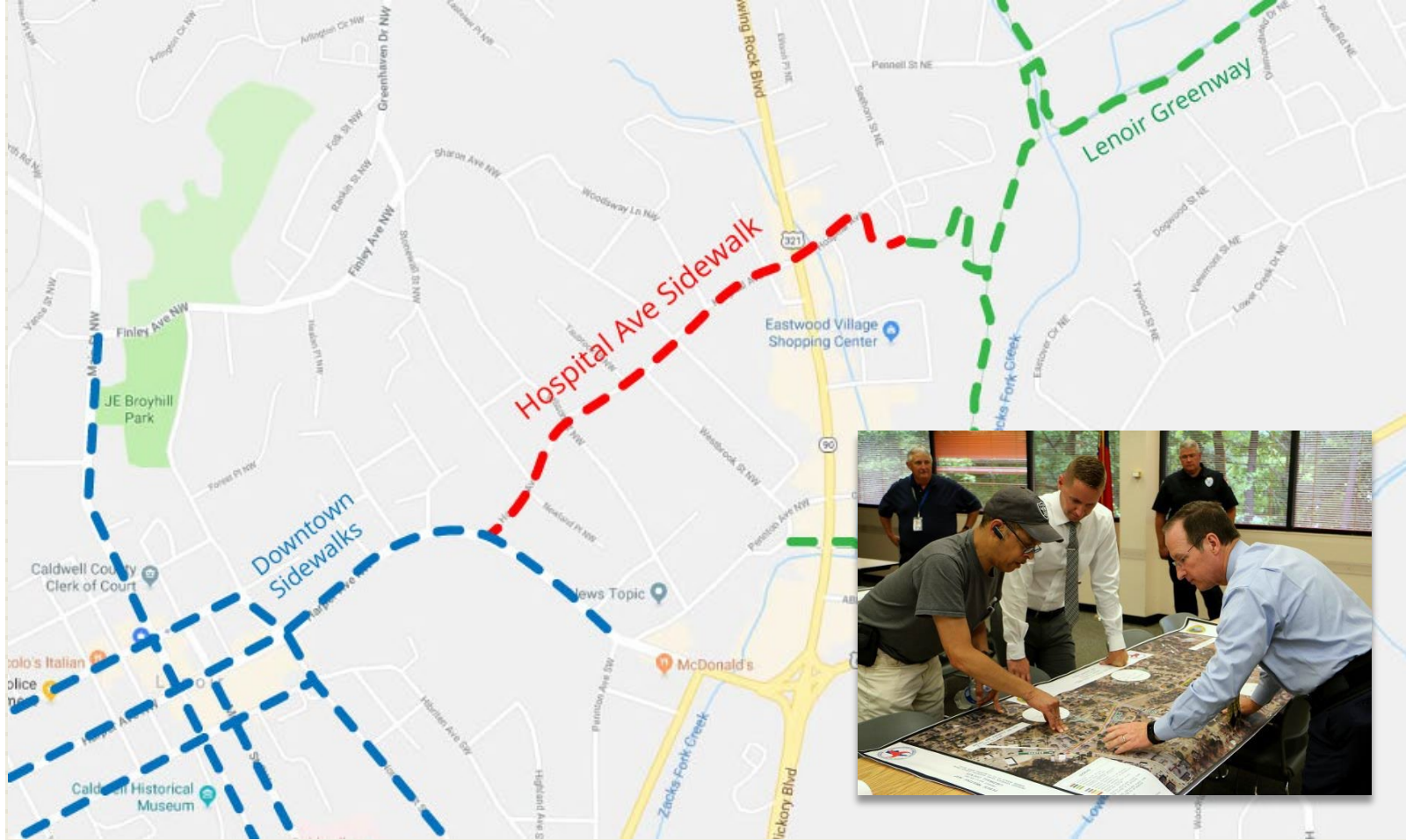
\$16 MILLION Water Plant Improvements

Contractors are finishing up two major projects. The City invested \$11 million to build two new filters and install Active Flow System. The plant will be able to deliver a guaranteed 12 MGD. The City also invested \$5 million to build a new chemical storage building along with piping and new control systems.



Police Department Fence

LPD completed the fencing project for the department. The new fence increased security at the facility and provided a safer, controlled area for staff exiting the rear of the building.



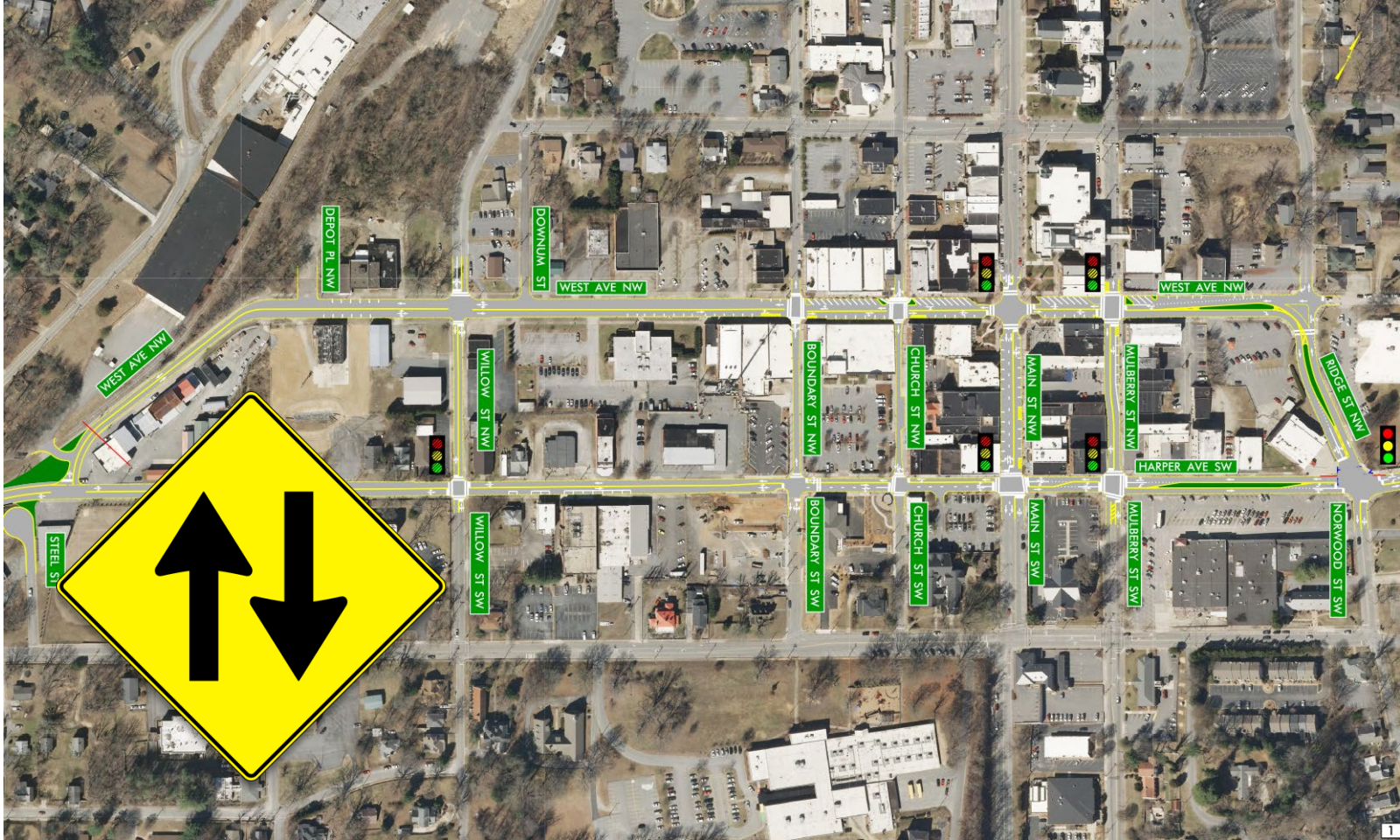
Hospital Avenue Sidewalk Project

In July 2018, staff presented the preliminary plan to the public. The new \$1 million sidewalk will connect downtown and the city's greenway. It will connect neighborhoods to jobs, medical facilities, pharmacies, and shopping opportunities on U.S. 321, and it will improve the appearance of the Hospital Avenue corridor.



Stormwater Study

In September 2018, Council approved a contract with Freese Nichols to evaluate the City's stormwater infrastructure and needs.



Downtown Two-Way Traffic Study

The City contracted with Ramey and Kemp to study and present a plan for converting several downtown streets to two-way traffic. After evaluation and several meetings with Council and staff, the group developed a three-phase approach.

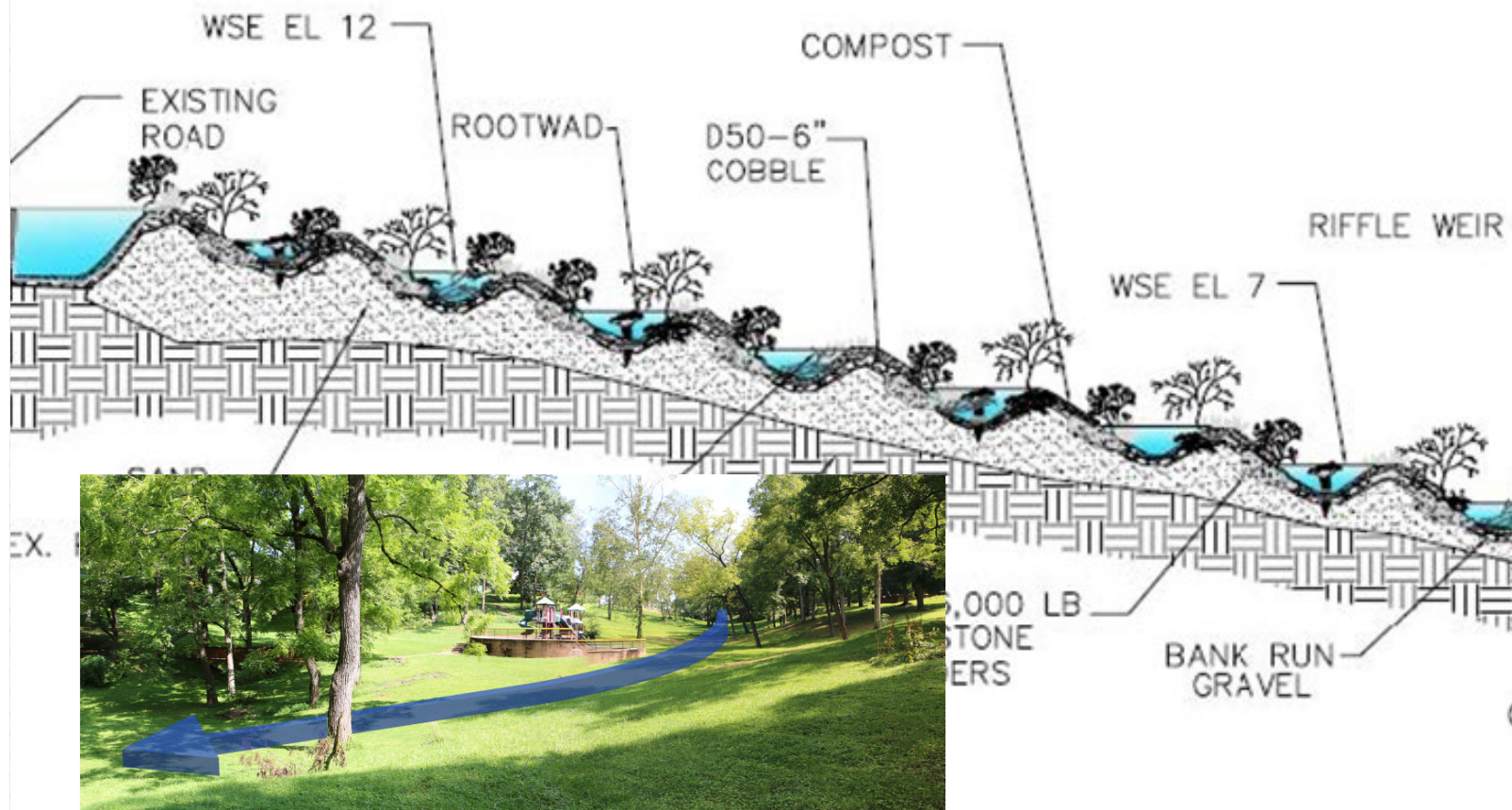


J.E. Broyhill Phase 1 Complete

The City wrapped up Phase 1 renovations at J.E. Broyhill Park. The park now boasts new picnic shelters and grills, a new basketball court, new restrooms, and new sidewalks.

J.E. Broyhill Park Improvements





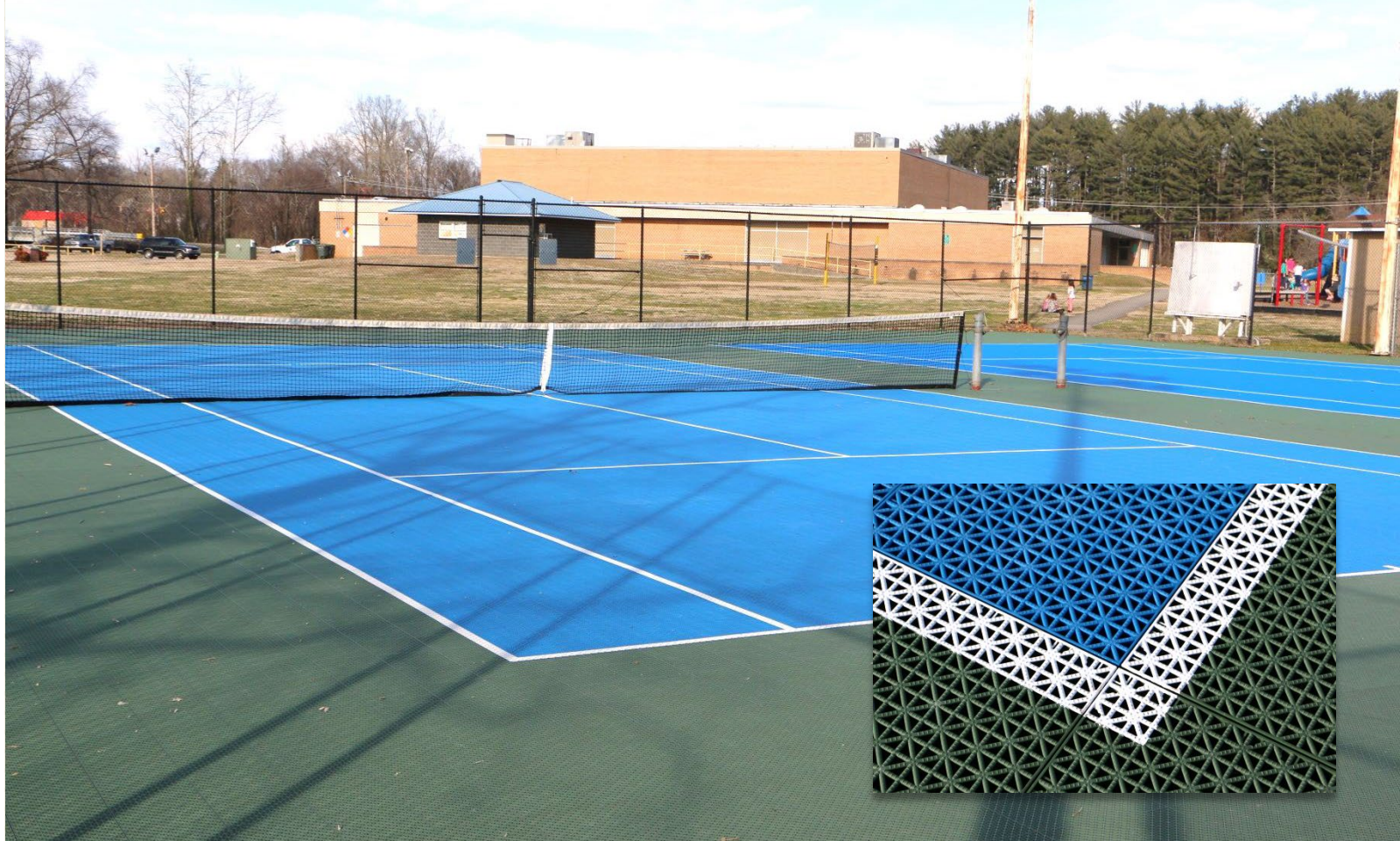
J.E. Broyhill Phase 2

Thanks to a \$240,000 United States Environmental Protection Agency grant and a partnership with North Carolina State University (NCSU), the City of Lenoir will be able to make much needed stormwater improvements at J.E. Broyhill Park.



Lenoir Optimist Park (PARTF)

The Lenoir Optimist Club donated the 12 acre Optimist Park to the City in 2015. The City received a \$327,000 PARTF grant for improvements to the Optimist Park and Mulberry Recreation Center. So far, the grant and the City's \$100,000 match has funded new fencing and repairs of old fencing, new ball field lighting for Mulberry Rec Field #1, minor repairs to the Park Club House, tennis court at Mulberry Rec, renovation of the maintenance Building. Future improvements will include two new shelters, playground equipment, restrooms, lighting, and a new parking lot. This project will be completed by October 2019.



Mulberry Recreation Center Tennis Courts (PARTF)

Parks and Recreation invested in new tennis courts at Mulberry Recreation Center. The courts were resurfaced with Flex Court, an all-weather surface made of a plastic composite tiles.



Greenway Water Fountain

In August 2018, the City dedicated the Rosemary Smith Marlowe water fountain. The fountain is located near the Lenoir Rotary Soccer Complex. Richard Marlowe, Rosemary's husband, donated the fountain to the City.



Paving

In 2018, the City paved approximately 5.28 miles on 28 streets.



Asphalt Recycler

In 2018, Public Works purchased an asphalt recycler and hotbox. The equipment can reheat asphalt, which can be used in small-scale paving and repair operations. Last year, staff patched potholes and utility cuts with 100% recycled asphalt.



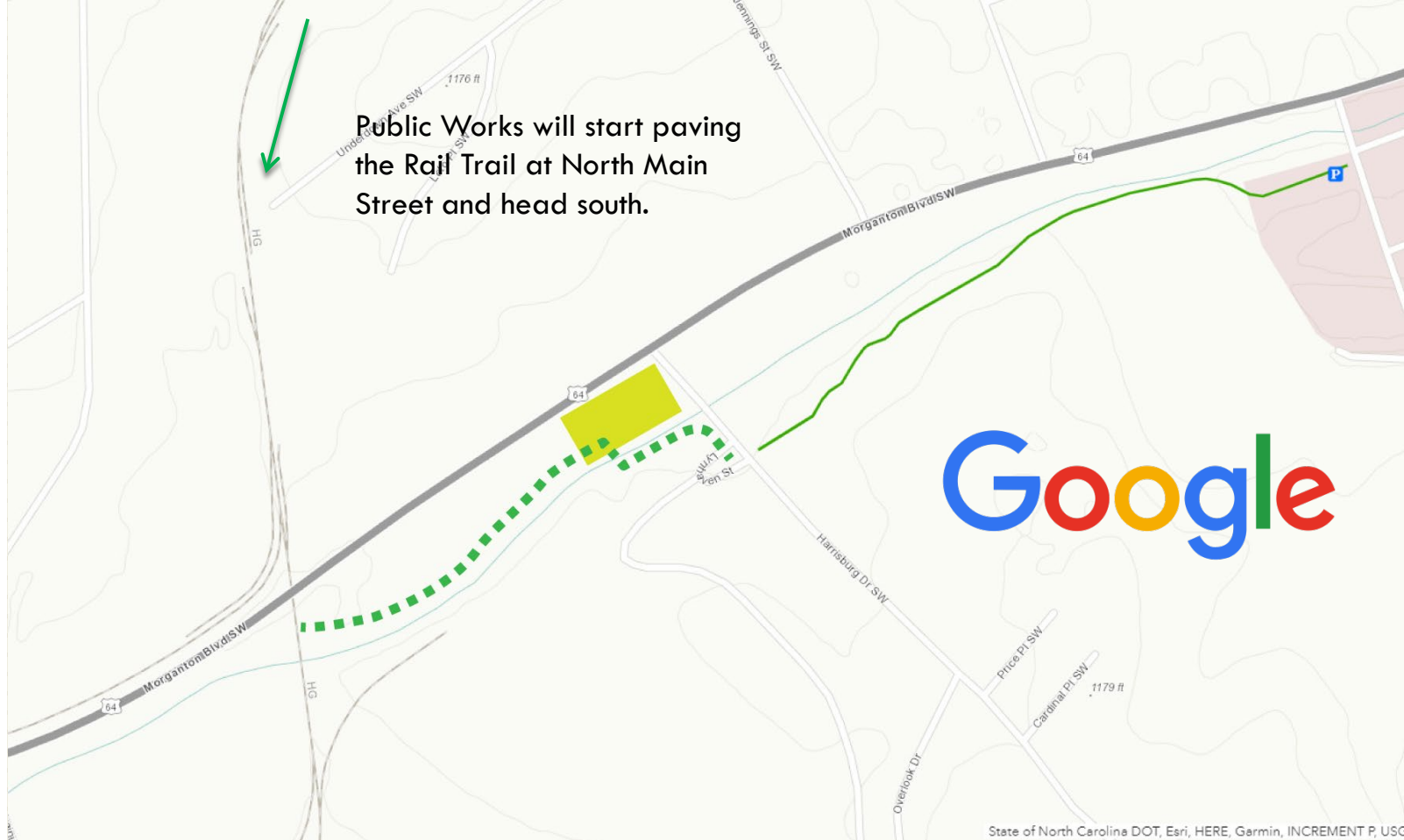
King Sculpture at Fire Station 1

Artist Kue King donated a sculpture to adorn Fire Station 1. King and staff revealed the piece in September 2018. The Caldwell Arts Council partnered in the project.



Greenway Trailhead on Morganton Boulevard

In September last year, the City invested \$150,000 in the greenway. The City bought two properties at the intersection of Morganton Boulevard and Harrisburg Drive to serve as a trailhead for a greenway extension from Harrisburg Drive to the Rail Trail. Public Works staff demolished the old car wash to make way.



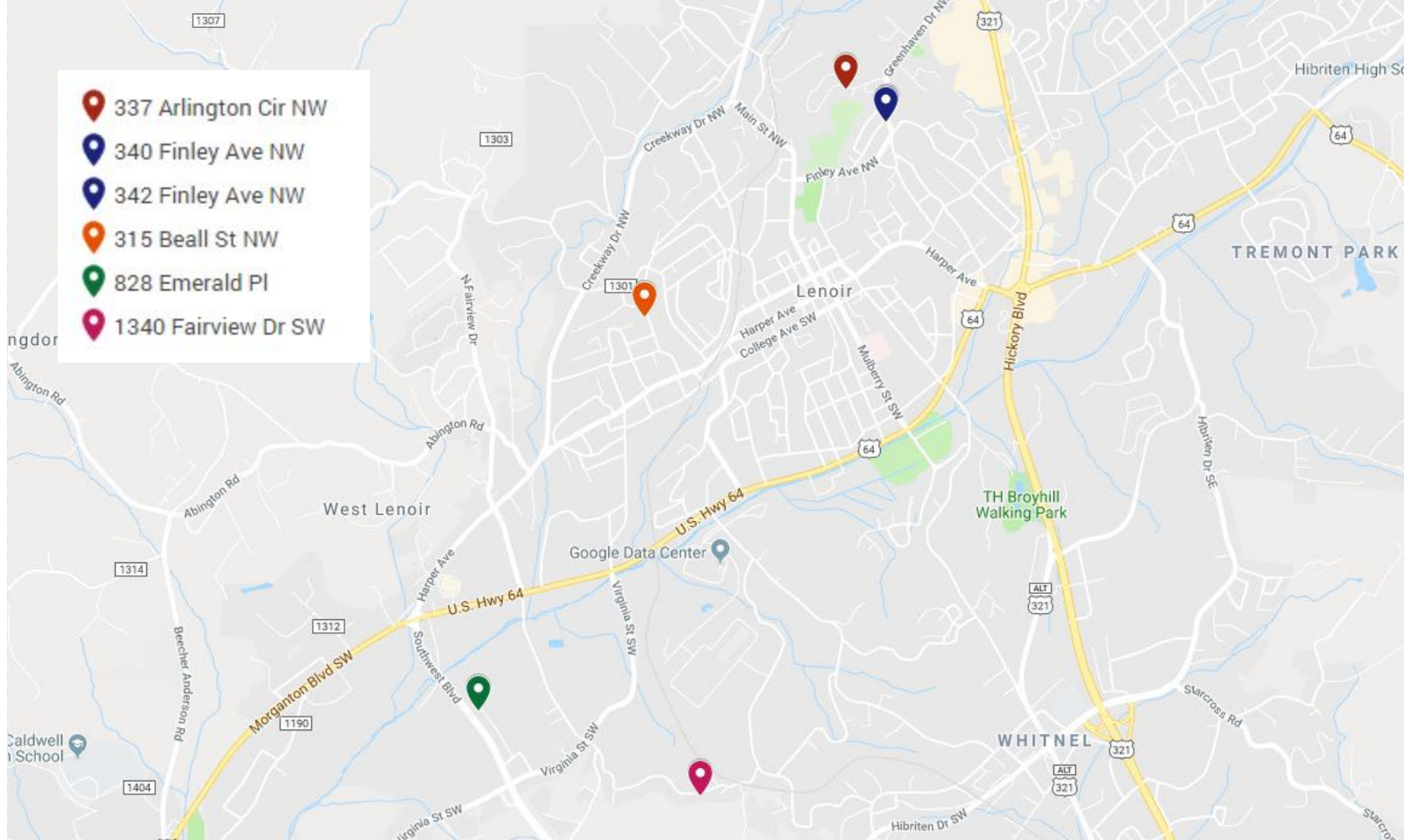
Greenway Extension on Morganton Boulevard

Google is funding the greenway extension from Harrisburg Drive to the Rail Trail.



Rail Trail Paving

This year, Public Works plans to start paving the Rail Trail through Lenoir starting at North Main Street and heading south to Morganton Boulevard.



Cleaning Up Abandoned Property

The City performed four residential demolitions in 2018 and two in December 2017. We also had three owner-abated clean ups last year.

315 Beall St

Before



After



337 Arlington Circle

Before



After



340/342 Finley Ave. (2017)

Before



After



1340 Fairview Dr

Before



After





Perry Trail

Parks and Recreation will install the Perry Trail sign on the Big Loop on the city's greenway this year.



Fire Station 3

In October, Council approved a land swap and purchase of property located at 1015 Wilkesboro Boulevard to house Fire Station 3. Station 3 will allow Fire staff to provide faster responses to calls in the Lower Creek area.

Fire Station 3



View & Pay Bills

\$0.50

As of Jan 20, 2019

[View bill](#)

Compare your current bill to recent past bills. -3% ↓



My Daily Use

190

Gallons Per Day

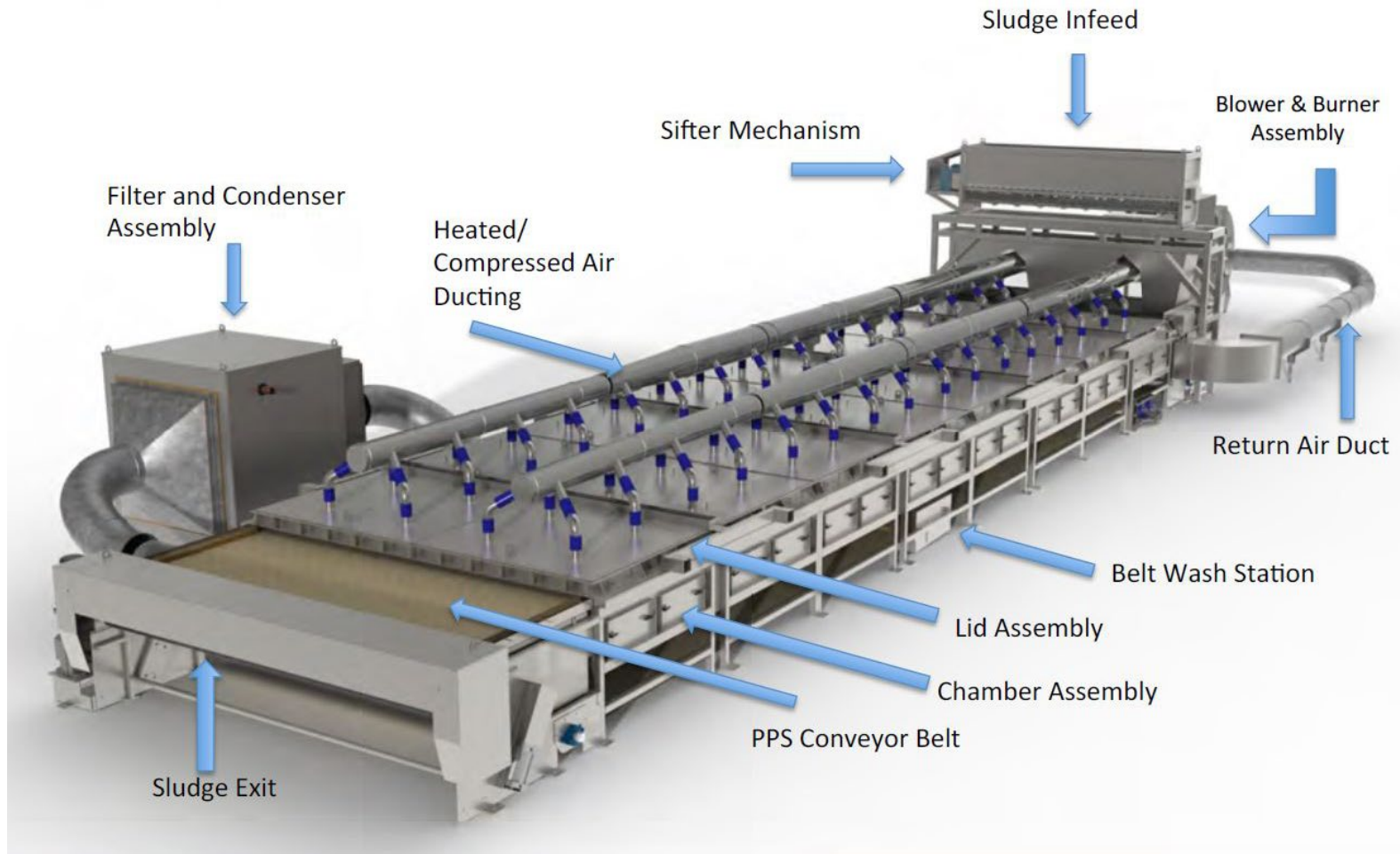
[View use](#)

Compare your past use for this billing period. -5% ↓



MeterSys Radio Read Meter Project

Public Utilities continues to move forward with the radio-read water meter project. The new system will provide remote cut off/cut on abilities as well as an online portal where customers can manage their utility account.



Biosolids Project

Council approved the purchase of a Gryphon Dryer system to handle biosolid waste produced at the Wastewater Treatment Plant. The City received a low-interest State Reserve loan in the amount of \$6,600,000 to fund the project.

Communications



We're sharing all these great projects with the public via multiple media channels and social media sites.

In 2018 we created:

- ❑ 98 news releases
- ❑ 2,429 photos
- ❑ 76 videos that received 18,300 views
- ❑ 35 city alerts about council meetings, trash pickup, recreation programs, and more
- ❑ 48 messages on the electronic sign at the LFD Station 1
- ❑ 12 employee newsletters



[HOME PAGE LAYOUT >](#)

New City Website



Staff is working with CivicPlus to design and build a new City of Lenoir Website. The new site will be user focused and will make it easier for the public to find the information they want in fewer clicks. The planned launch date is July 1.

Stay Connected



- ❑ cityoflenoir.com
- ❑ facebook.com/CityofLenoir
- ❑ twitter.com/CityofLenoir
- ❑ instagram.com/cityoflenoirnc
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