

MINUTES

City Council's Virtual Strategic Planning Meeting Friday, February 11, 2022 8:30 A.M.

Facilitator: Anthony Starr, Western Piedmont Council of Government.

Participants were: Mayor Joseph Gibbons, Mayor Pro-Tem Crissy Thomas, Councilmembers Kent Greer, David Stevens, Todd Perdue, Ralph Prestwood, Jonathan Beal, and Ike Perkins.

City Staff Participating were: City Manager Scott Hildebran, City Clerk Shirley Cannon, Finance Director Donna Bean, Fire Chief Ken Hair, Police Chief Brent Phelps, Economic Development Director Kaylynn Horn, Public Information Officer Joshua Harris, Planning Director Jenny Wheelock Public Utilities Director Radford Thomas, Public Works Director Jared Wright, and Recreation Director Kenny Story.

Customer Service Team Participants were: Hannah Williams, Chair, and Joshua Harris.

Others in Attendance were: Candace Simmons, Caldwell Free Press. Note: Cady Davis, *News-Topic*, reporter arrived at the meeting later in the day.

Call to Order/Introductions/Opening Remarks

Mayor Gibbons welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order. He stated this retreat is the most important meeting for City Council due to Council establishing their priorities for FY2022-23. Mayor Gibbons also thanked City Staff for all of their hard work during the past two years and for being able to accomplish so many good things during the pandemic.

Mayor Gibbons introduced Anthony Starr, Western Piedmont Council of Governments, and Facilitator of the session. Mr. Starr reviewed the agenda and ground rules for the meeting.

Mr. Starr referred to the current economic situation, but remarked the City of Lenoir continues to keep striving forward. He stated the City will have to use its resources to make tough choices in the future.

Swearing In (Kent Greer)

Mayor Gibbons administered the oath of office of Councilmember to Kent Greer and stated City Council and Staff were looking forward to working with him. Mr. Greer introduced his wife Susan and sons Tyler and Hunter who were also present at the meeting.

A copy of the oath of office is attached to these minutes as Attachment No. 1.

Mayor Gibbons then asked Councilmember Perkins to lead everyone in prayer.

Annual Review of Mission & Vision Statement

Mr. Starr reminded City Council that each budget year they have the opportunity to review the City's Mission Statement and Vision Statement for any changes and/or additions they would like to address.

Following the review and a brief discussion, City Council was in consensus to have the City's Mission Statement or Vision Statement remain the same.

(Copies of both statements are listed below as information.)

Mission Statement & Vision Review

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 and equitable manner.
- To identify, plan and act on opportunities for preserving and improving the quality of life for all of our citizens and the community.

Vision for the City of Lenoir:

- We aspire to be the city of choice for ourselves 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 and responsive
- Employer of choice
- Forward thinking
- Honest and ethical
- Inclusive and equitable
- Innovative and collaborative
- Transparent
- Fiscally responsible

Customer Service Team Update

Hannah Williams, Chair, presented an overview of the Customer Service Team's 2021 Report. She also reviewed the Team's mission, which 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 co-workers through support and recognition of a job well done.

Ms. Williams reported the Team continued in their efforts during the year to provide resources to City staff in order to provide "Service beyond Measure" to the citizens of Lenoir. In addition, she reviewed the City's ten (10) customer service keys and shared how the Team held new employee Customer Service Orientation sessions throughout the year. Next, she showed a video the Team

launched in late 2021 as a new training resource for all City employees. In addition, Ms. Williams reported that Joshua Harris, Communications Director, published 12 Team Talk employee newsletters with the help and input of the Customer Service Team.

On behalf of City Council, Mayor Gibbons expressed appreciation to the Customer Service Team for their leadership and training regarding this program and remarked that great things have occurred over the past fifteen (15) years because of the City's Customer Service program and employees taking part in providing "Service beyond Measure."

Next, City Council held a discussion regarding how to more efficiently promote events that are going on in the City along with getting general information out to the public that do not have internet access in the City. Director Harris clarified that he tracks all customer comments. City Manager Hildebran also mentioned that citizens may not know who to call for code enforcement, etc., but that Staff was currently compiling an information list to eliminate customer calls being switched between several individuals. This work order system should be ready in the near future.

State of the City Presentation – City Manager Hildebran

City Manager Hildebran reviewed a power point presentation "2021 Lenoir in Review, Creating Opportunity." Mr. Hildebran reiterated the City has accomplished much during the pandemic and expressed appreciation to all of the Department Directors. He also thanked Joshua Harris for keeping everyone informed via social media.

A copy of the 2021 State of the City Slide Show is attached to these minutes as Attachment No. 2. Please refer to the power point presentation for the full report.

Mr. Hildebran reported the County's average wage grew by 6.7% during 2021 and increased from \$41,147 to \$43,905, which is the second highest in the Unifour area. Also, he stated the Hickory-Lenoir-Morganton metropolitan (HLM) area non-seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for November 2021 was 3.1%, which is a drop from 3.4% that was reported a month earlier. He pointed out the HLM area's November unemployment rate is lower than the state's average rate of 3.9% for the same time period.

Housing Growth (2021)

In May 2019, Staff posted a Residential Ready To Build webpage at www.cityoflenoir.com/readytobuild. The page provides contact information and a map of hundreds of residential lots currently served by utilities and ready to build. Since creating that page, private developers have started construction on many single family homes in subdivisions across the City.

Mr. Hildebran reported that permit applications for single family homes and manufactured homes rose in 2021. Staff permitted 15 detached single-family homes and 12 manufactured homes in 2021 compared to 8 single-family homes and no manufactured homes in 2020.

Mr. Hildebran reported on the following 2021 new single-family & new housing construction:

Parkview: Fall 2021 – Brushy Mountain Builders completed two of 18+ houses in the Parkview subdivision near the corner of Zacks Fork Road and Nuway Circle. The City expanded the greenway from the eastern parking lot at the Soccer Complex south around Parkway and Scarlett Oak Court and north to Sassafra Court. The City plans to widen Ebel Place to improve access to development. Ebel Place connects Sassafra Court to Nuway Circle.

Mr. Hildebran reported Habitat for Humanity is building three new homes on Friendswood Street.

Other subdivisions he mentioned regarding ongoing construction include Summerhill, Powell Park, Georgetown Estates, and Huntington Woods.

Approved Permits

Planning staff reviewed and approved 163 permits in 2021, a 22.5% increase over 2020 (163 v. 133) and a 66% jump over 5 years ago (163 v. 98).

Private Investment/Expansions/Improvements

Mr. Hildebran reviewed a list of private investment/expansions and improvements for City Council which is included in the attachment.

Property Acquisitions and Downtown Property Transfers

Mr. Hildebran reported eight properties in downtown Lenoir changed hands in 2021 and he reviewed the list of new businesses/expansions. The full list is included in the attachment.

General Discussion

Mayor Gibbons referred to the ongoing projects and stated great things are happening in the City. Mr. Starr referred to the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding received from the federal government that is assisting municipalities and towns and pointed out that good things are happening across the state. City Manager Hildebran also reiterated cost and inflation are several issues the City will have to address moving forward.

Educating the Public (City Accomplishments/Events)

City Manager Hildebran said he was open to suggestions as to how to better educate the public that do not have internet access to the events going on in the City as well as getting general information out regarding accomplishments the City has made over the past year. Currently, Communications Director Joshua Harris posts events/happenings on the City's Facebook page and website. Candace Simmons also mentioned she could help promote City events by including articles in the Caldwell Free Press.

Discussion continued regarding making presentations at churches/organizations and possibly adding narration to the State of the City presentation. Council further talked about the possibility of holding community meetings again.

Review of 2021 Strategic Priorities/Other Areas of Focus

Next, City Manager Hildebran talked briefly about how the economy is currently experiencing record high inflation, but pointed out Staff has been able to accomplish a few things regarding employee compensation which remains Council's number one priority. Mr. Hildebran reported eligible employees that worked full-time during the two-year pandemic received a bonus with the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding the City received and that employees also received an annual Christmas bonus.

In addition, Mr. Hildebran reported there were signs the housing market is beginning to become a reality. Mr. Hildebran also mentioned the City is seeking ways to fund wayfinding signage and reported the Brownfields Assessment Grant (cleanup) will help make some properties more marketable. He further shared that Staff is working on a number of foreclosures which will help get these properties back on the tax rolls plus Staff is looking at options to address commercial blight.

Next, Mr. Hildebran shared that Wi-Fi is now available at the J. E. Broyhill Walking Park, which was one of Council's priorities in 2021.

Mr. Hildebran reviewed Council's 2021 Budget Priorities as listed below which are prioritized based on Council's votes at that time.

2021 City Council Priorities

1. Continue Efforts to Offer Competitive Compensation and Benefits for Employees
 2. Pursue Market Rate Housing
 - Encourage Affordable Housing Opportunities
 - Implement Branding/Wayfinding Plan
 - Develop Strategies to Address Commercial Blight (city-wide & downtown)
 - Address Major Appearance Issues (city entry corridors)
 - Continue to Fund Street Paving Plan
 - Continue to Fund Water/Sewer Capital Improvements Plan
 - Develop Strategies for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
 3. Continue to Fund Sidewalks/Greenway/OVT
 - Develop West End Area Neighborhood Plan
 4. Support Code Enforcement (including Strategic Foreclosures)
 - Develop Plan to Address Litter in Community (State, Local Partners)
- Re-Initiate Neighborhood Meetings (once safe to do so)
Encourage Whitnel & West End Area Improvements

Other Areas of Focus:

Employee Recruitment/Retention:

- Increase Employee Engagement
- Incentivize/Reward Efficiencies
- Develop Continuing Customer Service Education

Housing:

- Continue Minimum Housing & Code Enforcement
- Market City-owned Properties to Sell
- Encourage Downtown Living
- Continue to Promote Shovel-ready Residential Subdivisions
- Participate in WPCOG Vacant & Substandard Housing Task Force

Community Beautification:

- Continue Implementation of North Main Area Plan & Fairfield South Plan
- Consider Gateway Enhancements at Smith Crossroads

Healthy Infrastructure:

- Support Technology/Cybersecurity/Digital Services
- Continue to Fund City Facilities/Fleet Plan
- Continue to Fund Stormwater Improvements
- Implement Downtown 2-Way Traffic Plan
- Implement Bike/Ped Plan
- Improve/Implement Public Wi-Fi at City Parks/Facilities

Economic Development:

- Encourage Public/Private Partnerships
- Continue Partnership with Caldwell EDC

Public Engagement:

- Share State of the City Presentations
- Market Quality of Life Amenities
- Schedule Neighborhood Walk-through's
- Develop Strategic/Targeted Communication (multi-lingual)
- Promote Smart City, Online Interaction

Other

- Pursue COVID-related Funding Opportunities to Help Citizens

Code Enforcement/Foreclosures Update

Planning Director Jenny Wheelock and Police Chief Brent Phelps reviewed a power point presentation on Code Enforcement.

A copy of the Code Enforcement Power Point is attached to these minutes as Attachment No. 3.

Chief Phelps reported that Planning and Police have worked together for eight years to cover code enforcement and have a great partnership, but Staff has to maintain a balance and look at short-term goals as well as long-term goals.

Chief Phelps stated Council increased funding for abatements/cleanups several years ago and made this issue a priority. He pointed out abatement is a process and remarked property owners may be cited with criminal charges or their property may be seized if they do not bring it into compliance within an allotted time frame. Chief Phelps also referred to junk vehicles and said the Department is currently working on having vehicles removed from a site. Staff's goal is to have owner abatement first before the City takes any action.

Much discussion centered on dilapidated areas and how to encourage citizens to clean up and maintain their properties. Director Wheelock said Staff is currently looking at eight or nine dilapidated homes in the Finley Avenue area for possible foreclosures and explained that sometimes there are a number of heirs involved with a property, which creates issues with moving forward. Chief Phelps emphasized Staff was doing their job regarding enforcement and more work was being done that was known.

Compensation Review & Discussion

Finance Director Donna Bean reviewed compensation and benefits of City employees with City Council. Ms. Bean reminded Council that efforts to offer competitive compensation and benefits for employees has been the top priority for Council for many years. Ms. Bean reported that COLAs, holiday bonuses and additional leave have allowed the City to make progress toward offering competitive wages. In addition, Ms. Bean commented the current labor market is very challenging and employers are facing the tightest labor market in recent history amid rising inflation.

A copy of the Compensation and Benefits review is attached to these minutes as Attachment No. 4.

Director Bean shared reported increases for the 2022-23 budget are as follows:

- Retirement costs
- Health insurance
- Property and liability insurance
- Operating costs vs past two years due to closures from pandemic
- Fuel costs
- Impact of inflation on all costs

Next, Director Bean reviewed a list of recommendations and cost regarding compensation as follows:

- Increase the minimum salary City-wide for current full-time employees to \$30,000 July 1
- Increase the minimum salary for Patrol Officers with no experience to \$41,000
- 7% increase for positions below the beginning/average salary – ½ in July & ½ in January
- 4.5% increase for all other employees – ½ in July & ½ in January

- Begin hiring at the minimum rate rather than the hiring rate
- Other increases will be applied to the minimum salary if the employee has experience, certification(s), an associate's, bachelor's, or master's degree, military experience or is bi-lingual.

Director Bean reiterated she would prefer hiring at the minimum rate rather than the hiring rate. She also reviewed a chart showing the impact of implementing the minimum salary of \$30,000 by Department. In addition, Director Bean stated that, based on preliminary computations, she anticipates that the salary increases can be absorbed into the budget. She further stated these recommendations do not solve the compensation issue, but will make the City much more competitive in salaries and benefits. Director Bean further clarified that Staff will also review the salaries of part-time employees and will try to address the issue of compensation for them as well.

City Council held a brief discussion regarding the above recommendations with all of Council being in agreement of the proposal and that employees are the City's greatest assets and very important to the City.

Grant Funding (City of Lenoir Funding Opportunities)

Finance Director Bean reviewed a list of the City's projects, funding source, description, cost, match (if applicable) and the total amount of the project. A brief discussion was held regarding applying for available grant funding for several of the projects.

A copy of the handout pertaining to grants is attached to these minutes as Attachment No. 5.

Council Priorities

Next, Facilitator Starr asked Council to consider what current/new issues should be added to Council's priorities list. Following much discussion, Council ranked and compiled a list of 2022 City Council Priorities.

A copy of the 2022 City Council Priorities is attached to these minutes as Attachment No. 6.

Facilitator Starr asked Council if they had any closing comments regarding today's session:

Closing Comments

- Ike Perkins – Good information, appreciates and supports all Staff & will continue to support Department Heads. Everyone is doing a great job.
- Crissy Thomas – Agrees with Councilmember Perkins' comments. All Department Heads collaborate and work together (we get things done.)
- Kent Greer – Received a lot of information and looking forward to everything.
- Todd Perdue – Referred to Council's priorities – stated Council lets Department Heads do their jobs. Referred to all the accomplishments and remarked he supports everything.
- Jonathan Beal – City is in a good position. We find grant money and use it wisely. Commended employees and said he feels blessed.
- David Stevens – I am always amazed at our leadership and employees. Thank you for all of your hard work.
- Ralph Prestwood – Appreciates everyone. You give Council a chance for input and then we step back and let Staff get the projects done. Thank you to all Staff.
- Mayor Gibbons – I am so appreciative of the people we have and their creativity. They find ways to get things done and always provide "Service beyond Measure." Thank you for working with us. Mayor Gibbons commended City Manager Hildebran and his great leadership and remarked that

Mr. Hildebran attends all meetings and is involved in everything. He further stated Mr. Hildebran is well known and respected across the state.

City Manager Hildebran thanked Mayor Gibbons and Council for their comments and asked Council to let him know if they have any suggestions for change.

Facilitator Starr thanked everyone for the good meeting and great partnership between the Western Piedmont Council of Governments and the City of Lenoir. He stated City Council and Staff cooperates really well, which yields results.

The next Budget Session will be held at the Committee of the Whole meeting on Tuesday, March 22 at 8:30 a.m. at City Hall, Third Floor.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Attachments

1. Oath of Office –Kent Greer
2. State of City 2021 Slide Show
3. Code Enforcement/Foreclosures Program Update
4. Compensation Review Presentation
5. Grant Funding/Projects Review
6. 2022 City Council Priorities

CITY OF LENOIR, NORTH CAROLINA
OATH OF COUNCIL MEMBER

❧ F. Kent Greer ❧

I, **KENT GREER**, solemnly swear that I will support the Constitution and laws of the United States; that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to the State of North Carolina and to the constitutional powers and authorities which are or may be established for the government thereof; and, that I will endeavor to support, maintain, and defend the Constitution of said state, not inconsistent with the Constitution of the United States.

I, **KENT GREER**, further swear that I will execute the duties of the office of **COUNCIL MEMBER** for the City of Lenoir, North Carolina, to the best of my ability and judgment, so help me, God.


F. KENT GREER

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 11TH day of February, 2022.




Joseph L. Gibbons
Mayor, City of Lenoir

LENOIR IN REVIEW

2021: Creating Opportunity

This is a bullet point list of the slides presented during the City of Lenoir City Council Planning Retreat held Friday, February 11, 2022.

Opening Slides

- Average Private Sector Wage chart
- Unemployment

Industry Expansion

- Craftmaster
- Exela Expansion
- Grand Manor Building Reuse Grant
- Wild Fork Foods

Housing Growth

- Residential Ready To Build, May 2019
- Housing Permits 2021
- West Avenue Apartments, Aug. 2021
- Blue Bell, Depot, Steele Mill
- Blue Bell Apartments, Dec. 2021 (3 Slides)
- Kattz Corner, Feb. 2022 (3 Slides)
- Parkview Subdivision & Greenway, Fall 2021
- Single Family Housing, 2021 (2 Slides)
- Habitat Housing
- Teachery Townhomes, Dec. 2020

Private Investment Opened In 2020

- Planning Permits 2021
- Downtown Property Transfers, 2021
- Tumbleweeds Steak & Tavern, Jan. 2021
- Mi Caretta, Feb. 2021
- Studio 305, Feb. 2021
- Pelican's Snoballs, Spring 2021
- Liquid Roots Expansion, March 2021
- Stewart & Associates, June 2021

- Lenoir Legends, June 2021
- Twisted K's Korral, June 2021
- K&K Sparkle, Aug. 2021
- Golden Cardinal Gallery, Sept. 2021
- Doodlebugs & J Birds, Sept. 2021
- Red Roof Inn, Sept. 2021
- Artem Gallery, Oct. 2021
- Cubesmart, Oct. 2021
- Lenoir Crossing Renovations, Jan. 2022
- Jersey Mike's Subs, Jan. 2022
- Kids World, Jan. 2022

Private Investment On The Way

- WOLF MOON SALT CAVE & STRESS REDUCTION CENTER
- 4440 RANCH & CATTLE COMPANY
- HWY 55 BURGERS SHAKES & FRIES
- MAVIS DISCOUNT TIRE
- POPEYES LOUISIANA KITCHEN
- DODGE CITY STEAKHOUSE
- NEW B&B
- DAIRI-O
- APSEN DENTAL & CHIPOTLE
- BLUE RIDGE ENERGY

Public Investment Completed In 2021

- Branding & Wayfinding, Jan. 2021
- City Website, Jan. 2021
- Ncgs 160d Update, Jan. 2021
- Aquatic Center Improvements, Jan. 2021
- Tree Trimming In Downtown, Jan. 2021
- Outside Dining Tables, Feb. 2021
- Wcnc Story On Walking Park, Feb. 2021
- Downtown Scavenger Hunts, March & Oct. 2021
- Spring Paving, April 2021
- Greenway Paving, April 2021
- Ovnht (Rail Trail) Paving, April 2021
- City Litter Sweep, April 2021
- Gryphon Drier, May 2021
- Community Gardens, May 2021
- Downtown Parking Lot, May 2021
- Watersmart Portal, May 2021
- Streetscape Extension, May 2021
- Virginia Street Cleanup, May 2021
- Main Street Attendant, June 2021

- Lhs Improvements, June 2021
- Lenoir Local Podcast, June 2021
- New K9 Team, June 2021
- Public Works Repairs Welcome Sign, June 2021
- Renovations To Police HQ, June 2021
- Summer Events, July 2021
- Broyhill Walking Park Improvements, Aug. 2021 (2 Slides)
- Police Cars Get New Look, Aug. 2021
- Baseball & Softball Clinics, Sept. 2021
- Brownfields Grant, Sept. 2021
- Police K9 Academy, Sept. 2021
- Rec Facility Roof Repairs, Sept. 2021
- Fire Department QRVs, Nov. 2021
- New Sign At Wilson Park, Oct. 2021
- Police Speed Limit Signs, Oct. 2021
- Police Firing Range Improvements, Oct. 2021
- Fall Paving, Nov. 2021
- New Apron At Station 1, Nov. 2021
- Luminary Display, Dec. 2021
- Department Awards, 2021
- Hotel Street, Jan. 2022
- Ami Water Meters, Jan. 2022
- Communication Metrics

Public Investment Coming Soon

- Recreational Trails Program Grant, Feb. 2021
- WATERLIFE GREENWAY EASEMENT, June 2021
- MULBERRY TO OVNHT GREENWAY
- FINLEY AVENUE WATER PROJECT
- CALDWELL COUNTY ANIMAL SHELTER, July 2021
- SMITH CROSSROADS SEWER PROJECT, Dec. 2021
- LEOS BATHROOMS, Dec. 2021
- HOSPITAL AVENUE SIDEWALK
- FIRE STATION 1 SINKHOLE
- SMITH CROSSROADS WELCOME SIGN
- RETAIL STRATEGIES
- JOYCETON WATER WORKS, Sept. 2021
- THE CAMPUS AT THE HISTORIC LHS

Closing Slides

- Complaints, Call Mayor Joe Gibbons
- Compliments, Call or email ANY City employee
- Questions & Information

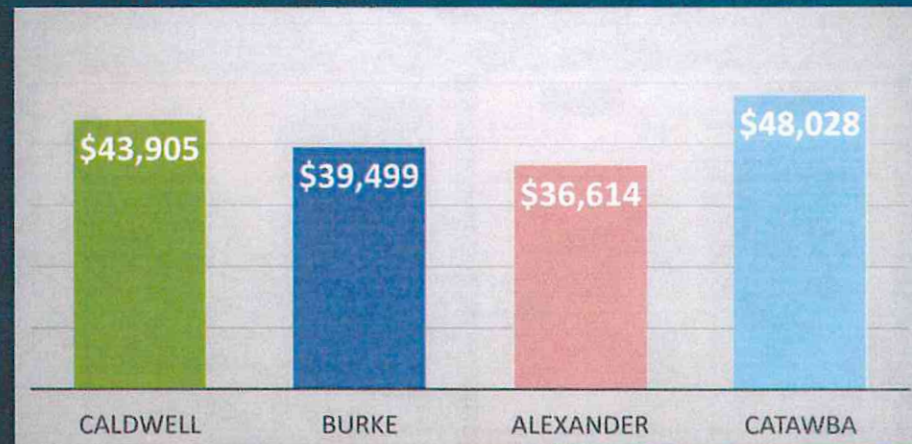


LENOIR IN REVIEW

2021: Creating Opportunity



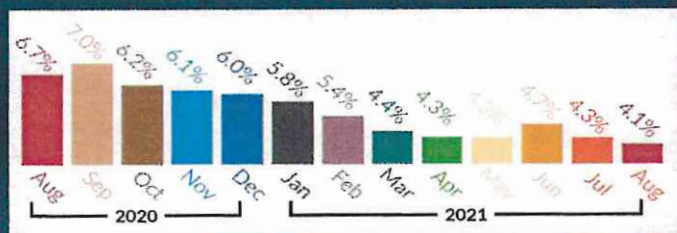
AVERAGE PRIVATE SECTOR WAGE (APSW)



December 2021 – In December, the county's average annual wage grew from \$41,157 to \$43,905, a 6.7% increase. Caldwell's APSW is the second highest in the Unifour.

UNEMPLOYMENT

- The Hickory-Lenoir-Morganton metropolitan area non-seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for **Nov. 2021** was **3.1%**.
 - This is a drop in HLM's previous unemployment rate of 3.4%, which was reported a month earlier.
 - HLM metro area's November unemployment rate is lower than the state's average rate of 3.9% rate for the same time period.



Growth in 2021 INDUSTRY EXPANSION



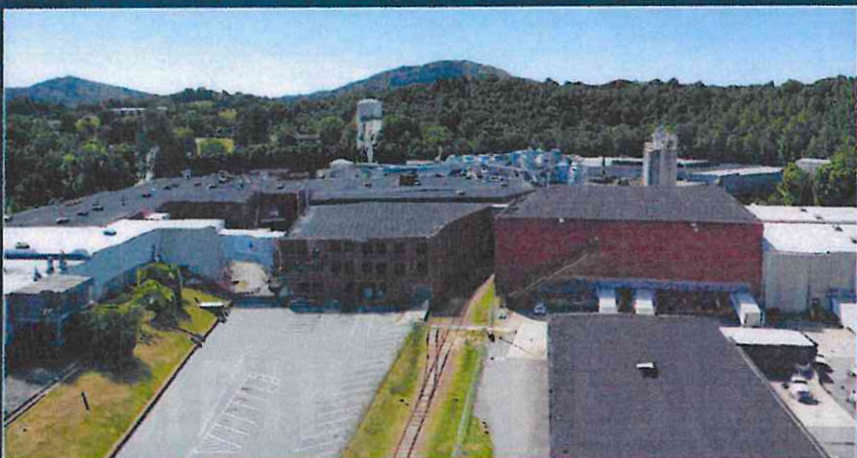
CRAFTMASTER

September 2020 - Craftmaster Furniture out of Taylorsville expanding manufacturing by 20 percent with a new plant in Lenoir in the former Broyhill Complex. A \$500,000 building reuse grant supported the renovation of a 412,554-square-foot building for the expansion. Craftmaster planned to create 62 jobs and invest \$753,405 in this project. Today, the company employees about 120 people at the Lenoir facility and is planning to start a second shift in the mill room.



EXELA EXPANSION

April 2021 - Exela Pharma Sciences received a \$500,000 grant from North Carolina Department of Commerce Rural Infrastructure Authority (RIA) to reuse the warehouse located at 1170 West Ave. NW in Downtown Lenoir. Exela plans to create 50 jobs while investing \$1,350,000 in the project.



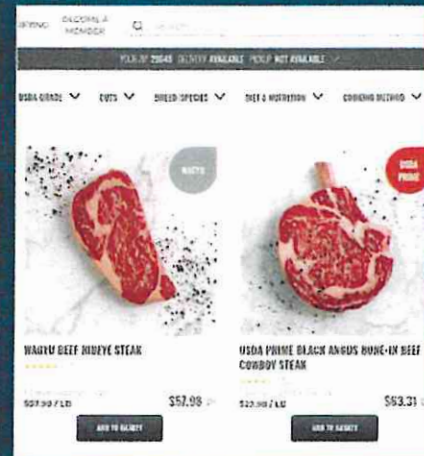
GRAND MANOR BUILDING REUSE GRANT

December 2021 - Council adopted an Authorizing Resolution for the City of Lenoir to serve as the formal applicant for a Building Reuse Grant for an expansion as planned by Grand Manor Furniture. Council also agreed to meet a 5% match required through the Caldwell County Local Jobs Incentive. The company is moving into a new location in the Valmead community.



WILD FORK FOODS, A DIVISION OF JBS/SWIFT BEEF

January 2022 - JBS / Wild Fork Foods is adding 72,000 square feet to the existing footprint in Lenoir. Wild Fork Foods (WFF) is a new division that actually is managed by the Brazil side of the company. WFF will do individual cuts of meat, flash freeze them and supply grocers and more boutique customers with individual frozen packages. The expansion will add 150 new jobs in addition to the 274 current JBS jobs already here. WFF hopes construction will be complete by late spring 2022.



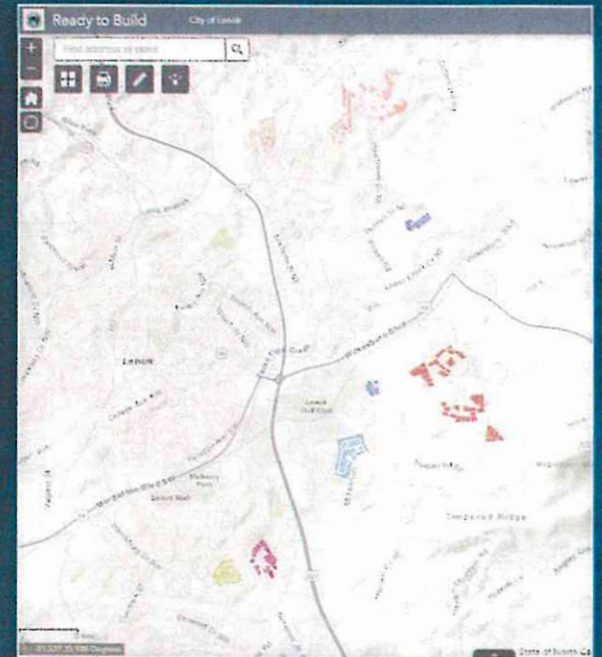
New homes in 2021 HOUSING GROWTH

RESIDENTIAL READY TO BUILD

May 2019 - Staff added the Residential Ready To Build webpage. The page provides contact information and a map of hundreds of residential lots currently served by utilities and ready to build.

Since creating that page, private developers have started construction on many single family homes in subdivisions across the City.

www.cityoflenoir.com/readytobuild



HOUSING PERMITS 2021

Permit applications for single family homes and manufactured homes rose in 2021.

Staff permitted 15 detached single-family homes and 12 manufactured homes in 2021 compared to 8 single-family homes and no manufactured homes in 2020



WEST AVENUE APARTMENTS

August 2021 - Jesse Plaster and Angela Postigo received the CO on five new apartments at 1001 West Ave. in downtown. The units are three bedrooms and two baths. The building has an elevator and indoor parking and there is a private gym on the lower level. \$1,300 to \$1,900 per month. Plaster said the "all 5 units were rented right away, we had a really good response."



BLUE BELL, DEPOT, STEELE MILL

Blue Bell, Steele Mill, and the Depot are all located off College Avenue, less than a mile walk from the square in Downtown Lenoir. All three properties will also have close access to the City of Lenoir Greenway shown in pink on the map above.



BLUE BELL APARTMENTS

December 2021 – Blue Bell Lenoir, LLC, started accepting tenants. Sixteen tenants have moved in 27 units are leased. Blue Bell offers 46 market-rate apartments in the old Lenoir Cotton Mill/Blue Bell, Inc. plant on College Ave. in downtown. The Blue Bell phase of the Lenoir Mills campus will be a \$14 million investment. Owners Yorke Lawson and Tom Niemann are also working on the Steele Mill and Depot, which could run approximately \$16.5 million and \$1.75 million respectively.



Blue Bell at Lenoir Mills



Blue Bell at Lenoir Mills



KATTZ CORNER

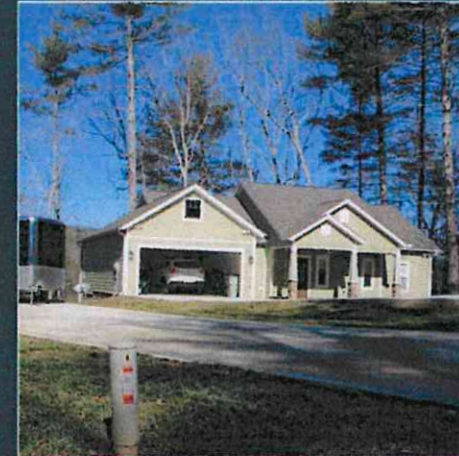
February 2022 – Construction continues on Kattz Corner. Mark Morgan, owner of MC Morgan & Associates, INC, is building a 68-unit, workforce-housing project located between Wilkesboro Boulevard and Lower Creek Drive. The development should be completed by the end of the year. The project is an \$11 million investment in the City.



Kattz Corner



Kattz Corner



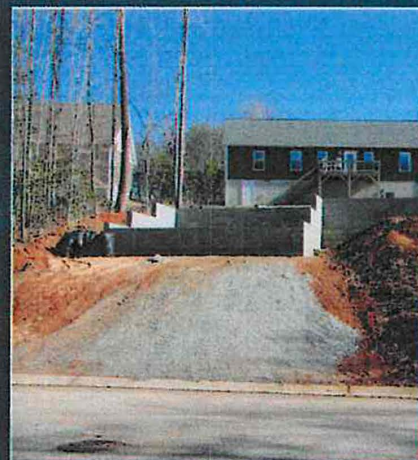
PARKVIEW SUBDIVISION & GREENWAY

Fall 2021 – Brushy Mountain Builders completed two of 18+ houses in the Parkview subdivision near the corner of Zacks Fork Road and Nuway Circle. The City expanded the greenway from the eastern parking lot at the Soccer Complex south around Parkway and Scarlett Oak Court and north to Sassafra Court. The City plans to widen Ebel Place (pink outline) to improve access to development. Ebel Place connects Sassafra Court to Nuway Circle.

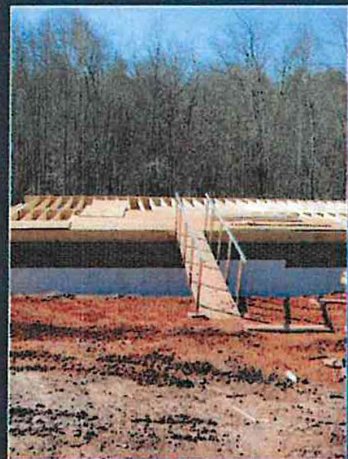


SINGLE FAMILY HOUSING

In 2021, owners and contractors finished and started many new single-family homes in subdivisions across the city including Parkview, Summerhill, Powell Park, Georgetown Estates, Huntington Woods, and Rocky Top. Left: New home in Powell Park. Right: New home in Georgetown Estates.



Single-family housing – Left: One of two new homes under construction in Summerhill. Right: New home in Huntington Woods.



HABITAT HOUSING

Habitat for Humanity is currently building three new homes on Friendswood Street.

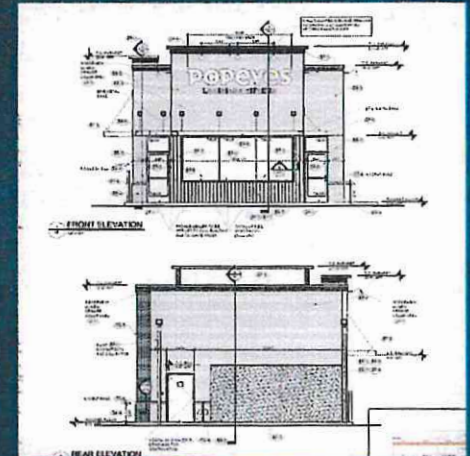


TEACHERY TOWNHOMES

December 2020 - The Education Foundation Inc. of Caldwell County completed a 3-unit teacherly at 1015 Ashe Ave. in December 2020 and started using the facility for new teachers in 2021. Council approved a Conditional Use Permit allowing the multi-family townhome in November 2018.

PLANNING PERMITS 2021

Planning staff reviewed and approved 163 permits in 2021, a 22.5% increase over 2020 (163 v. 133) and a 66% jump over 5 years ago (163 v. 98).



Opened in 2021

PRIVATE INVESTMENT

A Year in Review 2021

PROPERTY ACQUISITIONS	DATE	OWNER
Address		
814 Harper Ave	21-Oct	Wolf Moon Yoga LLC / Jason & Stefanie Keller
818 West Ave	21-Oct	William & Janet Huntsinger
217 Main St	21-Sep	John & Sharon McNeely
118 Mulberry St	21-Sep	GPS Dental Lab Inc / Gail Perricone
118 Main St	21-Aug	Lenoir First LLC / David Reule
115 Main St	21-Jun	R & J Piedmont Developers LLC / Rich Marzio
1036 Harper Ave	21-Mar	Liquid Roots Brewing / Taylor & Katie Brummett
215 North Main St	21-May	Jennifer Saunders / Alexandria Bumgarner

DOWNTOWN PROPERTY TRANSFERS

2021 – Eight properties in Downtown Lenoir changed hands in 2021. So far this year, members of Wilson, Lackey, Rohr & Hall, PC, bought their building at 606 College Ave., Ben Griffin bought the old Forbes Printing building at 1035 Harper Ave SW, and Lenoir First LLC / David Reule bought the Anything Office property.



TUMBLEWEEDS STEAK & TAVERN

January 2021 – Tumbleweed Steak & Tavern is under new ownership. The restaurant opened in February 2020 on Valencia PL NE behind Dos Amigos.



MI CARETTA

February 2021 – Mi Carreta finished an expansion of their business on Hickory Boulevard



STUDIO 305

February 2021 - Studio 305 opened at 118 Main St. Studio 305 specializes in wedding and boudoir photography, engagements, family portraits, and lifestyle photos.



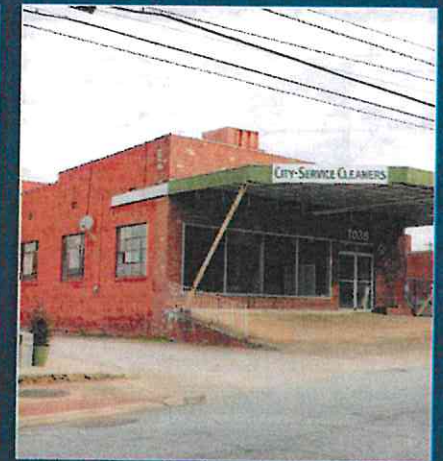
PELICAN SNOBALLS

Spring 2021 – Pelican Snoballs moved to a new location at 520 Realty St SW. The shop is closed for the season and will announce their opening on their Facebook page.



LIQUID ROOTS EXPANSION

March 2021 – Liquid Roots acquired the City Service Cleaners building adjacent to their location on Harper Avenue.





STEWART & ASSOCIATES

June 2021 – Stewart & Associates Insurance moved to 819 Harper Ave in Downtown. Owners Steven and Jamie renovated the building. The first floor is home to their business and the second floor is a three-bedroom apartment.



LENOIR LEGENDS

June 2021 – The Old North State League (ONSL) brought summer baseball back to Walker Stadium in Downtown Lenoir.



TWISTED K'S KORRAL

June 2021 – Twisted K's Korral opened in February 2021 at 118 Main St. and moved to 221 Main St. in June. They sell women's fashion, accessories, bags, and more.



K&K SPARKLE

August 2021 - K&K Sparkle Boutique moved to a new location at 118 Main St. in Downtown Lenoir.



GOLDEN CARDINAL GALLERY

September 2021 - Golden Cardinal Gallery moved into their location at 219 North Main St in Downtown Lenoir.



DOODLEBUGS & J BIRDS

September 2021 - DoodleBugs and J Birds moved into new locations in downtown. Doodle Bugs moved to 912 West Ave and J Birds opened in the adjacent building at 910 West Ave. The stores are owned and operated by the same family.



RED ROOF INN

September 2021 - New owners rebranded the old Days Inn on US 321 to Red Roof Inn.



ARTEM GALLERY

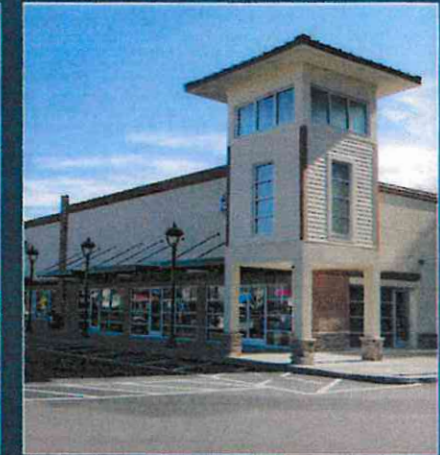
October 2021 - Artem Gallery opened at 626 Harper Ave. Jessica and Cecil Teeters opened Artem with the mission to showcase and exhibit wonderful, local, and international artists. They also host Paint Therapy 101 classes.





CUBESMART

October 2021 - CubeSmart opened in the old Lenoir mall. The new construction encompasses about 45,000 square feet and includes 335 climate-controlled storage units.



LENOIR CROSSING RENOVATIONS

January 2022 - Venture Properties completed much of its Phase 1 renovation to the Lenoir Crossing Shopping Center. Phase 1 includes refacing the shopping center buildings from the corner nearest to U.S. 321 to Harbor Freight, resurfacing and redesigning the parking lot, adding new landscaping and trees, and adding new lighting.



JERSEY MIKE'S SUB

January 2022 - Jersey Mike's Subs opened Jan. 19, 2022. The new store is located in the Lenoir Crossing shopping center at Smith Crossroads.



KIDS WORLD

January 2022 - James and Crystal Powell, owners of Kids World, moved from Hudson to their new location at 236 Morganton Blvd in Lenoir. The shop is located in the shopping center behind Blue Moose Coffee right beside Natural Elements. Kids World offers collectibles, toys, baby clothes, and more!

On the way PRIVATE INVESTMENT



WOLF MOON SALT CAVE & STRESS REDUCTION CENTER

Wolf Moon Salt Cave and Stress Reduction Center will be opening soon 814 Harper Ave bringing the first salt cave to Lenoir and the high country. The company will also offer a yoga studio, massage service, esthetician services, and acupuncture.



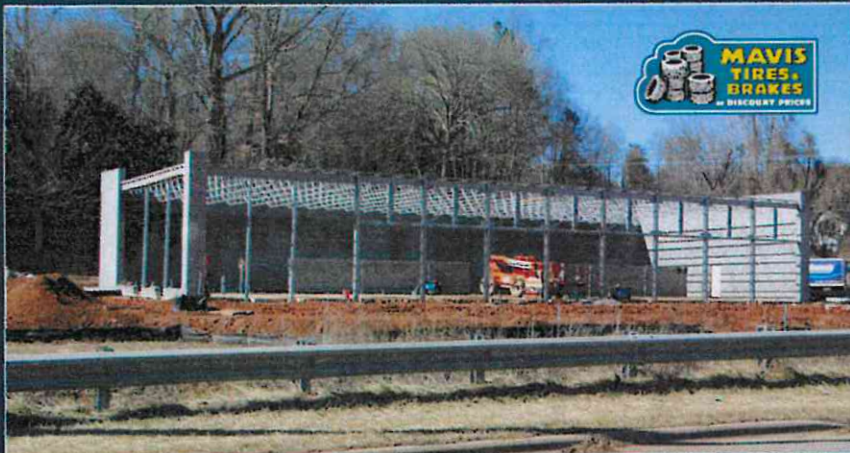
4440 RANCH & CATTLE COMPANY

4440 Ranch & Cattle Company will sell F1 Wagyu beef raised in Caldwell County. Construction continues on the new store in Downtown Lenoir. They hope to have all the construction done by the end of February and possibly open by the end of March, depending on contractors and supplies.



HWY 55 BURGERS SHAKES & FRIES

Hwy 55 completed most of the construction on their new store in Lenoir and are currently working to locate restaurant equipment. "We've opened over 100 locations across southeastern United States and rarely do we get this kind of publicity from local officials prior to an opening. The folks in Lenoir are super excited for Hwy 55 and we can't wait to open up and serve them." – Adam Wiggins, Sr. VP of Marketing Hwy 55



MAVIS DISCOUNT TIRE

Mavis Discount Tire is building a new store at 675 Blowing Rock Blvd (US 321). A company representative said they hope to be open in late February, early March 2022.



POPEYES LOUISIANA KITCHEN

Developers pulled permits for a new Popeyes Louisiana Kitchen beside Taco Bell on US 321. Contractors demolished the old building on the property in December 2021 and have been working on the new location ever since.



DODGE CITY STEAKHOUSE

A company representative said work continues on the new Dodge City Steakhouse in the old Sagebrush on US 321. The company plans to open later this year.



NEW B&B

New owners purchased the Irish Rose B&B and plan to reopen the business under a new name.



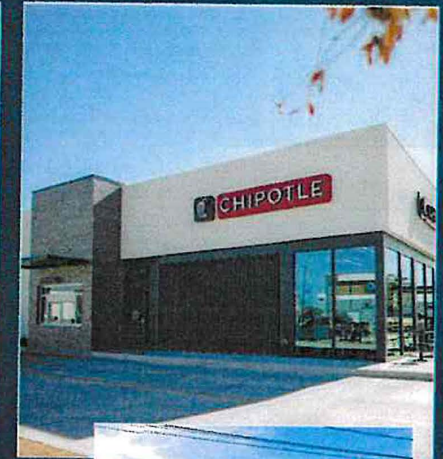
DAIRI-O

Dairi-O purchased the old Rite Aid on the northwest corner of Smith Crossroads. Contractors demolished the old building and cleared the property. Dairi-o does not have issued permits. Staff are waiting on applicant to provide additional information.



APSEN DENTAL & CHIPOTLE

Aspen Dental and Chipotle were permitted in January 2022. Both stores will be located on the property at 139 Blowing Rock Blvd.

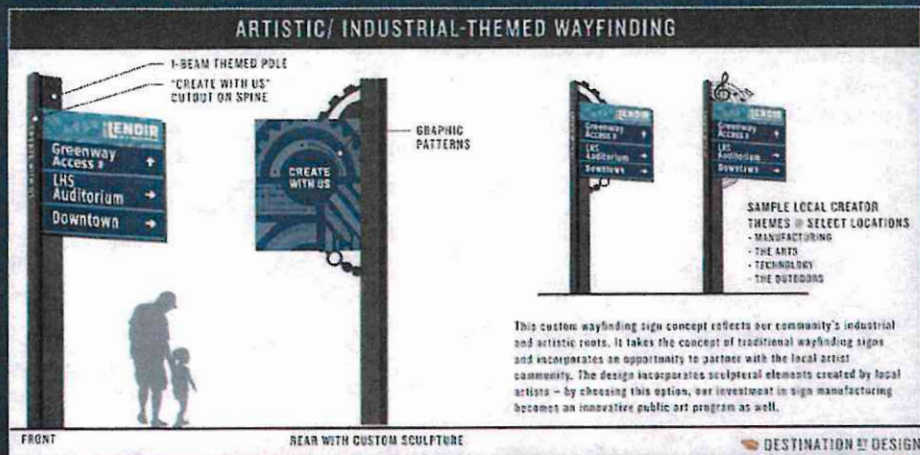


BLUE RIDGE ENERGY

February 2022 – Blue Ridge Energy received permits to remodel the company's old district office on Nuway Circle. Construction is underway.



Completed in 2021
PUBLIC INVESTMENT



BRANDING & WAYFINDING

January 2021 - Main Street and Planning revealed a new City brand and wayfinding sign plan.



CITY WEBSITE

January 2021 - Communications & Public Information refreshed the City website to match the new brand. Staff also updated the quick links on the front page to match the top pages of 2020.

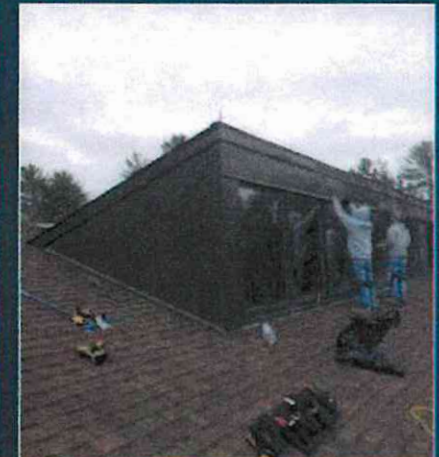
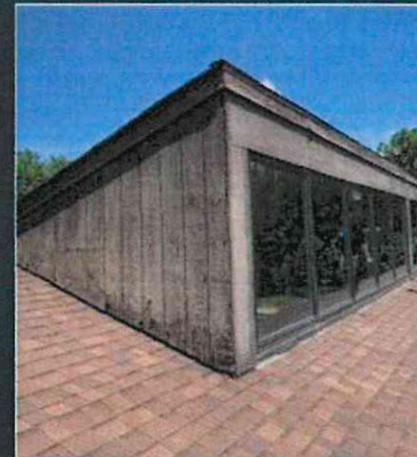
NCGS 160D Updates

{ Technical Changes to NC Land Use Law
(previously found in 160A and 153A)

Lenoir City Council
January 5, 2021
Presented by: Jenny Wheelock, AICP, CZO

NCGS 160D UPDATE

January 2021-Council approved an overhaul to the City Code relating to legislation adopted by the General Assembly pertaining to Chapter 160D. The law also makes technical and clarifying amendments to Chapter 160D.



AQUATIC CENTER IMPROVEMENTS

January 2021 - Contractors installed new doors, painted, made repairs to the roof and siding on the outside of the building and sidewalks at the Lenoir Aquatic and Fitness Center.



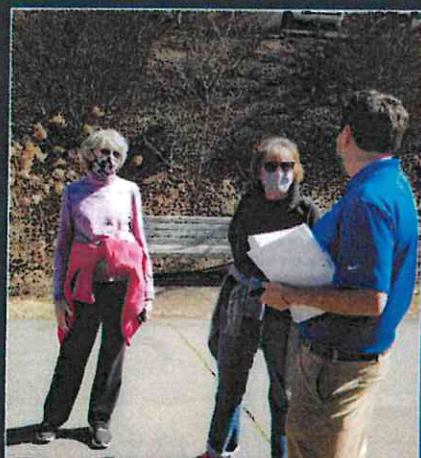
TREE TRIMMING IN DOWNTOWN

January 2021 - The City hired Brad's Tree Service to trim and prune about 70 trees located in downtown (the square, along Main Street, West Avenue, and Harper Avenue; and in four of the City's municipal parking lots).



OUTSIDE DINING TABLES

February 2021 - The City of Lenoir and Downtown Lenoir branded tables arrived. Staff put the tables on the square this month.



WCNC STORY ON WALKING PARK

February 2021 - After Communication staff did the story, "City gem getting renovations thanks to generous donation" about the Broyhill Walking park in January, WCNC did an Up in 60 spot that aired on the station and the WCNC website.



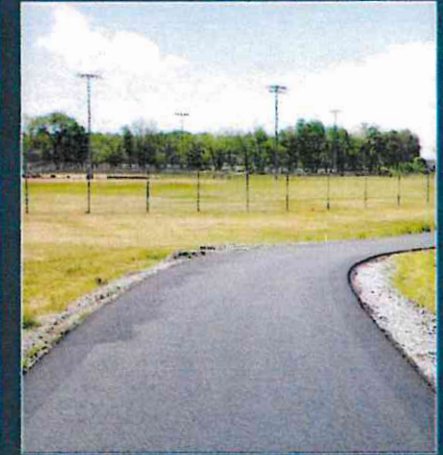
DOWNTOWN SCAVENGER HUNTS

March & October 2021 - Main Street organized two Downtown scavenger hunts in 2021 - the Leprechaun Chase Scavenger Hunt in March and the Haunted Halloween Mystery Heist in October. The events brought hundreds of people from Lenoir and the region to visit and shop in Downtown Lenoir.



SPRING PAVING

April 2021 - Contractors paved Link Place, Peacehaven Place, Lutz Street, Sherlee Street, Victoria Court / Victoria Lane, Commercial Court, and sections of Underdown Avenue, Virginia Street, College Avenue, Shasta Lane, and Swanson Drive.



GREENWAY PAVING

April 2021 - Staff paved 1.5 more miles of greenway in the spring of 2021 bringing Lenoir's total paved greenway to nearly 9 miles. New paved sections include College Ave to Morganton Blvd (part of the OVNHT), a section between Sherlee Street and Severt Circle, and a section at Mulberry Recreation Center from Mulberry Street to the Waterlife Church parking lot.



OVNHT (RAIL TRAIL) PAVING

April 2021 - The City has paved a large portion of the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail (OVNHT) that runs along the old railroad bed through the city. Trail from North Main Street to Harper Avenue and College Avenue to Morganton Blvd has been paved.



CITY LITTER SWEEP

April 2021 - City employees, Councilmembers, volunteers, and a Caldwell County Commissioner picked up 150 bags of trash around Lenoir during the Spring Litter Sweep event, April 14, 2021. About 60 people picked up trash along nearly two dozen roads around town.



GRYPHON DRIER

May 2021 – The City's new high-tech Gryphon drier is up and running at the wastewater treatment plant. After going through the dryer at ~300 degrees for about 30 minutes, the sludge from the City's wastewater treatment plant is 99% dry, pasteurized, and free from bacteria. It's a class-A product that can be put on hayfields or used as a soil amendment. The project is a \$6.6 million investment by the City.



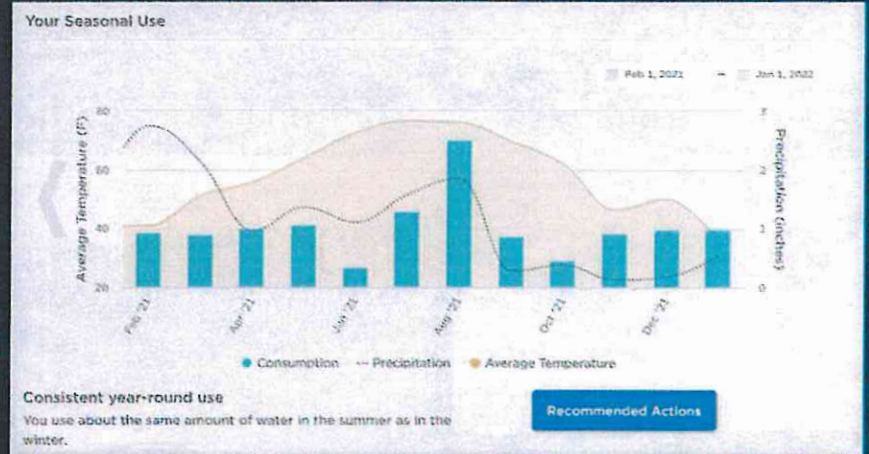
COMMUNITY GARDENS

May 2021 - Through donations from several organizations, volunteers and Master Gardeners installed a new 43-bed Community Share Garden at the Unity Park Community Gardens. Girl Scout Troop 2374 also donated 10 handmade and painted birdhouses that were placed around the property.



DOWNTOWN PARKING LOT

May 2021 - City workers restriped and reconfigured the City parking lot located on the 100 Block of Mulberry Street NW between Mulberry Street and Main Street in downtown. Public Works staff also installed a new street light in the parking lot to improve safety at night.



WATERSMART PORTAL

May 2021 – Public Utilities launched the WaterSmart portal. WaterSmart gives City of Lenoir Public Utilities customers online access to their water usage data, monthly bills, and more. Currently, 524 customers have registered, which is 5.1% of among eligible accounts.



STREETSCAPE EXTENSION

May 2021 – The City extended the sidewalk streetscape in front of Tybrisa Books in Downtown Lenoir. Workers removed the old sidewalk and installed new streetscape sidewalk and pavers. Staff also installed new, decorative trash cans at the stage across North Main Street.



VIRGINIA STREET CLEANUP

May 2021 – Contractors completed the cleanup work on Virginia Street through the ARC grant in late April/early May 2021. Workers removed 7,100 tons of debris. There is an estimated 3,000 to 4,000 more tons of debris left to be removed. The cleanup is the first step in putting the property back into productive use. The City funded the cleanup with a \$300,000 Appalachian Regional Commission grant and \$250,000 from the City. Staff also plan used \$45,000 in Brownfields funding toward a Brownfield agreement for the property.



MAIN STREET ATTENDANT

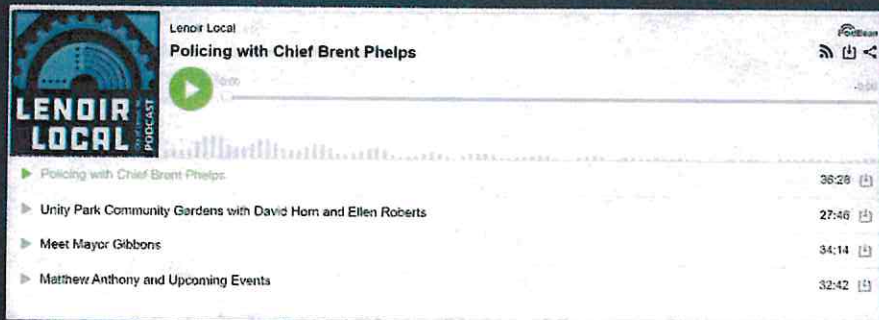
June 2021 – The City hired a Main Street Attendant in Downtown Lenoir June 1, 2021. The Main Street Attendant focuses on keeping Downtown Lenoir clean and tidy and helping out visitors as needed. The position also cleans City Hall and the Police department.



LHS IMPROVEMENTS

June 2021 – Contractors finished up Phase one of improvements at the Lenoir High School Auditorium including gutting and rebuilding two bathrooms on the lower floor of the facility, installing and painting six new doors, sanding and refinishing the stage floor, and replacing some of the stage curtains. Phase 2, approved by Council in December 2021, will include painting the walls and ceiling of the entry and main lobby, repairing the roof, painting stage walls, replacing HVAC units, switching to LED lights, replacing carpet in the lobby, and install new roof gutters.





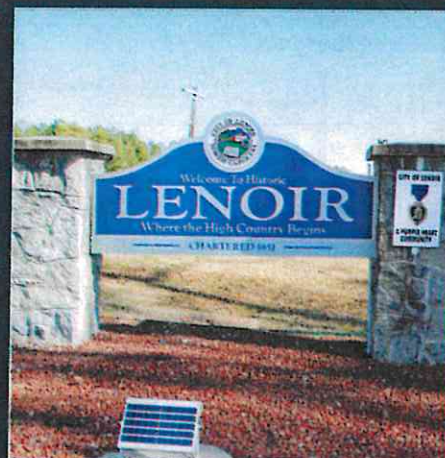
LENOIR LOCAL PODCAST

June 2021 – Staff launched the Lenoir Local Podcast. The podcast covers City events, things to do, City services, community interest topics and more. Communications staff paused the podcast due to mask protocols, but plans to start again as soon as things get back to normal.



NEW K9 TEAM

June 2021 – The Police Department added a new K9 team to the roster. K9 Handler Jo Lo and his partner Atos started patrolling City streets in the spring of 2021.



PUBLIC WORKS REPAIRS WELCOME SIGN

June 2021 – Public Works staff repaired the "Welcome to Lenoir" sign at the corner of Morganton Boulevard and Old Morganton Boulevard to replace one destroyed in a wreck. The sign was built using rocks from the old Smithey's department store downtown after it was torn down in late 2006.



RENOVATIONS TO POLICE HQ

June 2021 – The Police Department made a few renovations to their headquarters including a new rear door to lounge area in June and new flooring in the records room in November.



SUMMER EVENTS

July 2021 – Parks and Recreation held the July 4th Fireworks 2021. Staff said four to five thousand people attended the event. Main Street also hosted Summer Music Madness again with a show in July and August 2021.



BROYHILL WALKING PARK IMPROVEMENTS

August 2021 – The City held a ribbon cutting and rededicated the T.H. Broyhill Walking Park with some new improvements. The Broyhill Family Foundation donated \$100,000 to replace the flooring on the observation deck and to convert the park restrooms into three, single units.



Broyhill Walking Park improvements



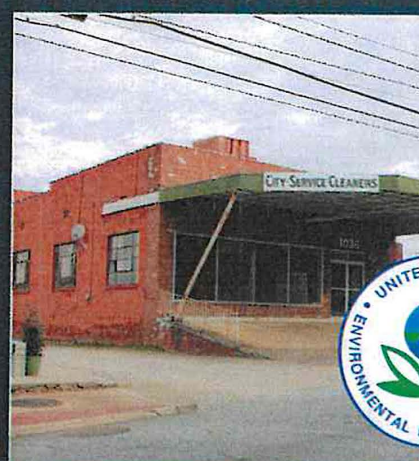
POLICE CARS GET NEW LOOK

August 2021 – The Police Department switched to a new color and striping scheme on new police cars. The department had to change color schemes because it was becoming more difficult to get cars with the darker blue paint.



BASEBALL & SOFTBALL CLINICS

September 2021 – Parks & Recreation hosted a baseball clinic led by App State and softball clinic led by CCC&TI Cobras in September. Nearly 70 boys attended the baseball clinic at Mulberry Recreation Center and about a dozen girls attended the softball clinic held at the Lenoir Optimist Park.



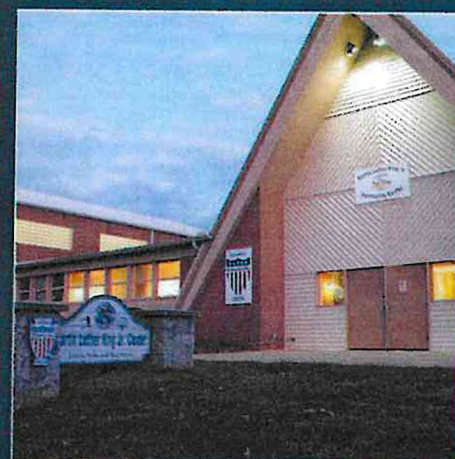
BROWNFIELDS GRANT

September 2021 – Staff wrapped up work on the City's first Brownfields Assessment Grant. The City received the grant from the EPA in 2018 and has worked since to assess multiple properties in the City including the Virginia Street property, the old City Service Cleaners (now owned by Liquid Roots), the Blue Bell Inc. property (prior to construction of the new apartments), and more. The City is applying for a second assessment grant to continue the project and should know if approved in April 2022. More info at www.cityoflenoir.com/brownfields.



POLICE K9 ACADEMY

September 2021 - Police staff brought back the K9 Academy last year. The class size was lessened from previous years and all classes were held in an outdoor/open setting.



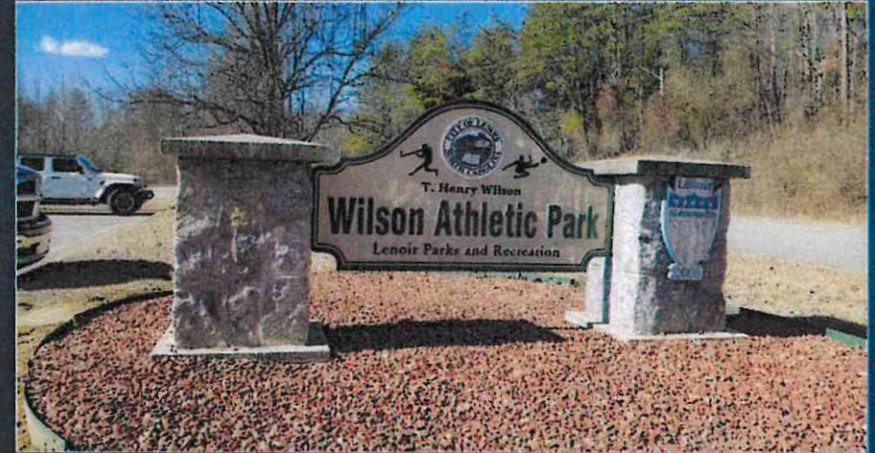
REC FACILITY ROOF REPAIRS

September 2021 – Parks & Recreation invested in roof repairs to the Martin Luther King Jr. center and the Lenoir Aquatic & Fitness Center. The MLK Center roof was finished in September and the LAFC repair was complete in January 2022.



FIRE DEPARTMENT QRVs

November 2021 - The City Fire Department rolled out three new quick response vehicles (QRVs). Firefighters will drive the QRVs to medical calls, which should reduce response times to health emergencies. More than half of the calls to the Fire Department are medical calls.



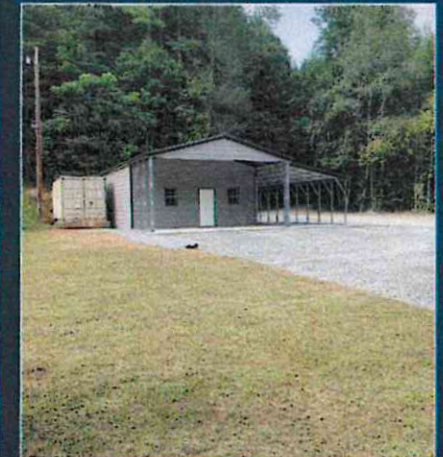
NEW SIGN AT WILSON PARK

October 2021 - Parks and Recreation replaced the sign at Wilson Athletic Park. Donated by the late T. Henry Wilson, Wilson Athletic Park covers 18 acres and offers baseball / softball fields, a soccer field, and open space for practices and games. The park is adjacent to the Lenoir Greenway.



POLICE SPEED LIMIT SIGNS

October 2021 - The department started using two electronic speed limit signs to help collect traffic data, including total number of cars and speed ranges while traffic units look at problem areas in the city. The signs are equipped with strobe notifications to make drivers aware when they are speeding. The signs are lightweight, battery operated, and can be placed on existing signs.



POLICE FIRING RANGE IMPROVEMENTS

October 2021 - Through the assistance of Police personnel and partnerships with Public Utilities and Public Works, staff made several improvements to the Police firing range. The department plans replace the current electrical infrastructure in the future, which will aid in the State-mandated nighttime law enforcement training.



FALL PAVING

November 2021 - The City contracted to pave 13 sections of roads during fall 2021 and spring 2022. Segments paved in fall 2021 included Bethel Colony Road, Pennell Street from Powell Road to Barrington Drive, Barrington Drive from Pennell Street to Turnberry Street, Falcon Court, Watson Place, and Wildwood Road from Lower Creek Drive to Cottrell Hill Road.



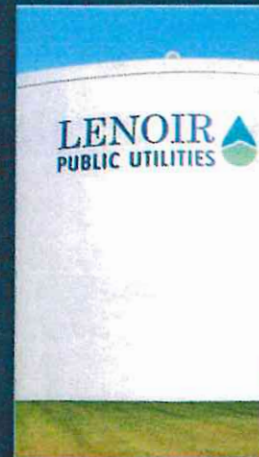
NEW APRON AT STATION 1

November 2021 - Public Works staff and contractors installed a new concrete apron at Fire Station 1 in Downtown Lenoir.



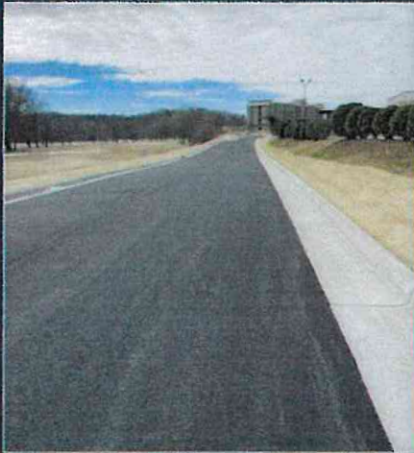
LUMINARY DISPLAY

December 2021 - The luminary display Dec. 17, 2021, was a big success. Staff received dozens of positive comments on social media about the event.



DEPARTMENT AWARDS

2021 - N.C. Division of Water Resources honored the City Water Treatment Plant for surpassing federal and state drinking water standards in 2020. Finance received a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting from the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA). Main Street and architect David Maurer and his wife Allison received a NC Main Street Award for saving the old Stine's Ice Cream Parlor building in downtown, now home Mandem Syndicate Barbershop and an apartment.



HOTEL STREET

January 2022 – Contractors finished paving Hotel Street. Hotel Street connects Linkside Court to Hibriten Drive. Residents of Linkside Court, the Veridian apartments, and the Hampton Inn will be able to access Hibriten Drive during high traffic times. Contractors still have to install fencing along the border of the golf course.



How AMI works

An advanced metering system uses a wireless network to provide detailed data that is easily accessible online by customers and staff.

Advanced water meters transmit hourly water use data over a wireless network.



City staff can access data and more detailed reports about water use in the City.



Customers can access data from the web portal.



AMI WATER METERS

January 2022 – The City invested \$4.4 million in advanced metering infrastructure for the City of Lenoir water system. The new meters and network provide remote cut off/cut on abilities as well as an online portal where customers can manage their utility account. The project is 98% complete.

COMMUNICATION METRICS

Communication staff created A LOT of content in 2021 promoting most slides shown already.

94

News Releases

1499

Photos

36

Videos

352

Alerts

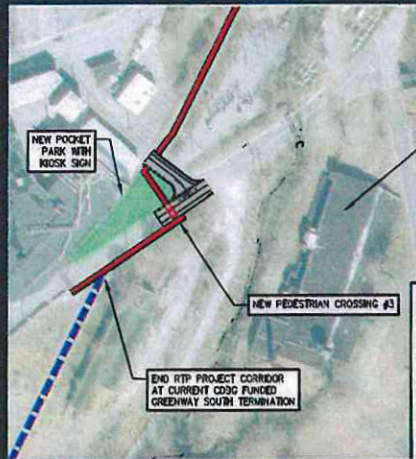
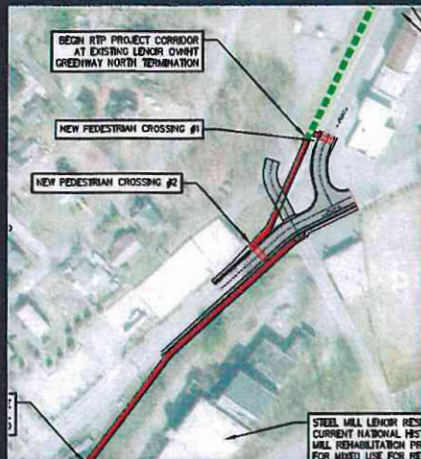
303

Q&As

228

Media Coverage

Coming Soon
PUBLIC INVESTMENT



RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM GRANT

February 2021 - The City of Lenoir recently received a \$250,000 Recreational Trails Program grant to design and build three street crossings along the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail (OVNHT) that runs through downtown. The total project cost to design and build the crossings is \$312,000. The grant is \$250,000 and the City is matching the grant with \$62,500 in local in-kind funding. The conceptual design is complete.



WATERLIFE GREENWAY EASEMENT

June 2021 - Public Works staff and the City attorney finalized the greenway easement with Waterlife Church (negotiations began in 2020). Staff now has to stripe the greenway and pave two new sections across the front of the property. Staff also finalized shared-use parking agreements for the Waterlife Church parking lot and the United Presbyterian parking lot. These lots are adjacent to City facilities (MRC and the Lower Creek greenway).



MULBERRY TO OVNHT GREENWAY

The City has three sections of greenway paved between Mulberry Recreation Center on the right and the OVNHT greenway on the left. The OVNHT greenway runs from Morganton Boulevard north to North Main Street. The solid green lines are finished greenway. The dotted yellow lines are connections to be made. The pink circle in the bottom left is a potential crossing location over Morganton Boulevard.



FINLEY AVENUE WATER PROJECT

The City's recent application for funding the estimated \$5.1 million Finley Avenue water project was not approved. Public Utilities staff plan to reapply for funding. A resident donated two lots beside the tower to the City to assist in improvements to the system.



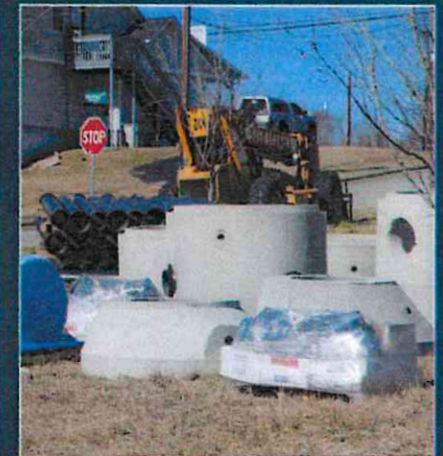
CALDWELL COUNTY ANIMAL SHELTER

July 2021 – Caldwell County broke ground on a new Animal Shelter. The new Animal Shelter is located near the health department building on Morganton Boulevard. It's a significant upgrade from the existing shelter.



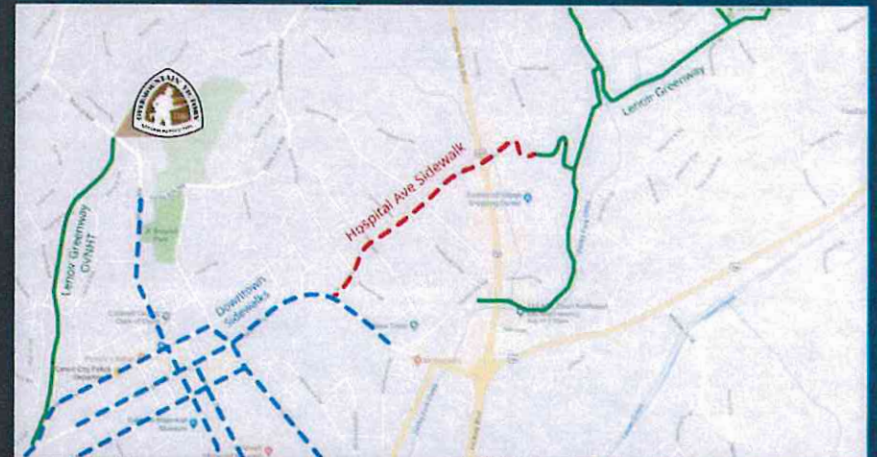
SMITH CROSSROADS SEWER PROJECT

December 2021 – Council approved a bid to replace more than 3,800 feet of sewer line that runs from Mayflower Seafood Restaurant to the Lenoir Golf Club parking lot. The project will replace an old 12-inch sewer pipe with a new 20-inch pipe, replace about 20 manholes, and reconnect all sewer services tied to the main line. Staff estimates the project will cost \$2.8 million.



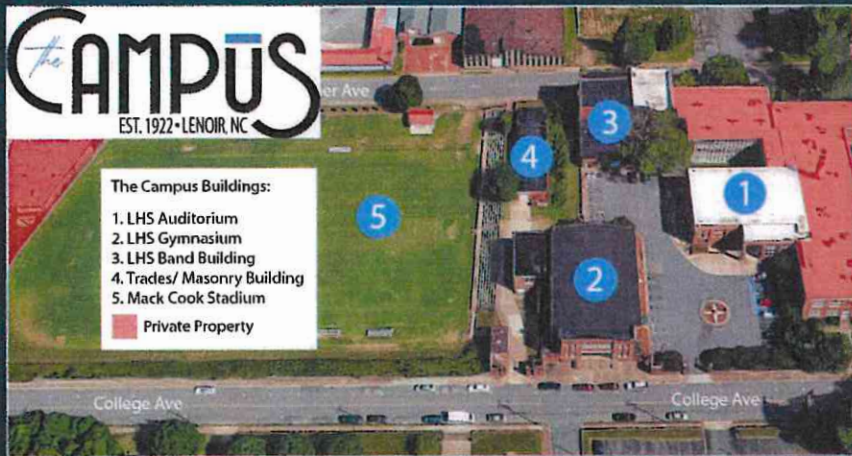
LEOS BATHROOMS

December 2021 – Council approved a request from Yokefellow of Caldwell County to add a restroom building addition to the Lenoir Emergency Outreach Shelter (LEOS), which is owned by the City of Lenoir.



HOSPITAL AVENUE SIDEWALK

Staff has resumed right-of-way acquisition on the Hotel Ave sidewalk project. The City has committed \$200K in local funding to match \$800K in grant funding to complete the \$1 million project. Construction authorization should follow right-of-way certification later this year. The project will connect the City greenway northeast of 321 to downtown sidewalks and to the City greenway /OVNHT to the west.



THE CAMPUS AT THE HISTORIC LHS

Staff continue to improve and use The Campus at the Historic Lenoir High School in Downtown Lenoir. The City plans to install lights at Mack Cook Stadium and staff hope to bring more renovations to the property in the future.

COMPLAINTS

Mayor Joe Gibbons

(828) CALL-JOE



COMPLIMENTS

Call or email **ANY**
City of Lenoir employee
or Council member
ANY time! 😊

- 828-757-2200
- jharris@cityoflenoir.com



QUESTIONS & INFORMATION

828-757-2100

www.cityoflenoir.com

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- twitter/CityofLenoir
- instagram/cityoflenoirnc
- nextdoor.com
search "City of Lenoir, NC"



What's Next for Code Enforcement?

Strategic ←-----→ Responsive

February 2022

Brent Phelps, Police Chief

Jenny Wheelock, AICP, CZO, Planning Director



 CITY OF LENOIR
PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



Junk/Clutter/Debris

Grass/weeds

Junk Vehicles

Noise



CITY OF LENOIR
PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Mobile Home Parks

Work w/out Permits

Signs

Minimum Housing

Strategic

- Tax foreclosures
- Selling City-owned property
- Area Plans/Relationships with stakeholders

Responsive

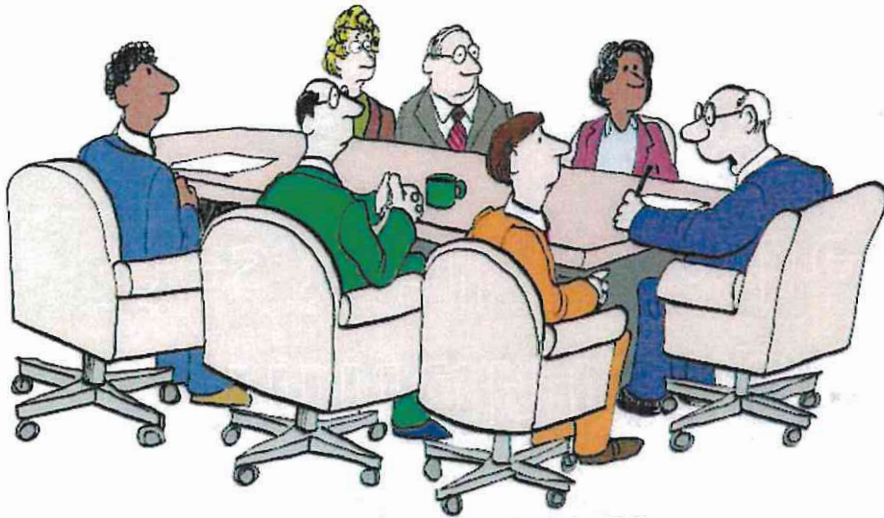
- Part time staff for peak season
- Increased funding for abatement
- NC ALE “Moral Nuisance” task force

Communication

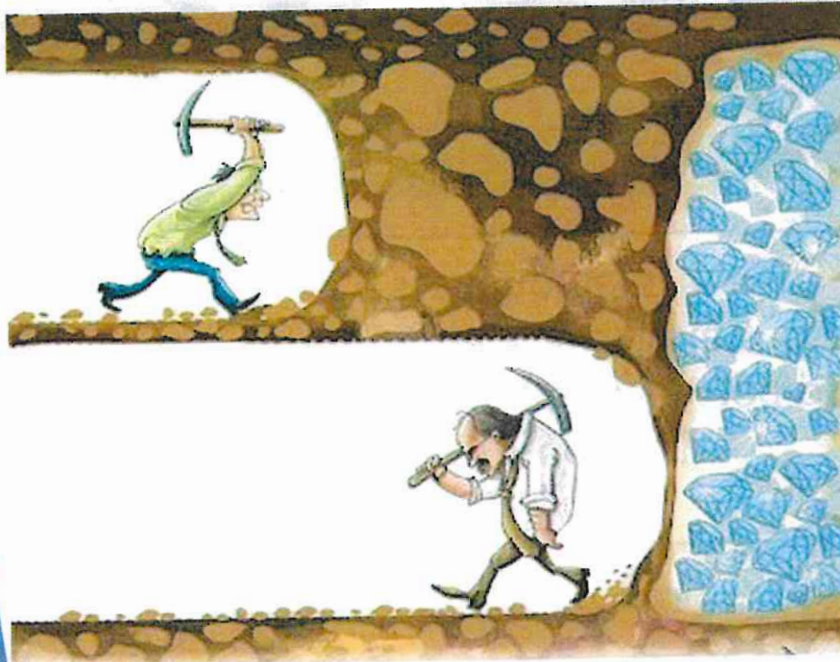
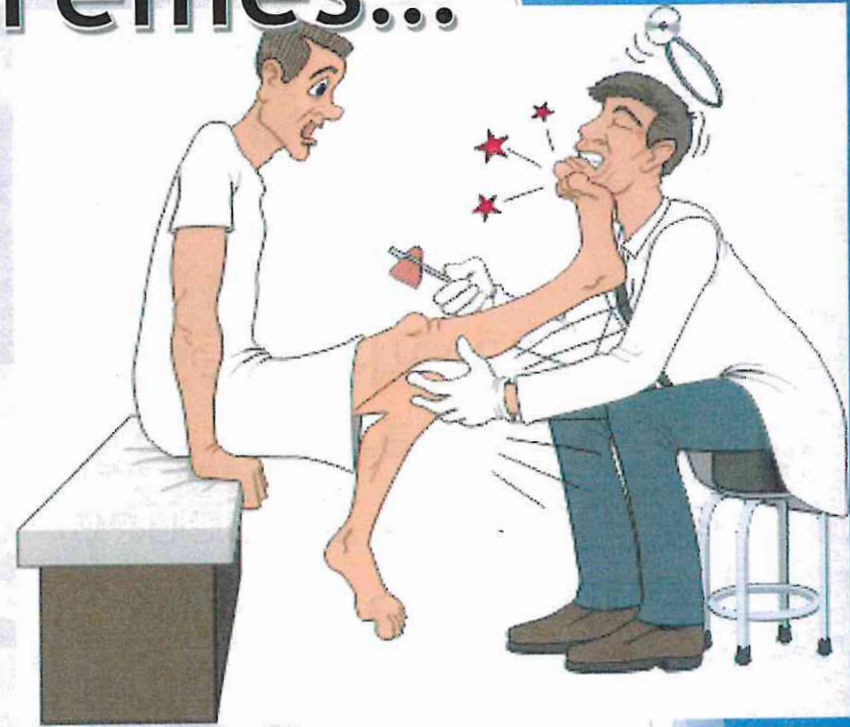
Ties it all together

- iWorq CE Module
- Managing Expectations
- Transparent process
- Visible to the community

At the extremes...

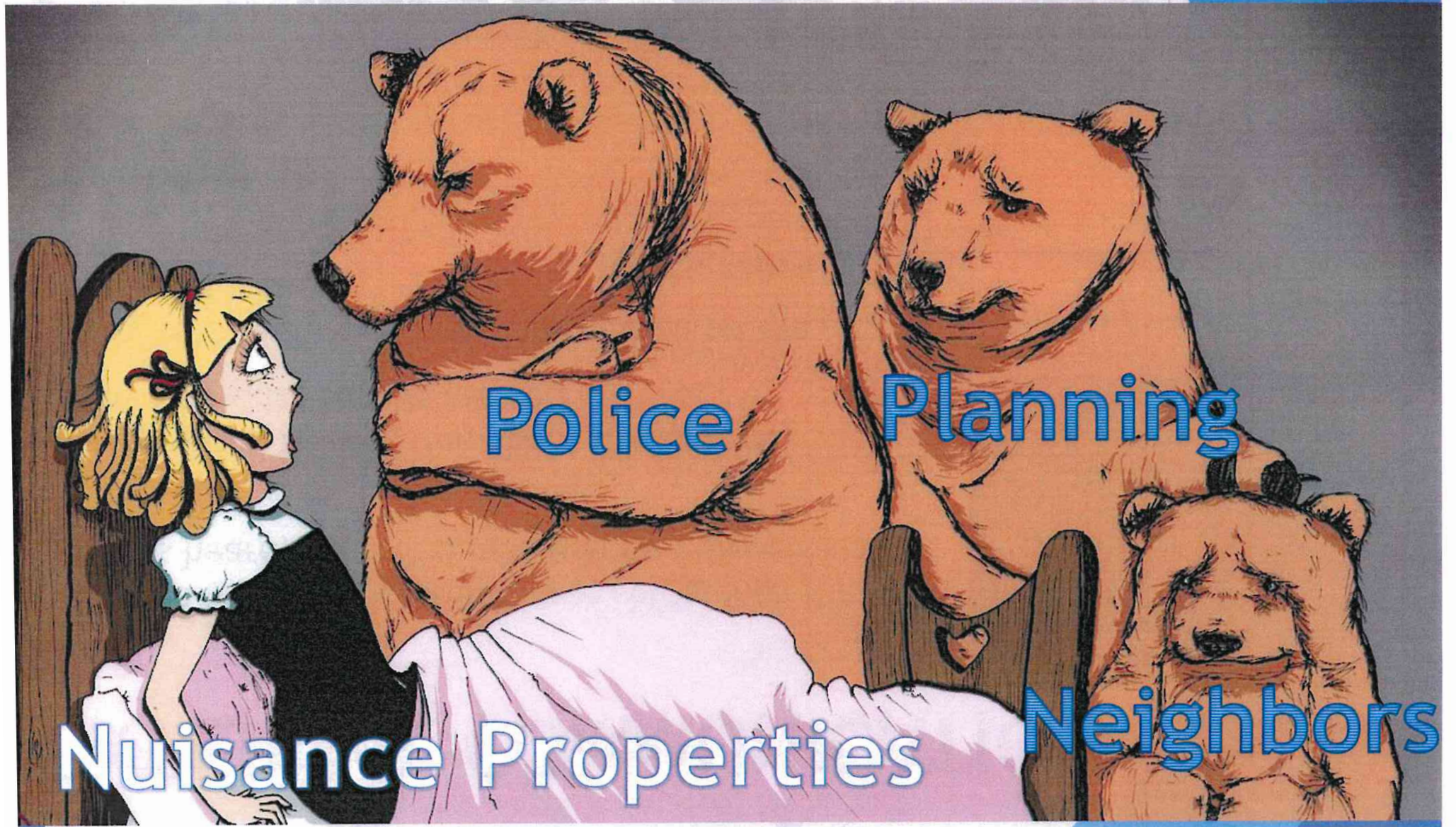


**"Of course we can make fast decisions ...
once we have considered the 4872 factors."**



The Goldilocks Zone: It's "Just right"

Effective Communication → Coordinated Enforcement → Strategic Response



EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION

GOALS:

- ▶ Easy to report a violation; have confidence that it was heard, recorded, and will be followed-up on
- ▶ Easy to find information about the process, how long until results are seen
- ▶ Easy to call back and get information on the status of a case



iWorQ

My voicemail will always be there for you.



iWorQ - Google Chrome
www.iworq.net/0_Pages/PropertyPopupProperty.php?sid=HV627T7GHZTHKQK9LMDP3SVG94400&k=1912&id=13892025

PROPERTY INFO

www.iworq.net says
Current owner bought property at tax foreclosure auction. Dilapidated non-residential structure extant.

Parcel: 2749993768

Address: 0 FINLEY ST

City: LENOIR

State: NC

Zip: 28645

Legal: BK 2023 PG 1322 YR 21 ST 13.00

Subdivision:

Lot:

Zoning: B-1

Owner: STEED-SMITH TONI EVON

Owner Address: 11218 WARFIELD AVE

Owner City: HUNTERSVILLE

Owner State: NC

Owner Zip: 28078

Owner Phone: (704) 519-5060; (704) 651-

Owner Email:

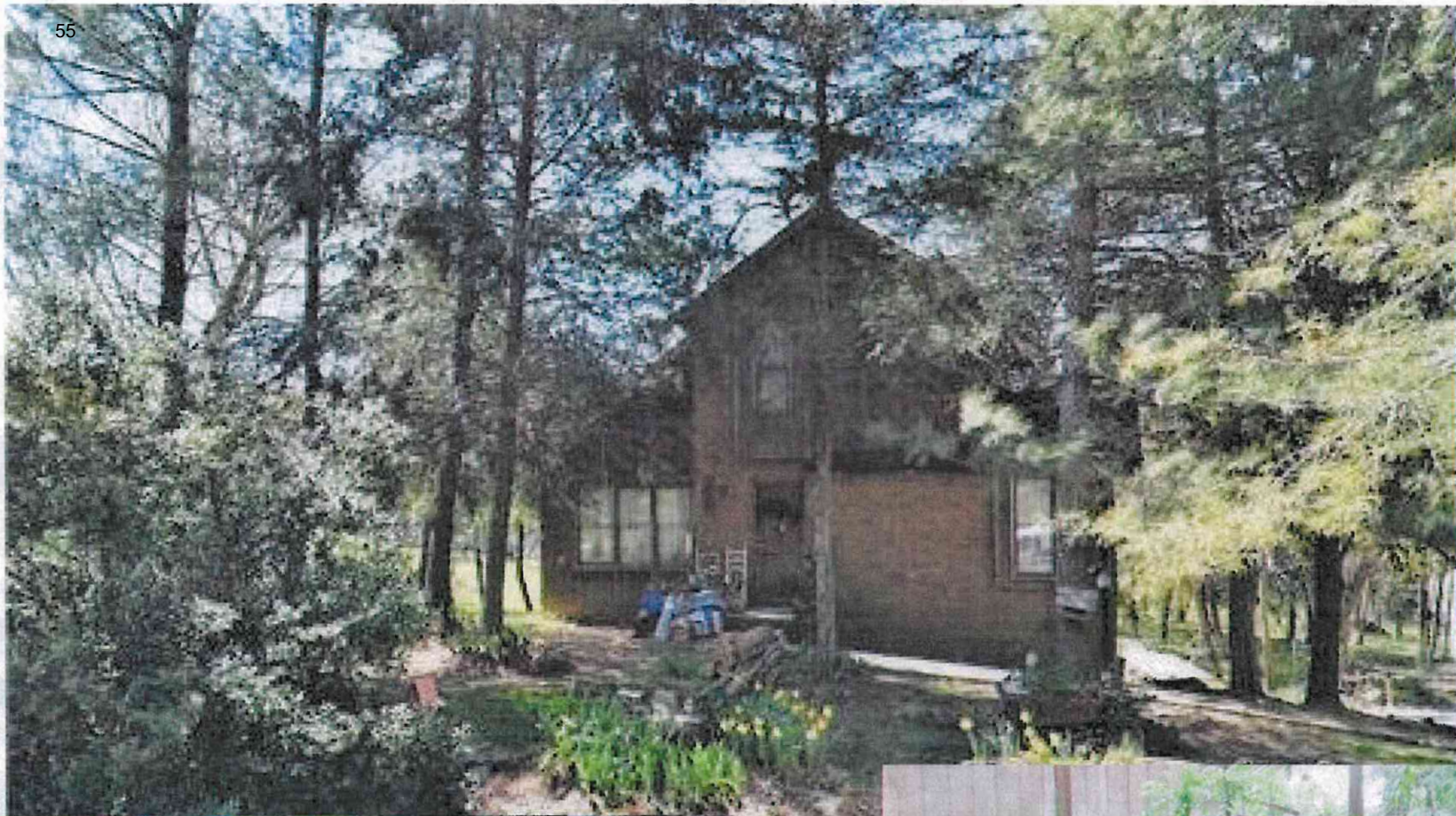
Copy Property
Add Note
Add Restriction
Upload File
Open Parcel Map
ADD RECORDS
Code Enforcement
Permit Management
Permit Management















09/07/2017 02:02 PM







CITY OF LENOIR COUNCIL RETREAT

FEBRUARY 11, 2022

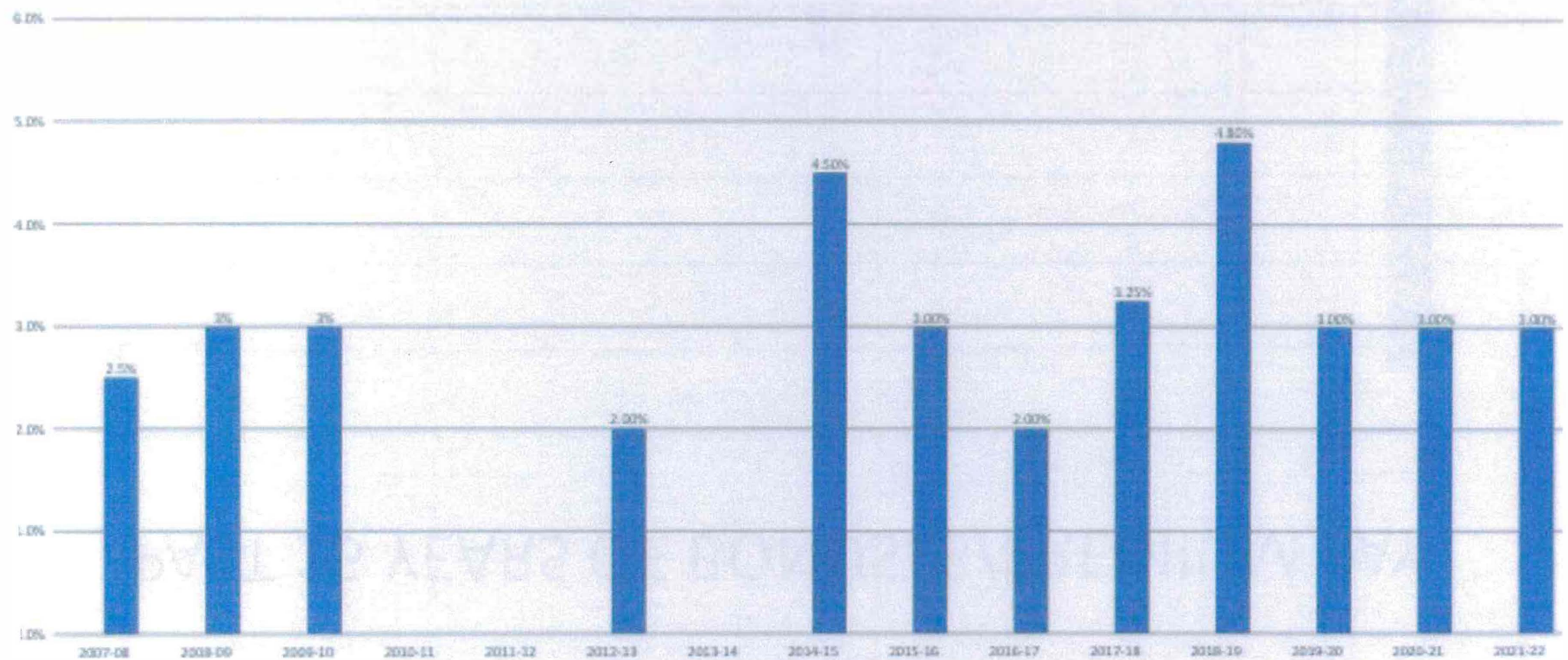


Compensation and Benefits

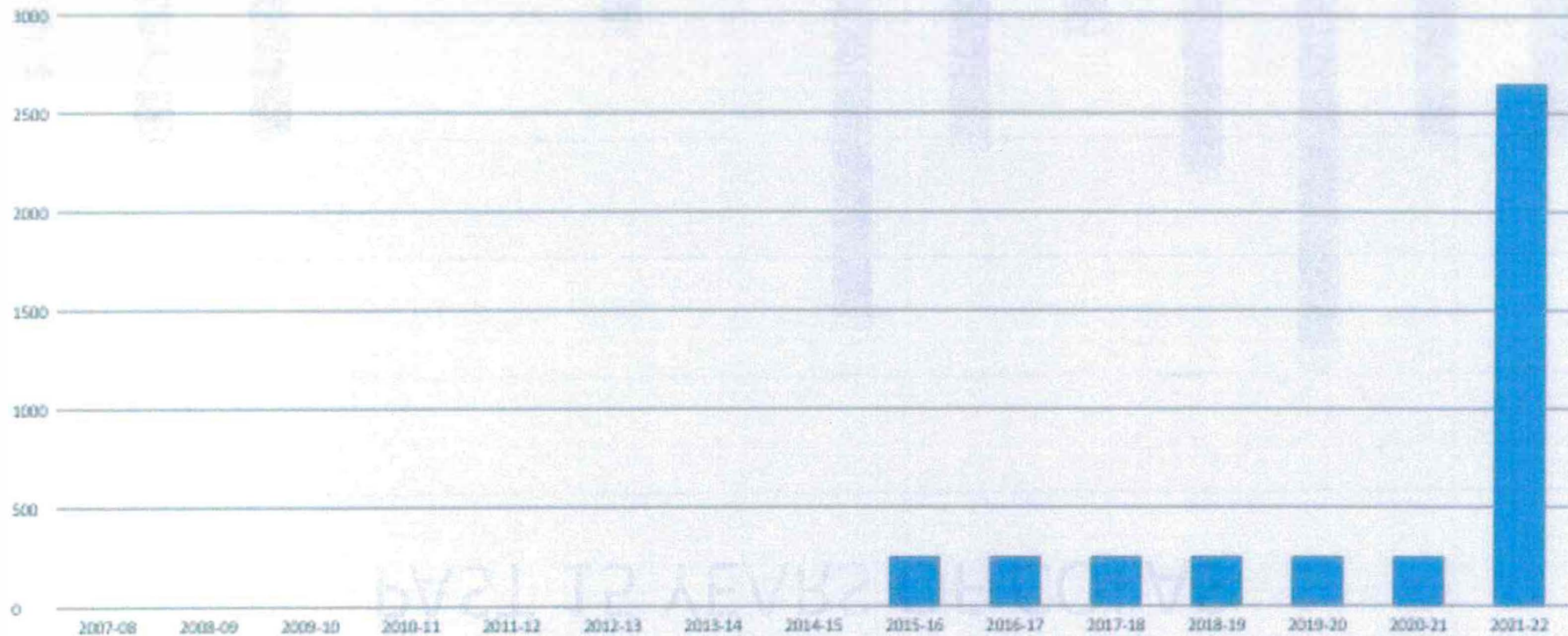
- Efforts to offer competitive compensation and benefits for employees has been the top priority for Council for many years.
- COLAs, holiday bonuses and additional leave have allowed the City to make progress toward offering competitive wages.
- The current labor market is very challenging. Employers are facing the tightest labor market in recent history amid rising inflation.



PAST 15 YEARS OF COLAS



PAST 15 YEARS OF BONUSES/PREMIUM PAY



City of Lenoir VS other municipalities with similar population

- 40 job classifications are below the League of Municipalities Salary Survey's average starting pay by an average of 10%
- 28 job classifications are above the League of Municipalities Salary Survey's average starting pay by an average of 11%
- 20 job classifications had no League of Municipalities Salary Survey code
- Note:
 - Seniority factors into pay and some positions are below or above the average pay due to job responsibilities and length of service.
 - When the MAPS group did the salary study in 2008, salaries were 10% to 15 % below the average for the area.



Council has approved several salary grade adjustments, by department, in the past to address the need to maintain competitiveness.



Last 5 Years of Pay and Grade Adjustments

Reorganization/Pay Adjustment		
Department	Year	Item
Administration	2017 & 2021	Pay and Grade Adjustments
Finance	2019	Re-organization & Adjustments
Fire	2018 & 2022	Pay and Grade Adjustments
IT & Police	2016	Pay and Grade Adjustments
Parks & Rec	2017 & 2018 & 2021	Pay and Grade Adjustments
Police	2018 & 2019	Pay and Grade Adjustments
Planning	2018	Pay and Grade Adjustments
Public Works	2020	Pay and Grade Adjustments
Water	2021	Pay and Grade Adjustments

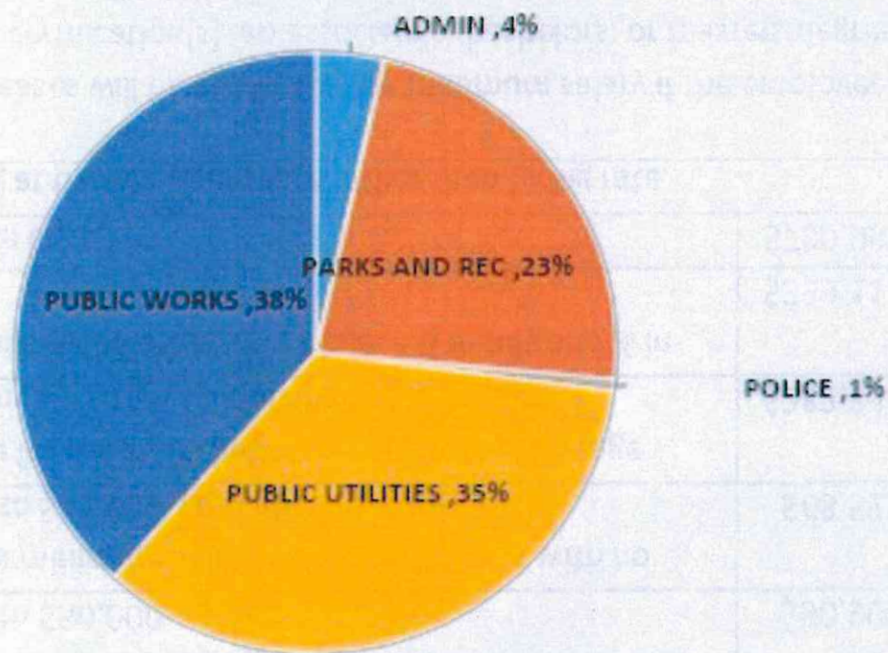
ANTICIPATED INCREASES FOR 2022-2023

- RETIREMENT COSTS
- HEALTH INSURANCE
- PROPERTY AND LIABILITY INSURANCE
- OPERATING COSTS VS PAST TWO YEARS DUE TO CLOSURES FROM PANDEMIC
- FUEL COSTS
- IMPACT OF INFLATION ON ALL COSTS

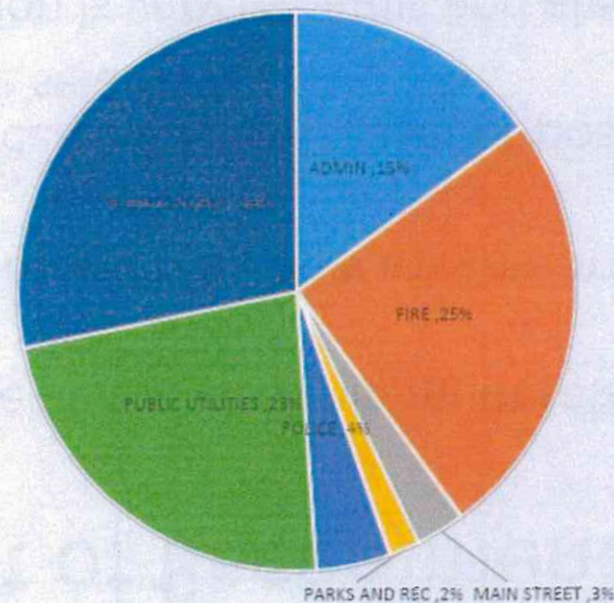
Recommendations		Cost
Minimum Salary - \$30,000	Increase the minimum salary City-wide for current full time employees to \$30,000 - July 1	\$90,908.35
Patrol Officer I Minimum Salary - \$41,000	Increase the minimum salary for Patrol Officers with no experience to \$41,000 (16 Officers) – July 1*	\$68,525.55
7% Increase to adjust to competitive wage	7% Increase for positions below the beginning/average salary - ½ in July and ½ in January	\$282,349.76
4.5% COLA	4.5% Increase for all other employees - ½ in July and ½ in January	\$339,117.31
	Total Annual Cost	\$780,900.97
	Begin hiring at the minimum rate rather than hiring rate.	
	*Other increases will be applied to the minimum salary if the employee has experience, certification(s), an associate's, bachelors, or masters degree, military experience or is bi-lingual.	



IMPACT BY DEPARTMENT OF IMPLEMENTING A MINIMUM SALARY OF \$30,000 – TOTAL COST \$90,908.35



IMPACT BY DEPARTMENT OF IMPLEMENTING 7% ADJUSTMENT TO LEAGUE OF MUNICIPALITIES SALARY SURVEY AVERAGES - TOTAL COST \$282,349.76



Overall Impact of Recommendations

- 31 employees will receive the new minimum salary of \$30,000 per year.
- 16 Patrol Officers will receive the new minimum salary of \$41,000.
- 108 employees will receive a 7% increase for positions below the beginning/average salary.
- Employee compensation is very dynamic and always evolving. Based on preliminary computations, it is anticipated that the salary increases can be absorbed into the budget.
- Does not solve the compensation issue but will make the City much more competitive in salaries and benefits.



City of Lenoir Funding Opportunities

Project	Funding Source	Description	Amount	Match	Total
Lenoir Greenway Expansion	State Allocation Funds	Grant to expand the Lenoir greenway system	750,000.00		750,000.00
Downtown Improvement/Enhancements	State Allocation Funds	Grant to construct a Farmers Market Pavilion	450,000.00		450,000.00
Downtown Improvement/Enhancements	State Allocation Funds	Grant to make City Hall Building Improvements	200,000.00		200,000.00
Downtown Improvement/Enhancements	State Allocation Funds	Grant for Mark Cook Stadium Lighting @ The Campus	100,000.00	25,000.00	125,000.00
Fire Truck/Rescue Pumper	ARP Funds	Purchase one Fire Truck/Rescue apparatus to enhance the service capability and service delivery to our citizens. The new truck will have pumping capabilities to suppress fires as well as haul rescue equipment and replaces our current 2004 Rescue Truck that has no pumping capabilities.	700,000.00		700,000.00
Automated Garbage Truck	ARP Funds	Purchase one automated garbage truck to assist with the continued conversion to automated garbage pick-up as this can be utilized to replace aging equipment.	300,000.00		300,000.00
Future Grant Matches	ARP Funds	Set aside funding for future grant matches in coordination with the WPCOG.	500,000.00	500,000.00	1,000,000.00
Water Project - Hwy 18	ARP Funds	Fund water line upgrade to improve the water pressure on Morganton Blvd. (HWY 18) and the Fairview area. The total project cost is estimated to be approximately \$2 million.	942,491.00	1,057,509.00	2,000,000.00
Cyber Security and Software	ARP Funds	Improve the current IT infrastructure to address cyber security changes and upgrade the 14-year-old financial software system.	300,000.00		300,000.00
Master Planning	ARP Funds	The City of Lenoir would like to develop master plans for the historic Campus at Lenoir High School, Downtown Lenoir and Parks and Recreation.	200,000.00		200,000.00
Greenway Expansion & Upgrades	ARP Funds	The plan calls for a continued investment in upgrading the greenways to promote outside healthy living.	200,000.00		200,000.00
Premium Pay for Essential Workers	ARP Funds	The plan calls for a one-time bonus for city employees. City employees worked throughout the COVID-19 pandemic to provide essential services.	692,200.00		692,200.00
Crossroads Sewer Project	NCDEQ	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 Yokefellow 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. NC DWI approved the 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. NC DWI has approved our loan package in the amount of \$2.7 million. The amount was increased due to the addition of additional work to eliminate a sewer line that runs under the major intersection of US 321 and Hwy 18/64 at Smith Crossroads. The contract for construction has been awarded and we anticipate construction to begin in early February 2022.	2,775,000.00	55,500.00	2,830,500.00
Smith Crossroads - Signage	LTDA	With support from the LTDA and other local funding, the process of manufacturing and installing a back-lit decorative sign for the Smith Crossroads location has begun. This project requires coordination with multiple stakeholders (NCDOT, Duke Energy, sub-consultants). Incorporating the recently developed City logo/brand and tagline "CREATE WITH US," gateway sign located at Smith Crossroads.	165,000.00		165,000.00
Hospital Avenue Sidewalk	NCDOT	The Hospital Avenue Sidewalk Project to include the expenditure of grant and local funds to engineer, design, acquire rights-of-way, relocate utilities, and construct sidewalks on Hospital Avenue. Funding of \$1,000,000 for this project will be from a Locally Administered Project Program from the Federal Highway Administration and local funds. This is a five year project. Council approved the NCDOT Agreement on September 16, 2016.	800,000.00	200,000.00	1,000,000.00

Subtotal			9,074,691.00	1,838,009.00	10,912,700.00
Possible Funding Opportunities					
Arrowood Bridge Replacement	FEMA BRIC	Project will replace the Arrowood Street Bridge which is in need of repair. The Public Works Director worked with consultant, Mattern and Craig, to develop a FEMA grant application for replacement of the Arrowood Street Bridge. The application process began in November, 2021, with intermediate submission deadlines in November, December, and a final submission deadline in January, 2022. The application includes a funding request for \$525,000 (70%), and notice of award, if successful, should occur in July, 2022.	525,000.00	225,000.00	750,000.00
Sewer Outfall Upgrade	FEMA BRIC	- FEMA made available a grant opportunity for funding projects that improve or mitigate infrastructure that is located in flood hazard areas. The Utilities Department, working with the Western Piedmont COG, identified two potential projects and submitted a grant application for 70% funding with a 30% local match. The projects would involve the construction of an equalization basin to equalize the flow during severe rain events and a new septic tank receiving station at the Lower Creek Wastewater Treatment Facility. In addition, funds have been requested to replace the sewer line that follows Zack's Fork Creek from Pennell Street to the soccer complex on Zack's Fork Rd. The total project cost is \$8.0 million with \$5.6 million in grant funding and \$2.4 million in local match. The sewer line replacement is currently in the Utilities department CIP. The equalization basin is part of a larger renovation project for Lower Creek also identified in the current CIP.	5,600,000.00	2,400,000.00	8,000,000.00
Rural Downtown Transformation Grant			1,000,000.00		1,000,000.00
Aquatics Center	PARTF GRANT	The Recreation Department is working with McGill Associates, PA on applying for a PARTF Grant this year. The grant would be for renovations at the LAFC and the Rotary Soccer complex. The LAFC facility is in dire need of some upgrades and this may be a way to improve the facility. Some of the updates would include a splash pad outside where the kiddie pool is now, also we would like to renovate the locker rooms from top to bottom, put new flooring throughout the whole building, including the pool deck, new LED lighting, a new decktron system that helps with the moisture inside the building. Also we are looking at building a picnic shelter and some playground equipment at the Rotary Soccer complex.	500,000.00	500,000.00	1,000,000.00
OVNHT Greenway Link	RTP GRANT	The City of Lenoir recently received a \$250,000 Recreational Trails Program grant to design and build three street crossings along the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail (OVNHT) that runs through downtown. The total project cost to design and build the crossings is \$312,000. The grant is \$250,000 and the City is matching the grant with \$62,500 in local, in-kind contributions.	250,000.00	62,500.00	312,500.00

Finley Avenue Area Water Project	State SRF Program	This project was identified and placed in the CIP several years ago. Its purpose is to improve the low pressure concerns in the area around the Finley water tank through system improvements that create a medium pressure zone in the specified area. Preliminary engineering has been completed and the report was used for a funding application that was submitted to the State Revolving Fund in the fall of 2020. The first application was declined however we have resubmitted the funding application after making several changes to the scope of the project. We are currently waiting for the acceptance of the application and funding approval from the State SRF program. The end results of this project will provide better water pressure and well as improved fire protection to the identified area.	\$5,750,000	\$115,000	\$5,865,000
Water Interconnection Project	TBA	The water distribution system analysis identified a possible interconnection of the Lenoir water system with a neighboring utility in the region. A more detailed engineering review of this project is being finalized. Funds being made available through the state and federal government are being considered to facilitate this project as they come available.			
Whitnel Transmission Line Replacement - Phase #1	ARP, Infrastructure Funds or SRF Funding - TBD	This project was identified in the water distribution system analysis as a top priority project. It would replace the existing 20 inch line from the water plant to Sawmills with a 24 inch line. Cost estimates range from \$7 million to \$10 million dollars. Surveying is underway to determine the location of the new line.	10,000,000.00		10,000,000.00
Brownfield Assessment Grant - #2	EPA	The City has submitted an application to EPA for a second Brownfield assessment grant in the amount of \$500,000.00 to complete the work at the old Broyhill site and several other sites in Lenoir including the former American and Efrid furniture location. Notification of grant funding should be in the spring of 2022.	500,000.00		500,000.00
The Campus Improvements	CDBG	Phased improvements to the auditorium in the Historic Lenoir High School continue. The completed ADA compliant and accessible ground floor bathrooms allows for the facilitate to increase use of the auditorium. Evaluation and discussions are underway regarding the use of the adjacent buildings is with the hope for an increase in much needed event spaces in the Downtown core and maximize the use of City owned properties. Theater/stage and audio upgrades to the auditorium would provide us with an ideal setting to host a variety of events and meetings.	250,000.00		250,000.00
Wayfinding	NC COMMERCE TOURIM GRANT	Grant funding for a wayfinding system to provide information regarding attractions, municipal amenities and local businesses. Signs will encourage travelers on 321 to visit downtown, the LHS Theater Auditorium and Recreational Fields, our Mountain Bike Trails, OVT Trails, Greenway MLK and Aquatic Center - to name just a few.	641,500.00		641,500.00
TBD	JBS/T-Mobile Hometown Grant	TBD	95,000.00		95,000.00
Subtotal			25,111,500.00	3,302,500.00	28,414,000.00
Grant Total			34,186,191.00	5,140,509.00	39,326,700.00

2022 City Council Priorities

1. Continue Efforts to Offer Competitive Compensation and Benefits for Employees
2. Increase Funding & Support for Minimum Housing & Code Enforcement
3. Develop Strategies to Support Affordable, Workforce, and Market-Rate Housing
Continue to Fund & Support Street Paving Plan
Develop Master Plans for The Campus, Downtown, and Park & Recreation
Establish a Human Relations Commission (Diversity, Equity & Inclusion)
4. Implement Wayfinding Plan, including Greenway Signage
Establish Area Plans for Whitnel & West End
Continue to Fund & Support Technology/Cybersecurity/Digital Services
5. Share State of the City Presentations/Re-establish Community Meetings
6. Continue to Fund & Support Water/Sewer Capital Improvements Plan
7. Continue to Fund & Support Sidewalks/Greenway/OVT

Other Areas of Focus:

Employee Recruitment/Retention:

- Increase Employee Engagement
- Incentivize/Reward Efficiencies
- Develop Continuing Customer Service Education

Housing:

- Market City-owned Properties to Sell
- Encourage Downtown Living
- Continue to Promote Shovel-ready Residential Subdivisions
- Participate in WPCOG Vacant & Substandard Housing Task Force

Community Beautification:

- Continue Implementation of North Main Area Plan & Fairfield South Plan
- Develop Strategies to Address Commercial Blight (city-wide & downtown)
- Address Major Appearance Issues (city entry corridors)
- Develop Plan to Address Litter in Community (State, Local Partners)

Healthy Infrastructure:

- Continue to Fund & Support City Facilities/Fleet Plan
- Continue to Fund & Support Stormwater Improvements
- Implement Downtown 2-Way Traffic Plan
- Implement Bike/Ped Plan

Economic Development:

- Encourage Public/Private Partnerships
- Continue Partnership with Caldwell EDC

Public Engagement:

- Market Quality of Life Amenities
- Develop Strategic/Targeted Communication (multi-lingual)
- Promote Smart City, Online Interaction

Other

- Seek COVID-related Funding Opportunities to Help Citizens