

Lenoir Planning Retreat Agenda – Friday, February 28, 2025
Blue Ridge Energy Community Room
8:00 a.m.-11:45 a.m.

Breakfast [8:00am]

Call to Order, Introductions & Opening Remarks - Mayor Joe Gibbons/Anthony Starr [8:30am]

Mission Statement & Vision Review - Anthony Starr [8:35am]

Customer Service Team Update - Joshua Harris [8:45am]

State of the City “2024 Review” Presentation - Scott Hildebran/Mayor Gibbons [9:00am]

Break [10:00am]

Presentations [10:15am]

- ***Lenoir Comprehensive Plan/P&R Master Plan Update*** - Danny Wilson, Planning Manager - FNI [30 minutes]
- ***The Campus Project Update*** - Jared Wright, Director of Special Projects/Grants [30 min.]
- ***Homeless Response Team Program Update*** - Ben Willis, Community & Economic Development Director, Western Piedmont Council of Governments [15 min.]
- ***Caldwell/Lenoir Housing Plan*** - Alison Adams, Regional Planning Director, WPCOG & Ashley Bolick, Caldwell Economic Development [30 min.]

Review of 2024-25 Strategic Priorities - Scott Hildebran [12:00 pm]

Questions/Comments - Anthony Starr [12:10pm]

Break - Lunch [12:15pm]

12:45 p.m.-3:00 p.m.

Presentation [12:45pm]

Grant Funding/Projects Review - Scott Hildebran/Donna Bean [60 minutes]

Facilitated Discussion - Priorities - Anthony Starr [1:45pm]

- A. What current issues/projects should be continued as strategic priorities for 2025-26 and what new issues/projects should be included for future consideration?
- B. Which of these issues are the most important for the City invest effort and resources during 2025-26?
- C. Ranking Exercise

Wrap Up: Questions/Comments - Anthony Starr [2:30pm]

Adjournment [3:00pm]

Budget Planning Retreat – Tuesday, March 25, 2024, 8:30 a.m.

Enclosures

- City of Lenoir Mission/Vision Statement
- 2024 Customer Service Team Update
- Customer Service Keys
- 2024-25 Strategic Priorities
- 2024 Department Updates/2025 Department Focus Areas
 - Communications
 - Finance/Administration
 - Fire Department
 - Main Street
 - Parks & Recreation
 - Planning & Community Development
 - Police Department
 - Public Services - Public Utilities
 - Public Services - Public Works
 - Special Projects & Grants

Items to be distributed at meeting (February 28)

- State of City 2024 Slide Show
- Presentations – Slides
 - *Lenoir Comprehensive Plan/P&R Master Plan Update*
 - *The Campus Project Update*
 - *Homeless Response Team Program Update*
 - *Caldwell/Lenoir Housing Plan*
- Projects Review/Grants

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, and attractive living and business environment, through the efficient delivery of essential city services in a fiscally responsible and equitable manner.
- to identify, prioritize, plan, and act on opportunities for preserving and improving the quality of life of all of our citizens and community.

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 and responsive*
- *an employer of choice*
- *forward thinking*
- *honest and ethical*
- *inclusive and equitable*
- *innovative and collaborative*
- *transparent*
- *fiscally responsible*



Customer Service Team 2024 Report

By Autumn Moffett and Joshua Harris, Feb. 7, 2025

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, visitors, and each other, and to motivate our coworkers through support and recognition of a job well done.

The Customer Service Team continued their efforts in 2024 to provide resources to city staff so that we can all deliver “Service Beyond Measure” to the residents of Lenoir.



MEETINGS

- The Customer Service Team (CST) met monthly throughout the year to plan employee appreciation events, host new hire orientations, create current employee training materials, and to discuss and share citywide service stories.

TRAINING

- CST held eight new hire customer service orientations throughout the year for both full-time and part-time staff. During each orientation, CST members give an overview of city departments and services, introduce the customer service keys, and set expectations for new employees.
- In 2024, CST continued working on current employee training videos, and was able to get Customer Service Key 4, Professionalism, filmed. The next skit will be Timely and Efficient, which has been written, and CST is planning on filming it at the Police Department. Each video highlights a service key, demonstrates good customer service, and is then distributed to each department to watch and discuss.

RESOURCES

- In 2024, CST continued hosting a city tent at local festivals. The city tent serves as place where citizens can learn more information about the city, the services offered, job opportunities, activities available, and general information about the festivals.

EMPLOYEE APPRECIATION

- CST hosted the Employee Appreciation event in August. Employees were invited to come out to LAFC for the evening and enjoy loads of fun, free food, and good company.
- For 2025, CST plans on hosting the Employee Appreciation event in August at the new splash pad at the Lenoir Rotary Soccer Complex!
- For Take a Break on Us, CST hosted an employee pizza party in March at Mulberry Recreation Center, and we plan on doing this program again in 2025.
- CST brought back the employee birthday cards for 2024. Every month, employees with birthdays that month receive a personal birthday card from the city.



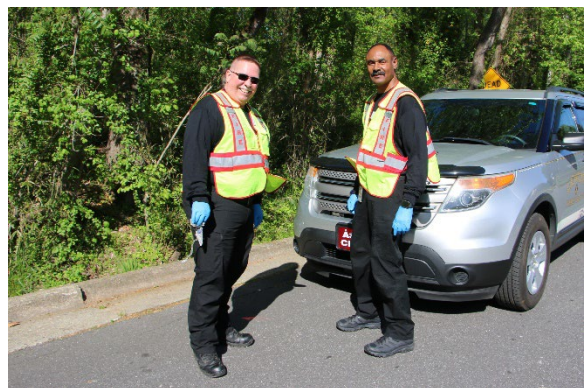
GOLDEN TICKETS

- In 2024, City employees gave out 30 Golden Ticket nominations to their coworkers. Golden Tickets are given to employees who go above and beyond to provide service beyond measure. CST will be announcing the 2023 Annual Golden Ticket Winner in March.
- In October of 2025, CST began announcing the annual and quarterly Golden Ticket winners at the City Council meetings. This is another way to recognize our employees that go above and beyond their duties!



COMMUNITY EVENTS

- CST organized an Employee Litter Sweep in April 2024. Staff picked up about two dozen bags of trash. Employees from City Hall, Downtown, Finance, Fire, Police, Parks and Recreation, Planning, and Public Works participated. The fall event was canceled due to Hurricane Helene.



MISCELLANEOUS

- In February of 2024, CST voted on a new Customer Service Team logo!
- For 2025 CST is planning on partnering with the HR department to bring back the Employee Recognition Dinner!



GOALS FOR 2025

- Continue current employee appreciation programs.
- Assist Human Resources with restarting and hosting the Employee Service Awards event.
- Create at least two more Customer Service Key training videos.
- Explore options for community outreach events.

CUSTOMER SERVICE TEAM

- **Crystal McCurry**, Police, Co-Chair
- **Joshua Harris**, Administration, Co-Chair
- **Autumn Moffett**, Parks & Recreation
- **Juliana Tripician**, Parks & Recreation
- **Garrett Williams**, Public Works
- **Jeff Church**, Public Utilities
- **Scott Lingle**, Public Utilities
- **Rhonda Hollowell**, Police

CUSTOMER SERVICE KEYS

- Key 1 - Personable
- Key 2 - Pro-Active
- Key 3 - Effective Communication
- Key 4 - Professionalism
- Key 5 - Timely and Efficient
- Key 6 - Teamwork
- Key 7 - Equitable Service
- Key 8 - Successful Service Recovery

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



2024 City Council Priorities

1. Continue efforts to offer competitive compensation and benefits for employees to improve recruitment and retention.
2. Develop options to increase code enforcement and improve beautification in three primary areas:
 - Abandoned/neglected housing
 - Dilapidated commercial properties
 - Appearance of downtown buildings
3. Continue to develop strategies to support affordable, workforce, and market-rate housing.
4. Continue to fund and support the Water/Sewer Capital Improvements Plan.
5. Continue to evaluate organizational staffing needs, and encourage succession planning and professional development.

2/23/2024

COMMUNICATION & PUBLIC INFORMATION ANNUAL REPORT

Joshua Harris, Communication & Public Information Director, Jan. 24, 2025



Accomplishments in 2024

CONTENT

- **54** news releases
- **4,204** photos
- **32** videos
- **1,035** website updates
- **1** radio interviews/PSAs
- **302** alerts
- **424** questions & answers
- **1,142** form requests
- **12** messages on the electronic sign at the LFD Station 1
- **29** items for Mayor and Council (*resolutions, speeches, etc.*)
- **79** items for Committees (*Customer Service Team & Safety Committee*)

NEWS RELEASES

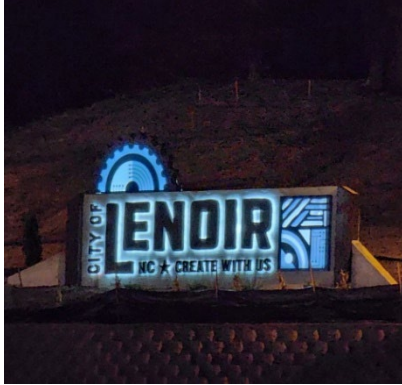
The City's **54 news releases** from 2024 and other releases from 2023 received **28,082 views** in 2024, which is 5.34% of total website traffic for 2024.

The **Top 10** releases from 2024 are:

1. [City facilities closed Friday, prepare for severe weather](#), Sept. 26, 2024
2. [July 4th events happening in Lenoir](#), July 1, 2024
3. [City Hall opening Monday, garbage collection delayed](#), Sept. 29, 2024
4. [N.C. Blackberry Festival this weekend in Downtown Lenoir!](#) July 10, 2024
5. [Caldwell County and City of Lenoir approve economic development incentive for Google](#), Oct. 23, 2024
6. [City building splash pad at Lenoir Rotary Soccer Complex](#), June 28, 2024
7. [Summer music, movies, and fun coming to Lenoir](#), May 8, 2024
8. [Discolored water safe to consume](#), Jan. 22, 2024
9. [Light Up Lenoir Thursday in Downtown Lenoir](#), Nov. 19, 2024
10. [Wood, Fire, Smoke Festival this Saturday in Downtown Lenoir](#), Oct. 15, 2024

PHOTOS

Staff created 4,204 photos while creating new releases, covering city events, attending Council meetings, and more. We used those photos in 50-plus news releases and more than 1,100 social media posts!



Lenoir Gateway Sign



Baseball Opening Day



Lenoir Bicycle Festival



Spring Employee Litter Sweep



Friday night concert



The Camp at the MLK Jr. Center



Lenoir 2045 Comp Plan West End meeting



Blackberry Festival volunteers



Tomato Blast at Community Gardens and Employee Appreciation Day



Drive-Through Trunk-or-Treat at the Martin Luther King Jr. Center

VIDEOS

Staff created **32 videos** in 2024, the majority being Council meetings and events.

City videos (~290 in total) received **18,237** views with **806** hours of watch time on Facebook and YouTube during the past year.

Staff started **live streaming** Council meeting videos in September 2023. In 2024, staff live streamed 17 Council meeting videos. The public was able to watch Council meetings in real time, and the meetings were available online immediately following the stream.

Due to some technical difficulties with the County wi-fi, we did not stream all Council meetings, but staff posted all meetings online. We have resolved the streaming issue.



City Council Meeting, June 4, 2024 Live Stream



City Council Meeting, May 21, 2024 Live Stream



City Council Meeting, May 7, 2024 Live Stream



City Council Meeting, April 16, 2024 Live Stream

WEBSITE

Staff made more than **1,000 updates** to www.cityoflenoir.com in 2024. Updates ranged from updating pages, adding documents, adding news releases and calendar events, updating staff, and posting alerts.

The website received a total of **526,157 views** from more than **200,000 unique users**, according to Google Analytics. The most popular search terms in 2024 included “property tax(es),” “pay my bill,” “water (bill),” and “downtown carriage rides.”

TOP PAGES for 2024 excluding the home page were:

#	Page	Views	Users
1	Payment Options	60,369	44,508
2	Jobs	21,365	13,210
3	Water & Sewer Service	15,095	8,203
4	Lenoir Aquatic & Fitness Center	14,212	8,241
5	Search	10,647	4,888
6	Police	9,034	5,968
7	Property Taxes	7,351	3,286
8	Alert Center	7,031	4,776
9	Calendar	6,299	3,328
10	Job – Firefighter / EMT	5,868	5,620

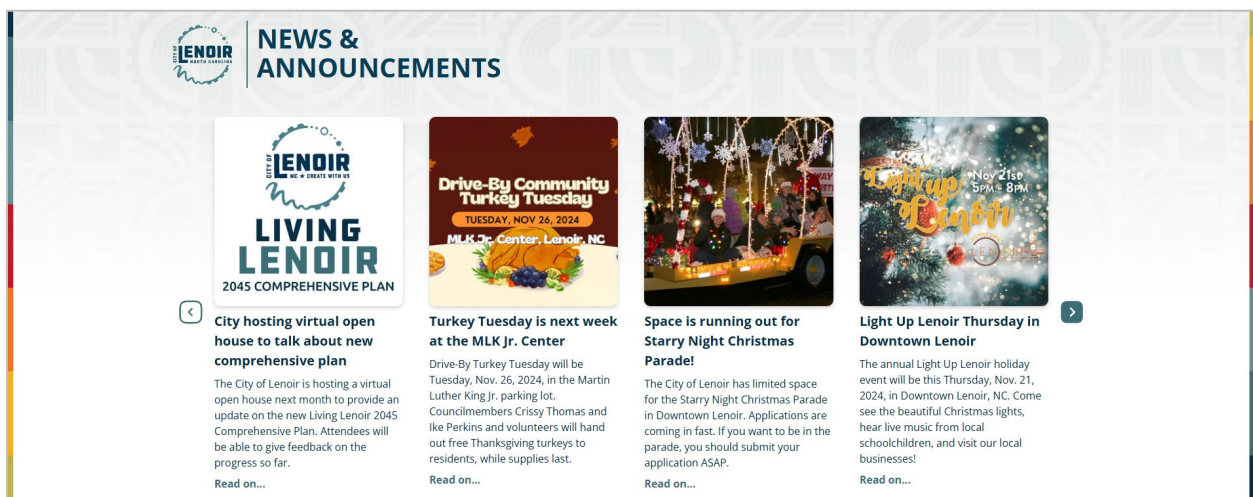
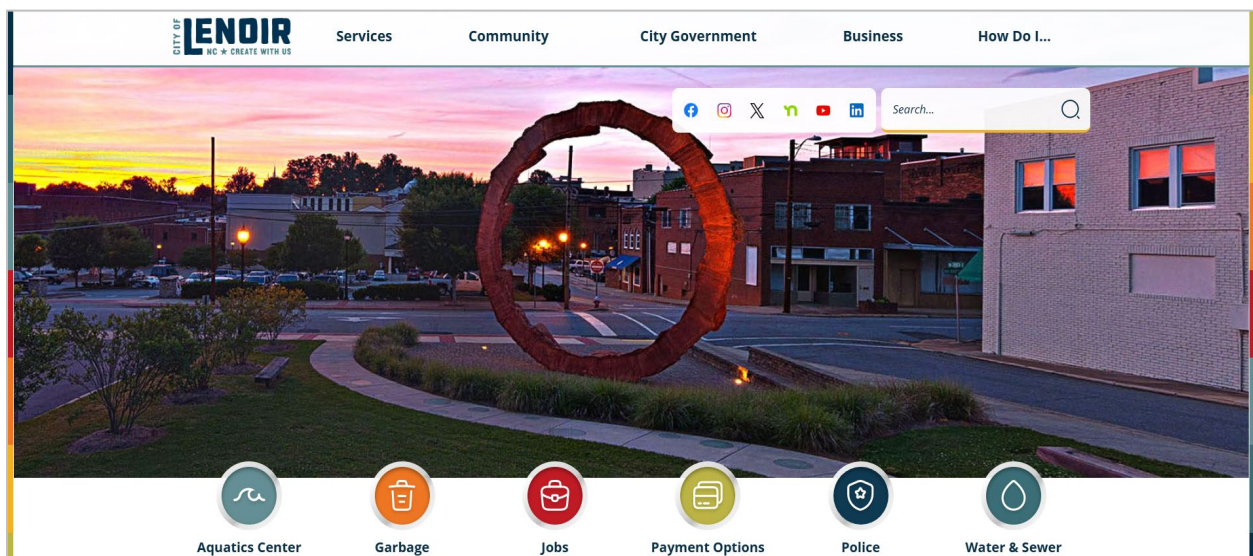
DESIGN REFRESH

Staff completed a refresh/update to the City website that went live on Jan. 14, 2025.

We're still using the City brand, but we brightened up the look and added some more color to the design.

The Search bar and City social links are displayed prominently on the homepage and interior pages. The round quick link buttons on the homepage will take visitors to the most popular pages on the site, followed by popular links to other pages.

We reverted to browser friendly fonts, which should speed up page load, and we incorporated some of the brand patterns in the background of the homepage.



ALERTS, QUESTIONS & REQUESTS

In addition to providing content to the public such as news releases, department information, and event updates, the City website can send alerts to the public, and, the public can use the website to ask questions and make requests.

ALERTS

Staff sent out **302 alerts** in 2024 via the website and CivicReady covering topics from meeting notices, agenda packet updates, news releases, job openings, events, and service messages such as road closings and trash collection delays.

QUESTIONS & REQUESTS

The public used the Contact Us form to submit **424 questions** and **1,142 request forms** last year.

	2024	2023	2022	2021
<i>Alerts</i>	302	475	360	352
<i>Questions</i>	424	377	332	303
<i>Forms</i>	1,142	1,324	1,230	1,271

Current forms on the website are:

- ADA Title II Grievance Form
- Additional Garbage Cart Request
- Bulk Collection Request
- Contact Us
- Garbage Cart Issues
- Garbage Collection Request
- LCRR Customer Self-Assessment
- Nuisance Issue Form
- Public Records Request
- Report a Concern
- Utility Bill Payment Plan Application
- White Goods Collection Request

MEDIA COVERAGE

In 2024, City news releases appeared nearly **230 times** in the local paper and on various websites in 2024. Articles appeared **77 times in the News-Topic**, and **146 times websites** that staff track and follow.



SOCIAL MEDIA & ENGAGEMENT

PAGES

We have 10 primary social media accounts for the City of Lenoir and various departments. The City, Downtown, Fire, Parks & Recreation, and Police have Facebook pages. The City and Downtown have accounts on Instagram. We also have City of Lenoir accounts on X, Nextdoor, LinkedIn, and YouTube.

 [City of Lenoir, NC Government](#)

 [Downtown Lenoir](#)

 [City of Lenoir Fire Department](#)

 [Lenoir Parks & Recreation](#)

 [Lenoir Police Department](#)

 [City of Lenoir, NC](#)

 [cityoflenoirnc](#)

 [downtownlenoir](#)

 [City of Lenoir, NC Government](#)

 [City of Lenoir](#)

 [City of Lenoir](#)

POSTS

In 2024, City staff made **1,527 social media posts** across our social media channels.

FOLLOWERS

City followers increased from 49,991 at the start of the year to **57,674** at the end of 2024. That's nearly **7,683 new followers**, which is a **15.4% increase**.

For reference, in December 2017, City accounts had 12,906 followers. Our followers have increased 349.9% in the last eight years.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

We held one Employee Litter Sweeps on April 25, 2024. Staff picked up about two dozen bags of trash. Employees from City Hall, Downtown, Finance, Fire, Police, Parks and Recreation, Planning, and Public Works participated. The fall event was canceled due to Hurricane Helene.



Goals for 2025

- Work with Public Works to complete new Veterans Memorial in Downtown
- Work with Fire Chief to incorporate an Emergency Communication Plan into our updated Emergency Response and Mitigation Plan
- Continue to build the Staff Directory and improve the CITYLINK Intranet
- Increase video production, partner with County studio staff if possible
- Continue growth of followers on social media



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 2024:

- During 2024, the Collections Department processed over 109,900 transactions totaling over \$27,608,100. The number of transactions was down 1% compared to the prior year and the amount collected was down 7% which 42% of the 7% decrease was due to one personal tax payment and majority of the remainder was due to grant funding received in the prior year. The largest percentage of the transactions was water and tax payments. The majority of the transactions were in the form of checks at 88% with cash making up 2% and credit cards being 10%.
- The Finance Department also processed the following:
 - 6,103 vendor checks totaling over \$29,566,000
 - 122,856 utility bills totaling over \$10,264,400
 - \$16,687,750 in property taxes levies
 - 8,222 Payroll Checks/Deposits processed totaling \$13,974,974
 - 397 W-2 Wage Statements
 - 282 job applications
 - 50 new water accounts
 - 19 Worker Compensation claims filed
 - 35 Property and Liability claims filed
 - 276 POs generated
 - 1,754 IT work orders completed
 - 3,364 total phone calls to IT support staff extensions
 - 71 email accounts created or deleted
 - 198 security cameras maintained
 - 40+ door access systems maintained (double the prior year)
 - 32+ Unifi Servers maintained for cameras and door access devices. (double the prior year)
 - 185 VOIP phones maintained
 - 287 desktops/laptops maintained
 - 224 network related pieces of equipment maintained
- The Finance Department, including Human Resources, organized training for departmental staff to insure all staff had the necessary information to be successful. Topics covered included human resources, payroll, ADA, safety, budgeting, purchasing and other areas of importance to those in leadership roles. With the

input of the staff, training for 2025 is being developed to cover various leadership areas where staff identified the need for additional training.

Billing and Collections

- The Revenue Collector continued working with Metersys, Watersmart and Mueller vendors to improve the meter reading billing process. During the past year, the team continued troubleshooting issues to make sure the data in all systems is up-to-date and meters are working properly. The Revenue Collector has worked with water staff verifying meter reads to ensure bills continue to be accurate and on schedule. The Watersmart system provides those customers who utilize it, a robust platform for bill management. At the end of 2024, approximately 9.9% of customers have created accounts in the new system.
- Strategic Foreclosures have become an important tool for tax collections and code enforcement. Over the past year, 7 new cases were filed and \$102,153 was collected due to foreclosure proceedings. A total of \$354,173, has been collected since 2017 with 29% of that amount being collected during the current year. During that same time period, 132 cases have been referred and 110 cases were resolved. These foreclosures have also assisted in several nuisance properties being clean up.
- The City of Lenoir was awarded the GFOA Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for the 33rd year.

Risk Management

- The Risk Manager and the Safety Coordinator have worked together to spearhead a targeted focus on safety training and awareness. They have begun auditing each facility to identify safety concerns and have been able to correct several safety issues as well as develop preparedness plans. Some of their accomplishments are as follows:
 - Along with staff, Risk Management completed City wide fire extinguisher inspections.
 - The Risk Manager and Safety Coordinator, the Risk Team, worked with various staff across the City to assist with the initial evaluation of the condition of the gym floor at Mulberry Rec Center to determine if removal or repair was needed. The Risk Team also worked with them to determine the source of the water that caused the Mulberry Rec Center gym floor to buckle. These evaluations resulted in removing the existing gym floor and designing a new roof drainage system for the Mulberry Rec Center building.
 - In conjunction with several departments, coordinated training through the Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP) Road Scholar Program Training topics included Chainsaw Safety and Fall Protection training and Supervisor training for the Public Works department.
 - The Risk Management team conducted Forklift Certification training for the Fire Department employees to allow them to assist the National Guard and County Emergency Management with Hurricane Helene

donations and also trained the Public Works and Public Utilities employees.

- The Safety Coordinator completed NIMS ICS 700 which is an introduction to the National Incident Management System class.
- To insure that the correct Personal Protective Equipment was being used, the Risk Team worked with City departments to evaluate their Personal Protective Equipment and distributed new hard hats, safety glasses, ear plugs, and safety vest as needed to departments and also performed respirator fit testing for Fire Investigators.

Information Technology (IT)

- The IT Manager received North Carolina Local Government Information Systems Association (NCLGISA) 2024 IT Professional of the Year Award. In their announcement about the award, NCLGISA wrote, "Throughout the year, Ben has exhibited steadfast determination to support the City of Lenoir beyond expectations. Despite facing personal hardships, he consistently goes above and beyond, investing countless unpaid hours to ensure the city's IT infrastructure operates seamlessly. Ben prioritizes the well-being of his team members and tirelessly advocates for the city's success."



- IT completed multiple team projects in 2024 which required all IT staff to work diligently with transitioning over to various platforms including:
 - AT&T FirstNET migration (70+ officers)
 - Getac Body Worn Camera (100+ devices)
 - Splashtop to NinjaOne RMM (250+ devices)
 - Transition from iWorQ ticketing to NinjaOne

- Multiple network upgrades (Gunpowder, MLK, George Bernhardt Water Treatment Plant)
 - Lenoir Police Department file recovery after a lightning strike on FreeNAS took down 5 TB of critical data
- The implementation of the Proxmox Virtualization Environment coupled with a bare metal approach to back-up the domain controller, which means the software is running directly on the server rather than virtualized, has been completed with a new hybrid sharing solution for tiered access evidence sharing for the Police Department. Due to this success, this model is being replicated for other departments, starting with City Hall administration and then following up with Public Works / Utilities and finally Parks and Recreation. This technique worked well with sharing files during the Hurricane Helene recovery documentation.
- Several infrastructure upgrades are underway in various phases at year-end:
 - Electronic Door Access installations for all the Fire Department locations
 - SCADA and Camera network overhaul at George Bernhardt Water Treatment Plant, Gunpowder and Lower Creek Wastewater Treatment Plants
 - Downtown Sounds is operational in 12 locations which will be 14 once completed
 - Electronic Door Access installations at Lenoir Police Department, JE Broyhill Park, and Broyhill Walking Park completed
 - Designed, constructed, and installed LaserCube chassis for Downtown Stage for Christmas
 - Upgrading desktops/laptops to Windows 11 Operating System since Windows 10 is End of Life in October of 2025
 - Transitioning email addresses from ci.lenoir.nc.us to lenoirnc.gov
 - Multiple agencies have had major changes in their IT methodologies as well, including Caldwell County and the State Bureau of Investigation (SBI) which involved the entire IT team to transition:
 - DCI/SBI transition from Cisco AnyConnect to Palo Alto Networks GlobalProtect
 - Getac Cloud
 - WatchGuard Authpoint
 - P2C Cloud migration from CentralSquare
 - Caldwell County GIS cloud migration
 - New E911 cluster with domain trust created with LPD.LENOIRNC.GOV
- Upon reflection after Hurricane Helene, there was some opportunities to mitigate IT issues in the event of another disaster. Mitigation actions taken were:
 - IT installed a Solar Generator on top of Hibriten to support radio operations for Public Works to allow for radio usage in the event of a widespread power outage.

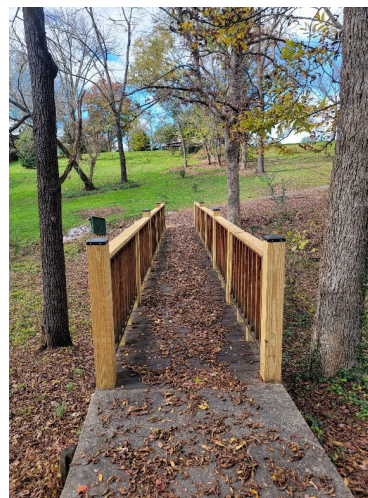
- IT installed Starlink at Rhodhiss Water Plan in case of an internet outage to avoid water interruption due to SCADA systems being down due to an internet outage during a disaster.
- During the past year, even with dealing with personal tragedies and loss, the birth of a child and the devastation of Hurricane Helene, the team continued to complete projects and maintaining all the technology needs of the City.
- The need to evaluate IT security is constant and the IT Manager continually looks for new ways to improve our systems as 2024 continued the trend of cyber threats for all municipal governments. Fortunately, due to measures already in place, the City was able to remain secure. Daily, the City gets an average of twenty serious virus threats and an average of 1,000+ phishing attempts. To make users more aware of potential phishing attempts and security issues, IT established baseline Phishing security tools and continued contracting with a vendor for online training. The vendor trains and interacts with users to determine if they are able to identify and avoid phishing attempts. To combat external security threats, IT staff continues to enable multi-factor authentication on critical accounts.
- The IT staff worked with the NC National Guard to perform a Pen Test on our system. A Pen Test is a security exercise where a cyber-security expert attempts to find and exploit vulnerabilities in a computer system.

Safety Committee

- The Safety Committee was reorganized and began focusing on evaluating the safety of City facilities. The committee did inspections of 10 City owned facilities and discovered some safety and facility issues. After each inspection, the Risk Team met with the department personnel to discuss the findings of the inspection and develop an action plan to remediate the issues as well as educate the department personnel on OSHA and other safety and health standards. Below are a few before and after photos of the findings.

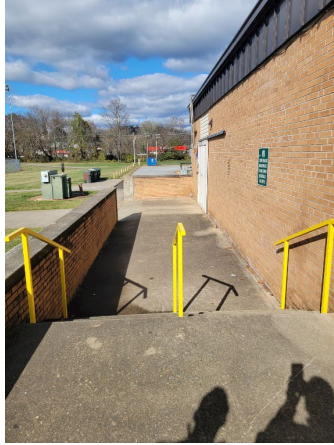


Before – JE Broyhill Park

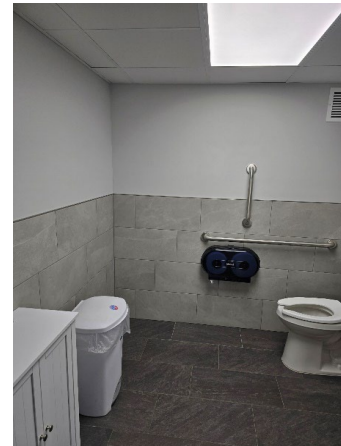
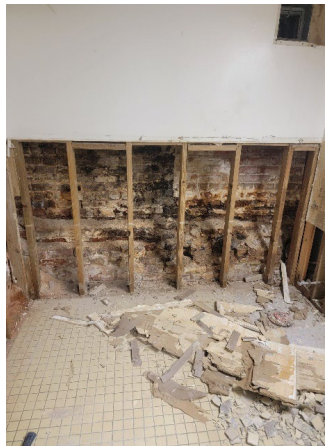
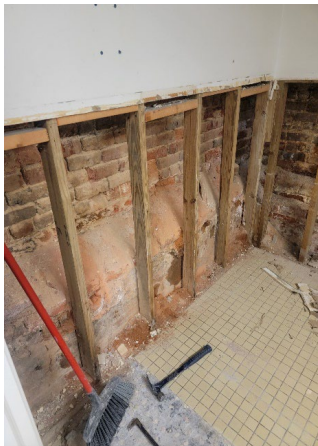


After –JE Broyhill Park

- New handrails at Mulberry and MLK were installed to make them safer. There were no handrails on the steps before which presented a fall hazard.

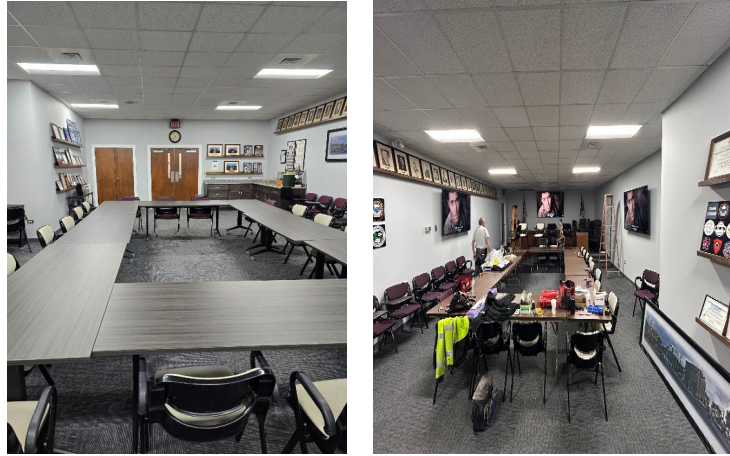


- The Risk Manager and IT assisted Building Maintenance in multiple building maintenance projects over the past year. One project was the renovations of City Hall. The windows were completed in late 2023 and the outside painting was completed in early 2024. Painting the inside of City Hall as well as flooring replacements and restroom remodels were complete in mid-2024. IT worked hard to move technology during the renovations and helped with the technology upgrades in the Conference rooms. City Hall received funding from the state for exterior repairs and window replacements in the amount of \$200,000. No significant exterior work had been done since 1982 (43 years ago) when the building was remodeled. The exact date of construction of the building is unknown however, a study by Carter and Burgess dated February 2003, estimates the building is 80 to 114 years old based on the design features. A few before and after pictures are below.



Before – water damage in the basement restroom.

After – basement restroom



Upgrades in the Conference Room

Future

- Below is a list of projects, concerns, and impacts the Finance Department plans to focus on in the calendar year:
 - IT plans to continue evaluating the City's hardware and infrastructure needs and continue to look for ways to improve the data infrastructure and identify ways to be as cost efficient as possible. Off-site storage remains a high priority as well. IT continues work to design and build a new network infrastructure using the SkyBest connection with the goal to maintain and improve internet speed and reliability.
 - IT will continue to do some simulated disaster recoveries to provide proof that multiple backups of city data can be recovered in a worst-case scenario. The focus is continuing to take a proactive rather than a reactive approach to cyber security and threats.
 - IT plans to begin transitioning all email accounts over the lenoirnc.gov domain and move accounts to the more secure Microsoft 365 platform.
 - The IT Infrastructure/Cybersecurity and Financial software used by the City of Lenoir is in the process being reviewed. It is anticipated that the software will be virtualized in 2025 and an employee portal will be implemented. The Infrastructure upgrades will include network and firewall upgrades as well as optimizing the data flow to add additional layers of security for the systems and avoid bottlenecks with data flow. By reconfiguring the entry point, virtualizing some storage and restructuring IP addresses, our systems will be even stronger and be able to defend in depth against attempts to gain access to internal systems by blocking unwanted incoming traffic from unrecognized sources. The financial software upgrade date has been moved due to some technical issues with the vendor that remain unresolved. The new date is targeted for Summer/Fall 2025.
 - Council and the City Manager have ranked salaries as a priority for several years and again, compensation remains a priority. The COLAs and

new pay plan the past few years have made some progress toward closing the pay gap however; there is still work to be done. Feedback from department heads continues to indicate 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 nine years and the COLA percentages appear to have improved morale. This past year, a graduated holiday bonus was given to recognize longevity which was received positively. 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. City staff is continuing to review the City's current pay plan and hiring practices, with the goal to become more competitive while staying within the framework of the current pay plan.

- Staff will work to maintain information regarding the 50+ projects identified that the City is working on currently. This number has more than doubled in the few past years.
- City staff is working with FEMA and other agencies to finalize the City's request for reimbursement from Hurricane Helena damages as well as identifying opportunities for mitigation funding.



Lenoir Fire Department

602 Harper Avenue, N.W.
Lenoir, North Carolina 28645



Fire Chief
Norman S Staines
(828) 757-2191

Deputy Fire Chief
Kenneth D. Nelson
(828) 757-2192

It is my privilege to submit to you a report reflecting on 2024 and a vision for the future for Lenoir Fire Department. The calendar year 2024 was another year of change, challenges and accomplishments for the Lenoir Fire Department. Several retirements occurred that included a Battalion Chief and two Captains which resulted in several promotions among all positions. The retirement of these three positions accounted for a combined years 74 years of service to the City of Lenoir and over 100 years of combined firefighting experience.

2024 was the busiest year for Lenoir Fire Department for calls for service in its 147-year history. Lenoir Fire Department responded to 3,454 calls for service which is a 2% increase from 2023. This included 202 fire related calls with 28 of them being structure fires. The estimated value of property and contents pre-fire was \$20,688,750. The estimated value of fire loss of this property and content is \$495,340 which resulted in an estimated potential property and content value savings of \$20,193,410.

2024 challenged staff with a once-in-a career storm and one that locally we have not seen with similar damage since Hurricane Hugo in 1989. Friday, September 27th Hurricane Helene hit western North Carolina, bringing historic rainfall, strong winds and tornadoes. Preparation for Helene started earlier in the week for staff. Storm-related calls started early in the morning on September 27th and continued for several days. Post-storm fire department staff assisted the street department with opening roadways by removing trees and debris. The response from all City of Lenoir staff during this event exemplified "Team Lenoir".

Staff are continuing to be encouraged to introduce new ideas and techniques into our operations when they can increase our efficiency and/or safety. Some of these are reflected in this report below and we will continue to implement additional ones in the future.

The following pages will outline some of the many accomplishments for the department.

Grants / External Funding

In January the department received notification of being awarded a grant from the Firehouse Subs Public Safety Foundation valued up to \$26,698.62. This grant allowed the department to purchase 18 nozzles and 72 sections of 1 ¾" fire hose at no cost to the City of Lenoir. This allowed the department to replace all the initial attack lines on each apparatus with the exact same nozzle and hose combination.

In February the department received notification of being awarded safety grant funding from the NC League of Municipalities. The grant was a 50/50 grant of \$3,355.15 with the NCLM paying \$1571.50 of the amount and the City of Lenoir paying \$1,783.65. The grant was utilized to purchase one Industrial Scientific GasBadge Pro Single Gas Detector – NH3 and supporting supplies. The gas detector was purchased to detect anhydrous ammonia at facilities such as JBS Foods.

In August the department received notification of being awarded the Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) with a value up to \$62,170.47 of federal funds to purchase 61 sets of wildland personal protective equipment and 18 fire shelters. The City of Lenoir will provide a 5% match of \$3,108.53 to purchase the requested equipment. In addition to grass fires, the new gear we be utilized during fire scene investigations and storm debris removal such as cutting downed trees. This new gear will reduce strain on firefighters when compared to wearing structural gear during these situations.

As part of the 2024-25 State of North Carolina Budget Caldwell County received funding to provide an allotment of dual band radios to each Fire Department in Caldwell County. The City of Lenoir has received 8 Kenwood portable radios and 2 Kenwood mobile radios at no cost.

Equipment Replacement

Following a fire at NEPTCO five sets of turnout gear including coat, pants and boots had to be removed from service due to the chemical that gear encountered during fire suppression. Unfortunately, all the damaged gear was less than three years old, but the gear was deemed unsafe by the manufacturer, and they advised us to remove it from service. As a result, new gear was ordered to replace this gear. *These five sets of gear were purchased with particulate shields in the pants and coats to help prevent exposure to carcinogens. This is a new addition to gear at Lenoir, but one that will help protect firefighters and will be incorporated into all future structural firefighting gear purchases.* **NOTE:** the cost associated with replacing the damage gear is \$19,225.

In May we purchased a Task Force Foam PRO/pak Portable Foam System that will allow firefighters to more efficiently prevent rekindles of both house, woods, grass and rubbish fires. The unit creates a foam mixture that smothers out hot spots and will reduce on scene time for firefighters during overhaul. Also, with the application of foam, the chance for rekindles is decreased. Reduced on scene time, less water use and less potential for rekindles results in a potential cost savings for the department. **NOTE:** the cost associated with the purchase of the PRO/pak is \$1,446.



We were able to purchase five (5) new SCOTT RIT PAKS to replace older RIT PAKS. RIT PAKS are used in the event a firefighter or victim should need to be rescued and needed air during the rescue. This purchase replaced RIT PAKS at the end of the service life and allowed us to have all RIT PAKS the same model which enhances firefighter safety by not having to learn operations

of different RIT PAKS. **NOTE:** the cost associated with the purchase of the five RIT PAKS is \$18,148.05.

We were able to purchase a new set of extrication tools to be utilized on an apparatus at Station 1. These 10,000 psi tools will replace an old set of 5,000 psi tools that were approximately twenty-five years old. A set of Hurst tools including a spreader, cutter, ram, and spare batteries were purchased. The importance of the increase in psi capabilities is due to the new vehicle manufacturing materials and the ability to efficiently extricate a patient in these vehicles. **NOTE:** the cost associated with the purchase of these new tools was \$31,640.70.

We were able to purchase twenty-two (22) new portable scene lights. These lights are battery powered and are quicker to deploy than previous lights. Also, the new lights are LED, so they are “brighter” than the previous lights. In the short time since receiving the lights it has been noticed staff are quicker to deploy lights when needed which results in a safer fire scene. **NOTE:** the cost associated with the purchase of these new lights was \$12,560.91.

A new Polaris Ranger UTV has been purchased to enhance our current capabilities. The new UTV will have the capabilities to carry four (4) firefighters or patients inside the cab. An Enforcer 10 (Compressed Foam) system will be placed on the UTV. The UTV will give access to areas not current accessible with our fire apparatus such as the Greenway. This will carry a class A/B foam concentrate which will allow it to be used to extinguish fires consisting of ordinary combustibles and flammable liquids, so the UTV will be able to assist with multiple outdoor fires. During a downtown event it would be able to assist in the event of a grease fire when accessibility by fire apparatus may be delayed due to street closures and crowded streets. The foam system will be able to convert 10 gallons of water and 20 ounces of foam concentrate into 200 gallons of finished foam with the aid of a SCBA bottle. In addition, the UTV will have an area in the bed that would allow for a patient to be transported to an ambulance on a backboard if they needed to be placed in spinal protocol. **NOTE:** the cost associated with this project is \$37,800.59.



Federal requirements effective July 1, 2025 have required replacement of several of our mobile (truck) radios and upgrades to all of our portable radios. Those radios not meeting the “P-25 phase II” compliance will not be operable after June 30, 2025. All equipment purchases and upgrades have been ordered and waiting on delivery. **NOTE:** the cost associated with this project is \$45,391.20.

As part of the 2024/25 CIP upgrades of PPE and SCBA were listed. Fourteen new fire helmets, six new rescue helmets, twenty pair of boots, six sets of turnout gear (coat, pants, gloves and hoods), five SCBA, five SCBA mask and ten SCBA bottles have all been ordered and delivery is pending. **NOTE:** the cost associated with this project is \$76,435.70.

Station Upgrades

New door locks were purchased for each of the fire stations and once installation is completed it will help with security of the buildings. As part of this project, additional locks have been added to Station 1 and 2 to increase security inside the stations when bay doors are open to limit access to the living areas.

In November new HVAC units were purchased for Station 2 to replace current units. These new units will be more efficient and reliable than current units. **NOTE:** the cost associated with the purchase of the new HVAC units was \$11,833.09.

Fifty-two mattresses and bed frames were purchased to replace the beds at Station 1 and Station 2 which were at the end of the service life. **NOTE:** the cost associated with the purchase of this project was \$23,094.81.

Equipment Maintenance

In late 2023 a decision was made to move maintenance and repairs to All Pro (A fire truck repair vendor that is currently conducting maintenance for over 100 departments in western North Carolina). During the annual service of trucks in 2024 they were able to point out issues that need to be resolved with apparatus that were going undetected during the previous preventative maintenance program. The detection of these issues was because of their specialized knowledge of fire apparatus. They only repair fire apparatus and their knowledge of each manufacturer gives them an advantage to know what issues and/or trends exist with each manufacturer. The documented issues will be addressed based on their level of severity. Long-term this should help with service life and safety of apparatus and reduction in repair cost by catching issues quicker before they become more expensive fixes.

Community Involvement

The Fire Department participated in a Christmas Tree Decorating contest sponsored by Caldwell Pediatric Dentistry. The competition involved decorating a miniature Christmas Tree followed by voting on Caldwell Pediatric Dentistry Facebook and in their office. Thanks to our community we won the contest, and staff received some sweets as a prize from Caldwell Pediatric Dentistry.



We had eighteen staff members participate in the City's "Litter Sweep" event in April. Hurricane Helene caused the fall event to be canceled.

Staff applied and was able to participate on June 1st in the North Carolina Smoke Detector Canvas as an extension of our current smoke detector program. This was the first year for Lenoir Fire Department participating in the program and staff were able to install 53 smoke alarms in a single Saturday.

Additionally, 71 other smoke detectors were installed during the year as part of our normal smoke detector program. So, the annual total for 2024 was 124 smoke detectors installed.



Staff assisted with a Chick-Fil-A Community Night to provide support for the Watson Family. Zack Hatton was a Kings Creek Firefighter who passed away following injuries sustained in an automobile accident. Zack was the son of City of Lenoir Fire Department Engineer Brian Watson.



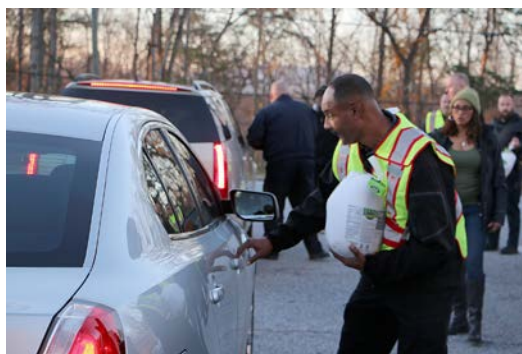
Staff participated in multiple City of Lenoir Events. Examples of these events are Blackberry Festival, July 4th Fireworks, Madhatter's Parade, Light Up Lenoir, Luminaries and Lenoir Christmas Parade.



Staff participated in several local public safety-related summer camps. These included summer camps offered by Lenoir Police Department, Caldwell County Sheriff's Office and the Keith Owens Firefighter Academy at Gamewell Fire Department.



Staff assisted with distributing turkeys at the Martin Luther King Center on Turkey Tuesday.



Collaboration

The Fire Department continued to focus on working with other departments and agencies during the year. During the year, the Police Department and Fire Department joined for breakfast on multiple occasions at Station 1. This gives them opportunities to fellowship and build relationships.



Hurricane Helene gave multiple opportunities to build relationships and work with other departments and agencies. In preparing for the Helene, staff participated in planning meetings with Caldwell County Emergency Services and North Carolina Emergency Management. Post Helene staff work alongside multiple departments within the City to help clean up debris, open roadways and assist anyway possible. Staff also provided assistance to Caldwell County and NC Air Guard while their disaster distribution center was open. In addition, staff have worked and continue to work with Caldwell County, NC Emergency Management, Western Piedmont Council of Government and FEMA as part of the recovery process.

Training

Training is a daily occurrence for staff at the Lenoir Fire Department. Depending upon the position of an employee at Lenoir Fire Department training requirements vary. During the year, staff documented 17,763 training hours. Topics include EMT in service, firefighter, rescue, fire cause determination and hazardous materials.

In 2024, staff participated in training opportunities, such as:

- Two staff completed the weeklong North Carolina Breathing Equipment School.
- Four of our Certified Fire Investigators attended the NC / SC International Association of Arson Investigators Seminar and received 36 hours of training towards their recertification.
- Six firefighters attended a Chainsaw class offered by North Carolina Forest Service.
- Two firefighters attended a weekend High Angle Rescue class offered by the North Carolina Association of Rescue and EMS.
- Three firefighters attended the Fire Department Instructor Conference.
- Four firefighters attended weekend class at the National Fire Academy.

Station Response Districts

After months of evaluating calls among response areas for each station, changes were made between some of the areas with Station 1 and Station 3. In October, Station 3 started responding

to all calls for service on both sides of Blowing Rock Boulevard from Smith Crossroads to Nuway Circle. This includes areas on east side of Blowing Rock Boulevard that had been previously covered by Station 1. As part of this redistricting Green Mountain Park was reassigned to Station 3. These changes were made to eliminate some of the dangerous intersections and road congestion on initial responses from Station 1.

Staff are continuing to evaluate the need for any additional changes in response districts. Also, these areas have been evaluated since the change. Prior to the change, little to no delay was noticed when comparing response times on calls when both Station 1 and 3 responded to the same location on calls such as fire alarms on Blowing Rock Boulevard. Apparatus would arrive within seconds of each other in this area.

Lenoir Fire Department 2025/26 and Beyond

Below is a list of concerns and impacts Lenoir Fire Department that may incur in the physical year 2025-26 and beyond. This list has items that were included last year, in addition to added items that have been identified. The staff is designing a more definitive replacement plan to help with future budget planning. Each of these projects are important to the safety and operations of the fire department, but staff understands the need for prioritizing the projects over multiple years:

Station 1 Sinkhole Repairs

We continued to be concerned with the sinkhole at Station 1. Public Works continues to work on a plan to have the necessary repairs made in the area around the sinkhole. Once repair decisions are made we will adjust our operations out of Station 1 accordingly.

Departmental Apparatus

NFPA makes recommendations on apparatus replacement based on age of and mileage on apparatus. These recommendations are based upon not only the normal wear and tear on the apparatus, but the enhanced safety features that are installed on the new apparatus. Simple examples are technology in lights from halogen to LED, engine noise level of apparatus and seat belt warning systems. NFPA is only a recommendation but needs to be considered as part of our replacement plan. Our fleet continues to get older and with this we are witnessing increased maintenance costs due to the number of repairs. Also, we are starting to have issues with finding replacement parts on some of our older apparatus as vendors are no longer producing and stocking certain parts. Apparatus manufacturers now have delivery dates up to 44 months for custom trucks, so purchases of a custom truck must be made four years ahead of the need. Stock apparatus are being sold within minutes of being placed for sale.

Over the past few years Ladder 1, (2013 Sutphen) has started experiencing large amounts of mechanical issues. In 2024 Ladder 1 was out of service for repairs for 109 days which included: transmission rebuild, torsion bars replacement, fuel tank replacement and multiple emission related issues. Tower 1 (1998 Sutphen) was out of service 98 days in 2024 due to replacement of a hydraulic cylinder that operates the ladder. The original part is no longer produced, so the manufacturer had to help develop a fix with a new cylinder. Engine 1 (2000 Sutphen) was out of service for 16 days for repairs in 2024 and due to its age replacement parts are becoming harder to purchase. Rescue 1 (2004 Spartan) was out of service 14 days in 2024. Previous Engine 1 which was planned to be a reserve was deemed unsafe in late 2023 by All Pro due to multiple issues. The rising cost of fire apparatus due to inflation over the past few years has become a concern with future needed apparatus replacement. As an example, since 2021 two separate fire apparatus

manufactures said their combined increases have been 34% and 48.5% each. These increases range annually from 4.5% to 18%.

Apparatus replacement over the next few years will have to be strategic, but necessary. Replacement of Ladder 1 with a single axle 100' or 107' will not only replace it, but help support Tower 1 with being able to reach 100'. Continuing prior administrations vision of purchasing another Rescue Pumper would replace Engine 1 and help reduce the strain placed on Rescue 1. An extension of this plan would be to purchase a custom truck that could combine Engine 1 and Rescue 1 into a single truck (Squad). A truck could be customized with water, pump and enough compartment space to be able fully combine two trucks into one and would cost less than buying two apparatus.

To reduce some of the strain on the current fleet we have adjusted responses to fire alarms and CO alarms in single family residential structures to only 2 Engines and a Ladder, unless upgraded by a Chief Officer based on information received during dispatch or information gained while enroute. Research is currently be conducted to reduce these numbers farther to help longevity on larger apparatus. All current and potential changes will be consistent with NC Rating Requirements and reduces excessive wear on apparatus.

As part of an apparatus replacement plan, new trends are being explored to help reduce overall long-term cost of for the citizens. Other departments ideas are being explored to see the benefits if they were incorporated at Lenoir.



Current Fire Department Fleet

Apparatus	Model Year	Type	Mileage (10/24)	Hours (10/24)
Engine 1	2000	Sutphen	85,525	10,534
Engine 2	2022	Sutphen	11,277	565.5
Engine 3	2005	Sutphen	64,185	9,920
Ladder 1	2013	Sutphen	79,434	6,867
Ladder 2	2006	Sutphen	89,957	7,627
Tower 1	1998	Sutphen	31,534	3,900
Rescue 1	2004	Spartan	87,035	8,472
Car 1	2021	Chevy Tahoe	17,471	
Car 2	2014	Chevy Silverado	63,660	
Car 3	2022	Chevy Silverado	17,325	
Car 4	2014	Ford Explorer	88,868	
Ambulance	1996	Chevy 3500	43,741	
Battalion	2015	Chevy Tahoe	74,788	
QRV 1	2017	Chevy Tahoe	38,974	
QRV 2	2021	Chevy Silverado	8,914	
QRV 3	2021	Chevy Silverado	8,721	
Truck 17	2000	Ford F-150	89,148	
Truck 18	2006	Dodge	111,366	

Staff Recruitment, Retention and Experience

Nationally there is a trend in the decline of volunteer firefighters. The decline of these volunteers affects us in our recruitment of new paid firefighters. Generally our new hires are from a volunteer fire department. In addition, due to this decrease in volunteers more and more of these volunteer departments are hiring full-time paid staff, which increases our competition in recruiting staff.

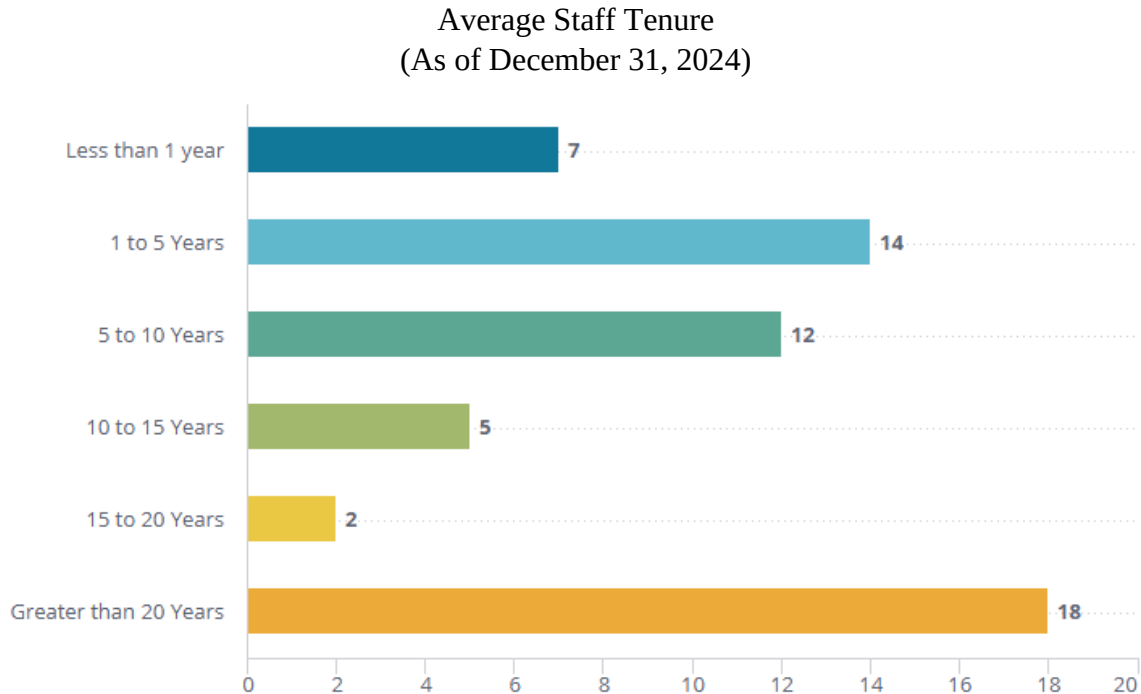
Staff experience and training are a concern based on recent and future retirements. In 2024, a Battalion Chief and two Captains retired. Deputy Chief Nelson is retiring January 31, 2025. Assistant Chief Sturgis is eligible to retire. Two Battalion Chiefs and two Captains could retire within the next two years. The department is placing an emphasis on training our future firefighters and officers due to the youth movement we are facing. Newer firefighters will see an increase in training to enhance their basic knowledge in specialized areas to help fill the void created by these retirements. These training opportunities will involve specialized topics such as officer development (leadership), confined space, trench, structural collapse and fire inspections to help with succession planning with future retirements.

As part of this process succession planning will have to be strategic. We must ensure that we can get employees the needed credentials and experience to be the next person to step up into a higher position. Increased opportunities for training must be explored and some will require a creative approach to ensure staffing levels are maintained at the minimum level while allowing personnel to attend training.

As vacancies occur, especially in officer positions, job requirements and responsibilities are reevaluated. This reevaluation process not only includes organization structure, but allocation of

staff and resources within each station. Also, as part of this process, a paradigm shift within Lenoir Fire Department to allow for lateral entry positions is being evaluated to help with gaining experience of our new hires. Currently, the future rank structure is being evaluated with the retirement of the current Deputy Chief and pending retirements of other officers.

Employee recruitment and retention continues to be a major concern for our organization. In 2024 we had seven employees with greater than 100 years of combined service to the City of Lenoir resign or retire from the department. These employees have left for various reasons such as retirement, other fire departments jobs or private sector jobs. The City of Lenoir has been able to make great progress in this area, but as other fire departments have vacancies, they are making similar adjustments to compensation, benefits and schedules. Also, we are seeing other departments adding additional positions, which increases opportunities for those seeking a job within the fire service. Turnover is a national issue within the fire service. Surrounding departments are now offering increased / alternative benefits such as different scheduling options, contributing to 401k, longevity pay, paying for NC Firefighter and Rescue Squad Workers Pension Fund and / or paying for retiree insurance.



As of December 31, 2024, average tenure of staff was 11.8 years.

Station Renovations and Updates

Station 1 and Station 2 are both needing renovations / updates. Replacing all the carpet with laminate flooring would not only improve appearance but resolve a couple safety issues noted in our safety inspection conducted by the City of Lenoir Safety Committee. When funding allows, replacing the original wood paneling with sheetrock would allow for an update in appearance and removal of fifty years of carcinogens that have been absorbed into the wood paneling. Initially these renovations and updates will be conducted at Station 2 while sink hole repair work is being completed at Station 1.

As part of the updates and renovations the training room at both stations will be updated with new technology and appearance to help enhance the learning experience. At Station 1 the training room will be relocated to a larger room on the third floor to give staff more room during classroom sessions. This new location will have a decreased level of distractions that can be caused in the current classroom.

Another area to be addressed during the renovations is to better secure the fire poles. The poles will have walls placed around them with a door that can be secured during station tours and visits to limit the risk of someone falling down the pole. While staff only are in the building the door could remain open, but during tours and visits the door would be shut and locked to protect the both our citizen and the City.

Equipment Upgrades and Replacement

Due to the extreme nature of the fire service, natural wear and tear occurs on tools and equipment. This wear and tear can affect the operations of equipment and can lead to equipment not fully functioning as designed. Safety and technology upgrades on equipment are being constantly made that can increase firefighter safety in utilizing upgraded equipment. Condition of equipment is continuing to be evaluated for future replacement to enhance operations and safety. Examples include power tools, SCBA, ventilation saws, positive pressure ventilation (PPV) fans and thermal imaging cameras (TICS). A recommendation is to continue the multi-year project that began in 2024-25 to replace safety-related equipment initially and then replace other equipment to ensure staff have the necessary equipment to complete tasks.

Fire Station 4 (Police Substation) / NC Rating and Response (ISO)

In 2022 Lenoir Fire Department was able to obtain an ISO Class 2 Insurance Rating. Of the possible 105.5 points, Lenoir Fire received an 81.56. The range for a Class 2 is 80.00 to 89.99, so the department must be vigilant to ensure we do not revert to a Class 3 and ideally, we would have a long-term goal on achieving a Class 1. The rating looks at many aspects of a fire department and some such as communications are outside of our control. A review of the documentation from that reviews outlines how points were distributed. Initially, we are focusing on the items we can control and there is little to no cost in improving our score.

Long-term to ensure we maintain a Class 2 but potentially achieve a Class 1 a plan will include opening Station 4, potentially hiring additional personnel for Station 4, and the ability to obtain training by all staff at an approved training facility. A review of the current station locations and comparing it to the NC Rating and Response requirement for Engine (1.5 road miles) and Ladder (2.5 road miles) deployment along with examining current response times will help determine the location for future Station 4. Selection will be from an area that has a higher response time due to its distance from one of the current stations and increase the areas covered by the 1.5 road miles as evaluated in the NC Rating and Response evaluation. In addition to reducing response times to that area it would result in an overall decrease in citywide response times and provide an overall safer environment for the citizens in the selected area.

The project could include a substation for Lenoir Police Department. The substation would help with space issues currently facing the department. If properly designed it would give both

departments their own secure areas, but have some common space to help continue working as one team. The substation would give LPD and LFD both a presence in a new area and help with coverage in those areas.

As part of a future Station 4, if space allows construction of a multi-purpose training facility (fire and police) that could allow for on-duty staff to obtain facilities training could assist with enhancing skills of staff. A three-story facility with a burn room would allow us opportunities to better training firefighters, help them gain experience and assist our department in future ISO ratings. *(NC Rating and Response defines a facility as a 3-story training tower or facility with a burn building and for maximum credit the facility must have both a 3-story tower and a burn building on 2 acres of land.)* A facility inside the City of Lenoir would allow on-duty staff more opportunities to enhance their skills while still being able to respond to emergency calls. If a training room was incorporated in the project and it would also be able to serve as a location for an Emergency Operations Center for the City during events such as the Hurricane Helene or a severe snow storm.

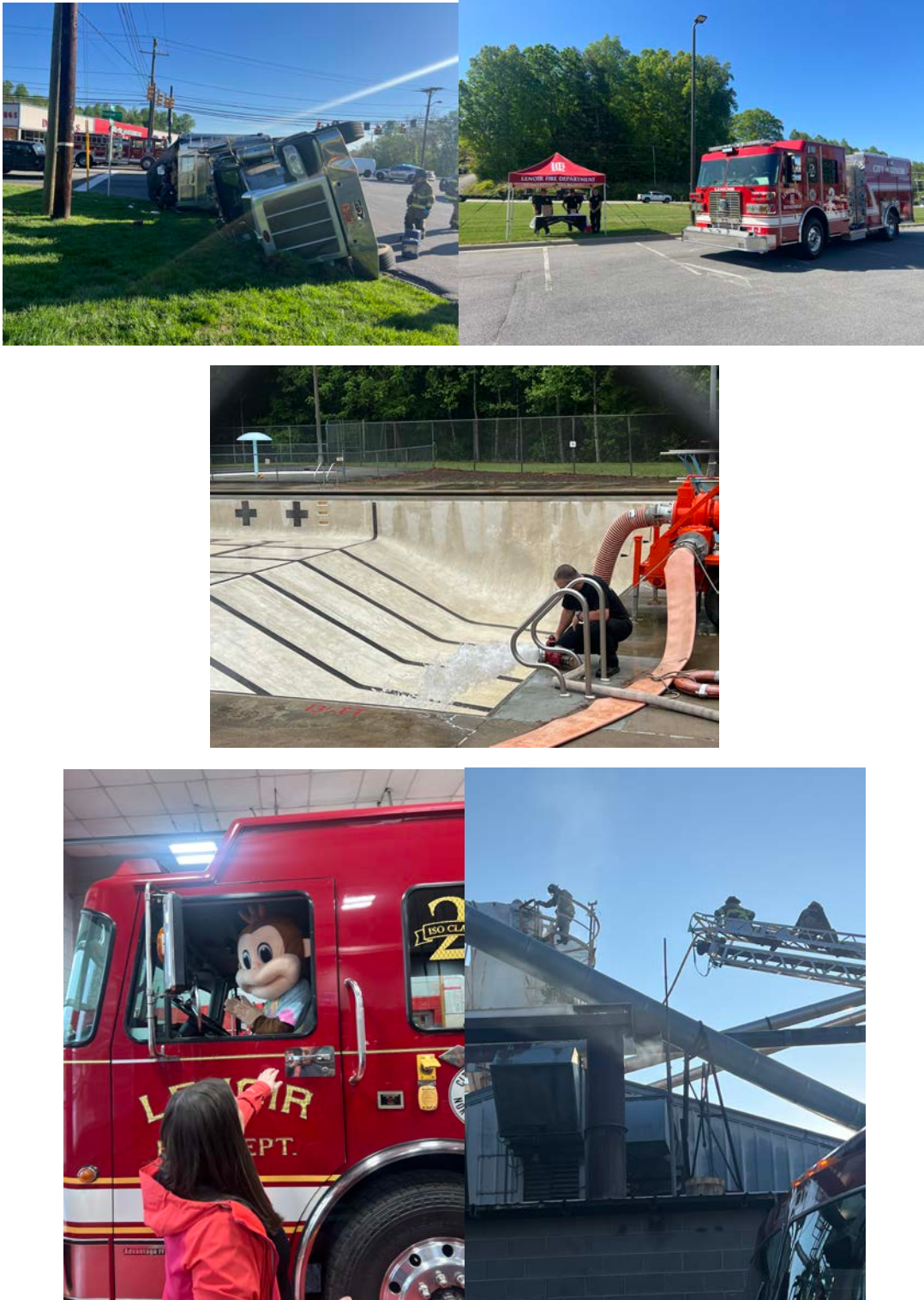
Pre-fire planning and training related items are currently being evaluated and enhanced internally, which will help in obtaining some additional credit. Current Public Works projects, such as the Finley Water Project, should help with some of the areas of water concern. In addition, Fire Department staff and Water Department staff are working on a plan to complete testing of hydrants in areas that have not recently been tested. *(As part of the NCRRS process to receive full credit all hydrants must be flowed annually, and all hydrants must be tested every five years.)* In addition, conversations have been had with Caldwell County to implement Emergency Fire Dispatch (EFD) into fire dispatch to allow for maximum credit on communications.

Review of LFD credit during most recent ISO Rating

Evaluated Area	Earned Credit	Credit Available
Emergency Communications		
414. Credit for Emergency Reporting	3.00	3
422. Credit for Telecommunicators	3.20	4
432. Credit for Dispatch Circuits	1.35	3
440. Credit for Emergency Communications	7.55	10
Fire Department		
513. Credit for Engine Companies	6.00	
523. Credit for Reserve Pumpers	0.00	0.5
532. Credit for Pump Capacity	3.00	3
549. Credit for Ladder Service	4.00	4
553. Credit for Reserve Ladder and Service Trucks	0.41	0.5
561. Credit for Deployment Analysis	6.92	10
571. Credit for Company Personnel	10.11	15
581. Credit for Training	5.73	9
730. Credit for Operational Considerations	2.00	2
590. Credit for Fire Department	38.17	50
Water Supply		
616. Credit for Supply System	25.58	30
621. Credit for Hydrants	2.25	3
631. Credit for Inspection and Flow Testing	5.50	7
640. Credit for Water Supply	33.33	40
Divergence	-1.40	
1050. Community Risk Reduction	3.91	5.5
TOTAL CREDITS	81.56	105.5

CLOSING

Thank you for allowing me an opportunity to showcase some of our many accomplishments in 2024 and express our focus on 2025 and beyond. The fire service is a very traditional profession, but staff are being challenged to find a balance between tradition and modernity to ensure we have success in the future.





Downtown Lenoir & Main Street Revitalization

Goals and objectives accomplished by
City of Lenoir Main Street Program
and Downtown Economic Development Department
2024

Presented by Brenda Floyd, Downtown Economic Development Main Street Director

Before delving into the initiatives of 2024, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to the City of Lenoir Administrative Staff, fellow Department Heads, and City Council for their unwavering support and warm welcome as I transitioned into this new role. Kaylynn Horn retired on March 1, 2024, after ten years of dedicated service, leaving behind a legacy of impactful contributions. Alongside Ashley Smith, our new Main Street Community Engagement Coordinator, we are embracing this "changing of the guard" as an opportunity to honor the department's legacy while introducing innovative approaches to engage the community and drive economic development. Together, we are committed to building a vibrant and thriving downtown.

Thank you for your continued support, and here's to an exciting 2025 with even greater accomplishments ahead!

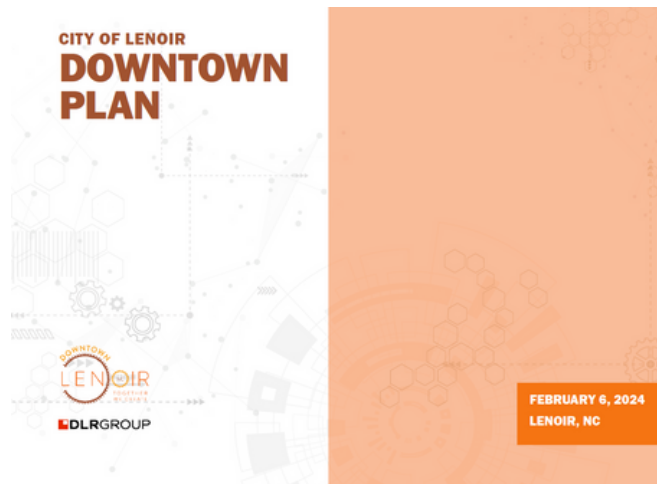


Promotional Efforts and Recognition

- Continued strategic marketing raised awareness about downtown initiatives on local, state, and national level through marketing efforts and participating in award recognition programs.
- The 2024 NC Main Street Conference held in Goldsboro in March used downtown Lenoir as a model in several sessions regarding best practices in using Historic Tax Credits and the economic impact of moving residents into downtown.
- Main Street Champions state-wide were honored at a ceremony at the conference and local champions Daniel and Rebecca Phillips of Moonjoy Meadery were recognized for their contributions to downtown Lenoir.



- Downtown property owners Debbie Burns, Jesse Plaster and Ralph ‘Chip’ Duckett completed their projects with National Park Service grants program by the June 1, 2024 deadline. On a national level, the Lenoir Main Street Program continues to work with the National Park Service to monitor the properties for the next 5 years as part of the National Park Service agreement. The 5 Year Preservation Agreement with the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office is required by the NPS Main Street Façade Grant Program. This ensures the preservation of the downtown historic properties. The Lenoir Main Street Program was honored to be one of 12 communities from across the country selected to be a recipient. This \$48,000 grant is used for façade improvements and building stabilization Jesse Plaster was the first recipient of the funding for an \$18,000 award for the 814 Harper Ave Project (Wolf Moon Salt Cave), Ralph “Chip” Duckett a \$15K award for the 914 West Ave Project (Service League Store) , and \$15K award for Debbie Burns for the 128 N Main St Project (Pour House).
- The LBAB Grants Committee voted to support 3 projects with the \$15k BUILD Grant in 2023-24
- They selected:
 1. 101 Main Street/808 Harper Ave property owned by Steven Stewart was completed December 2023
 2. 128 N. Main Street ‘The Side Street Pourhouse’ property owned by Debbie Burns was completed June 2024
 3. 916-918 West Avenue properties project owned by Ralph ‘Chip’ Duckett is underway and yet to be totally completed.



- Lenoir's first Downtown Master Plan was adopted in February 2024. The plan, created by the DLR Group emphasizes organizational goals and implementation strategies as a framework and vision for the downtown moving forward. It has proved to be a terrific tool to communicate the municipality's program and commitment. The plan has proven to be a guide for programming and resource as the Campus project moves forward. In addition, the plan is referenced and shared to guide the Economic Development goals for years to come.

Following the Downtown Master Plan

- Recommendations in the Master Plan proposed the addition of a pavilion in the West District to replace the existing City-owned shed. The Harper Avenue location is adjacent the Overmountain Victory Trail. This well-positioned pavilion could provide a site for a host of community gatherings and event types. Mauer Architecture evaluated the conditions and possibilities of the structure and recommended building a new structure as the shed was limiting for the new design. The OVT Farmers Market Pavilion and LEOS renovation designs are in process and will transition to construction drawings then bidding documents. The selected Construction Manager and Design Consultants are working in concert to review and update the design, develop cost estimates, and perform constructability reviews as construction documents progress. While no grant funding has been awarded for this portion of the campus project, there are a few applications pending. Bid advertisement is expected soon and will be reviewed Q2/early Q3 2025.
- The Plan recommends that Campus project improvements include the Auditorium and Gymnasium. New roofs were installed on both the Auditorium and Gymnasium in June 2024. In August 2024, J.M. Cope was selected as the Construction Manager at Risk for the project. Per Jared, the Schematic design (SD) and design development (DD) were underway from June through December 2024. The project is anticipated to be advertised for bidding to trade specialists/subcontractors in April/May 2025, with award and execution of contracts in June/July 2025. We also anticipate an approximate one-year (12 month) construction time, exclusive of any required testing and commissioning, closeout processes, or final punch list completion and handover. The Final completion is expected in Q2/Q3 of 2026.



Public Art: "Time Well Spent" Clock Tower Sculpture

In May of 2024 the City of Lenoir tasked our On-Call engineering firm Mattern & Craig to provide engineering services to the Public Works Department for Civil Engineering related services as requested per February 22, 2024 meeting. These services include engineering design & plans (Survey, Civil Site Design and Structural Design) as well as any additional services required for Time Well Spent Clock Tower. These services are being provided for a Lump Sum fee totaling \$22,700. Of that lump sum 50% are public funds and the remaining 50% are private donor funds. Preliminary/Review plans were completed in October of 2024 and presented to the city, donors and Western North Carolina Sculpture Center. Minor changes and or additions were detailed at that meeting and were to be addressed in the sealed construction plans. The design portion of this project is currently 98% complete, as we are waiting for the completed sealed construction plans. Current installation target date is late spring/early summer 2025.

The Lenoir Historic Clock Tower Sculpture is a project where the celebration of a creative spirit meets a desire to preserve our historic treasures. It was designed by WNCSC Executive Director Joe Bigley, featuring 224 cast-iron tiles created by the public. This design speaks to the community's appreciation for outdoor sculpture, is unique, and showcases the historic clock. The newly refurbished O.B. McClintock Co. historic clock has been part of the Downtown Lenoir landscape for more than 100 years. Lenoir and Caldwell County are home to more than 80 pieces of publicly displayed sculpture.



Events and Festivals



- The Downtown Lenoir Development Alliance nonprofit board serves in advisory capacity for Downtown Master Plan and Entrepreneur Eco-Systems project, participate in Main Street event promotion. In 2023, the DLDA took the production of the Blackberry Festival and the WOOD.FIRE.SMOKE. Artisan Festival. They executed loyalty and business passport programs for downtown businesses. The passport program will continue in 2025 after more than 250 passports circulated Downtown and patronized businesses for stamps to fill their passports. The month-long promotion increased February downtown foot traffic by 20% and more than 75 passports visited every stop Downtown.
- The NC Blackberry Festival in July was a tremendous success, drawing over 21,000 visitors over the course of two days. City divisions worked collaboratively to plan for a smooth safe festival. The festival footprint revision for 2024 allowed for improved locations for emergency services recommended by the Fire Department and Police Department. Enhancements made to the street sounds system made by the IT Department allowed intercom ability. The Maintenance Department supported repurposing and moving an outdoor dining area that added to the patron experience. Promotions for the festival included radio, tv, print, and social media. The festival celebrated the region's blackberry harvest with community pride, local vendors, live entertainment, and engaging activities. The large turnout highlighted the festival's 23rd year and the tradition in fostering local engagement.
- The WOOD.FIRE.SMOKE. Artisan Festival, originally planned for October as a celebration of wood-fired cooking and artisanal craftsmanship, pivoted to a Hurricane Relief Effort following the devastation caused by recent hurricanes in the region. The festival focus shifted to raising funds, collecting donations, and providing aid to those affected by the storms. Community partner, United Way facilitated collection of donations and distributed locally following the event. Vendors registered for the festival, residents and visitors responded positively and applauded the relief effort. Downtown businesses appreciated the increased foot traffic following several days of closures prior to the event. The festival attracted over 4,000 attendees, who supported the cause through donations and participation. Local artisans, food vendors, and community members came together to raise significant funds for disaster recovery and rebuild efforts, showcasing the resilience and generosity of the community.
- Although distinct in their focus, both events highlighted the strength of community spirit and solidarity in times of crisis, with WOOD.FIRE.SMOKE. offering a powerful reminder of how local gatherings can unite people.



- The City of Lenoir offered to kick off the 25th Cycle NC event following Hurricane Helene. Originally the first ‘rest’ stop on a traverse of NC. The City of Lenoir stepped up to start the race when Spruce Pine could not due to unfathomable damage to their downtown following the storm. So, 800 cyclists from 42 states and 4 countries gathered at Mulberry Recreation for the ‘Mountains to Coast’ tour of scenic North Carolina 7-day ride. The City of Lenoir Fire Department, Parks and Recreation, Police Department, Maintenance, Downtown Economic Development and Streets Department worked together to pivot hosting the event a day early. Community partners supported the effort with shuttle donations to move cyclists around the city before the ride. Twenty Downtown businesses were open for cyclists and even planned special activities for them.

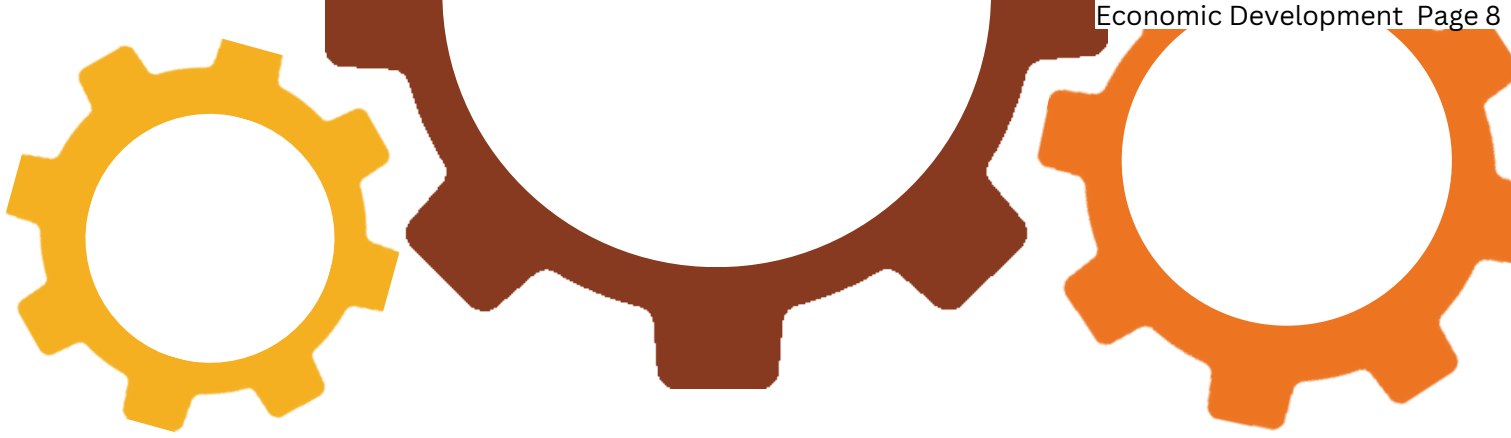
For the first time in over 10 years, Gravity Games did not occur. Historically the event was held in downtown on Church St and later on Ashe Street. This collaborative event with Google was removed from their programming with the promise of a continued discussion to support downtown initiatives financially.

- Downtown Economic Development and Parks and Recreation created a Special Event Policy in February 2024. The document outlines rules for events and is formatted in Heyzine to link for accessible viewing. This policy will work in tandem with the web-based application ‘Cognito’ where event hosts can apply to use city spaces for events. The adoption of the policy and accessible application improves processes for Special Events both internal and external. This program fielded 37 applications for citywide events consideration. Twenty of these were in downtown. Use of this new technology makes for seamless internal coordination, an improved user experience and allows document sharing and communication. Additionally, multiple departments have the ability to review the applications before approval and save notes for reference. This addition proved useful for 10 city users and over 350 web-based approvals were executed to date. The program also fielded applications for the Christmas parade and a downtown business questionnaire.

PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES & EVENTS

2/1/24	Love Letters for Local
4/6/2024-12/8/2024	Lenoir Cruise-Ins
4/20/24	Bootlegger 100
4/20/24	Lenoir Bike Festival
5/11/24	Bloom Blast
5/31/24	Neon Night Ride
6/7/2024-7/26/24	Friday Night Live
6/19/24	Juneteenth
7/12/24	Blackberry Festival
7/20/24	Crack of Dawn Dash
8/24/24	Sundowner 4 miler
8/30/24	Carolina Tattoo Gathering
10/3/24	Police National Night Out
10/6/24	Cycle NC
10/19/14	Wood, Fire, Smoke Festival
10/25/24	Mad Hatter Pumpkin Patch Parade
11/21/24	Light Up Lenoir
12/6/24	Starry Night Christmas Parade
12/9/2024-12/18/24	Downtown Carriage Rides





Downtown Lenoir Event Safety and Improvement Program

- Regular events meetings include individualized safety discussion and improvement standards for downtown events.
- Security continues to be a high priority for downtown events through strategic planning with Law Enforcement, Fire Department, Public Utilities and Streets Division for the placement of 'bike gates', heavy equipment, county assets and personnel.
- Collaborated with Lenoir Police Department, Fire Department, Public Works and IT to determine recommended emergency intercom use of Downtown Lenoir's audio system during events.
- Distributed Bicycle safety helmets to participants in need at the Bicycle Festival and Neon Night Ride with Parks and Recreation Department.
- Street lighting, video cameras, and internet hot spots for improved event safety.

Downtown Lenoir Social District

- The Downtown Lenoir Social District was adopted in 2023. Ongoing education for property and business owners continues as well as boundary maintenance that must be executed throughout the year. During the Blackberry Festival, more than 3k Social District Stickers were distributed to vendors for use during the festival. Each Social District ABC Licensed location in downtown provides their own branded stickers for social district cups so purchasers can freely explore downtown within the social district. There are 6 ABC Licensed locations and 12 non-ABC locations in the Downtown Lenoir Social District. The defined boundaries and operational guidelines adopted in 2023 are working well and community use continues to grow.

Residential Development and Education

- This year Downtown Lenoir was selected for a Historic Tax Credit Workshop. Property owners, potential property owners and Main Street leaders gathered in the newly renovated 1841 event space to learn valuable steps in using tax credits. Attendees toured Downtown, highlighting historic property renovations that used tax credits. This initiative aims to inspire and expand historic building renovations and residential living options Downtown.

Recent Property Acquisitions

Private Property Acquisitions	Date	Formerly
110 H. Lewis Price Street: David & Elisabeth Wall	11/23/23	Storage Building
117 North Main Street: Heart of LLC/1841 Restaurant Building	6/24/24	Hog Waller/Bernhardt Seagle Building
126 Mulberry Street: Caldwell Arts Council	5/1/24	Henkle Opera House

Public Acquisitions	Date
625 Harper Avenue - Caldwell County/Harper Property	3/28/2024



Recent Business Openings / Expansions

New Businesses	Date
912 West Avenue: Morning Dove Leather and Biker Apparel	6/2024
106 Main Street: Rhythm on Main	8/2024
115 N. Main Street: Flash Bat Tattoo	12/2024
130 Church Street: Pixel Planet Gaming Lounge	1/2025
Expansions	Date
902 West Avenue: Moonjoy Meadery	8/2024
221 N Main St: Working Girl Yarn	9/2024
814 Harper Avenue: Wolf Moon Salt Cave	11/2024



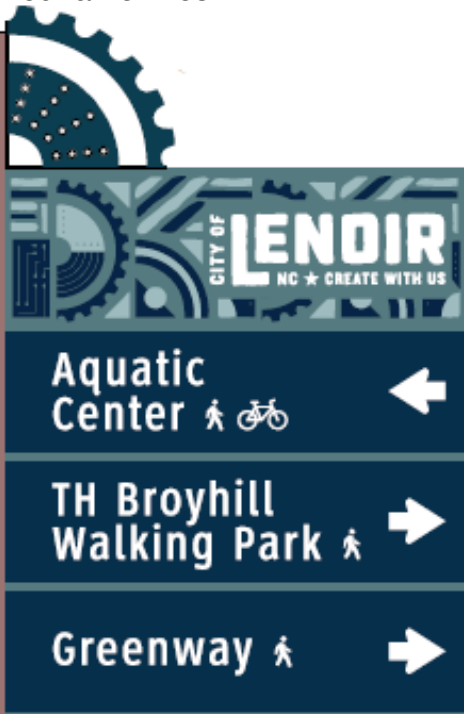
Vehicular Sculptural Wayfinding and Gateways

In collaboration with the City of Lenoir's Planning Department, Public Works Department and Economic Development Department continues to work with Destination by Design, a consulting firm in Boone, NC to finalize the wayfinding project. The project was put out for bid in December of 2023 and the bid was awarded to Rite Lite Signs, Inc. for 55 signs including 36 Major signs at \$7,619.00 and 19 Minor Signs at \$7,404.00.

The \$250,000 ARC grant awarded in 2023 in large part funded the project with support from Lenoir Tourism Advisory Board. The Planning Department initiated an 'all call' to local artists in April 2024 for themed design submissions. Once selected, they were shared with manufacturer. The 55 planned signs around the City of Lenoir is an excellent way to create a sense of place and guide residents and visitors to our amenities.

Many of the signs will guide motorists to Downtown and 12 will be installed in Downtown. This investment demonstrates the city's commitment to public investment, encourages community pride in Lenoir, and guides Highway 321 travelers to turn off and explore. This project is being reviewed by NCDOT. Public Works and Planning met with Rite Lite Signs (April-May 2024) and marked all sites per Destination by Design drawing and pre-designated locations. Utility locates were submitted and sign locations adjusted based on those locates. At this time Rite Lite has completed all drawing and submitted encroachments for NCDOT review.

The Smith Crossroads illuminated gateway sign was installed in December 2023 by Carolina Bomanite Corporation with the total cost at \$382,325.00. The 4 remaining gateway signs are planned for Hickory Boulevard/US321 South, Hickory Boulevard/US321 North, Wilkesboro Boulevard/Highway 18 East, and Wilkesboro Boulevard/Highway 18 West. The design of these signs mimic the Smith Crossroads sign and are smaller in stature and non illuminated. The installation process is planned for Q2 2025. This project began the design phase in April 2024. As of 1/9/2024 Traffic Engineering and Site Surveys of all four (4) location have been completed. Destination by Design staff is currently working on conceptual renderings for review. They are contracted to providing design, engineering and construction admin. They should have renderings by the end of this month, January.





City of Lenoir CIP 2025-2026 Reference:

The addition of holiday enhancements to the Smith Crossroads Gateway sign, Fire Department, the Thomas Sayre Sculpture area and the Laser Light Show at the square got a lot of community attention. The Public Utilities, Maintenance and Downtown Economic Development Departments together enlisted the Professional Design Services at Carpenters Decorating Company, Inc. to create designs to compliment the already robust collection of Christmas decor. The Winterfest Snowflake Stream moving design was selected for the crossroads sign. The Woodland Scene with the moving stag was selected for the sculpture area. Seasons Greeting was recommended for the Fire Department. The IT Department vetted new technology to awe the community. The programmable laser could be used to replace the previous stage show. Many programming hours and test shows were needed before the showcase at Light Up Lenoir in November. The plan moving forward is to extend the snowflake theme from the crossroads to the 4 gateway signs and extend the snowflake pole lights down Harper Avenue. The snowflake theme allows the decor to extend through the holiday season and celebrate residents and tourists through January.

Looking Ahead: 2025 Goals-Prioritizing new and existing initiatives and executing the Downtown Master Plan.

- Plan downtown programming with equitable accessibility and inclusive design and continue to attract events that stimulate economic activity through engaging the community and visitors
- Partner with DLDA to produce the NC Blackberry Festival and the WOOD.FIRE.SMOKE. Artisan Festival
- Continue enhancing holiday décor with coordinating embellishments
- Contribute to advancing and completing citywide vehicular and pedestrian wayfinding systems
- Continuing partnerships for safety improvements and event planning with all City of Lenoir Departments
- Facilitate entrepreneurial programs, including the "Certified NC Destination Business" initiative and educate downtown businesses about Destination University and Small Business through North Carolina Main Street
- Collaborate to advance The Campus at the Historic Lenoir High School project as potential event spaces in order to maximize the use of these city owned properties
- Work collaboratively with Department of Commerce and Caldwell County Historical Museum to conduct a facility assessment and market analysis for the rehabilitation of the Harper Band Building and create programming for the adaptive reuse of the building
- Continue to work with Public Works, Dept & Parks & Rec to brainstorm engaging programming for an outdoor farmer's market OVT Pavilion in Downtown
- Relaunch Moving Lenoir to the 2nd Floor with creative branding, utilize Main Street Facade Program and enhance delivery of recommended processes to current and potential downtown property owners and help to facilitate rehabilitation
- Work collaboratively with the NC Sculpture Center, the Caldwell Arts Council, Public Works, and Administration Staff to complete the TIME WELL SPENT clock tower sculpture for the Downtown Historic Clock and promote and celebrate its completion through engaging community programming
- Monitor, document and report property updates to State Historic Preservation Office regarding the National Park Service / National Main Street Façade Improvements Grant properties through 2029.

- Continue promoting gratis design services to contributing property owners in MSD/Historic Register for facade and 2nd floor residential space designs focusing on historic preservation from Main Street Fellows at UNCG-G
- Collaborate with LTDA marketing team for a unified message to visitors about happenings downtown to include social media, Main to Main Trail Program and printed promotions
- Partner with DLDA to vet alternate downtown loyalty programs to replace Wish Trip App that engages users with the diverse offerings in downtown
- Contribute to Caldwell County Historic Trail efforts and identify historic locations in downtown for downtown promotions
- Continue to provide updated information about Downtown Lenoir for marketing and collect demographic data from Retire NC program and share with LTDA and Caldwell Chamber of Commerce

The Economic Development Department remains steadfast in its mission to enrich Downtown Lenoir through innovative programs, strategic planning, and community collaboration. Thank you for your continued support, and here's to an exciting 2025 with even greater accomplishments ahead!



Recreation Administrative Offices (828)757-2165 - Fax (828)758-1315

Lenoir Aquatic & Fitness Center (828)757 2196

Mulberry Recreation Center (828)757-2165

Martin Luther King Center (828)757-2170



Below is a list of goals and objectives Lenoir Parks & Recreation Accomplished in 2024

- Installed Security Cameras & Signage at JE Broyhill Park
- New roof on the LHS Gymnasium, band building and Auditorium
- Repair outdoor pool at the Aquatic Fitness Center (Leaks)
- Replace the gym floor at Mulberry Recreation Center
- Repair gutter issues at Mulberry Recreation center
- Electronic Gates and Mag locks at TH Broyhill Walking Park and JE Broyhill Park
- Added (8) outdoor Pickle ball courts at Mulberry Recreation Center
- Addition to Community Gardens- with prep area and restrooms
- New Splash pad at the Rotary Soccer Complex/ New Shelter as well
- New stage floor installed at Lenoir High School Auditorium
- Piano donated to the city for Lenoir High School Auditorium
- New HVAC system installed at Lenoir High School Auditorium
- New concrete wall installed at Martin Luther King Jr. Center near the Tennis Courts
- Men's soccer field established and marked at Wilson Athletic Field. Trash receptacles, and stadium bench seating were placed on site.
- New LED lights installed at the indoor pool
- New LED lights installed at Martin Luther King Jr. Center ballfield, and tennis courts
- We have added numerous youth and adult programs in the last year or so to include adult pickle ball tournaments, men's industrial basketball league, and 40 and over basketball league, ping pong tournament, youth tennis lessons, youth cheer program.
- We have had a large increase in participation numbers in various programs to include Lap swim- Rec Swim-birthday party rentals-and youth basketball program.

Updates:

Lenoir High School Property Enhancements:

Renovations on the LHS Auditorium project continued in 2024 with Phase two of this project. Work that has been done in phase two includes general painting & repairs, painting of the walls and ceiling in the entry lobby and main lobby, roofing repairs over the entry lobby, painting of the existing walls in the stage area, replacement of broken glass window panes in the stage area, new HVAC system, conversion of existing Auditorium lighting to LED. Phase two of the project has been completed. These upgrades are being done with CDBG Funds. Engineers and contractors have looked at the facilities and will be submitting quotes soon for the campus.

Martin Luther King Jr. Center:

Exterior doors have been installed at this point- with lots of other renovations taking place in 2025

Dog Park:

Staff is continuing to look at areas to place a dog park within the city. Working with the local church of Greenway to see if it's suitable to do so on that property- Our special projects staff has worked on an all in quote for that project to include ADA assess ability, parking and restrooms. I am also working with a businessman locally that may offset the cost.

Below is a list of concerns and impacts Lenoir Parks & Recreation may incur in 2025:

- New Administrative vehicle- department errands- travel and training.
- Paint the exterior of the MLK Center is expected to begin spring 2025.
- Replace the exterior doors at the MLK Center will begin spring 2025.
- Replace flooring in lobby and multipurpose rooms at MLK Center/in progress-HVAC-Tennis Courts Pickle ball Courts- New exercise equipment.
- Replacing the indoor pool filtration system at Lenoir Aquatic & Fitness Center.
- Repair outdoor water slide- painting – cracks-rust areas.
- Exterior paint & door replacement at Mulberry Recreation Center (FY 25-26 budget & Lenoir Aquatic & Fitness Center FY25-26.
- Updating the City of Lenoir Parks and Recreation Masterplan.
- Resurfacing the basketball court/Shelter at West End Park.
- Replace our outdated playground equipment for both the 2-5 age group as well as the 5-12 equipment at both Mulberry Recreation Center and West End Park.

Highlights for future projects:

- Interior/Exterior Renovations to the Optimist Park Clubhouse.
- Renovations to Mulberry Recreation Center (Replace tile flooring, repairs to ceilings throughout the facility.
- Adding picnic tables to West End Park shelter.
- Renovations to MLK Center, Cut/Sand/Paint & Refinish gym floor.
- Adding a deck Tron system to LAFC indoor pool to help with moisture issues.

LAFC Improvements (PARTF Grant):

The Recreation Department was awarded the PARTF Grant on November 1, 2022 in the amount of \$500,000. The grant is a 50/50 matching grant. The total project will be a little over 1 million dollars. This project is under way now. The city has three years to complete this project. Met with engineers looking to receive drawings and scope of work early 2025. Construction scheduled to begin early spring 2025.

West End Park Improvements:

Renovations to the West End Community Park would include updating the shelter and basketball court. This would include painting the shelter, add 4 new picnic tables, two new trash cans, resurfacing the basketball court, replacing some fencing around the court, replace backboards, rims and nets. We may be able to renovate the park by using CDBG funds.

Old City Property – Stage/Prospect Streets (Old Tennis Court Area):

The city owns five or six parcels of land around these streets which at one time had tennis courts and playground equipment on some of the property. The property has not been used in quite a long time. There is no parking at these sites. My suggestion would be to sell the property or possibly work with Habitat for Humanity to see if there is interest.

SEE SPECIAL PROJECTS REPORT FOR ADDITIONAL P&R CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS UPDATES

Lenoir Parks and Recreation Master Plan Programming													
Event or Program Name	Note if Program is Gender Specific (male/female/both)	Age Group (check all that apply)				Location	Season	Registration Fee	Estimated Attendance (if available)				
(City run or operated by other vendor on City property)		Age 12 and under	Age 13-18	Adults	Seniors	(Park and/or facility location(s))	Winter/Spring/Summer/Fall		2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Festivals/Events													
July 4th	B	X	X	X	X	Mulberry	Summer	\$0	0	2000+	3000+	5000+	7000+
Easter egg hunt	B	X				Mulberry	Fall	\$0	0	0	200+	300+	300+
NCAS- event	B	X	X	X	X	Mulberry	Fall	\$0	0	0	0	0	900+
Summer Music Series	B	X	X	X	X	Downtown Lenoir	Summer	\$0	0	400	500	900	1,500
Summer Movie Series	B	X	X	X	X	Downtown Lenoir	Summer	\$0	0	20	50	50	20
Christmas Parade	B	X	X	X	X	Downtown Lenoir	Winter	\$0	0	4000+	5000+	8000+	5000?
Leprechaun Leap 5K/10K Race	B	X	X	X	X	Greenway	Winter	\$25-\$45	0	0	80	122	236
Firecracker 5K/10K Race	B	X	X	X	X	Greenway	Summer	\$25-\$45	0	0	110	184	189
Run 4 Your Life 5K	B	X	X	X	X	Downtown Lenoir	Fall	\$25-\$35	0	N/A	N/A	129	N/A
Jump Street Drive Festival	B	X	X	X	X	MLK JR CENTER	Summer	\$0	0	300	400	450	500
Harambee Arts Festival	B	X	X	X	X	MLK JR CENTER	Summer	\$0	0	700	725	700	675
Sculpture Celebration	B	X	X	X	X	TH Broyhill walking park	Fall	\$0	0			2,200	2,400
Neon Bike Ride	B	X	X	X	X	Rotary Soccer Complex	Summer	\$0	0			110	125
									0				
									0				
									0				
Recreational Programs													
JH Jones Jr. League basketball	B	X				MLK JR CENTER	Summer	\$10	N/A	60	65	70	105
JH Jones Sr. League Basketball	B		X			MLK JR CENTER	Summer	\$10	N/A	60	70	75	105
MLK Cheerleading	F	X	X			MLK JR CENTER	Summer	\$10	N/A	N/A	80	80	70
Trunk or Treat	B	X	X			MLK JR CENTER	Fall	0	N/A	150	200	230	250
Santa Claus Toys	B	X	X			MLK JR CENTER	Winter	0	N/A	100	100	100	100
Black History Month	B	X	X	X	X	MLK JR CENTER	Winter	0	N/A	200	200	250	250
Thanksgiving Dinner	B	X	X	X	X	MLK JR CENTER	Winter	0	N/A	120	120	120	300
Turkey Tuesday	B	X	X	X	X	MLK JR CENTER	Winter	0	N/A	150	200	300	400
Christmas Dance	B	X	X	X	X	MLK JR CENTER	Winter	0	N/A	200	200	300	300
Basketball Camp	B	X	X			MLK JR CENTER	Summer	\$10	N/A	100	120	100	120
Water Aerobics	B			X	X	Aquatic Fitness Center	All	MEMBERSHIP	N/A	862	1718	2133	1149
Floor Aerobics	B			X	X	Aquatic Fitness Center	All	MEMBERSHIP	N/A	311	625	460	322

Lenoir Parks and Recreation Master Plan Programming													
Event or Program Name	Note if Program is Gender Specific (male/female/both)	Age Group (check all that apply)				Location	Season	Registration Fee	Estimated Attendance (if available)				
(City run or operated by other vendor on City property)		Age 12 and under	Age 13-18	Adults	Seniors	(Park and/or facility location(s))	Winter/Spring/Summer/Fall		2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Recreational Programs													
Lap Swim	B	X	X	X	X	Aquatic Fitness Center	All	MEMBERSHIP	N/A	1,757	2,513	2741	2810
Rec Swim	B	X	X	X	X	Aquatic Fitness Center	All	MEMBERSHIP	N/A	1741	2787	5810	9135
Racquetball	B		X	X	X	Aquatic Fitness Center	All	MEMBERSHIP	N/A	214	360	405	195
Weight Room	B		X	X	X	Aquatic Fitness Center	All	MEMBERSHIP	N/A	1691	3543	3754	2241
High School Swim	B		X			Aquatic Fitness Center	Winter	MEMBERSHIP	N/A	154	1678	1908	876
Kayaking	B	X	X	X	X	Aquatic Fitness Center	Winter	MEMBERSHIP	N/A	0	89	92	104
Lenoir Makos	B	X	X			Aquatic Fitness Center	Summer	MEMBERSHIP	N/A	0	132	484	1823
Birthday Parties	B	X	X	X	X	Aquatic Fitness Center	All	MEMBERSHIP	N/A	0	245	436	536
Swim Lessons	B	X				Aquatic Fitness Center	All	MEMBERSHIP	N/A	0	0	1200	886
Special Olympics	B	X	X	X	X	Aquatic Fitness Center	W,Sp, & F	MEMBERSHIP	N/A	0	52	70	115
BB/SS/TBALL	B	X	X			Mulberry Rec Center	Spring	\$25/\$50	N/A	100	158	86	107
Fall Baseball	M	X	X			Mulberry Rec Center	Fall	\$25/\$50	N/A	33	47	21	43
Youth Basketball	B	X	X			Mulberry Rec Center	Winter	\$25/\$50	N/A	147	130	167	201
Adult Pickleball Tourney	B			X	X	Mulberry Rec Center	Fall	\$10	N/A	N/A	N/A	60	Spring 25
Men's Basketball League	M			X	X	Mulberry Rec Center		\$400	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	85
40 Over 3 on 3 Basketball	M			X	X	Mulberry Rec Center		\$150	N/A	N/A	N/A	24	Spring 25
Ping Pong Tournament	B			X	X	Mulberry Rec Center		\$10	N/A	N/A	N/A	15	Spring 25
Tennis Lessons	B	X	X	X	X	Mulberry Rec Center		\$25	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	22
Budget Pickleball Tourney	B			X	X	Mulberry Rec Center		\$10	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	74
Cheerleading	F	X				Mulberry Rec Center	Winter	\$25/\$50	N/A	N/A	N/A	35	52
#'s have increased a lot.													
New programs													





CITY OF LENOIR PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

2025 Strategic Planning Retreat

Planning & Community Development Initiatives & Projects

ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2024

- Current Planning

- The planning department issued 330 zoning permits, floodplain permits, and zoning verification letters in 2024, around 100 more than in 2023. Applications for single family homes accounted for 49 of those permits (33% increase from 2023), and 26 were for manufactured homes (58% increase).



- Floodplain Permits: Floodplain development permits document any man-made change in the AE floodplain or AEFW floodplain. Twenty FDPs were issued in 2024 (10% increase). Four were building/structural related, and ten were replacement of Duke Energy utility poles.
- It was a strong year for commercial site development permits, with 9 extensive site plan reviews. This year, the number of permits for new construction were equal to renovation of existing buildings. New development permitted in 2024 includes:
 - UNC Caldwell: \$33 million expansion for an updated heart center, inpatient pharmacy, and improved cafeteria
 - Google Campus Expansion: \$600 million expansion for a 300,000 square foot data center
 - Shed's Direct: great example of a well-developed intensive retail site with all exterior product display/storage, also a small business.
 - Burger King Renovation: extensive renovation will include a perimeter sidewalk at the northeast corner of Smith Crossroads, upgraded signage, and architectural improvements.

- 1001 West Av (OP Lutz Furniture Co): Creating three storefront units on West Avenue
- Longhorn Steakhouse: Scrape and rebuild project at former Fatz location.
- Other commercial re-development and business expansion in 2024 includes a 3,000 square-foot expansion at Walmart for their pick-up program, exterior changes and additions at 4 Exela sites, relocation of Enola Group Childcare Center to a former church building, and expansion to JBS's building entrance and parking lot.



- Comprehensive Plan Update

- Freese and Nichols has been working with Planning Staff to update the Comprehensive Plan with a special focus on the Future Land Use Map, as well as Whitnel and West End neighborhoods.
- FNI has completed two rounds of public engagement so far. Each engagement session includes:
 - Steering Committee meeting
 - Special neighborhood meetings for both Whitnel and West End
 - Community-wide Open House for a general plan update
 - Follow-up Virtual Meeting for folks unable to participate in-person
- FNI also manned festival booths in Summer and Fall 2024 at Blackberry Festival and Wood Fire Smoke Festival
- Lenoir and FNI incorporated Parks and Rec Master Plan to plan for the next 20 years of parks improvements
- Chapter 1 (Community Snapshot), Chapter 2 (Land Use, including Future Land Use Map), and Chapter 3 (Housing) are drafted as of January 30, 2025



- **User Friendly**
 - Staff implemented an expanded iWorq package to include an online permit portal and code enforcement complaint module.
 - Most permit applications still arrive by PDF and complaints mostly arrive by phone - staff will look for ways to promote the online portal system in 2025
- **Ordinance Amendments**
 - Electronic Message Boards (ZOA 1-24): This amendment added EMB signs as a permitted sign in certain districts, prohibits them on historic properties, and added design and operating standards for EMB signs city-wide.
 - Beach Bingo (ZOA 4-24): This amendment added a definition for Beach Bingo and included it as “Indoor Recreation” and excludes it from Adult Gaming Establishment.
 - Churches in Industrial (ZOA 5-24): This amendment adds Cultural and Community Facilities, Churches, Synagogues, Mosques as a permitted use in industrial districts in order to comply with federal law.
- **Code Compliance & Minimum Housing:**
 - 72 total cases were opened (Minimum Housing, Zoning, Signs, and Floodplain)
 - 43 Zoning violations abated
 - 13 Minimum housing cases opened
 - 7 Abatement Ordinances Passed
 - 3 City-abated properties abated since July 1, 2024.
- **Staff Update:**
 - Matt Duchan (Planner/GIS Specialist) achieved the Certified Zoning Official certification from NCAZO.
 - Certified Zoning Officials (CZO) have mastered administrative skills in reviewing plans, inspecting sites, enforcing ordinances, and providing service to customers and are trained in NC zoning laws.
 - Lauren Hartley (Planning Technician) has been with the Department 7 years, achieved Clerk certification in 2023.
 - Teresa Kinney, a contract planner from WPCOG works for Lenoir once a week and focuses on zoning compliance.
 - Planning Department Enjoyed being fully staffed all year until December
 - Code Compliance Officer Bob Teague resigned from the role in mid-December.
 - Search for a new Code Compliance Officer is underway at the time of this writing.

LOOKING AHEAD IN 2025

- **Current Planning:**
 - o Planning staff has already issued 14 permits issued so far in 2025, including 4 residences.
 - o Police and planning are still coordinating efforts to target housing and nuisance problems.
 - o Mobile Home Park inspections will be completed in early 2025.
- **Comprehensive Plan**
 - o Freese and Nichols continue to draft the plan based on the community's vision. More public engagement is slated for late winter 2024. Their target completion date is August 2025.
- **Code Enforcement/Minimum Housing Needs**
 - o Lenoir contracted a WPCOG zoning compliance planner, who works for Lenoir on Tuesdays. Teresa handles many basic zoning violations, while the Code Compliance Officer handles minimum housing and more intensive zoning violations.
 - o The Comp plan will have many recommendations and ordinance changes. Along with neighborhood stabilization tactics, we anticipate policy concepts that deal with commercial code enforcement and repair of nonresidential buildings.
 - Currently, staff is determining what building regulation code exists in Lenoir's ordinances, and what could be added to broaden code enforcement abilities. This background research and the new plan's recommendations will lead the effort in improving Lenoir's building stock.
 - o The three demolitions in 2024 totaled \$17,420. In compliance with state law, all demolition abatements receive an asbestos inspection and abatement (as-needed) prior to demolition.
 - Four abatement ordinances passed in Fall of 2024 are in the bid stage.
 - o We continue to send properties to tax foreclosure as well as push for owner abatement.
- **Sidewalk Gap Analysis**
 - o Planning Staff plans to map sidewalks in Lenoir and determine what areas lack connectivity to improve pedestrian facilities.
 - o The sidewalk fund (which developers can opt into in lieu of construction) can be leveraged as matching funds for various pedestrian grants available.
- **Fee Schedule Study**
 - o Planning Department fee schedule for various permits, reviews, and public hearing cases was adopted in 2016 and has not increased in 9 years. Staff would like to study similar fee structures in the unfour region and across the state to determine whether the current fee schedule needs to change. This would include administrative reviews as well as legislative and quasi-judicial cases heard before governing boards.
- **Stormwater Program**
 - o The City is in compliance with the Phase 2 Stormwater regulations. We hold a current National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit for our MS4 (municipal separate storm sewer system). The City contracts the WPCOG to administer the six minimum control measures for the NPDES permit requirements. Coordination with the WPCOG regarding the review and permitting of new developments has been very successful, with the support from Caldwell County Building inspections we have been to use inspection holds to ensure compliance with stormwater regulations. See the

WPCOG's annual report for more details about compliance with the 6 minimum control measures.

- As a separate service, but also required of the NPDES permit, the WPCOG is mapping the City's entire stormwater system. So far, about 80% have been mapped. The mapping will be complete by the June 2026 renewal date.

- **Greenway 911 Location**

- This project is in design. Fifty-four markers have been created. The next step is creating a sign graphic and post that will work for Lenoir Greenways. Staff is working with Public Works on this project, which may include benches to post signs on.
- Staff has created points every quarter mile with a unique 3-digit ID. The digit will be applied to signs. If someone were to call 911 and give a mile marker location, they can be located within 5 feet.

- **User/Business Friendly:**

- 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. In 2024, staff is looking to implement online forms for permits and code enforcement by expanding our iWorq package. This would cut down on data entry and make the application process and review workflow smoother.
 - The parcel data and GIS service is currently updated quarterly under our current package. The expansion will include weekly parcel data updates, keeping our working permit data with the most recent information.



OUTSTANDING PROJECTS (NO CHANGES)

These are projects that have been lower priority, or have implementation challenges, and have not had progress in several years. They are still good projects, and we intend to work on them as opportunities/needs arise.

- **Neighborhood and Greenway 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. Now that we have successfully developed a city-wide brand and design concept for vehicular wayfinding, we can use these design concepts to explore smaller off-shoot projects like neighborhood signs and signage on the greenway.
- **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.
- **Stormwater Utility Fee/Stormwater CIP:** Freese and Nichols has created an inventory of SW needs, a tracking system/database to compile new issues, and provided information on the adoption of a SW utility fee to fund capital needs. This project was completed at the same time the City transitioned SW management duties to the WPCOG. However, the City remains responsible for the maintenance of the municipal storm sewer system, as well as the cost for contracting with the WPCOG to handle the administrative tasks (education, outreach, enforcement, permitting) related to compliance with the Clean Water Act. Should the City choose to move forward on the adoption of a Stormwater Utility Fee, the funding could be used to pay for WPCOG services as well as fund capital projects. Next steps for this project (if any) will likely be implemented by the Public Works and/or Finance Departments.
- **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. (No changes since 2019 – finding a “champion” for the project has been difficult. We need to do “fundraising” if it is not going to be funded through the City directly, and no one has emerged to lead this effort.)

DEPARTMENT BUDGET REQUESTS

- **Greenway 911 Location Signs, \$1000**
 - \$25 per sign, about 35 signs
 - Could split over 2 or 3 fiscal years.

- Building Demolition/Legal Fees for Foreclosures: The three demolitions in 2023 totaled \$42,545. Continue to fund at current levels for demolishing structures as well as legal fees related to foreclosing on abandoned houses that are still salvageable.
- 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. A few years ago, some initial conversations with Fairfield Chair, Broyhill, and Bernhardt were favorable in those entities contributing 5,000 each, however the City has since made other requests for higher priority projects and there have been some leadership changes. The project still has a funding gap.



CITY OF LENOIR POLICE

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



*Brent Phelps
Chief*

*Scott Hildebran
City Manager*

Throughout 2024, the Lenoir Police Department continued its goal of providing professional police services while focusing on council priorities. Many of those priorities were accomplished throughout the year through community partners, in-house resources, and current staff self-initiative. The following document will highlight many of those successes.

In 2024, an essential equipment upgrade included the procurement of new ballistic plate carrier vests and helmets for all sworn personnel. Additionally, the department routinely purchased 10 new uniform ballistic vests, which are essential for officers' safety and are replaced on a regularly scheduled basis.

Officers continue to address homeless camps throughout the city, collaborating with businesses, code enforcement, and property owners to connect individuals with necessary resources. Additionally, officers assist in cleanup efforts to enhance the city's appearance and reduce future occurrences. One of those collaborations is with the Western Piedmont Council of Government to collect data on the homeless population. They also participated in events like Partnering for Warmth, aiming to better understand and support unsheltered individuals.

The continuation of Critical Incident Stress Management team led by Lt. Chris Bumgarner continues to serve the Foothills region. The team provided 13 group interventions in 2024, assisting both Lenoir PD officers and other agencies.

In 2024, renovations to the police department lounge were completed. This area of our building was in much need of repair and rejuvenation as it serves as a focal point during events and outside hosting. The replacement of two rooftop air conditioners was also completed to replace aging units that could no longer be repaired.

2024 saw the implementation of our first-ever CADET Camp. This one-week kids camp provided youth from within our community a chance to interact with officers in a relaxed atmosphere, all the while providing a learning environment focused on public safety topics.

In September 2024, we experienced the response efforts to Hurricane Helene. Officers responded to over 1,000 calls related to the storm, addressing downed trees, and flooding, and providing critical support to neighboring counties. Their collaborative efforts ensured public safety during the crisis.

I am grateful to have worked alongside the men and women of the Lenoir Police Department. Through accolades and obstacles, the Lenoir Police Department has provided an unwavering commitment to serve and protect the community through proactive engagement, professional development, and strategic partnerships.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR 2024

PATROL DIVISION

The Patrol Division of the Lenoir Police Department is the agency's backbone. The men and women who make up this division staff these positions 24 hours per day, 365 days per year. They are the initial responders to all calls for service no matter the nature of the event. In 2024, the Patrol Division responded to 40,439 self-initiated and response calls for service. Through these calls for service, the Patrol Division has provided a safe place for residents and visitors to live, work, and play.

Patrol Officers must be able to respond to any call for service no matter the current weather condition or level of danger. One of the many ongoing equipment projects completed this year was the procurement of new ballistic plate carrier vests and helmets for all sworn personnel. In addition to this needed protective equipment was the routine purchase of 10 new uniform ballistic vests. These items are a necessity for patrol officers to conduct normal patrol functions and must be replaced and/or updated on a scheduled basis.



Patrol Officer Recognition:

Several patrol officers received their Intermediate and Advanced Law Enforcement Certificates. In order to be awarded such a certificate, an officer must acquire a certain amount of training hours as well as credible experience. In most cases, officers must possess a minimum of four to eight years of credible service to receive these professional certificates.

Patrol supervisor Sgt. Mark Coffey received his Advanced Law Enforcement Certificate.

Cpl. Zambrano received the American Legion Post 29 Officer of the Year award.

Cpl. Foust, Cpl. Zambrano, Cpl. G. Baxter, Ptl. H. King, Ptl. A. Ryerse, Ptl. J. Pyle and Ptl. J. Brown all received Golden Ticket Awards in 2024. The Golden Ticket Award recognizes outstanding customer service provided by our team members.

Patrol supervisor promotions included Cpl. M. Foust to Sergeant and Ptl. G. Baxter to Corporal.



K9 Major Retires:

K9 Major began his career with the Lenoir Police Department in 2019. Throughout his service, he played a vital role in the seizure of numerous illegal controlled substances, assisted in locating individuals involved in criminal activity, and showcased his exceptional skills to countless members of the community. Major's contributions will be greatly missed.



Patrol Officers Community Involvement:

Patrol officers remain dedicated to addressing reports of homeless camps and individuals throughout the City of Lenoir. In 2024, officers responded to numerous calls related to these situations. They actively collaborate with businesses, code enforcement and property owners to assist the unsheltered by connecting them with resources that can address their current needs.

Abandoned sites often become littered with significant amounts of trash and debris that requires cleanup. Patrol officers prioritize efforts to restore these areas, reducing the likelihood of recurring incidents, all the while enhancing the city's overall aesthetics.



The Patrol Division partnered with One Blood to host two blood drives in 2024, one in June and another in November. We believe that participating in community service activities like blood drives plays a key role in building positive relationships between the police and the community. These events help foster trust by demonstrating the department's commitment to supporting initiatives that directly benefit the community beyond law enforcement.



Western Piedmont Council of Government Initiative:

Officers continue to collaborate with the Western Piedmont Council of Governments (WPCOG) over periods of time to gather data on the unsheltered population for the homeless initiative program. During this time, officers supported WPCOG personnel in locating and documenting cases of displaced individuals. This partnership is part of our ongoing efforts to gain a deeper understanding of this population. Members of the Lenoir Police Department continue to actively engage with the WPCOG Homelessness Response Team by sharing information and participating in events like Partnering for Warmth, held at the Civic Center in June 2024.

Critical Incident Stress Management Team:

Lt. Chris Bumgarner (Patrol Division) serves as the Team Coordinator for the Foothills Regional Law Enforcement Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) team. The team's primary focus is to offer regular one-on-one peer support and conduct post-critical incident group interventions.

In 2024, CISM team members from Lenoir PD participated in thirteen group interventions (defuse/debrief). Two of these interventions were held for our own officers following critical incidents, while the remaining eleven were in support of other agencies. In July, the Catawba County Sheriff's Office joined the team, expanding its reach. Currently, seven agencies within our region make up the CISM team, with agency leaders meeting regularly to ensure the management and continued development of the team. As the team evolves, a more comprehensive understanding of its benefits will become clear.

Through community grants, advanced training opportunities are provided for CISM team members. In 2024, Lt. Bumgarner and Assistant Team Coordinator Mike Ollis (Hickory PD) attended the IACP Officer Safety and Wellness Conference in Louisville, KY.

CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS DIVISION

In 2024, the Criminal Investigations Division maintained its steadfast commitment to working closely with the citizens of Lenoir and engaging with our communities to investigate criminal acts and deter criminal activities of all kinds. Over the year, the division handled a total of 835 cases, covering a wide range of offenses.

Ensuring the safety of our community remains a top priority, with a particular focus on crimes against persons and property. Our goal is to provide a secure environment where residents can live, work, and enjoy their daily lives with peace of mind.

Investigator Recognition:

To earn Intermediate and Advanced Law Enforcement Certificates, officers must meet specific requirements, including a combination of training hours and years of credible service. Typically, these certifications require four to eight years of credible experience.

In 2024, Senior Detective Landon Annas achieved his Advanced Law Enforcement Certificate, while Detective Jesse Massey earned her Intermediate Law Enforcement Certificate from the North Carolina Training and Standards Division.

Additionally, Patrol Officer Brandon Mooney was promoted to Detective I and transitioned into the division, and Detective Joe Hamrick was promoted to Senior Detective within the Investigations Division.

Senior Detective Joe Hamrick also received the prestigious “Top Gun” award for the third consecutive year, recognizing his exceptional skills and dedication.



Nuisance Investigations:

The Investigations Division continues to collaborate closely with Code Enforcement and the Planning Department to address nuisance violations within our communities. These efforts are essential for protecting the health, safety, and overall quality of life for our residents. By tackling issues such as unsafe structures, overgrown lots, and other violations, nuisance enforcement plays a vital role in maintaining a clean and safe environment for all.

Whenever possible, investigators work cooperatively with property owners to resolve violations amicably. In 2024, these focused efforts led to the investigation of 215 properties for various nuisance violations. Of those, 144 were successfully abated, either through the property owner's efforts or by the City of Lenoir.

Pictured below are examples of properties abated by investigators in 2024, showcasing the positive impact of these initiatives on our community.



1702 Columbus Street Before abatement



1702 Columbus Street after abatement



342 Eastover Circle before abatement



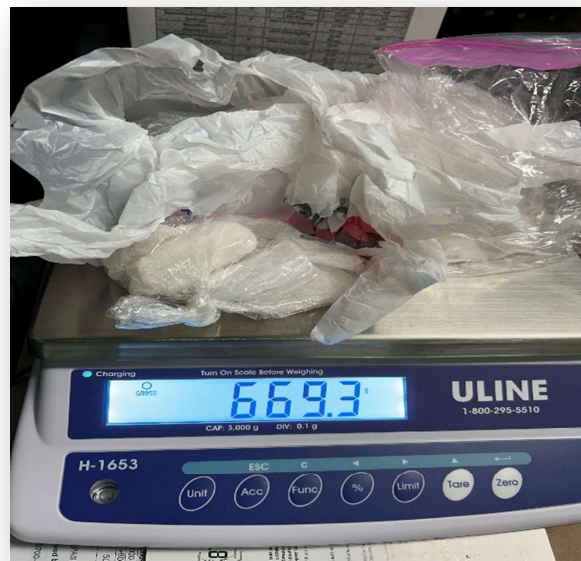
342 Eastover Circle after abatement

Narcotics Investigations:

The opioid crisis continues to profoundly impact families across the City of Lenoir and Caldwell County. In 2024, investigators responded to 111 overdoses, with 69 directly linked to opioid use. These incidents disrupt the lives of countless individuals and highlight the ongoing challenges our communities face in addressing this epidemic.

Investigators remain dedicated to combating the flow of illegal drugs into our city, working in close partnership with local, state, and federal agencies. In 2024, these efforts led to the seizure of illegal narcotics valued at \$630,381 within the City of Lenoir. Additionally, investigators contributed to the seizure of \$3,519,210 worth of narcotics while assisting other agencies.

Addressing the illegal distribution of these dangerous substances remains a top priority as we work to protect the health and safety of our citizens. Below are photographs showcasing some of the significant drug seizures from 2024.



Support Services Division

Support Services manages and oversees various administrative and response functions for the department, to include Training, Logistics, Records, Evidence, Community Resources, Communications, School Resource, Traffic Enforcement, and the Downtown District Officer.

Facility Upgrades:

In 2024, Support Services took on the responsibility of managing a renovation project for the Lenoir Police Department lounge. This space serves as an essential area where employees can prepare and enjoy their meals, offering a much-needed place to recharge during their shifts.

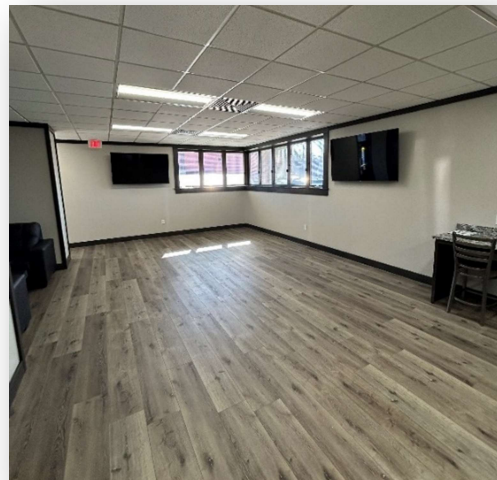
The renovation project began in August 2024 and remains ongoing, with completion anticipated by February 2025. Once finished, the updated lounge will provide a more functional and comfortable environment for our staff.



Beginning
Renovation



Nearing
Completion

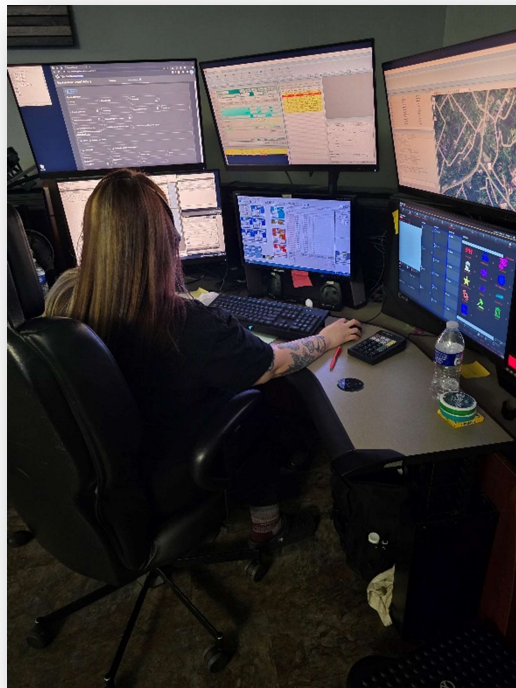


In August of 2024, two new rooftop air conditioners replaced units that were original to construction of the building. To date, all original units have been replaced.



Communications Center:

In 2024, Communications received 59,970 total phone calls. Of those calls, 7,309 were processed as 911 emergency calls and 11,260 were non-911 calls for service. The communications center processed 21,684 officer-initiated calls and made 40,689 CAD entries. In addition, communications personnel processed and received 4,845 after-hours water and sewer service calls for the City of Lenoir.



Caldwell Joint Emergency Communications Center merger project:

In May of 2024, the city of Lenoir elected municipal board entered into an agreement with the Caldwell County elected commissioners to establish the joint communications center for emergency public safety communications services within Caldwell County and the City of Lenoir.

At the start of this project, “Lenoir shall appropriate funds to the annual costs of maintenance, operation, repair and capital costs of Caldwell Joint Emergency Communications Center, in a reverse grant beginning the first Operational Date. Lenoir will contribute over five fiscal years, beginning at \$771,000 in the first year. \$620,000, the second year, \$465,000, the third year, \$310,000 the fourth year, and \$155,000 after the fifth year. Hereafter their financial obligation shall end.”

This facility shall serve all of Caldwell County, and the City of Lenoir. This system will promote the delivery of public safety services to the residents and taxpayers of Caldwell, and Lenoir in furtherance of the public health, safety, and general welfare of all Caldwell County residents.

Communications Personnel Training and Advancement:

Our communications personnel continue to enhance their expertise through various training and certification opportunities. In 2024, Crystal McCurry and Nadia Hollar successfully completed the Telecommunications Certification class, a now state-mandated requirement for municipal police agencies. Additionally, Bethany Clark, Molly Ford, and Dustin Eller attended the First Line Supervision class, while Dustin Eller furthered his professional development by completing the 911 Center Supervisor Program and the National Emergency Number Association’s 911 Center Management class.

This year also brought several changes within the Communications team. Molly Ford and Bethany Clark were promoted to Telecommunicator Supervisors. Rhonda Hollowell joined the Customer Service Team, and Crystal McCurry took on the role of Co-Chair for the team.

A notable achievement was earned by Zylah Walker, who received a Golden Ticket award on April 28th for her exceptional assistance in helping another agency locate an escaped inmate.

These accomplishments reflect the dedication and professionalism of our communications team in serving the community.

Training:

The Training Section of the Lenoir Police Department plays a vital role in supporting the agency by managing all hiring and promotional processes, overseeing annual in-service training, and maintaining records of officer certifications. In 2024, the Training Section conducted 32 background investigations and facilitated 8 hiring processes, resulting in the recruitment of 5 police officers and 3 civilian employees.

Throughout the year, the Training Section also implemented, coordinated, and tracked training for all department personnel. In total, LPD staff completed an impressive 6,666.5 hours of training in 2024, reflecting the department's commitment to professional development and readiness.

At the close of the year, the Training Coordinator successfully prepared and submitted the required annual compliance reports to the Criminal Justice Training Standards and Sheriff Standards, with the 2024 reports for both finalized and submitted in early January 2025.

Evidence:

In 2024, Evidence Tech Jackie Kerley processed 2,160 pieces of incoming evidence. She was able to destroy per Court Order, 1,156 pieces of evidence. She took in 189 pounds of unused or unwanted medication through one community event and our department's lobby drop box.

Logistics:

The Logistics Lieutenant of the Lenoir Police Department oversees asset inventory, procurement, and purchasing, while also assisting with Internal Affairs matters. In 2024, Logistics procured four new vehicles, which were assigned to the Patrol Division, ensuring the fleet remains reliable and mission-ready. Throughout the year, the Logistics Lieutenant meticulously tracked equipment and assets to maintain an accurate and up-to-date inventory.

Several significant projects were also managed by Logistics in 2024. In April, the department transitioned its cell phone provider from Verizon to AT&T FIRSTNET, upgrading 57 cellphones and 40 internet hotspots to enhance communication capabilities.

Additionally, Logistics oversaw a critical upgrade to the department's camera program. This included issuing 55 new body-worn cameras to officers and outfitting 30 in-car cameras. The upgrades modernized the equipment and transitioned camera data storage from on-site servers to a more secure cloud-based system.

Downtown District:

The Lenoir Police Department's Downtown District Officer plays a vital role in the daily operations of the agency, serving as a key asset to both the department and the community. By maintaining a consistent and visible presence in the heart of downtown, this officer fosters strong relationships with business owners, visitors, and residents alike.

With a focus on providing exceptional customer service, the Downtown District Officer ensures that downtown visitors feel welcome and secure, while addressing the unique needs of business

owners. From resolving concerns swiftly to offering guidance and support, this officer's dedication enhances the vibrancy and safety of our downtown area, making it a place where people can shop, dine, and gather together with confidence. The Downtown District Officer's commitment is a testament to the department's mission of serving and protecting our community with professionalism, fairness, and excellence.

A side-by-side was purchased in 2024 to support downtown patrol and parking enforcement efforts. This versatile vehicle enhances the department's ability to maintain safety and accessibility in high-traffic areas.



Community Resources Platoon:

City Events:

Officers have actively participated in and provided security for a wide range of city events and festivals, including the Bicycle Festival, Blackberry Festival, Cruise-In events, Summer Music Madness, Mad Hatter Festival, North Carolina Tattoo Gathering, and the Wood, Fire and Smoke Festival. In addition to these events, officers supported community initiatives such as the turkey giveaway at the Martin Luther King Center, Light Up Lenoir, and the Christmas Parade. MPO C. Rubio played a key role in assisting with the Special Olympics, further demonstrating the department's commitment to supporting and enhancing local events and community engagement.



Lt. M. Crisp and Cpl. C. Lynn attended Long View Police Department's National Night Out. Lt. M. Crisp and Cpl. C. Lynn attended several job fairs hosted within the county as well as hosted numerous tours of our Police Department for students and Boy Scout Troops. Lt. Crisp has partnered with the Women of Rotary to promote and combat Human Trafficking with the Red Sands Project. Officers with C Platoon assisted with the Western Piedmont COG in addressing the homeless population. All officers of C Platoon conducted a cleanup of homeless camps located on city property.

Personnel Changes and Awards:

In 2024 Sergeant Jen Banks took over as the School Resource Officer Sergeant. Sergeant Banks has stepped into her new role with a high level of motivation and eagerness.



MPO C. Smith received his Advanced Law Enforcement Certificate and MPO J. Ramsey received his Intermediate Law Enforcement Certificate.



Ptl. G. Warren and Ptl. S. Clark were certified as D.A.R.E. Officers over the summer of 2024.



C.A.D.E.T. Camp (Connect, Achieve, Develop, and Engage Together)

The department proudly organized and hosted the first annual CADET Camp in June, a week-long event that gave 21 local youths an up-close experience with law enforcement, EMS, and fire services. Throughout the camp, participants had the opportunity to learn about various divisions, including Patrol Field, Criminal Investigations, and the Special Response Team.

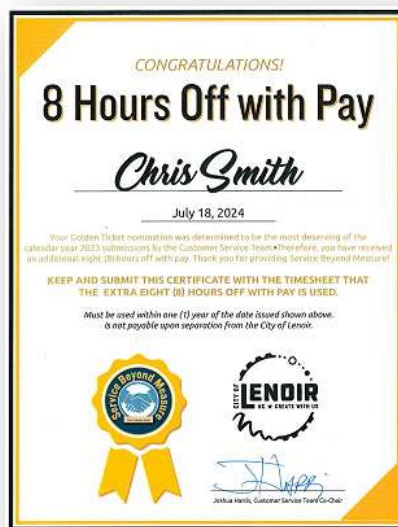
The camp also included exciting activities such as attending a Crawdads game, touring a Forest Service helicopter, and learning about water safety at the pool. In a highlight of the week, nine of the campers even learned to swim, making the experience both fun and educational. The CADET Camp provided an invaluable opportunity for young people to engage with first responders and gain a deeper understanding of their roles in the community.



Golden Ticket Award:

In October of 2024, MPO C. Smith was recognized by the City Council for receiving the prestigious Golden Ticket award for the year 2023. The Customer Service Team reviewed all Golden Ticket nominations from the year and selected Smith's as the most deserving.

The incident that earned Smith this recognition involved a search for an autistic child who had run away from home after an argument with his mother. Smith located the child hiding under a bus at West Lenoir Elementary. After safely returning the child home, Smith took the time to speak with the mother about the child's medication. As a result, the mother took the child to his doctor, who adjusted his medication. The mother later shared that her interaction with MPO Smith had a profound impact on her family, helping to keep them together. Today, the child is thriving—off the medication and excelling as a straight-A student at Hibriten High School.



School Resource Officers:

Our School Resource Officers (SROs) conducted over 35 lockdown drills across our city schools and assisted with more than 20 fire drills. Additionally, the SROs organized and coordinated four K9 sniffs of school properties, with the help of K9 officers.

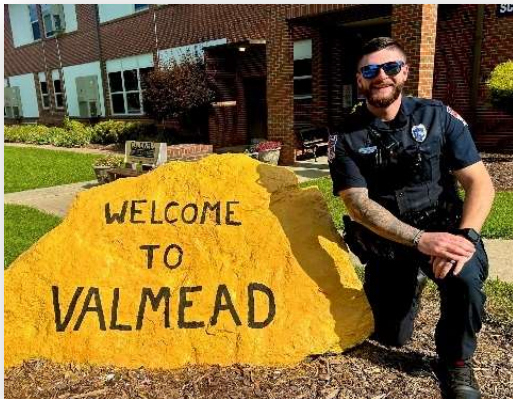
SROs at our elementary schools launched a reading program, where they read to classes weekly, fostering positive relationships with students. They also continue to mentor at-risk students, providing support and guidance.

Officers from C Platoon provided security for over 50 sporting events and ensured safety at Hibriten High School's graduation and Project Graduation at Bo's Entertainment.

Lt. M. Crisp, Sgt. J. Banks, Cpl. C. Lynn, and MPO C. Rubio delivered active shooter training to upperclassmen at Hibriten High School, while MPO C. Smith conducted classes for middle

school students on bullying and cyberbullying. Officers from C Platoon participated in various training, including active shooter response, juvenile law, and de-escalation techniques.

Multiple site surveys and threat assessments were conducted at local businesses and schools, ensuring that all schools within the city were thoroughly assessed for safety and security.



Hurricane Helene Response:

On the evening of September 26, 2024, Hurricane Helene made landfall in the City of Lenoir. During the storm, Lenoir Police Officers demonstrated extraordinary dedication and bravery as they responded to a variety of emergencies caused by the storm's impact. The hurricane brought heavy rains and powerful winds that led to widespread damage across the region, challenging first responders to act swiftly and effectively to ensure public safety.

When Hurricane Helene struck Lenoir, our communications center managed an overwhelming volume of more than 500 calls in just 24 hours and 1,096 calls throughout the weekend. During this challenging time, all full-time Telecommunicators worked overtime, with one even sleeping at the police department due to widespread power outages.

In addition to handling emergency calls for the City of Lenoir, our team stepped up to assist neighboring counties—Avery, Watauga, Ashe, and Buncombe—when their communication systems were overwhelmed by the storm's devastation. To ensure critical information reached the appropriate emergency personnel, our Telecommunicators showed remarkable adaptability, utilizing social media and other unconventional methods to bridge communication gaps.

One of the primary issues faced by Lenoir Police was the significant number of downed trees that were obstructing roadways and posing hazards to residents. Officers worked tirelessly to address these blockages, often cutting downed trees themselves to clear critical pathways. Their efforts were crucial in enabling emergency vehicles to access affected areas and ensure that residents could evacuate if necessary.

In addition to dealing with fallen trees, officers also responded to incidents of flooding, which created dangerous conditions for residents and motorists alike. Numerous roadways were inundated, rendering them impassable. Officers directed traffic away from hazardous areas to prevent further incidents.

The officers' commitment extended to assisting residents directly impacted by the storm. In several instances, they helped those trapped inside their homes due to structural damage or blocked exits caused by fallen debris. Their quick actions ensured that residents were brought to safety and received any necessary medical attention.

Throughout the hurricane response, Lenoir Police Officers worked closely with other emergency services, including the Lenoir Fire Department, Lenoir Public Works, NC State officials, Caldwell County Emergency Management, and other local entities. This collaboration ensured a coordinated and effective approach to managing the crisis and mitigating its effects on the community.

Lenoir Police Officers also extended their support to neighboring law enforcement agencies, including the Marion Police Department and Boone Police Department. By sharing resources, personnel, and expertise, they strengthened the collective response to the hurricane's widespread impact, highlighting the importance of inter-agency cooperation during large-scale emergencies.

The dedication and resilience displayed by Lenoir Police Officers during Hurricane Helene exemplify the critical role of law enforcement in disaster response. Their efforts not only safeguarded lives and property but also underscored the importance of preparedness and teamwork in overcoming natural disasters.

As pictured below, Officers removed debris and fallen trees during and after the storm.



Officers aid in disaster relief efforts to the needs of Hurricane Helene victims. A washer and dryer combo was also purchased after a need was identified in response to Hurricane Helene.



POTENTIAL OBSTACLES FOR THIS YEAR AND BEYOND:

Recruitment and Retention of Employees:

Recruiting and retaining dedicated personnel is critical to our success. However, recruitment and retention remain ongoing challenges for the law enforcement profession nationwide; our department is no exception. Addressing this issue will continue to be a priority moving forward.

There is no single contributing factor to this problem that agencies can easily address. Across the profession, many officers are choosing to retire or leave law enforcement entirely. At the same time, the pool of applicants continues to decline, making it increasingly difficult to fill vacancies.

Compounding these challenges, the North Carolina Basic Law Enforcement Training (BLET) program recently extended its curriculum from 640 hours to 868 hours, a nearly 35% increase in training time. While this change enhances officer preparedness, it also delays the timeline for new recruits to begin their career at the Lenoir Police Department. Additionally, once recruits complete the BLET program and receive certification through NC Criminal Justice Training Standards, they must undergo a mandated 12-week field training program before they are eligible to begin patrol responsibilities in a one-man, unassisted capacity. This extended training and onboarding period further impacts the department's ability to quickly fill operational gaps.

Over the past several years, city officials have made significant efforts to ensure our starting salaries are more competitive. Despite these efforts, as we adjust our pay, surrounding departments adjust theirs. A recent survey of 17 regional agencies shows that, as of 2024, Lenoir ranks 12th out of 17 in starting pay. This data highlights the ongoing challenge of staying competitive in a shifting labor market, while continuing to maintain fiscal responsibility.

Rank	Agency	Current 2024	Projected 2025/2026
1	Appalachian State University PD	\$62,382.32	N/A
2	Hickory Police Department	\$57,565.00	COLA TBD
3	North Carolina Highway Patrol	\$55,000.00	TBD
4	Boone Police Department	\$54,200.00	TBD
5	Burke County Sheriff's Office	\$52,500.00	COLA TBD
6	Morganton DPS	\$50,738.00	Merit and COLA TBD
7	Lincolnton Police Department	\$49,738.00	COLA TBD
8	Claremont Police Department	\$49,468.00	TBD
9	Conover Police Department	\$48,828.00	COLA TBD
10	Catawba County Sheriff's Office	\$48,407.00	Current Study / COLA TBD
11	Newton Police Department	\$47,526.00	4% COLA in July
12	Lenoir Police Department	\$47,136.00	TBD
13	Caldwell County Sheriff's Office	\$45,500.00	47k Starting Projected
14	Granite Falls Police Department	\$45,012.24	Unk
15	Blowing Rock Police Department	\$44,916.00	COLA 4%
16	Hudson Police Department	\$44,751.00	COLA TBD
17	Valdese Police Department	\$40,708.00	TBD

Vehicles for the Department:

The Lenoir Police Department continues to face the challenge of replacing its fleet of patrol vehicles due to age, wear, and tear resulting from rigorous daily use. Patrol vehicles endure constant operation, high mileage, and demanding conditions, which accelerate their deterioration and necessitates regular replacement to ensure officer safety and effective community service.

Adding to this challenge is the fact that police-rated passenger cars are no longer available, leaving SUVs and pickup trucks as the only viable options for replacement in a patrol function. Rising prices in the automotive market make it increasingly difficult to replace vehicles without significantly impacting resources.

To address these issues, the department has implemented extended measures to ensure fiscal responsibility. This includes exploring cost-effective procurement options, maintaining vehicles beyond traditional service periods when feasible, and carefully prioritizing replacements based on condition and operational needs. Despite these efforts, the need for reliable and updated vehicles remains essential to maintaining service quality and public safety.

Forecasted Retirements in 2025:

The Lenoir Police Department is preparing for significant transitions as five officers of our team, serving in the ranks of Chief, Captain, Lieutenant, Corporal, and Investigator, approach their retirements. These departures represent a wealth of institutional knowledge, leadership, and dedication to the community that will be greatly missed.

In response to these changes, we are initiating a comprehensive promotional process to ensure that capable, motivated employees are placed in the roles best suited to their skills and experience. This effort is essential to maintaining the department's operational effectiveness and continuing our mission to serve the citizens of Lenoir with professionalism and integrity.

Additionally, we recognize the challenge of recruiting and onboarding new officers in a competitive labor market, particularly with the ongoing expansion of the North Carolina Basic Law Enforcement Training (BLET) program. While this growth in training opportunities is positive for the profession as a whole, it requires the department to remain proactive and adaptive in attracting top talent to meet the evolving needs of our community.

The department is committed to addressing these transitions with thoughtful planning, ensuring continuity of service and fostering the next generation of law enforcement leaders.



Thank you for taking the time to review this report. We sincerely appreciate your continued support and look forward to serving the City of Lenoir and meeting its needs in the years to come.

Chief Brent Phelps
Jan 2025



CITY OF LENOIR

Public Services Department



Jon Hogan
Public Works Director
jon.hogan@ci.lenoir.nc.us

510 B Greer Circle
Lenoir, NC 28645
828-757-2175

Dr. Jeff Church
Public Utilities Director
jeff.church@lenoirnc.gov

Public Utilities

2025 Annual Report

January 23, 2025

WATER

Rhodhiss Water Treatment Plant

The Water Plant treated over 2.2 BILLION gallons of water in 2024 to a US EPA Area-Wide Optimization Program (AWOP) award winning optimized performance level of clarity. Due to the hard work of the Division Superintendent, Kevin Matheson, his operators, and a little favor from Mother Nature, the Rhodhiss plant was able to maintain full treatment capabilities during the extremely adverse and challenging effects of Hurricane Helene. The dedication of our operators, the support of the City Manager and the City Council, and the purposeful ongoing investments into the plant infrastructure were critical in insuring this success.

Water Meter Replacement Project

The replaced meters are working as expected. The City has purchased approximately 400 replacement meters for stock in 2024. This purchase has allowed the City to have replacement meters when issue arise; thus, removing the stress of waiting for a warranty replacement. The City is still waiting to close out this project.

Finley Area Water System/Pressure Improvements Project

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. The NC Division of Water Infrastructure determined the project eligible to fund using State Capital and Infrastructure Fund (SCIF) funding made possible by the assistance of Representative Destin Hall. The project is approved and is currently in the design phase. Boring logs were received the week of January 12, 2024 for the latest geotechnical work. The geotechnical data will be evaluated and compared with previous borings over the coming weeks and then discussed with the geotechnical engineer. The geotechnical engineer will then prepare and submit the final report of geotechnical recommendations needed for the tank design. The proposed water system pressures are being compared with the water line plans. A meeting was held with City staff to define the project area in 2024. The project is submitted to and waiting for approval from the NC Public Water Supply. The original project estimate was \$6.3 million; however, it is highly likely this will not cover the cost of the project.

Lenoir-Valdese Interconnection Project

The City received funding in the amount of approximately \$17,000,000 through Session Law 2023-2024, House Bill 259, Section 12.2.(e) to construct a water interconnection between the City of Lenoir and the Town of Valdese. McGill Associates are the design engineering firm. We



Scott Hildebran, City Manager



are in the preliminary stages of the project. City staff have met with McGill to discuss possible lake crossings for the transmission line. Once the final recommendation is received and approved, City staff will begin the process of acquiring easements for the line.

Lead and Copper

The water system lead and copper study is currently underway. City staff certified the inventory was submitted by the October 2024 deadline and the required letters were mailed by the November 2024 deadline. The City, in September 2023, received notification the Division of Water Infrastructure (DWI) and the State Water Infrastructure Authority (SWIA) approved the Lead Service Line Replacement project to receive a total funding amount of \$500,000 from the Drinking Water State Revolving Funds (DWSRF) Bi-Partisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) Lead Service Line Replacement Funds. The loan is repayable at 0.00% interest. An initial scope of work was submitted in November of 2023 and is scheduled to be approved by early February 2023. The scope included \$347,500 for field inspections. From this funding the City is able to contract with Duke's Root Control, Inc. for service line identification services. The City staff have applied for an additional \$1,000,000 in state funding to complete the service line inventory. The engineering firm of Freese and Nichols are retained to lead the City through this process.

Flash Mix Basin Repairs (Rhodhiss Water Plant)

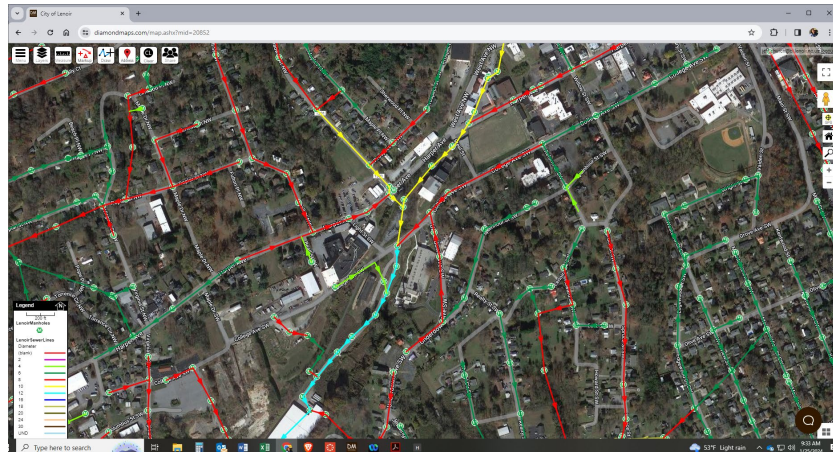
This project includes concrete repairs and replacement of old equipment. This project is currently in progress, Freyssinet, Inc. as the general contractor. The consulting engineering firm of SKA, Consulting Engineers, is providing McGill Associate consultation services for this project.

Collections and Utility Service Policy and Fees

With the implementation of the new metering system, staff conducts an ongoing a review of our policies and fees related to service applications, cut on and cut off procedures and policies. Billing and collection policies are also reviewed. The technology in the smart meters is much more expensive than the traditional analog meters. Fees for tampering with or damaging a meter have increased to reflect the increased cost of the meters and the transmitters associated with the AMI network. City staff reviews the current water and sewer tap fees to insure they are adequately covering the cost for a new service installation. This process is ongoing. The water and sewer tap fees were last updated in the fall of 2022.

Diamond Maps

The utilities department has purchased an online GIS platform, based on Google Maps, to inventory our utilities infrastructure. The platform is very user friendly and is able to be updated on a daily basis, thus, making it a living document. Each member of the distribution and collections crew has access to the mapping platform. A link for the program overview can be accessed at www.diamondmaps.com and a sample screenshot of the sewer system showing direction of flow and manhole locations is pasted below. In 2024, Collections and Distribution staff, under the leadership of Superintendent Derek Goble, took full advantage of the platform and are utilizing it on a daily basis.



Utility Department Capital Asset Inventory

Freese and Nichols has completed the inventory of all of the water and wastewater facilities and capital assets such as treatment plants, water tanks and sewer pump stations to assist with capital planning and to better track maintenance and repair needs at the facilities. The document is a living document and staff will update it in October every year.

Utilities Maintenance Division

The Utilities Maintenance Division, lead by Superintendent Tommy Mann, completed numerous water system projects this past year. Two of the main projects included the completion of the preparation work for security camera installation and replacing the day tanks for chemicals at the Rhodhiss water treatment plant.

WASTEWATER

Gunpowder Bar Screen Replacement

The City purchased a new bar screen for the Gunpowder wastewater plant for approximately \$65,000 replacing a unit that is approximately 30 years old. The bar screen filters out various debris items that, if left unaddressed, would cause multiple maintenance issues within the wastewater plant. The bar screen was installed in the fall of 2024 and has greatly increased the screening capability of the influent to the plant.

Harper Avenue Sewer Line Replacement

The project design is almost completed as of the writing of this update. McGill staff will soon be scheduling a final project review meeting with City staff. The project should be going out to bid in early spring 2025.

Utilities Maintenance Division

The Utilities Maintenance Division completed numerous wastewater projects this past year. The main projects include:

- Installing security cameras at the Gunpowder plant,
- Raising the top of the lift station located on Spring Street in Hudson. The original top of the lift station was just above ground level and was subject to a vast amount of inflow during a high rain event. This caused, at least one, house on the street to not have sewer services during this event. The division received a call from a concerned customer and was able to raise the top approximately 12" alleviating the issue.

- Rebuilding of the Cypress Street, Hudson, lift station. The lift station was rebuilt with larger pumps to increase the efficiency of the station.
- Rebuilt the controls of the Valmead lift station, increasing the dependability of the station.
- Replaced the bar screen at the Gunpowder wastewater treatment plant, as mentioned above.
- Replaced the large raw influent pump at Lower Creek wastewater treatment plant to assist in efficiency, redundancy, and effectiveness.
- Installed a Variable Frequency Drive (VFD) on the influent pump at Lower Creek to increase serviceability and efficiency.

GRANTS

Water and Sewer Asset Inventory Assessment Grants

The City received notification from the North Carolina Division of Water Infrastructure (NCDWI) in 2023. The asset inventory assessment grant application was approved by the State Water Infrastructure Authority (SWIA) to receive grant funding from the American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA) and the State Reserve Program (SRP) in 2024. The grant is approved to fund one hundred percent of eligible project construction costs up to a maximum of \$200,000 for each inventory assessment. Currently, McGill Associates are completing the assessment for the City.

Additional Grants

Radford Thomas is reporting on the BRIC and Brownfield grants.

FUTURE PROJECTS

Lenoir, Granite Falls, Hickory Interconnect

In order to create redundancy, build capacity, and to protect customers during times of unexpected events, Lenoir will investigate a water distribution interconnect, through the Town of Granite Falls, to the City of Hickory.

Meadowood Lift Station Pump Upgrades

This project is identified in the Capital Improvement Plan. The lift station serves approximately 50%-60% of the Gunpowder basin. In times of heavy flow, the 12" sewer line flowing into the plant fills to capacity. This contributes to possible sanitary sewer overflows (SSOs) upstream from the station.

Collection System Line Replacement in the Hudson/Boxwood Street area

This project is identified in the Capital Improvement Plan. This project is a sister project to the Meadowood lift station pump upgrades project. If SSOs continue after the pump upgrades the next phase is to upscale sewer pipe size from the existing 8" sewer pipe.

Gunpowder Wastewater Treatment Plant Dry Wells

The dry wells at the Gunpowder plant are aging. McGill, as of the writing of this update, will visit the site in the near future to provide suggestions/options for remediation. In speaking with Joel with McGill, in most cases, dry wells are replaced, instead of repaired. More information will be provided as it is known.

Whitnel Water Transmission Line Replacement

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 has been completed to determine the location of the new line. Funding sources are currently being identified.

Morganton Boulevard Water Line Loop

This project would connect the Whitnel 20-inch transmission line from east of Harrisburg Drive to Fairview Drive along Morganton Boulevard.

Divisional Valve Replacements

This project would begin the process of replacing the valves that separate the high-pressure side of the distribution system (Cajah's Mountain side) from the lower pressure side of the system (Whitnel side). This project is ongoing as funds and time allows.

Pressure Reducing Valve Vault

Replacement of the vault located on Fairview drive that connects the high-pressure side to the low-pressure side on the 24-inch main transmission line from the Cajah's Mountain tanks.

Hudson Valve Insertions

Add strategic valves to the Lenoir distribution system in the Town of Hudson to improve divisional separation during water main repairs.

Lenoir Valve Insertions

Add strategic valves to the Lenoir distribution system to improve divisional separation during water main repairs.

AWIA Compliance Projects

This project may include the purchase of large, portable generators, security cameras and alarms and fencing to improve security measures at the water treatment plant. This is an ongoing project planned over several years in the CIP.

Lower Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant Updates/Upgrades

City staff is working with McGill Engineering to design the replacement of the mixers and diffusers in the basins.

Water Plant Operational Building Upgrades

This may include interior and exterior painting, HVAC updates, window replacements and lighting improvements. This project is partially funded in the current FY budget.

Vehicles and Equipment

Replacement of service trucks, mowers and other maintenance equipment. This is ongoing and included in the CIP.

Manhole Improvements

This project includes the repair or replacement of old brick or deteriorated manholes in the collection system.



Public Works Department

510-B Greer Circle SW
Lenoir, North Carolina 28645

Public Works Director
Jonathan Hogan
(828) 757-2183

Public Works Department – Annual Report for Calendar Year 2024



Engineering Division & Admin (2 FTE)

- Reorganized and merged the Street and Sanitation Divisions to create the Streets & Solid Waste Division. This has been a very successful endeavor.
- Reorganized and merged the Horticulture/Landscaping staff with the Parks Maintenance staff to create the Parks & Public Properties division, new to Public Works (see info in report).
- Continued to work with the Downtown Economic Development staff to select and purchase new Holiday decorations extending our footprint to include the Smith Crossroads Gateway sign.
- Worked with the Downtown Economic Development staff and Destination by Design in completing Wayfinding documentation and NCDOT submittals. Project was put out to bid and contract awarded to Rite Lite Sign, Inc. currently completing contract documentation and working with DED staff on the artistic embellishments.
- Worked with Destination by Design, to design the remaining four (4) City gateway signs. To date survey work has been completed. We hope to have a conceptual designs by end of January.
- Awarded NC Forestry Grant for Canopy Cover Assessment and Tree Planting project with local schools. As a licensed Arborist I have been asked to work with William Lenoir Middle School in developing their planting plan.
- Continue to manage numerous Capital Improvement projects throughout the city (Hospital Ave., Greenways etc.).
- Joined the Comprehensive Highway Safety Plan Technical Safety Subcommittee (GHMPO) to assist with drafting the regions Highway Safety Plan.
- Graduated from PELA (Public Executive Leadership Academy) at UNC SOG.
- Worked with Broyhill Foundation to complete installation of an automatic gate system, complete fall mulch application. Painting/staining all structures at Broyhill Walking Park coming in spring 2025.
- Successfully navigated a major disaster with Hurricane Helene. All staff were safe with no injuries. Extremely blessed with a dedicated, talented and hardworking staff.
- Worked with the County EOC during Helene disaster, recovery and debris cleanup.



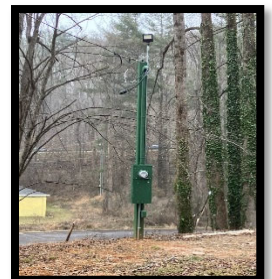
Streets & Solid Waste Division (28 FTE)

- Supervised resurfacing of six (6) streets in the City of Lenoir. Resurfacing for the current fiscal year is ongoing. Streets paved in 2024:
 - Haigler Rd – Foothills Dr to End**
 - Lower Creek Drive –West Blvd to Wildwood Rd**
 - Willow St – Ashe to Vance**
 - Vance St-Willow to Scroggs**
 - Scroggs St**
 - Wedgewood Pl**
- In-House stream bank repair at (3) three Greenway locations due to Hurricane Helene.
- Installed new frame/grate drainage at Pennell St on Greenway.
- Assisted with cleaning sidewalks, sweeping and barricading streets in preparation for all events (Blackberry, Christmas Parade, Car Shows etc.).
- Continues to work with Planning Department on permitting and other issues.
- Performed curbside loose leaf collection from Mid-October 2024 and will likely continue through February/March 2025 due to Helene debris cleanup operations.
- Purchased new 8yd PacMac for small and special pickup routes.
- Replaced 36” storm culvert on Poplar Street.
- Worked with Shotcrete to line 56” culvert pipes on Renwick and Overlook Drive to mitigate collapse and extend life of pipe 20+ years.
- Chip sealed the street into the Lower Creek Sewer Plant for PU.
- Retaining wall and street collapsed on Old North Rd. during a severe summer storm. The crew worked diligently with Shotcrete Contractors Inc. to build back a more secure structure. Repair was complete and road opened in less than a week.
- **Standard operations included the following:**
 - Completed 3,326 work orders
 - Hauled 531 tons of brush
 - Approximately 50 uses of “Hot Box” asphalt recycling equipment
 - 50 potholes and 81 utility cuts patched
 - 31 Streets scraped and graveled
 - 78 Hurricane Helene Work Orders
 - 265 Storm Drains cleaned/ general maintenance
 - 608 Bulk piles collected in 2024
 - 5250 tons of garbage collected in 2024
 - Repaired 150 Rollout Cans



Building Maintenance Division (6 FTE)

- **LPD:** Remodeled kitchen and breakroom, wired/plumbed/installed washer and dryers.
- **LFD:** Installed new clock motor @ Station #1, installed new thermostats, exhaust fans, motion and exit lights in various stations.
- Assisted with design and installation of new holiday deco throughout town.
- **Mulberry Rec.:** Tore out gym floors, plumbed new roof drains, fabricated and installed new handrails, cut and poured concrete for pickle ball courts and repaired ballfield lights.
- **MLK Center:** Installed two new rooftop gas pack units, fabricated and installed new handrails.
- Installed LED lighting at City facilities; Broyhill Walking Park and LAFC; this is an ongoing project to upgrade lighting at city facilities.
- **JE Broyhill Park:** Wired new auto gate, installed mag locks on bathrooms, added motion lights to picnic shelters and installed new post and handrails on Ped Bridge.
- **City Hall:** Remodeled 2nd floor offices, installed cabinets on the 3rd floor, installed bathroom heaters, installed electrical and cabinets in all new restrooms, water sealed the basement and installed conduit around the building for Sky Best access.
- **LAFC:** Installed new heater in pool room, installed new LED lights in Racquet Ball Courts, installed new ice maker for concessions and new AC in concessions.
- **Greenway/Zacks Fork Soccer:** Installed 12 new bollards at greenway trailheads, bonded new splash pad and installed new downspouts for guttering on ZF restroom building. Also installed Rick Rash Trail signs, All-American City signs and Joan Rogers Trail.
- **Broyhill Walking Park:** Install 3 new pond fountains with RGB lighting, install new service and wired new auto gate, install new LED parking lot lights, installed new mag locks on bathrooms, added 4 swans in pond for goose control, installed new service at upper pond, built new handrails for bridge and installed deco fencing in areas for safety concerns.
- **Standard operations included the following:**
 - Performed monthly inspections of City buildings (exit signage, plumbing, lighting, and HVAC systems)
 - Performed maintenance and repairs on 13 City-owned traffic signals (downtown area)
 - Performed required inspections of the TH Broyhill Walking Park Dam.
 - 320 Work Orders Completed
 - Continued to staff all downtown events for mechanical and or electrical services (Blackberry, Light-Up Lenoir, Music Madness and Smoke festival).



Cemeteries Division (7 FTE)

- Hosted the annual *Luminary Display* at Blue Ridge Memorial Park. Over 150 volunteers from numerous agencies and institutions assisted with bag placement and lighting of candles. The event in 2024 proved to be a tremendous success once again.
- Designed and installed 8 new 16-niche columbarium panels set and ready to sell. (Total 128 available)
- Removed 11 downed trees and other debris from the cemeteries from Hurricane Helene.
- Worked with McGill and Jared on the cemetery expansion project.
- Presented Blue Ridge Cemetery Expansion project to Committee of the Whole.
- Standard operations included the following:
 - Seasonal maintenance of City cemeteries (Blue Ridge, Belleview, 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 and pesticide application for weed control.
 - 2024 Burials - 165
 - 2024 Plot Sales – 123
 - 2024 Monuments and scrolls 49
- Current number of available spaces as of December 31st, 2024:
 - Serenity Cove – 391 graves
 - Rockhill – 8 (8 grave lots)
 - Columbarium – 126 niches



Vehicle Services Division (5 FTE)

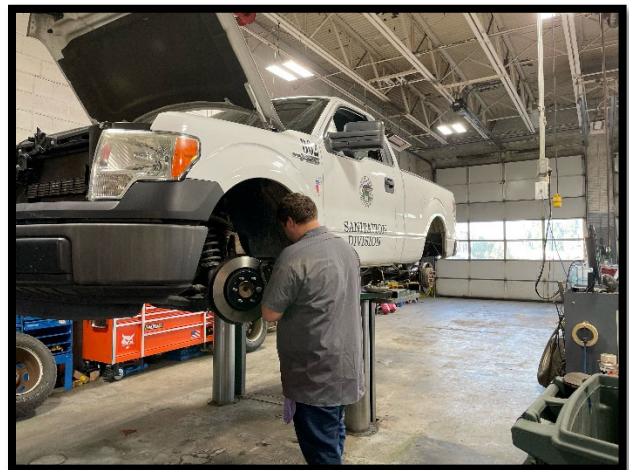
- Vehicle Services Superintendent Beth McMahan received a Public Fleet Management Certification through APWA.
- Continue to use assembled service “kits” for common and larger vehicles consisting of required filters and other maintenance items. These kits make for more efficiency.
- Staff completed 7 of the 9 modules required to graduate from CCC&TI Diesel Mechanics training program.
- Continued focusing on the preventative maintenance program.

Off-site Service Call Summary (6-Year)						
Calendar Year	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
	42	35	32	27	48	52

- Managed the GovDeals program for the disposal of surplus vehicles and equipment:

GovDeals Summary – CY2023		
Item Description	Quantity	Sale \$
Miscellaneous small parts	N/A	1,222.22
Vehicles	5	33,775.00
	TOTAL:	\$34,997.22

- Standard operations included the following:
 - Completed 1,782 work orders



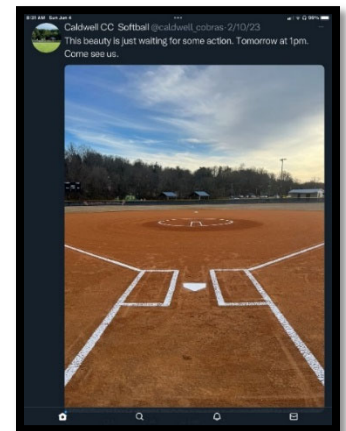
Parks & Public Properties (8 FTE)

Team	Responsibilities
Superintendent	
Turfgrass Crew (4 crew members)	Unity Park Community Garden/ Facilities/Parks/Greenways/Field maintenance/City right-a-ways
Landscaper	Broyhill Walking Park/Business district
Horticulturalist	Business district
Laborer position – not filled	

Baseball/Softball/Soccer Fields:

- 40 bags of ballfield chalk were applied
- Painted 9 soccer fields (Lenoir Rotary Soccer Complex and Mack Cook Stadium) between February – May
- Painted 7 baseball/softball fields between August – October
- Used 100 gallons of white paint and 75 gallons of blue paint in spring and fall
- Soccer fields were mowed once/week throughout the summer
- Both baseball and softball fields were mowed a minimum of once/week throughout the summer
- Fertilized all ballfields/soccer fields are in the spring
- Used 160 bags (4 tons) of fertilizer
- Sprayed for weeds around city and on the fields as needed which included 60+ gallons of chemicals for Kudzu control as well as other like chemicals for weed control

Sport	# of players/yr
Baseball	113
Softball	53
Soccer	Unknown – Recreation and Travel Soccer are not run by the City



Turfgrass Crew – Responsibilities

The following maintained areas consist of approximately 120 acres

Weekly:

- Maintained and mowed the following areas: soccer complex, Mulberry Recreation Center, Optimist Park, Mack Cook Stadium, Wilson Park, Unity Park, J.E. Broyhill Park, Recreation facilities, West End Park, Greenways, City right-of-way including Smith's Crossroads and up Highway 321 to Lowes Hardware
- painted/dug and lined soccer, baseball and softball fields

As needed:

- cleaned and painted tunnel, storm clean-up, cut trees, fertilized, sprayed for weeds, general maintenance on all equipment to include oil changes replaced air filters and sharpened blades

Horticulturalist - Responsibilities

Weekly:

- Maintained areas in business district to include area around the Police Department, landscape beds and the area around the new City of Lenoir sign at Smiths Crossroads. This maintenance includes blowing of sidewalks, picking up trash, etc.
- Planted, redesigned and maintained the sculpture area on Highway 321
- Planted and maintained all hanging baskets and planters downtown and at the Broyhill Walking Park
- Planted 15 new trees in the downtown area. Planted Maples, Cherry and Oak.

As needed:

- Assisted Landscaper at the Broyhill Walking Park

Landscaper - Responsibilities

Weekly:

- Maintained the Broyhill Walking Park; assisted Horticulturalist downtown with mowing, trimming, mulching, spraying and over-seeding.

Team – Responsibilities

- Trash pick-up around city's business district three days/week or as needed
- Assisted with set-up for downtown events (Ex. Blackberry Festival, Christmas parade, etc.)
- Responsible for the delivery of tables/chairs for all events
- Responsible for the set-up and preparation for the sculpture celebration at the Broyhill Walking Park
- Assisted West Caldwell High School athletics by aerifying their softball field
- Superintendent met with West Caldwell High School's "Field Maintenance" class and explained the field maintenance processes to include overseeding, fertilization and best agronomic practice



Public Works Department

Calendar Year 2024 Concerns and considerations (update), and Calendar Year 2025 outlook:

The Public Works Department has continued to complete infrastructure and facility upgrade projects, and sincerely appreciates Council's commitment to funding projects throughout the City. In the past several years, we have been fortunate to acquire much-needed vehicles and equipment replacements, and complete important facility upgrades, but we still consider our fleet to be aging and in need of significant investment. The below sections identify vehicle, equipment, and facility needs that have been scheduled in recent years, completed, deferred, or added as needs evolve.

- **Capital Improvements – Vehicle/Equipment Needs (update):**

In an effort to assemble a comprehensive list of capital/equipment needs, each Division superintendent supplied a list of vehicle and equipment replacements to be entered into the 20yr CIP to aid in future budget planning and ensuring an adequate and efficient schedule for replacement based on projected service life. *(Example: Garbage collection vehicles and street sweepers should be scheduled for replacement at 3 to 5 year intervals, commercial mowers 5 to 7 years)*

Division	Equipment Description	Comment	Cost	Status
Streets	Single Axle Dump Truck	MY1997 replacement	\$165,000	Deferred
Streets	Sign Truck w/Crane	Replacement for MY2004 Truck	\$110,000	Deferred
Streets	Single Axle Dump Truck	Replacement for MY2000 Truck	\$125,000	Deferred
Streets	Asphalt Tack Truck	Replacement for MY1987 Truck	\$250,000	Complete
Streets	ROW Tractor/Mower	Replace MY2012 JD Side Arm Mower	\$350,000	Ordered
Streets	Street Sweeper	Replacement for MY2009 Sweeper	\$400,000	Deferred
Streets	Skid steer Loader	Replacement for MY2008 Equip.	\$85,000	Deferred
STREETS TOTAL			\$1,485,000.00	
Solid Waste			\$325,000	Complete
Solid Waste	Automated Leaf Collection Truck	Replacement of Pull- Behind Vac.	\$275,000	Deferred
Solid Waste	Pak-Rat Small Garbage Truck	Replacement for MY2000 Truck	\$120,000.00	Complete
Solid Waste TOTAL			\$720,000.00	
Building Maintenance	Service Truck F350	Replacement for MY2005 Truck	\$68,000	Complete
Building Maintenance	Tractor w/Loader	Replacement of MY1975 Tractor	\$50,000	Deferred
Building Maintenance	Scissor Lift	Replacement of MY2000 50' Lift	\$80,000	Deferred
Building Maintenance	Pickup Truck	Replacement of MY209 GMC Canyon	\$68,000	Deferred
BM TOTAL			\$266,000	
Vehicle Services	2- HVAC Units	Adding Air to Motor Pool Facility	\$16,000	Complete
Vehicle Services	Epoxy Floors	Cleaning and Coating floors	\$66,000	Deferred
Vehicle Services	Light Duty Truck- ½ ton 4WD	Replacement for MY2008 Truck	\$45,000	Deferred
Vehicle Services	Tire Balancer	Replace Hunter GSP9200	\$15,000	Deferred
VS TOTAL			\$142,000	
Cemeteries	F250 Pickup Truck	Replace MY2005 Truck	\$50,000	Deferred
Cemeteries	Zero- Turn Mower	Replacement for MY2007 Mower	\$15,000	Deferred
Cemeteries	Zero- Turn Mower 60"	Replacement for MY2012 Mower	\$15,000	Deferred
Cemeteries	UTV - Gator	New UTV	\$15,500	Complete
Cemeteries	Office Floors	LVT Flooring	\$4,953.51	Complete
CEMETERIES TOTAL			\$99,953.51	

Capital Improvements – Facilities (update):

Over the past three years, the City has completed several important facility upgrades, roof replacements and numerous, LED lighting upgrades, as well as HVAC system replacements. The updated spreadsheet below contains projects from previous years that have been completed, are scheduled or planned for in the immediate future, or have been recently added due to facility condition assessments:

Facility	Project Description	Comment	Priority	Notes
Public Works	Painting/Flooring	Needed updates	High	Painting 90% Complete
Clock Tower	Stucco/Plaster Exterior	Tower removed due to safety	High	Structural Design Complete
Motor Pool	2 HVAC Roof Units	Adding Cooling to facility	High	Complete
Public Works Salt Shed	Salt shed for storage	Bernhardt Lease Improvements	MED	85% Complete
Public Works Solid Waste Shed	Shed for Solid Waste Vehicles	Bernhardt Lease Improvements	MED	95% Complete
Mulberry Rec. Center	LED Lighting	Complete LED Conversion	High	25% Complete
LAFC	HVAC (1 unit)	Ordered, Mar-April	High	Complete
LAFC	LED Lighting	Full LED Conversion	High	50% Complete
MLK Center	HVAC (2 Units) multi. room	Increasing repair frequency	High	Complete

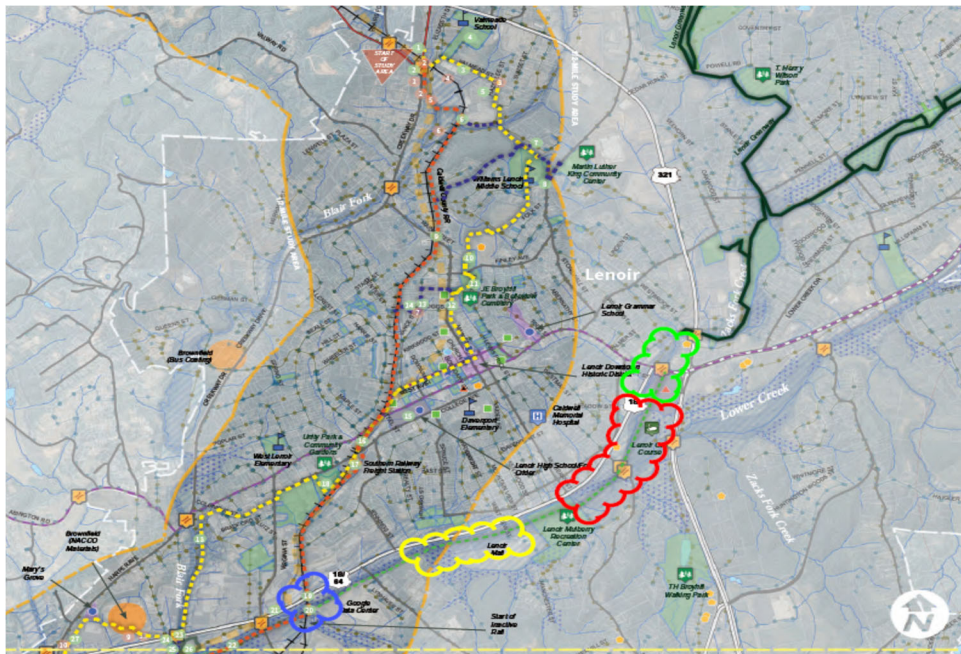
Capital Improvements – Projects (current and future):

- **Hospital Avenue Sidewalk Project:** Right-of-way acquisition for this project has been ongoing for approximately one year. Currently there are still three (3) properties that have not agreed to the offer(s) to purchase the necessary right-of-way or easements for the project. These properties, in accordance with NCDOT standards, must be fully appraised to determine land values. The appraisal process is underway. A tentative bid date of March 08, 2022, was established for the project, but this date is contingent upon right-of-way certification by NCDOT. Work has continued throughout 2022. Worked with Wetherill Engineering and Professional Property Services to complete ROW acquisition. 100% plans and draft bid document were submitted and comments received. Revision have been made and all documents submitted to NCDOT via EBS portal. Awaiting ROW Certification and approval to move forward with letting the project. 2023 We worked with Wetherill, NCDOT and Duke Energy to get the utility relocation part of the project underway. As of today all trees have been pruned or removed, poles installed and some overhead utilities relocated. Currently we are waiting on AT&T and Piedmont Natural gas to complete their relocations. Due to the updated engineers estimate for construction we applied for additional LAP funds and were awarded \$1,640,000 with a local match total of \$410,000. Due to the additional funding the project let date was moved to mid-February 2024.
As of December 31st, a majority of the utilities have been relocated. AT&T and Charter are working now with a completion date of May2025. The project was LET in November of 2024. Unfortunately after delivering 18 bid packets, we received no bids. The project is currently scheduled to be advertised beginning January 22, 2025 with a bid opening date of February 27, 2025.
- **Harper/West Avenue Two-Way Street Conversion:** This project continues to be a future priority for the City, but is highly dependent on funding. Preliminary work on signalization design has been completed by transportation consultant, Mattern and Craig. We anticipate the project to be completed in phases, with 1A (Steel Street closure) already completed. Remaining phases include the following: 1B – Harper/West Avenue intersection improvements; 2 – Harper Avenue conversion; and 3 – West Avenue conversion (if deemed necessary). 2023 Project is still on hold at this time. DLR Master Plan could

spark some movement on this project. **2024 Mattern & Craig is scheduled to begin a Traffic Signal Analysis on all 13 city traffic signals in the downtown. This could aid in the Two-Way conversion.**

- **RTP Trail Grant:** The City was awarded grant funding to complete trail crossings of Harper Avenue, Light Street, and College Avenue (near the Blue Bell project), in December of 2020. Transportation consultant, Mattern and Craig, assisted with the funding application and is currently working on project design. A final design, bidding, and construction schedule should be available in Q2, 2022. Have continued to work with Mattern and Craig on this project. Have provided CAD files for design and encroachment agreements. 2023 The RTP Grant was extended for 1 year. Mattern & Craig has completed design work for these Greenway sections. This work should be contracted by spring 2024. **2024 Design is complete, M&C is working to secure ROW from adjacent property owner (Lenoir Building Supply) in order to build this Greenway Connector.**
- **College Avenue Infrastructure Improvements:** The City pledged to perform roadway improvements within the right-of-way of College Avenue and Underdown Avenue to address traffic patterns around the recently completed Blue Bell mill project. These improvements, which included drainage and curb and gutter installation, were completed by the site contractor for the mill project in 2021. Removal of an existing traffic island, and final asphalt overlay, will be completed by City staff in spring, 2022. Traffic island and final asphalt work have not been completed. **Mattern & Craig has completed the striping and signage plan for this Greenway connector. This project was placed within a Greenway bid packet that was affected by the Google Connector and the additional Zacks Fork Loop Connector. Due to this being a small scale project, with thermo, striping application and signage installation, we will plan on self-performing this portion of the project.**
- **Parkview Estates Improvements:** Due to this subdivision being targeted for in-fill development, and the construction of several new homes being completed, the City initiated a greenway connection and roadway improvements to improve access and visibility for the neighborhood. The greenway connection to the Zack's Fork Road main trail network was completed in 2021. This included construction of a small trailhead and parking area near the intersection of Ebel Place and Sassafras Court. The roadway improvements to Ebel Place, which will include minor widening and asphalt resurfacing, may be completed in Q2, 2022, if funding allows. Improvements to Ebel Place have not been completed to date. In 2023 a restructure of the Ebel Place and Powell Rd intersection was completed. Signage was added as well as thermos pavement markings. **The Streets & Solid Waste Division has Ebel Place widening on schedule for the 2025 calendar year.**
- **Greenway Expansion – Gaps and Connections:** The City continued its expansion of the greenway trail network in 2021 with the completion of new trail sections serving the Parkview Estates subdivision, and asphalt surfacing of existing trails sections at the Mulberry Recreation Center and north of Sherlee Street. We also continue to work with transportation consultant, Mattern and Craig, for design development of the, and the. Additionally, in 2021, the City received a greenway easement from WaterLife Church for construction of a trail through their parcel (former mall property). This trail section will tie in to the recently paved section at Mulberry Recreation Center, and will serve as a starting point to transverse the remainder of the former mall property. During the next fiscal year, we expect to continue identification of trail network gaps, and with adequate funding, continue with construction in key areas. These focus areas include the Highway 18 crossing (noted above), a connection from the Pennton Avenue terminus that will cross Harper Avenue, Lenoir Golf Course property, and additional easement(s) through the former mall property. 2023 Mattern & Craig has completed design for Greenway connections at WaterLife, Cube Smart, Quest and Google. The Planning Department is working with property owners at these locations to obtain the needed easement documents. The engineering report package for the Highway 18 OVNHT crossing has been submitted to NCDOT. We hope to have those recommendations and approvals back in February, a spring bid for this crossing is the goal. The Greenway extension at Harper along the golf course property

has been submitted to the EBS portal for project assignment in the STIPP. Once that is approved and RFP will be created for this project. Unfortunately we did not get to build any Greenway in 2024. We have been unable to acquire the proper easement along the Quest 4 Life property to make the WaterLife connection. We have also submitted the plans and proper documentation for the Highway 18 OVNHT/greenway crossing. However, NCDOT has rejected a mid-block crossing at the Google connector, we are currently evaluating other options to make our connection. M&C is working to acquire ROW for the RTP connection between Harper Avenue and College Avenue. We have worked to design a Greenway Loop Connector at the Zacks Fork Soccer complex. This would connect all parking lots as well as the restroom facility and splash pad. We intend to have this bid out and built in early spring.



OVNHT Master Plan Excerpt

- Arrowood Street Bridge Replacement:** Previously noted, this prioritized project was included in a funding application to FEMA in January, 2022. Public Works staff worked with Mattern and Craig to develop the application, and successful recipients will be notified of award in July, 2022. Bridge inspections (performed by NCDOT consultants) in 2016, 2018, and 2020 categorized the structure as poor, and in need of significant repair or replacement. The asphalt wear surface continues to fail, and in 2021 City staff attempted a chip seal repair as a temporary solution, to offer a consistent roadway surface. This repair has begun failing due to continuous movement of the timber decking. This project was not selected for FEMA grant funding in 2022. However the grant application was revised and resubmitted (Mattern and Craig) through another funding source. We have not been notified of possible award at this time. Paving maintenance has been performed in 2022 but continues to fail. 2023 We did not receive funding through FEMA grant. 2023 Arrowood Bridge continues to be an issue with holding asphalt. Mattern and Craig is scheduled to complete an updated bridge inspection within the next two weeks. They are also exploring funding sources specific to bridge replacements. 2024 M&C continues to look for funding sources for this bridge replacement. We were contacted by NCDOT (06/2024) due to findings during their annual inspection. M&C reviewed the inspection report as well. It would not be cost effective to attempt to make repairs as the structure would have to basically be replaced. We will be working to secure funding to replace this structure in 2025.

- Blue Ridge Memorial Park Expansion:** A *Master Plan* for the remaining approximate 15 acres of City-owned property at Blue Ridge Memorial Park has been included in the CIP for several years. In 2019, cemetery staff contracted with a surveyor to lay off the last remaining vacant section of the existing park, and since that time sales and burials have continually increased. If these trends continue, remaining capacity will be exhausted in 3-4 calendar years. In 2023 a new section of cemetery was opened “Serenity Cove” with 500 single grave plots. Given our current numbers that should get us through at least 3.5 years. RFP’s were sent out in June of 2023 for the Blue Ridge Memorial Park Master Plan. McGill and Associates was awarded the contract to design a buildable Master Plan. The project kickoff meeting was held on Friday 1/19. The goal is to have the Master Plan complete by summer 2024. **2024 Conceptual plans were completed in the late summer/fall and presented to the Committee of The Whole. We have moved into construction design. See cemetery report for plot availability.**
- LFD – Headquarters Sinkhole:** Following heavy rain events in 2021, a sinkhole was discovered in the northeastern lawn of the LFD – Headquarters property near the Harper Avenue and Ridge Street intersection. After investigation, it was determined that the large (48”), corrugated metal culvert that runs through the property was compromised. A video camera inspection of the pipe showed significant rust and erosion of the pipe invert (bottom flow-line), as well as metal deformation and debris collection. The pipe also appears to be undersized for the drainage area, as frequent surcharging of upstream manholes has been observed by LFD staff on numerous occasions. The pipe is 25’-30’ in this location, and its proximity to the fire department building makes an excavated repair nearly impossible to complete. We have engaged *Catawba Valley Engineering & Testing* to lead the geotechnical and civil engineering efforts to design a suitable system replacement in this area. This firm previously installed crack monitoring devices in the building to monitor and measure any foundational movement after concerns arose (~2019). This project is ongoing, and construction estimates are only preliminary. Project costs may exceed \$500,000. Work has continued with Catawba Valley Engineering & Testing as well as WK Dickson & Co, Inc. Four (4) civil options have been designed for pipe repair and replacement. Due to the depth of the pipe, proximity to the structure, existing utilities and the void created by the partial collapse the construction estimates range from two million to three point six million dollars (\$2,000,000 - \$ 3,500,000). Once option is selected we will put project out for bid. 2023 WK Dickson was awarded the contract for Engineering Services, design and construction admin for this project. One concept was selected which involves abandoning the current pipe and installing new pipe more shallow and further away from LFD Station #1. Currently all permitting and 60% plans have been submitted. We have also applied for Golden Leaf funding for this project and are awaiting the February notice of award. Project schedule has project being let in February with a construction start in March. Construction estimates still remain relatively the same at two and a half million dollars to three and a half million dollars (\$2,500,000-\$3,500,000). **2024 WK Dickson completed design and LET the project. Unfortunately, no bids were received. Due to the depth of both the storm pipe (28’) and utilities beneath it, this is a very complex project. We decided to go back to the drawing board and re-design the utility relocation in order to get them out of the footprint of the storm pipe replacement. Currently McGill is completing the utility design and hopes to get that out to bid soon as well as the storm pipe replacement. We have executed a contract with Catawba Valley Engineering and Testing to provide a structural evaluation of the LFD building to identify any needed repairs or mitigation work.**
- LPD/Williams Produce- Sinkhole:** A possible sinkhole was identified in the rear parking lot of the old Williams produce. The large retaining wall between this property and the LPD rear parking has shown signs of significant settling. This project is only in the beginning stages as we have contracted with Western Carolina Surveyors to survey the property to identify ownership and parties to be involved in this project. Our next step will be to meet with Catawba Valley Engineering to evaluate the storm water system in that to determine the issue. **No change in 2024.**

- **Finley/Greenhaven Sidewalk Rehabilitation:** In 2021, several concerns were raised by community members and elected officials about the condition of the sidewalk that parallels Finley Avenue between North Main Street and the newer sidewalk installed on the northern end of Greenhaven Drive. The existing sidewalk is narrow (approximately 3' in width), and is in poor condition. We also have frequent complaints with vegetation overgrowth preventing safe travel on the sidewalk. With the existing width not compliant with ADA standards, this sidewalk section has been identified as a priority for replacement. Cost estimates for the project have not been developed to date, and right-of-way/street lane widths have not been investigated to determine if sufficient area exists for replacement without the need for additional right-of-way from neighboring property owners. **No change in 2024.**
- **Circle Drive Repairs:** A Public Works Department memorandum was presented to Council in 2020 highlighting issues with Circle Drive in the Lower Creek neighborhood. The curb and gutter and asphalt in a 200' section of northern Circle Drive appeared to be failing due to subgrade issues. The memorandum suggested a repair method using soil undercutting and replacement with stone to create a firm subgrade, then replacement of failing concrete curb and gutter and asphalt. The initial cost estimate for the project, anticipating self-performance of the work by Street Division staff, was \$30,000. This funding would have been taken from the division's general operating budget, therefore the project has not been completed to date. 2023 No change at this time (funding). **2024 We were able to acquire one quote from Shotcrete Contractors to repair this bank and street. The quote was \$4,500 for sealed drawings and \$185,000 for construction. We have considered a couple self-performing options that we will consider in 2025.**
- **Downtown Beautification:** 2024 Downtown Beautification continues as the Parks & Public Properties division updated numerous landscapes throughout the downtown. This includes adding perennial shrubs and annuals to the planters, removing dead or unsightly shrubs, pruning trees and mulching as well as turf maintenance. Fifteen trees were removed and replaced throughout downtown in order to provide more seasonal color and alleviate line of sight and traffic obstacles. We have also added RGB lighting to the trees to provide up lighting. We have multiple planting projects planned in the downtown as well as additional planters to add along Harper Ave spring of 2025.
- **Street Resurfacing 2024:** Tri-County Paving closed out their two year paving contract with six streets (See Streets & Solid Waste Report) during the spring of 2024. We bid out the new two year contract which was awarded to J.T. Russell & Sons Inc. for \$110.30 per/ton. Unfortunately, due to Hurricane Helene and the amount of debris we were unable to complete any fall paving in 2024.

Submitted by:

Jonathan Hogan

Jonathan Hogan
Public Works Director

Annual Report

2 0 2 4

Director of Special Projects and Grants
Project Management and Funding Administration



Presented by: Jared Wright

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Background

The Director of Special Projects and Grants position was officially adopted by City Council on March 26, 2024. City administration felt it was appropriate to create a dedicated position responsible for project management and funding administration to assist with completion of the City's 70+ ongoing and planned infrastructure and improvement projects. Additionally, many of these projects are funded through a variety of sources, including local, state, and/or federal grant funds. Each of these agencies and funding programs have specific compliance requirements. The Director of Special Projects and Grants performs project management, contract administration, and grants management for the City's ongoing projects, and also works closely with other departments to identify and scope future projects, develop funding applications, and manage contracts in accordance with North Carolina statutory requirements.

2024 Summary and Accomplishments

Since early May, 2024, the Special Projects and Grants office has assisted City departments with advertising, awarding, administering, and/or closing out 14+ projects totaling well over \$6,000,000 in public investment in facilities and infrastructure. Notably, these include advertising for and selecting a Construction Manager at Risk (CMaR) for the Campus Improvements Project, and advertising for and selecting a Design-Build firm to complete renovations at the Lenoir Aquatic and Fitness Center (LAFC). Each of these projects hold the distinct recognition of being the first of each type to utilize their respective delivery method in the City of Lenoir. The selection process for each is governed by different statutory requirements than traditional design-bid-build projects, therefore the solicitation process must be administered formally and selection based on qualifications instead of outright costs.

Beyond visible and meaningful progress with moving long-standing projects closer to completion, the Special Projects and Grants office also worked with City departments and external agencies to complete three (3) grant applications (one awarded, one pending, one denied), and a Duke Energy incentive application to claim a significant rebate for installation of higher-efficiency HVAC equipment.

2025 Outlook and Priorities

2025 is poised to be a remarkable year for the City of Lenoir, with the Campus Improvements Project scheduled to be underway by Q3 and the LAFC interior renovation in active construction through Q4. These projects, in addition to many others highlighted in this report, will be vital pieces of the continued evolution, transformation, and improvement of Lenoir.

In addition to continuing with project management, contract administration, and funding administration, in 2025 the Special Projects and Grants office seeks to continue implementation of formal processes for project development, advertisement and award, and execution, identify and apply for additional grant funding opportunities, and continue to be a resource for other City departments.

City of Lenoir - Special Projects Master Schedule



					2024												2025												2026																							
					Q1			Q2			Q3			Q4			Q1			Q2			Q3			Q4			Q1			Q2			Q3			Q4														
Project Group and Title	Department	Budget	Start	End	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec												
Campus Improvements Project																																																				
LHS Auditorium Renovation	Admin	\$4,300,000	4/1/2024	12/31/2026																																																
LHS Gymnasium Renovation	Admin	0	4/1/2024	12/31/2026																																																
OVT Pavilion and LEOS Renovation	Admin	0	4/1/2024	12/31/2026																																																
2022 PARTF Project																																																				
LAFC Interior Renovation	Parks and Rec.	\$720,000	2/1/2025	11/1/2025																																																
Zacks Fork Splash Pad	Parks and Rec.	\$313,000	6/15/2024	11/26/2024																																																
Picnic Shelter	Parks and Rec.	\$48,000	12/1/2024	1/15/2025																																																
ADA Connector Path	Parks and Rec.	\$20,000	3/1/2025	5/1/2025																																																
Recreation Center Improvements Projects																																																				
MRC Roof top and Drainage Repairs (Phase 1)	Parks and Rec.	\$64,500	8/1/2024	11/1/2024																																																
MRC Roof top and Drainage Repairs (Phase 2)	Parks and Rec.	\$18,000	2/1/2025	3/1/2025																																																
MRC Gym Floor Replacement	Parks and Rec.	\$148,000	11/1/2024	12/20/2024																																																
MRC Pickleball Court Conversion	Parks and Rec.	\$88,000	11/1/2024	2/1/2025																																																
MRC/West End Playground Improvements	Parks and Rec.	\$71,000	3/1/2025	6/1/2025																																																
West End Park Upgrades	Parks and Rec.	\$25,000	3/1/2025	5/1/2025																																																
MLK Center Facility Improvements	Parks and Rec.	\$250,000	11/1/2024	4/1/2025																																																
Other Capital Improvement Projects																																																				
UPCG Teaching and Learning Pavilion	PW/P&R	\$98,000	11/1/2024	1/15/2025																																																
TH Broyhill Walking Park Reatining Wall Replacement	Parks and Rec.	\$57,500	12/1/2024	3/1/2025																																																
BRMP Cemetery Expansion Master Plan	Public Works	\$45,000	1/1/2024	10/1/2024																																																
TOTAL INVESTMENT		\$6,266,000																																																		

CAMPUS IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT

Renovation and rehabilitation of the Historic Old Lenoir High School Auditorium and Gymnasium, renovation of the former LEOS building, and construction of the new, open-air, OVT Farmers' Market Pavilion



AT A GLANCE

Project Components

- Auditorium Renovation
- Gymnasium Renovation
- Pavilion Construction
- 1129 West Ave. Renovation

OBJECTIVES

This transformational project seeks to renovate key components of the Historic Old Lenoir High School "Campus". A portion of the facility, the auditorium, is listed in the National Registry of Historic Places, and the gymnasium has been identified for future consideration. The project scope for each of these components includes much needed improvements to floor plan layout(s), MEP systems, interior finishes, and select building envelope systems (windows, doors, etc.). With the historic designation, improvements must conform to historic preservation guidelines to maintain listing status.

In addition to renovation of the Historic Old Lenoir High School Auditorium and Gymnasium, this project also includes renovation of the former LEOS building on West Avenue, and construction of a new, open-air Farmers' Market Pavilion. This component will add a much-anticipated, dedicated space for vendors to participate in seasonal markets, as well as indoor and outdoor event spaces for a variety of other public uses. The pavilion will also create an appealing visual focal point near the convergence of West Avenue and Harper Avenue, signifying a warm welcome to the downtown district.

Challenges

- Historic Preservation is \$\$\$
- Renovation scope(s) are complex and multidisciplinary
- Construction cost trends indicate that building materials and labor will continue to escalate



INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS

The Campus Improvements Project is the first project in Lenoir's history using the Construction Manager at Risk (CMaR) delivery method. This contracting method allows the City to hire a design consultant for architectural services and a Construction Manager to participate in design review, constructability review, and budget development and assessment. The Construction Manager also assembles bidding documents, receives bids from subcontractors, and offers the City a "Guaranteed Maximum Price" (GMP) to complete the project, thus limiting the City's exposure to costly change orders or uncertainties encountered over the life of the project.

BENEFITS

Benefit 1

The CMaR delivery method brings licensed, practicing professionals to the table much sooner in the design process than the traditional design-bid-build delivery method.

Benefit 2

The Construction Manager acts as the City's fiduciary, guarding the interests of the City throughout design, bidding, and construction.

Benefit 3

The final project cost (GMP) is known and agreed upon prior to execution of the construction contract. Any savings are divided among the City and the CM, but project costs may not increase over the life of the project.



CAMPUS IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT

Historic Old Lenoir High School Auditorium Renovation

AUDITORIUM RENOVATION SUMMARY

- New seating, floor coverings, acoustic ceiling tiles, interior paint
- Revised back-of-house floor plan with improved access and organization
- Interior and exterior ADA improvements including ramp(s) and a convertible lift for stage access
- Window and door refurbishment with restored windows or new storefront(s)
- Audio and Video (A/V) updates throughout the facility



SPECIFIC ELEMENTS

- 500 seat auditorium
- Fully-functioning A/V, curtains, stage lighting
- Renovation will update back-of-house restrooms and access for props, instruments, and equipment
- All improvements must meet historic preservation guidelines



CAMPUS IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT



Historic Old Lenoir High School Gymnasium Renovation

GYMNASIUM RENOVATION SUMMARY

- Change of use from A4 (strictly athletic) to A2 (event space)
- New elevator and stairwell for basement and main level access
- HVAC system installation to provide heating and cooling
- New warming kitchen and concession stand
- Window and door refurbishment with restored windows and doors
- New ADA ramp and updated parking/site amenities
- Restroom upgrades
- Interior finish replacement including ceilings, floors, and paint
- Audio and Video (A/V) updates throughout the facility

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS AND CHALLENGES

- The interior space currently only has gas heat. All new heating and cooling equipment is required for a functioning system. Rooftop packaged units and interior ductwork will be costly components.
- Installation of the elevator and stairwell addition are also costly but absolutely necessary to preserve the project intent of providing a multi-level usable, accessible space for all visitors.
- All improvements will meet historic preservation guidelines, although the gymnasium is currently only "study-listed".

CAMPUS IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT



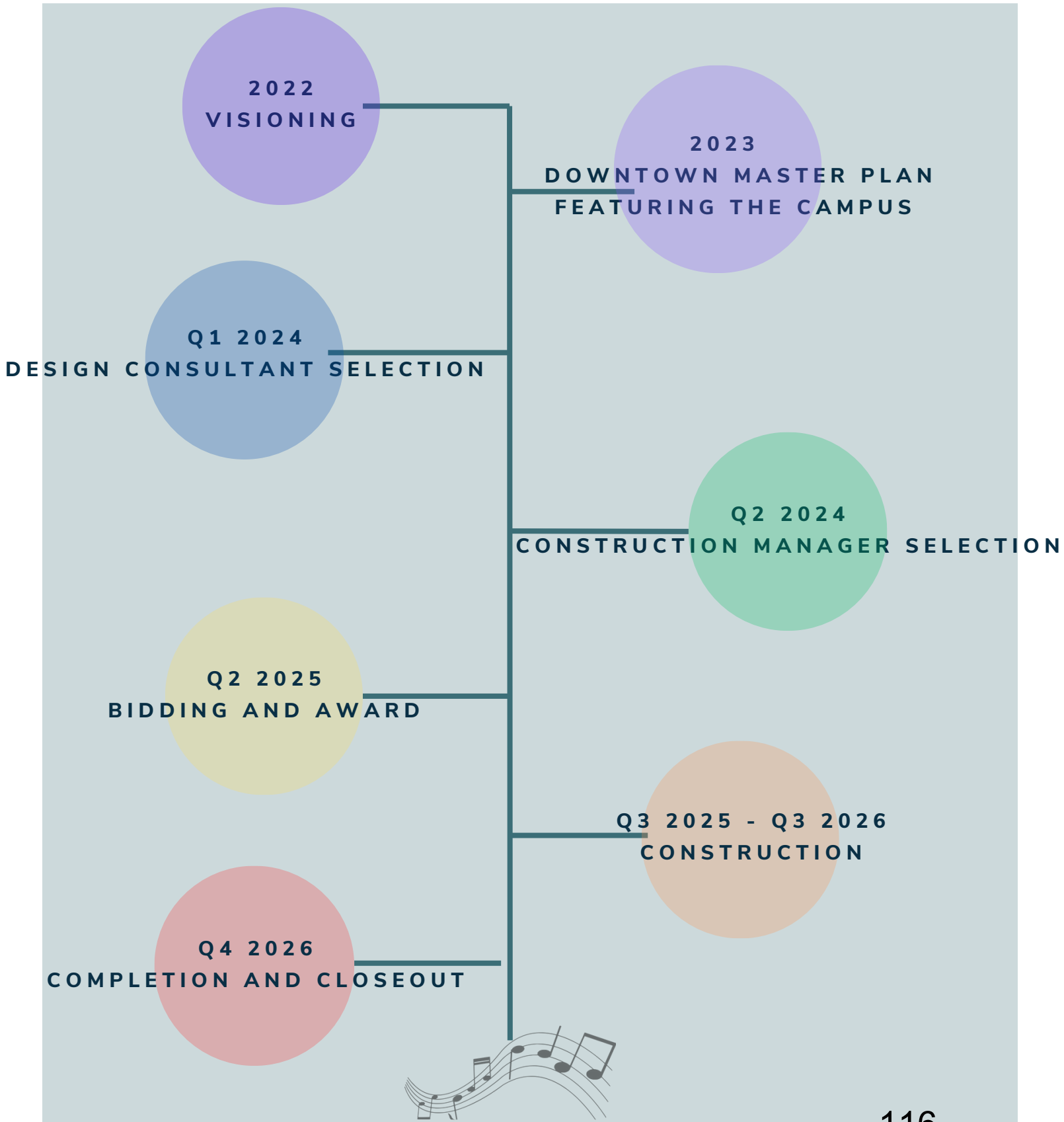
OVT PAVILION CONSTRUCTION AND LEOS RENOVATION

CONSTRUCTION AND RENOVATION SUMMARY

- Structural tube steel construction of a new, open-air 4,500 square feet pavilion
 - Skylights in the roof structure to allow natural lighting throughout
 - Fully-functioning masonry fireplace adds to aesthetic appeal and all-season usability
 - Pavilion fills the longstanding vacancy of a dedicated outdoor vendor space and venue
-
- LEOS renovation breathes life into a vacant building and fills the need of a support building for the OVT Pavilion
 - The revised floor plan adds restrooms and a small warming kitchen while removing interior stud walls, thus opening up the space to accommodate small events and meetings
 - New exterior paint and cleaning will compliment the new pavilion and add a sense of continuity from the main Campus components (auditorium and gymnasium) to the pavilion site.



CAMPUS IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT TIMELINE



2022 PARTF PROJECT

Interior renovation of the Lenoir Aquatic and Fitness Center coupled with installation of small recreational elements, and construction of a new splash pad, picnic shelter, and accessible path at the Rotary Soccer Complex.

AT A GLANCE

Project Components

- LAFC Interior Renovation
- Splash Pad Construction
- Picnic Shelter Construction
- Accessible Path Construction
- New Recreational Elements



OBJECTIVES

The City of Lenoir's 2022 PARTF Project includes several component projects that are poised to make a huge impact on the public's enjoyment of available recreational opportunities in Lenoir. Notably, these include the much-anticipated construction of a new splash pad at the City's Rotary Soccer Complex and interior renovations at the Lenoir Aquatic and Fitness Center (LAFC).

The City was awarded Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) grant funding in 2022 to complete these projects. PARTF grant awards offer 50% of total project costs and typically include a 3-year timeline from award to completion of all associated components. The deadline for completion of the 2022 PARTF Project is October 2025.

Challenges

- Multiple, distinct components that each require separate procurement efforts
- Complex project scope for LAFC interior renovation
- LAFC has more needs than just those identified in the project scope
- Aggressive schedule is required to meet the October 2025 completion date

INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS

The LAFC interior renovation will be the first actual design-build project ever completed by the City of Lenoir. This delivery method includes executing a contract with a single firm or team to complete all design and construction requirements associated with completion of the project. Selection of a design-build firm is a qualification-based selection process, as required by North Carolina general statutes, much like the selection process required for other consultant services. Like construction projects, however, a minimum number of responses are required prior to evaluation and selection of the successful design-build firm. Through the use of the design-build delivery method, the City seeks to save valuable contract time by allowing design and construction to occur simultaneously (where feasible). Additionally, due to the complex nature of the planned improvements, having a single firm or team responsible for completion of the work should minimize costly changes or unforeseen issues.



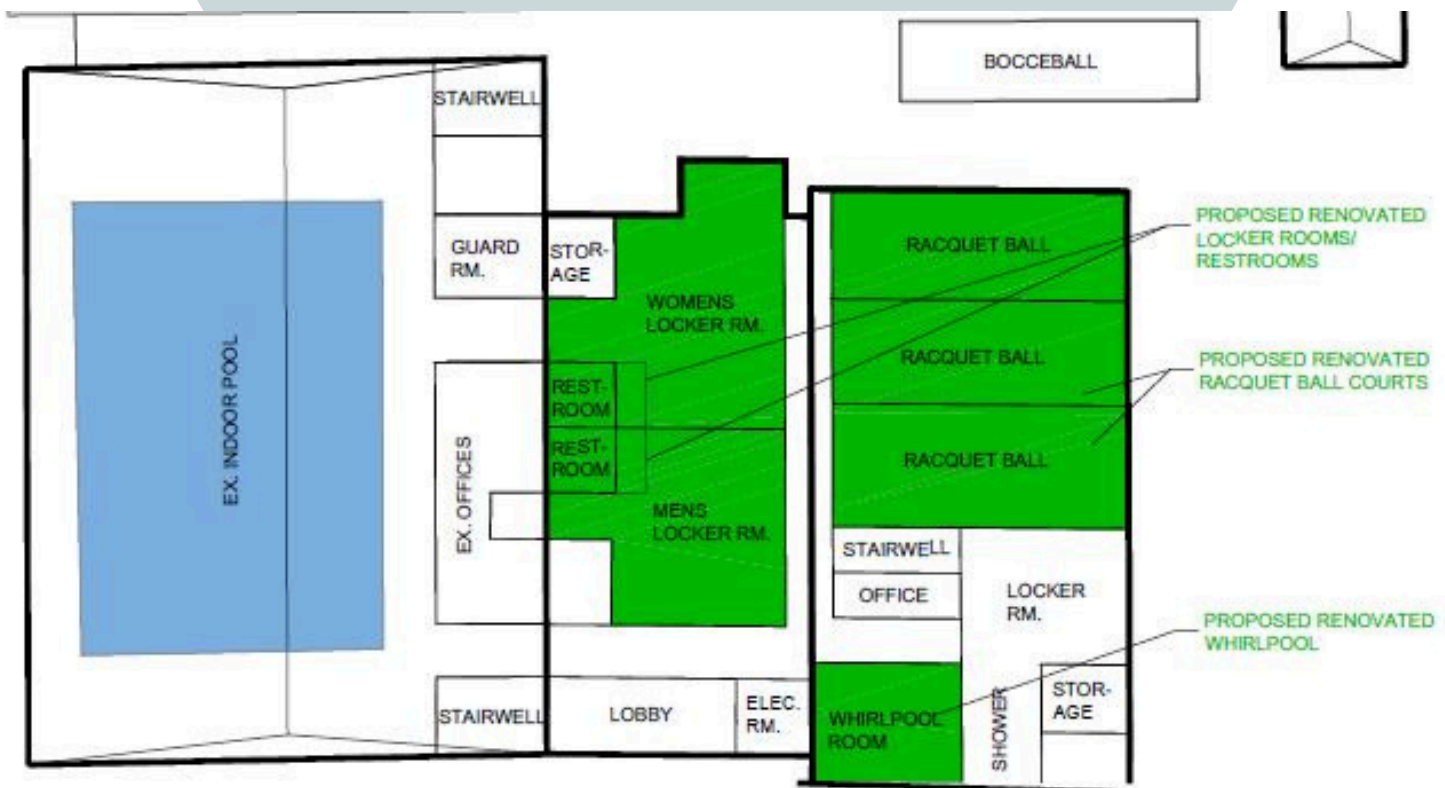
2022 PARTF PROJECT

LAFC INTERIOR RENOVATION



LAFC Interior Renovation Summary

- Revised floor plan and significant changes in mechanical systems to two (2) restrooms and male/female locker rooms. The project scope includes converting the current, non-accessible restrooms to ADA-compliant family restrooms. These spaces share a wall with the adjacent locker rooms. Floor plan revisions to accommodate enlarging the restrooms will also require significant changes and up-fits to the locker rooms.
- Renovation of three (3) existing racquetball courts to better accommodate the public's recreational needs and a more productive use of the space(s).
- Renovation of the existing whirlpool room to allow plumbing repairs and possibly a new layout for a replacement whirlpool. The new layout would eliminate the pool structure from being totally sub-floor level, instead installing a new whirlpool that is partially recessed.



2022 PARTF PROJECT

ROTARY SOCCER COMPLEX

ZACKS FORK SPLASH PAD



Rotary Soccer Complex - Zacks Fork Splash Pad Summary

- New cast-in-place concrete splash pad constructed at the Rotary Soccer Complex; contract was executed in May 2024, and final completion was achieved in November 2024.
- Splash pad design includes approximately 1,600 square feet of play area and 55 spray features of varying heights and patterns. Spray sequences can be customized to the user's specific needs, and a timer can shut the system down during off-hours to prevent unauthorized use.
- The splash pad is a key component in a total landscape and hardscape renovation between the Rotary Soccer Complex's center parking lot and the existing restroom building. Planned improvements include the splash pad, a picnic shelter, an accessible paved path, and new landscaping.

2022 PARTF PROJECT

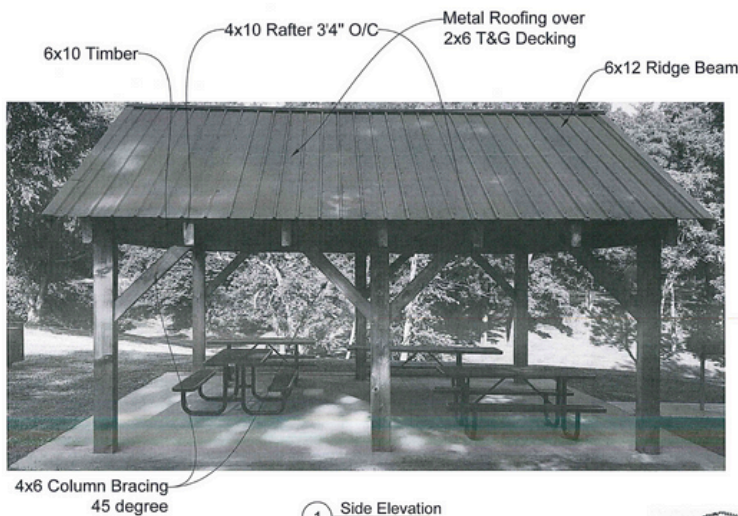
ROTARY SOCCER COMPLEX

PICNIC SHELTER



Rotary Soccer Complex Picnic Shelter Summary

- New 20' x 20' timber-framed picnic shelter to accompany the recently completed splash pad at the Rotary Soccer Complex.
- Shelter matches design and color scheme of other shelters constructed throughout the City.
- The shelter will be connected via sidewalk connections to the splash pad and the future accessible path. This amenity provides parents, spectators, and park visitors a shaded area to observe the splash pad, soccer fields, or the greenway.



1 Side Elevation



2022 PART F PROJECT

ROTARY SOCCER COMPLEX

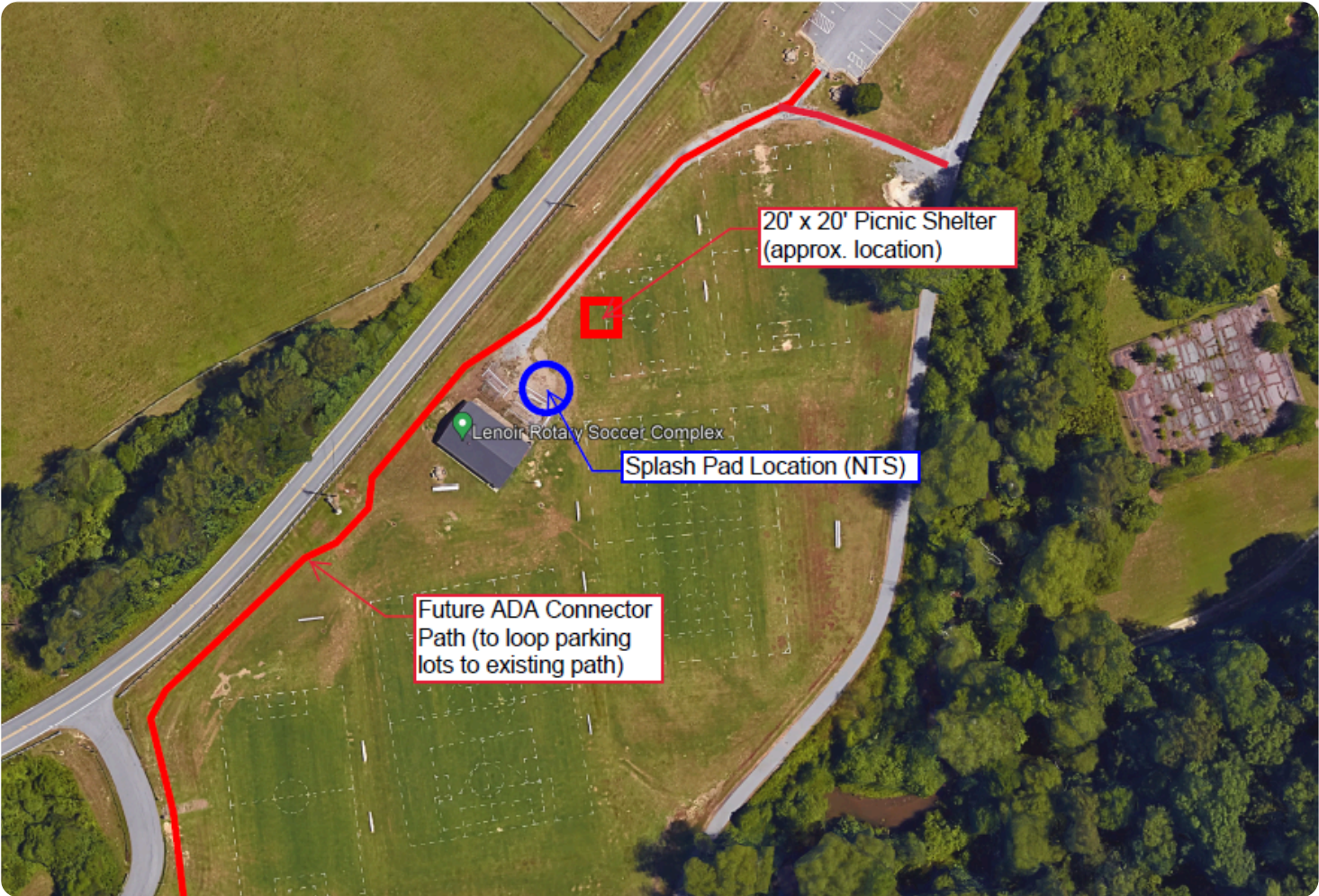
ACCESSIBLE CONNECTOR PATH



Rotary Soccer Complex Accessible Connector Path

Background and Summary

To offer better connectivity to parking areas and recreational elements, the City engaged a consultant to survey and design an accessible, paved path to be constructed from the soccer complex's center parking area, by the new splash pad, picnic shelter, and existing restroom facility, and around the entire field perimeter. The path is intended to serve multiple purposes: offer an accessible route to park amenities, offer connectivity to the new splash pad area and surrounding plaza, and form a loop around the playing fields. Path design is underway and construction should begin in early 2025.



RECREATION CENTER IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

“ 2024 saw the completion of several exciting recreation center projects, as well as the beginning of many others that will be completed during the '24-'25 fiscal year. ”



AT A GLANCE

Noteworthy Projects

- MRC - Rooftop Drainage and Facade (Phase 1)
- MRC - Underground Drainage (Phase 2)
- MRC - Gym Floor Replacement
- MRC - Pickleball Court Conversion
- MRC/West End - Playground Improvements
- MLK - Facility Improvements
- West End - Park Upgrades

AN EXTREMELY BUSY YEAR



MULBERRY RECREATION CENTER ROOFTOP DRAINAGE AND FACADE REPAIRS



MRC Rooftop Drainage and Facade Repairs

This project included removal and replacement of the original almond-toned decorative metal trim adorning the building façade to allow for installation of a fabricated gutter system. The new gutter system was necessary due to failure of the original rooftop drainage system, which included downspouts that were routed through the ceiling and interior walls. This system failed in late 2023 and the subsequent water intrusion caused the gymnasium floor to buckle.

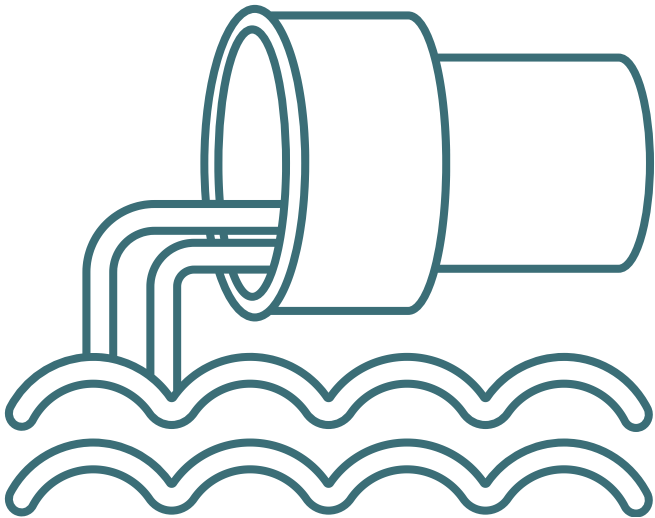
A new exterior trim color, dark bronze, was selected to reflect a more modern look that should complement future planned improvements. The new standing-seam metal trim, fabricated gutter system, exterior downspouts, and roof system modifications were completed in mid-October 2024.

MULBERRY RECREATION CENTER ROOFTOP DRAINAGE AND FACADE REPAIRS PHASE 2



MRC Rooftop Drainage and Facade Repairs - Phase 2

Phase 2 of the Rooftop Drainage and Facade Repairs project consists of abandonment of the existing interior roof drains and replacement of the entire existing underground drainage system that accepts runoff from the building rooftop and surrounding grounds. This work requires re-piping a portion of interior downspouts to the building exterior (diverting rooftop runoff to the new gutter system) and replacement of approximately 800 linear feet of 6-inch and 12-inch drainage piping. New exterior downspouts will be connected to the replaced underground piping system.



MULBERRY RECREATION CENTER GYMNASIUM FLOOR REPLACEMENT



MRC Gym Floor Replacement Background

After discovering that the roof drainage system at MRC was compromised, and through a concerted effort from numerous City departments to re-create the leak and identify the source, staff removed the damaged gym floor that buckled in late December 2023. Determining that the floor was not salvageable, planning and budgeting began to replace the gym floor following repair of all leaks and interior infrastructure. The gym floor replacement project was officially advertised for bids in August and was completed in December 2024.



A new look and new uses for the court...

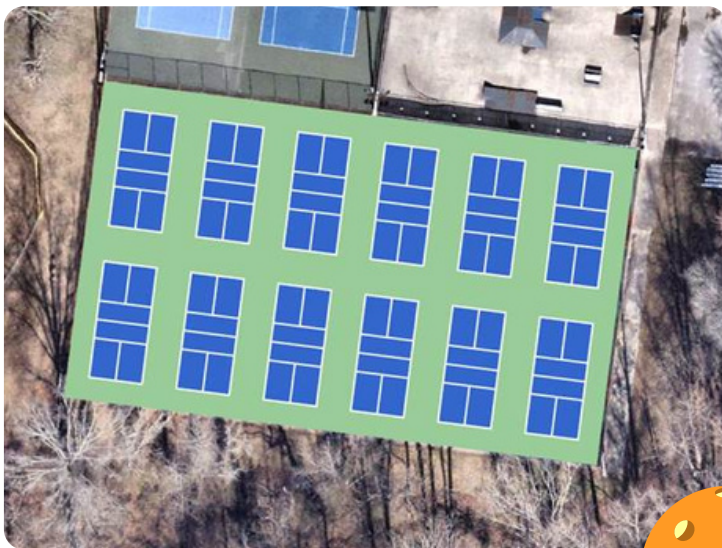
During the preliminary phases of the gym floor replacement project, the City realized this was an opportunity to update the floor's game striping plan with the City's new logo and color scheme, in addition to adding dedicated volleyball and pickleball game lines. The completed project features new maple court flooring with stained 3-point arcs, teal, navy, and white game lines, the new City logo proudly displayed at half court, and a host of other facility upgrades that complement the substantial investment in a high quality court flooring system.

MULBERRY RECREATION CENTER PICKLEBALL COURT CONVERSION



MRC Pickleball Court Conversion Background and Summary

The City recognized the need to bolster the Recreations Department's pickleball offerings and budgeted funds for a court conversion in FY24-25. After a review of the space and the configuration of the recently converted courts, a decision was made to fully convert the new and existing spaces to yield the maximum number of courts. The project was advertised and bid as a full conversion and resurfacing contract. The project also required staff to self-perform fence removal and concrete repairs to prepare for total resurfacing by the contractor. New posts, nets, and divider fencing was also installed. The project has been delayed due to weather conditions, but is approximately 95% complete as of January 2025.



MULBERRY RECREATION CENTER & WEST END COMMUNITY PARK PLAYGROUND IMPROVEMENTS



MRC and West End Community Park Playground Improvements Summary

Recognizing the need to replace and/or update playground equipment at several facilities, in late October 2024, the City developed a Request for Proposals (RFP) for equipment replacement and the addition a free-standing shade structure. During internal project review while awaiting proposals, a decision was made to explore installing new equipment at the West End Community Park in addition to replacing existing equipment at Mulberry Recreation Center. Bids were received in late November, and the project was awarded in January 2025. Location and site review for the new equipment is currently underway, and the project should begin in Q1 2025. New equipment consists of a 2-5 year old play set, a 5-12 year old play set, and a new 12' x 12' free-standing shade structure.

WEST END COMMUNITY PARK

PARK UPGRADES



West End Community Park Upgrades Summary

The City of Lenoir's West End Community Park is a hidden gem nestled between Robbins Avenue, Beall Street, and Willow Street in the West End neighborhood. The park features a unique layout spread across multiple, separate parcels, and includes a community basketball court, a covered picnic shelter, and various pieces of older playground equipment. The current configuration poses challenges for accessibility, limiting use to those that can transverse steep slopes and vegetated paths. With the ongoing review of playground equipment upgrades, site and park layout reconfiguration is also being considered to improve access.

Project Components

- Basketball court surface repairs
- Walkway and sidewalk repairs
- Picnic shelter repairs, painting, and pressure-washing
- Playground improvements



MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. RECREATION CENTER FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS



MLK Jr. Center Facility Improvements Summary

A wide variety of planned improvements to the interior and exterior of the Martin Luther King Jr. Recreation Center were packaged into a single Request for Proposals (RFP) and advertised for bids in June 2024. The project was awarded in early August, and work began in November, following completion of several planned events at the center. Work should take approximately four months to complete.

AT A GLANCE

Project Components

- Interior floor covering replacement
- Exterior door and frame replacement
- Exterior wooden trim repair and painting
- Gutter replacement
- Concrete and asphalt repairs for accessibility improvements
- HVAC system replacement
- Tennis court resurfacing
- Outdoor basketball court restriping



OTHER CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS



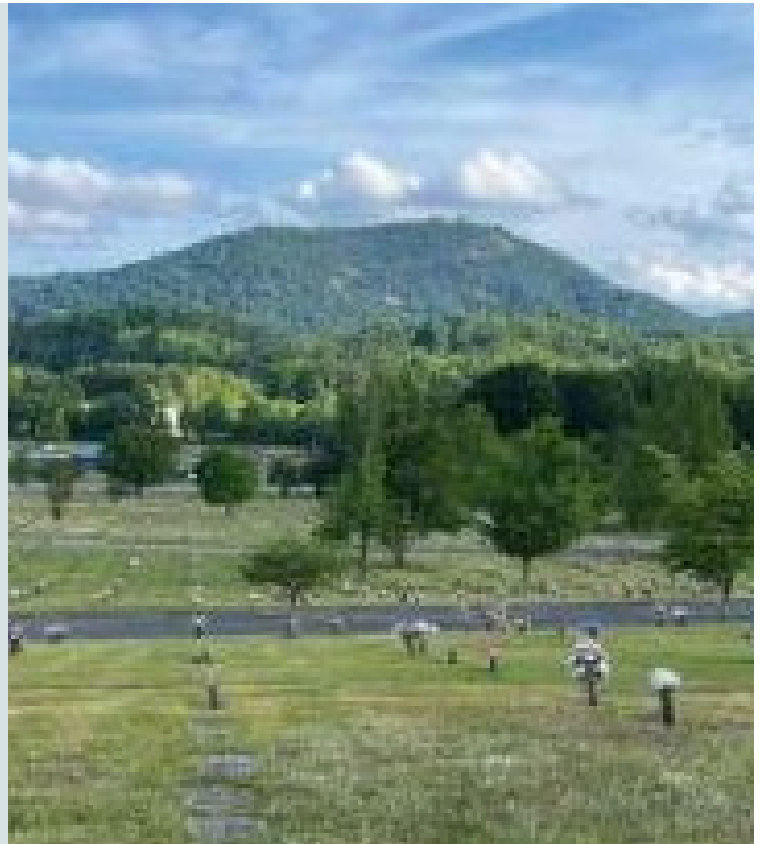
Several other exciting projects were completed in 2024, ranging from innovative projects showcasing partnerships with local foundations and universities, to a master planning effort to guide cemetery expansion for the next several decades. Each of these projects required input from multiple stakeholders, a creative vision, and the commitment by the City of Lenoir to bring these visions to life.

COOPERATIVE EFFORTS IN ACTION: PROJECTS THAT SHOWCASE PARTNERSHIPS AND FORESIGHT

**Unity Park & Community Garden
Teaching and Learning Pavilion**

**TH Broyhill Walking Park
Retaining Wall Replacement**

**Blue Ridge Memorial Park
Cemetery Expansion Master Plan**



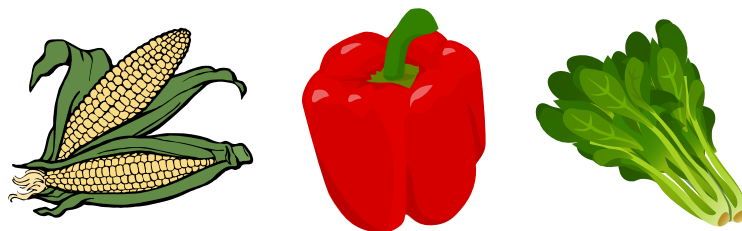
UNITY PARK & COMMUNITY GARDEN TEACHING AND LEARNING PAVILION



From Concept to Reality...

In 2018-2019 the City partnered with the local Master Gardeners Association and Appalachian State University to design a covered pavilion addition for the Unity Park & Community Garden (UPCG). The final design, completed by architectural design studio students, was crafted through site visits, community research, and input from UPCG stakeholders. The intent of the partnership was to allow students to design a functional, much-needed space for a local community and actually participate in construction of a modular unit that was to be assembled on-site. The project ultimately suffered delays due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and in 2024, the City advertised the project for bids to local contractors. With a slightly revised design and assistance and guidance from the Master Gardeners Association, the project was completed in December 2024 and features a 30' x 30' covered concrete slab, an enclosed restroom, outdoor sink and food prep counter, and electric fans to offer a breeze on those hot summer days.

Original Rendering - 2019



Completed Project - January 2025



TH BROYHILL WALKING PARK RETAINING WALL REPLACEMENT PROJECT



Even Jewels Need Polishing...

Given the surrounding topography at TH Broyhill Walking Park, the park's hardscape includes numerous retaining walls and steeply graded slopes. Several walls have been repaired or replaced in recent years, but many original cross-tie timber walls still exist. The southeastern slopes in the park, near the restroom building, include terraced timber walls that are currently failing due to decomposition. Spot-repairs have been made, but the City realized a full wall replacement was in order. Partnering with the Broyhill Foundation, funding was secured to replace the failing timber walls in June 2024. Two approaches were considered for wall replacement; one design utilizing treated timbers terraced like the existing wall(s), and another naturalized approach including slope grading, strategic placement of boulders of various sizes, and updated landscaping. The latter was selected for construction and work began in December 2024. Weather delays have slowed progress, but the project is expected to be complete in late January or early February 2025.



Existing Cross-tie Walls



Proposed Rendering - Naturalized Approach

BLUE RIDGE MEMORIAL PARK CEMETERY EXPANSION MASTER PLAN



Positioning Lenoir To Meet The Community's Perpetual Care Needs For Decades To Come

In 2023, the City of Lenoir contracted with McGill Associates to complete a master planning effort for future development of the remaining unimproved property at Blue Ridge Memorial Park. The goals of the plan included identifying local zoning regulations with setbacks and buffering requirements, potential utility needs, connectivity to Wildwood Road (NCDOT SR1548), environmental impacts and constraints, and a schematic layout of future roads and dedicated burial spaces.



Master Plan Components

- Environmental survey and stream/wetland delineation
- Improved secondary access to Wildwood Road (SR1548)
- Site amenities and recommendations
- Conceptual rendering, preliminary grading plan, cost estimate

New Grave Spaces

5,240

133