

# LEBANON'S PRINCIPLES FOR A SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY

*Sustainable: Meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.*

## **Principle #1 - Community Access, and Engagement**

Does the action. . .

- A. Promote public trust, accountability, and transparency; communicate effectively?
- B. Increase citizen participation, and leadership in all aspects of local, state, and federal government?
- C. Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration in local government decisions?

## **Principle #2 - Sense of Place**

Does the action. . .

- A. Foster the traditional character of Lebanon and Northern New England?
- B. Sustain quality of life?
- C. Ensure that development retains and enhances the traditions, goals, and values of our community?
- D. Revitalize and sustain the City's two downtowns: Lebanon and West Lebanon?
- E. Preserve the rural landscape?

## **Principle #3 - Environmental Responsibility and Energy Efficiency**

Does the action. . .

- A. Sustain and enhance a healthy natural environment: air, water, soil, and ecosystems?
- B. Promote and reinforce a network ("green infrastructure") of protected open space and natural areas?
- C. Improve energy efficiency and reduce the City's carbon footprint?
- D. Engage citizens, property owners, schools, businesses, organizations, and other governments to conserve energy and adopt more sustainable technologies for heating, cooling, lighting, transportation, and so forth?

## **Principle #4 -Intelligent, Coordinated Development and Transportation**

Does the action. . .

- A. Control sprawl by maintaining traditional compact settlement patterns?
- B. Use existing land, resources, and investments in infrastructure?
- C. Conserve and enhance environmental and cultural resources?
- D. Harmoniously combine housing, employment, shopping, services, educational, recreational, cultural, and social opportunities within walkable neighborhoods?
- E. Create a balanced, multi-modal transportation system that plans for increased transportation choice?
- F. Create livable, walkable communities with greater accessibility for people of all ages and abilities?

## **Principle #5 - Economic Vitality**

Does the action. . .

- A. Enable the local and regional economies to become more prosperous . . . not just bigger?
- B. Promote community prosperity and proactively position our community for a changing world?
- C. Support and enhance innovative, diversified, green, and creative enterprises?

## **Principle #6- Fiscal Responsibility**

Does the action. . .

- A. Strengthen the City's tax base and maintain or enhance property values?
- B. Offer cost-effectiveness, and preferably pay for itself?
- C. Promote other forms of revenue to help reduce the fiscal burden on taxpayers?
- D. Balance current demands with investments necessary for long-term viability?
- E. Ensure transparency in government fiscal policies?

## **Principle #7 - Regional leadership**

Does the action. . .

- A. Advance Lebanon as a regional leader?
- B. Work with neighboring towns to achieve common goals and address common problems more effectively?
- C. Encourage a regional view of community interdependence while respecting local autonomy?
- D. Manage growth locally and collaborate regionally?
- E. Promote positive innovation and excellence by achieving and exceeding Best Management Practices?

## WHY ARE “LEBANON’S PRINCIPLES FOR A SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY” IMPORTANT?

*Sustainable: Meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.*

In order to best serve its citizens, the City of Lebanon must provide a more sustainable, effective, and responsive government. The following principles address 7 essential areas in which better local government can make a positive difference in our community.

### **Principle #1 - Community Access and Engagement**

Good government requires that we welcome the public’s participation and honor the public trust. Cornerstones of public trust include effective outreach, communication, accountability, and transparency. Encouraging broad, inclusive collaboration in local government decisions recognizes that all levels of government, together with the non-profit and private sectors, have a stake in creating and implementing mutually beneficial policies. Improving public access to information and processes can make City government more accountable, transparent, fair, and responsive to community needs. At the same time, because state and federal government decisions affect our community, we can effectively advocate our interests by increasing our participation at those levels.

### **Principle #2 - Sense of Place**

The traditional character of Lebanon and Northern New England anchors our community identity, civic pride, and quality of life. Preserving the character of existing neighborhoods, and promoting harmonious character in new neighborhoods, helps keep our City unique. Revitalizing and supporting our two downtowns, Lebanon and West Lebanon, helps maintain key focal points for community activity. Preserving the rural landscape supports farm- and forest-based activities, contiguous tracts of open space for people and wildlife, and highly valued scenic assets.

### **Principle #3 - Environmental Responsibility and Energy Efficiency**

A healthy natural environment in turn sustains human physical, mental, and fiscal health. Scientific data and practical experience confirm the value of identifying, avoiding, minimizing, and repairing environmental harm. We benefit from clean air, abundant drinking water, productive soils, and diverse ecosystems. Protecting and strengthening our community’s natural resources—including the ability to raise food and timber—enhances our economy and capacity to withstand floods, drought, and other potential disasters. Conserving “green infrastructure”—a network of open space, waterways, and other natural areas—is vital to this effort. Partnering with citizens, landowners, schools, businesses, organizations, and other governments, we can responsibly enjoy natural assets now and for many years to come. The City can lead by example in following or exceeding best-management practices for all operations. For example, energy efficiency is critical to environmental health and community prosperity. Everyone can help promote energy conservation and more sustainable technology.

### **Principle #4 - Intelligent, Coordinated Development and Transportation**

Sprawling development detracts from many of the principles outlined here, and should be discouraged if we are to secure those assets that have made our community desirable. Coordinating infill development, adaptive re-use of existing buildings, and conservation design for new development will maintain traditional compact settlement patterns and efficiently use existing infrastructure. Developing attractive human-scale, mixed-use, walkable/bikable neighborhoods will help conserve and enhance quality of life—especially with an integrated multi-modal transportation system to promote alternatives to the automobile. Benefits include less traffic congestion, less air pollution, less wear and tear on roads, and safer access for people of all ages and abilities. Managing an orderly pace of development will minimize negative effects on City finances from associated needs for increased facilities and services as the City grows.

### **Principle #5 - Economic Vitality**

The continued vitality of our local economy depends upon proactively positioning our community for a changing world. The City must foster a green, innovative and diversified business environment as it supports a healthy climate for existing enterprises. Local companies have shown that they can compete and succeed in a global economy. Identifying sustainable industry niches that we can fill and successfully compete within, and attracting sustainable businesses within those niches, will strengthen overall quality of life. For example, encouraging local markets and community-supported agriculture can revitalize the rural economy. Providing a range of affordable housing options and incubating high-tech, medical, recreational, and creative businesses can help strengthen our job base, especially by promoting training for a skilled, diverse, productive workforce. All of these activities will encourage further community investment, reduce poverty, and promote prosperity.

### **Principle #6 - Fiscal Responsibility**

The City's finances must be managed such that current and future generations of residents can afford to live here. The alternative would erode the traditional socioeconomic diversity that has distinguished our community from some of our neighbors. City budgets must judiciously assess and prioritize current demands, keeping debt low while making selective investments such as energy efficiency to meet future needs. Careful attention to land use and tax policy, such as promoting redevelopment in order to increase asset valuations, can raise new revenues without incurring new costs for municipal services. Incentives for sensible frugality can yield further savings. Above all, fiscal responsibility depends on continuing to improve transparency and public understanding of municipal budgetary matters.

### **Principle #7 - Regional Leadership**

Lebanon has become the hub of the Upper Valley. The City, as well as the region, can benefit by actively engaging with neighboring towns to achieve common goals and address common challenges and opportunities more effectively. Financial and operational efficiencies may result from economies of scale. Encouraging a regional view of community interdependence while respecting local autonomy can enable the community to manage growth locally and collaborate regionally. We should promote positive innovation and excellence by achieving and exceeding best-management practices.