

## 12 | **Community Design and Civic Art**

### 12 | A **Vision & Purpose**

Civic art and cultural resources have the unique ability to invigorate and energize a community as well as attract people from surrounding areas, making Lebanon a regional arts and festival destination site. The City of Lebanon is committed to supporting civic art and cultural resources that will catalyze the creative economy, create a positive sense of place, establish our City as a regional cultural center, improve the visual presentation of our City, draw the community into public spaces, and elevate community pride. Lebanon will seek opportunities to integrate artists and designers into public projects and activities.

### 12 | B **Issues & Priorities**

#### 12 | B-1 **Civic Art Program**

A well thought out civic art program has the power to express the City’s image and support a positive sense of place. The City should find funding strategies to support a sustainable civic art program, choosing, evaluating, and promoting civic art that is designed to engage citizen appreciation and participation. The City should find funding strategies to support a sustainable civic art program run by an appointed Commission for Civic Arts. The commission would choose, evaluate, and promote civic art that is designed to engage citizen appreciation and participation.

#### 12 | B-2 **Creative Economy**

Artists, crafts people, design professionals, cultural organizations, media companies and other businesses in the “creative” sector are a growing component of the Upper Valley economy. Lebanon has recognized that not only does a strong creative economy generate jobs and revenue directly, it also does so indirectly by enhancing the City’s quality of life and downtown vitality. As a regional center, Lebanon has the infrastructure and resources to be the hub of Upper Valley’s creative economy. The City will need to create a stronger understanding or awareness of the existing creative economy, including its benefits and the actions needed to support its continued health and future growth.

### 12 | C **Existing Conditions & Trends**

#### 12 | C-1 **Creative Economy**

The creative economy includes non-profit organizations and for-profit business where creativity is essential to success and where the potential for wealth and job creation comes through the generation of ideas, products and/or services. The creative economy contributes to economic growth that increases the quality of life within communities. Throughout New England, communities are currently engaged with planning at the municipal

#### [key points](#) | [vision & purpose](#)



- Establish Lebanon as the arts and cultural center of the Upper Valley.
- Enhance the City’s character and quality of life through civic art and activities.
- Continue to expand Lebanon’s creative economy.

#### [key points](#) | [issues & priorities](#)



- Support a sustainable civic art program to promote arts and cultural opportunities that enhance the City’s character and quality of life.
- Establish Lebanon as the hub of the Upper Valley’s creative economy by attracting new creative businesses, institutions and entrepreneurs to locate in the City and by supporting the City’s existing creative sector.

## key points | existing conditions & trends

- The “creative” sector is an expanding component of the City’s and region’s economy, which is contributing to economic growth and increasing quality of life.
- Lebanon has a wealth of cultural and civic art resources and partners, which encourages further growth of the creative economy, attracts new residents and visitors to the City, and creates interesting public spaces and events.
- Civic art has multiple benefits for municipalities including enlivening streets, improving the appearance of public infrastructure and spaces, and generating civic pride and engagement.



level to support the creative economy. In Lebanon, the Upper Valley Community Foundation brought the Creative Economy Summit to the Upper Valley region in spring of 2004, initiating this endeavor locally.

**Creative Clusters.** Studies show that creative businesses tend to locate in clusters in communities that have concentrations of creative people, access to urban markets and offer a high quality of life - all features of Lebanon and the Upper Valley. Creative communities understand and value their cultural assets; they support diversity and innovation. Creative communities are a powerful draw to tourists, but also contribute to the economic stability of the region.

Lebanon has a creative community that continues to progress, grow and shape the City. We have creative clusters that include nonprofit institutions, commercial businesses, and individual artists that produce goods and services. Lebanon’s creative clusters attract workers with higher education and specialized skills. The presence of these businesses and organizations elevates Lebanon’s quality of life by providing diversity, cultural amenities and activities, and economic prosperity. Lebanon’s creative clusters contribute to an environment that supports innovation, attracts highly desirable knowledge-based employees, and encourages new forms of knowledge intensive production to flourish in the City.

**Creative Workforce.** The creative workforce is composed of individuals working in the creative sector, whether employed by a business, non-profit or self-employed. Lebanon’s creative workforce includes individuals whose jobs require a high level of skill in cultural, fine or applied arts, new technology, and enterprise. They teach, create, generate technical innovation, drive design, and cultivate change.

The creative workforce is usually attracted to areas with civic art programs due to the direct relationship with quality of life. Creative workers have been attracted to Lebanon for our high end jobs, the natural beauty of the environment, access to outdoor recreation, a richly historic downtown, and the region’s cultural opportunities. The creative workforce is growing in Lebanon and will continue to develop with the City’s cultural growth and expansion of the creative sector.

## 12 | C-2 Cultural and Civic Art Resources and Partners

Lebanon has a wealth of cultural and artistic resources as identified below. As the creative community in the Upper Valley has grown, the quality and quantity of the cultural and artistic resources accessible to City residents have also increased. With a greater presence of creative workers and organizations in the City, Lebanon has recognized that innovative community art is a powerful way to expand the public’s understanding of participatory art, youth empowerment, and community activism. Collaborative community art projects can engage people in civic life, join history with place, and transform public spaces.

The entire creative cluster in and around Lebanon has a vested interest in civic art because the increased quality of life will attract a desirable creative workforce to the region. The Upper Valley region is tightly interconnected. Residents all travel to neighboring towns to utilize the unique services available. Lebanon is a popular destination because it offers numerous commercial and public services, accessible from throughout the Upper Valley.

Lebanon's cultural and civic art resources include:

- **Lebanon Opera House, North Park Street.** The Lebanon Opera House connects the general public with diverse artists from around the world. An estimated 30,000 people annually attend or participate in events at the Lebanon Opera House, an historic 800-seat facility in the heart of downtown Lebanon. The Lebanon City Hall and Opera House building was designed by architect Jens Larsen, c. 1923-1924, and has a ceiling mural in the stairwell by Gary Hamel and a painting in foyer by Larry Howard. The Opera House hosts presentation series, community arts organization productions, educational workshops and student works. In addition to producing its own programming, the Lebanon Opera House Corporation coordinates and aids in the presentation of numerous productions staged by a variety of community arts organizations. Two of the most active, North Country Community Theater and Opera North, draw more than 8,000 patrons annually.
- **Soldiers Memorial Building, North Park Street.** The Civil War Soldiers Memorial building is the only one of its kind in this state. This asset has great potential for cultural tourism and educational value. The building is infrequently open to the public, so there is much community curiosity about it. Various veterans' groups are slowly turning it into a Civil War museum, although it does not meet ADA standards at the present time. The building, which contains stained glass windows and sculpture, was designed by Captain Ferdinand Davis c. 1886-1890.
- **Dana House, Route 4 West, Seminary Hill.** The oldest house in Lebanon is currently being preserved for eventual restoration under the direction of a committee of volunteers. This building has the potential to become part of a historic "belt" if restoration of buildings between Main Street, West Lebanon, and the Connecticut River ever becomes a reality.
- **Packard Hill Covered Bridge, Hardy Hill.** This historic bridge is now an attractive focal point for the east side of the City, and preserves the history of the Hardy Hill area. Its location adjacent to Baker's Crossing Conservation Area, provides an important link between the past and present.
- **City of Lebanon Recreation and Parks Department.** The City of Lebanon Recreation and Parks Department offers affordable art and drama courses and summer camps to area youth, and produces a music series in the summer. The department employs a seasonal Arts and Crafts Coordinator, who programs arts and crafts activities around the City for residents of all ages. The coordinator also runs the art program for Camp K and the arts and crafts program during the school year.
- **Lebanon Farmers Market, Colburn Park.** The Lebanon Farmers Market has both music and arts every Thursday from June to October.
- **City Artifacts.** Lebanon's historic artifacts are locked in an underground vault adjacent to the basement of the Carter House. However, the Heritage Commission and Historical Society are interested in acquiring an ADA-accessible historic house to be a museum that would display City artifacts.
- **City of Fountains.** Lebanon was once known as the City of Fountains. Many of the artful fountains once located around the City have been displaced in the past 30 years. The Marion Carter Fountain Committee has been working to revive and create new fountains in Lebanon. They have replaced the Colburn Park fountain (The Henry Wood Carter Memorial Fountain/"Umbrella Girl" Fountain on the east end of North Park Street ) and have installed a waterfall on High Street. Fountains are an important part of Lebanon's history and identity.
- **Art Walk.** AVA Gallery and Art Center created the Art Walk pamphlet in Lebanon that leads the reader to the buildings around Colburn Park that have art installations and artful architectural elements.
- **Lebanon Mural Project.** The Lebanon Mural Project involves local youth and has completed a mural in the Lebanon Public Library Young Adult Room and a mural for Lebanon's Riverside Community Park.
- **Lebanon Public Library, East Park Street.** The Lebanon Public Library has three notable historic paintings that offer significant glimpses into early 19<sup>th</sup> century Lebanon as well as a contemporary mural designed by the youth of Lebanon and Saskia and Natasha Haugen.
- **Kilton Public Library, Main Street, West Lebanon.** The Kilton Public Library includes an interior garden with a fountain.
- **Lebanon Post Office, East Park Street.** Lebanon Post Office has "Rural New Hampshire," a 1939 Historical Mural by Charles Kaeseleau.
- **Lebanon High School, Hanover Street.** The High School has many murals.
- **Lebanon Community College, Hanover Street.** Lebanon Community College's art studios have large windows that face the mall. They offer fine art courses, photography, theatre, dance, and music.
- **First Congregational Church of Lebanon, South Park Street.** The First Congregational Church of Lebanon designed by Ammi Burnham Young, 1828, has impressive architecture, stained glass windows, and murals in the dining room.
- **Lebanon United Methodist Church, School Street.** The Lebanon United Methodist Church designed by Banwell White Arnold Hemberger & Partners, 1994, contains impressive stained glass windows and woodwork.
- **AVA Gallery and Art Center.** The AVA Gallery and Art Center has 250 artist members, 650 community members, three teaching studios, three galleries, 18 rental studios and an outdoor sculpture garden. There are classes for all ages and abilities, a scholarship program, internship program, special events exhibitions, summer art camps for children, and vacation art camps for young people. AVA has 27 art exhibitions a year and has been located in Lebanon since 1990.
- **Power House Arcade, West Lebanon.** The Power House Arcade has a large hanging copper sculpture called "Circus Parade" by Dennis and Sansea Sparling, assisted by Dick Wissler and commissioned by Bayne Stevenson. It was installed May 8, 1986 and is one of the more impressive pieces in Lebanon.
- **Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center.** Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center has an extensive collection of paintings, murals, sculptures, multimedia, and community art on permanent display, as well as rotating exhibitions. DHMC has the largest collection of public art in Lebanon. Sol Levenson has painted historically themed murals at DHMC.
- **Alice Peck Day Memorial Hospital, Mascoma Street.** The hospital has a large art collection.
- **Three Tomatoes Trattoria, Court Street.** Three Tomatoes Trattoria contains a Mural Italian Suite one and two, 1991-1992 by Clifford West, Bird Mobile, 1991 by William Peabody, Where Tradition Lives, 1994 by Geoffrey Sass, Rain Drops, by Kirsten Nichols, and forged metal and glass shelves by Roger Chudzik.
- **One Court Street.** One Court Street was designed by architect Paul Mirski, 1989.
- **Lebanon Trade Center, West Lebanon.** The Lebanon Trade Center has a large outdoor sculpture.
- **Witherell Center & Carter Community Building.** CCBA has a large aquatic mural in the pool room.



There are many entities that have vested interest in the benefits of cultural and civic art resources in Lebanon, including artists, museums, schools, and historians. The increase of cultural tourism will bring prosperity to all the cultural organizations in the region.

Lebanon’s cultural and civic art partners include:

- Lebanon Historical Society and Heritage Commission
- Lebanon Garden Club
- Lebanon Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee
- Lebanon Arts and Crafts Association
- Northern Lights Quilting Guild in Lebanon
- Lebanon Rotary Club
- Lebanon Riverside Rotary Club
- Lebanon Chamber of Commerce
- Lebanon Youth in Action
- Full Moon Community Association in Lebanon
- Public schools in Lebanon and surrounding communities
- Lebanon College
- Franklin Pierce University in West Lebanon
- Dartmouth College in Hanover
- Lebanon City Center Ballet
- Upper Valley Music Center in Lebanon
- Co-op and River Valley Club Art Galleries at Centerra Park
- Duke’s Art and Frame Shop in Lebanon
- Lebanon Art Suppliers and Hobby Store
- L.L. Bean (has gifted \$20,000 to create 19 kiosks for Lebanon trail heads and community art can be incorporated)
- Upper Valley Arts Alliance
- Upper Valley Scene website ([www.uvscene.com](http://www.uvscene.com))
- Vital Communities in White River Junction, Vermont
- Connecticut River Byways Council
- Upper Valley Region - New Hampshire Charitable Foundation
- State of New Hampshire Council on The Arts
- State of New Hampshire Humanities Council
- League of New Hampshire Craftsmen
- Pentangle Arts Council in Woodstock, Vermont
- St. Gaudens National Historic Site in Cornish
- American Precision Museum in Windsor, Vermont
- Enfield Shaker Museum
- Shrine of Our Lady of La Salette in Enfield
- Maxfield Parrish Museum in Windsor, Vermont
- Hopkins Center at Dartmouth College in Hanover
- Hood Museum at Dartmouth College in Hanover
- Center for Cartoon Studies in White River Junction, Vermont
- Two Rivers Printmaking Studios in White River Junction, Vermont
- Tip-Top Studios in White River Junction, Vermont
- Cooler Gallery in White River Junction, Vermont

### 12 | C-3 Benefits of Civic Art and Events

Well placed, unique public art is a great way to highlight the meaning of a place. Lebanon’s central fountain, for example, invites passersby to enjoy a moment of leisure and relaxation, and underscores the meaning and intention of green space. In instances where few citizens ever see visual art, placing civic art in a City’s outdoors creates an art museum without walls. Cities that want to enliven the streets in a benign way should look to civic art. Civic art can also be incorporated into the design of main transportation corridors and gateways, providing visitors and citizens with a unique local visual experience. Civic art can enhance the appearance of public infrastructure and integrate utilities into their surroundings. Cities have found that by creating unique and engaging transit station designs they can increase ridership and contribute to the sense of civic well being, for example.

Similarly, well planned and coordinated civic festivals and activities are a great way to add diversity to the year and provide opportunities to support local artists, performers, businesses and organizations. Such events also provide an opportunity to showcase and market the local creative economy.

Civic art is an effective means to reinforce community and neighborhood identity. Civic art programs often focus on commissioning art which reflects a sense of place and unique community character. Community residents can play a role in envisioning, creating, and maintaining the art work. Such involvement can create a strong sense of place and community pride.

Civic art may be used to preserve and tell a narrative of people and their past. It can also teach people about broader social issues. Art and entertainment has the ability to interpret the multi-layered history in urban spaces.

Civic art programs play a significant role in the development of local artists. Community art opportunities can elevate the youth and college level participation in the creation of art in civic spaces. Professional artists have played the role of creating a meaningful consultation with the community to discover its values and aspirations in order to design art and entertainment to reflect and strengthen the community ideals. This work stretches the capacity of artists, develops cultural icons, and represents community expression.

12 | D

## **Future Challenges & Opportunities**

12 | D-1

### **Promoting Arts and Cultural Activities**

Similar to a general theme expressed in chapters throughout this Master Plan, there is a need for coordinated planning and engagement to capitalize or enhance the opportunities associated with the local creative economy. The potential for supporting and promoting arts and cultural activities in Lebanon is great.

The City should investigate the best methods for linking important cultural facilities, such as the Lebanon Opera House and the AVA Gallery. This could take the form of a centrally located arts information kiosk or a brochure/map highlighting the various arts/cultural/historic resources in the City. Development of walking tours highlighting these resources would also help accomplish this goal. These activities would all help bolster this increasingly important segment of the downtown economy.

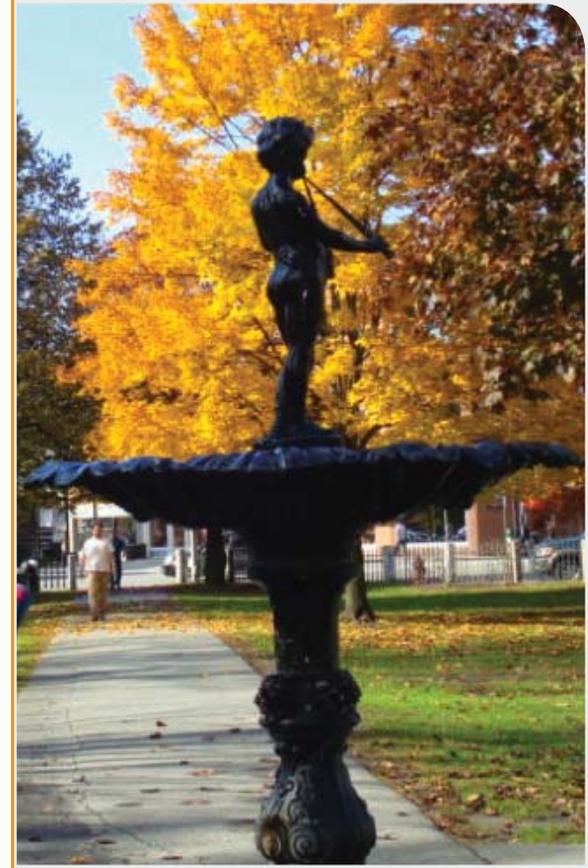
The City should also provide programs that highlight Lebanon's historic resources. Currently, Lebanon is not considered a primary destination for cultural tourism. However, Lebanon's potential as a cultural landmark is strong. There are many public sites which have potential for cultural development. They include the Lebanon mall, Main Street in West Lebanon, the String of Pearls (a series of planned recreation and conservation parcels along the Connecticut and Mascoma Rivers), and Lebanon trail kiosks (display for community art).

The land sites behind plazas could be prime locations for parks and civic art because they complement Lebanon's commercial districts. This strategic development would balance Lebanon's commercial environment with public parks and art by the rivers. There is potential for civic art in the land parcel behind the K-Mart Plaza, highway medians and right of ways, interstate exits, the gateways into Lebanon, and in public buildings.



#### **key points | future challenges & opportunities**

- Lebanon needs a coordinated effort and plan to promote civic art and activities, and expand the creative economy.



colburn park fountain

**OUTCOME 1**

Support a sustainable civic art program to promote arts and cultural opportunities that enhance the City's character and quality of life.

**STRATEGIES**

- 1 Increase public awareness of the variety of arts and cultural activities and resources that exist in the City.
- 2 Develop established processes for identifying civic art opportunities, evaluating, acquiring, and preserving civic art, and facilitating community arts projects.
- 3 Explore various funding mechanisms for civic art and activities.
- 4 Improve dialogue and awareness of the benefits of civic art and activities.
- 5 Promote the benefits of civic art, which include: civic art is a catalyst for developing a sustainable creative economy, civic art creates a sense of place, and civic art engages people in civic life.
- 6 Collaborate with art leaders from other cities for program speakers and presenters on the role of art in community.
- 7 Utilize the available opportunities in traveling historical shows, art shows, speakers, and presenters from NH State Council on the Arts and the Council on Humanities.
- 8 Create a stronger sense of place in Lebanon by reviving Lebanon's historical image and establishing its cultural image with a Civic Art and Festival Program that markets Lebanon as a historical and cultural destination.
- 9 Take advantage of opportunities to beautify public spaces.
- 10 Make improvements to the City's gateways with sculpture, gardens, and landscaping.
- 11 Encourage business to sponsor public gardens areas and activities.
- 12 Seek opportunities to work with students from the vocational/technical school to make improvements to the City's gateways and gardens.
- 13 Work with the state to allow planting of trees, shrubs, and hardy perennials and annuals wildflowers at interstate exits and all available medians.
- 14 Revitalize Main Street in West Lebanon with community art, public art and cultural activities.
- 15 Create a public sculpture garden park.
- 16 Encourage corporate and institutional advocacy for civic art and activities in Lebanon.
- 17 Encourage the creation of civic art during the planning of large-scale developments by adopting a process that engages developers and institutions in the creation of civic art and encourages the emergence of corporate and institutional leadership in advocating for civic art.

**ACTIONS**

- 1 Establish "historic" walking tours of Lebanon with different themes, such as significant architecture, life in a mill town, bridges, notable people, notable artworks, etc.
- 2 Create a walking tour pamphlet of Lebanon's civic art and distribute at City Hall, Chamber of Commerce, and other appropriate venues.
- 3 Create a centrally located kiosk to distribute information about community arts and cultural events and resources.
- 4 Promote arts/cultural events and resources on the City's website, in the City newsletter and on CATV.
- 5 Establish a Civic Art and Festival Program that would be overseen by a Civic Art Commission appointed by the City Council.
- 6 Connect Lebanon's civic art to the Vital Communities Valley Quest Program.
- 7 Provide funding to support the fountain committee's efforts to re-establish Lebanon as "The City of Fountains."
- 8 Provide funding for civic art in the City's gateways and gardens.
- 9 Improve the Pedestrian Mall and bring back the turtle, dolphin, new sculptures and shade-loving perennial gardens.
- 10 Commission a new historical mural for City Hall.
- 11 Install sculptures at Storrs Hill that reflect Lebanon's place in the history of skiing.
- 12 Create rotating opportunities for the display of Lebanon student art work.
- 13 Establish a venue for collaboration among arts organizations such as monthly gatherings to encourage collaboration on special events or arts programs.
- 14 Create an arts organization collaborative website that includes a place for dialogue among visitors and users.
- 15 Open the Soldiers' Memorial Building as an ADA-accessible museum.

## OUTCOME 1

Support a sustainable civic art program to promote arts and cultural opportunities that enhance the City's character and quality of life.

### STRATEGIES

- 18 Research and stay current with other City initiatives to promote corporate advocacy for civic art and cultural activities.
- 19 Identify and adopt successful strategies that other communities have used to engage corporate leadership in civic art projects.
- 20 Encourage incentives and challenge Lebanon's businesses to contribute to a series of sculptures that relate to Lebanon.
- 21 Identify and catalogue available public spaces for community arts and activities, and identify the organizations that may help facilitate community arts projects.
- 22 Support the Historical Society and the Heritage Commission in the effort to acquire and establish an ADA-accessible historical house to be a museum that will house City artifacts.

## OUTCOME 2

Establish Lebanon as the hub of the Upper Valley's creative economy by attracting new creative businesses, institutions and entrepreneurs to locate in the City and by supporting the City's existing creative sector.

### STRATEGIES

- 1 Foster an Arts District in Lebanon.
- 2 Identify potential facilities, public and private, that would be appropriate for a commercial gallery or studio space, such as the old West Lebanon Library, the School Street School, or Sacred Heart School.
- 3 Identify galleries and studios as having a distinct use beyond retail and allow them to be in the residential office district.