

CITY OF DOVER

# CERTIFICATE OF ADOPTION

Agenda Item#: 4A

Adopting: Vision Chapter of the Master Plan

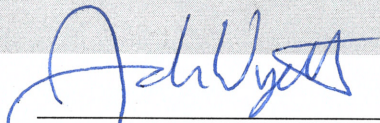
- WHEREAS: The Planning Board and Planning Department have finalized a draft of the Vision Chapter of the Master Plan in accordance with RSA 674:3, and
- WHEREAS: A concerted effort was undertaken to include participation by the general public through the use of public meetings and a citizen steering committee; and
- WHEREAS: A formal public hearing on said Chapter, in accordance with RSA 675:6, was held before the Planning Board on July 25, 2023; and

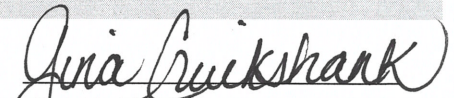
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY DOVER PLANNING BOARD THAT:

1. The Vision Chapter of the Master Plan is adopted and certified in accordance with RSA 674:4;
2. The Planning Board Chairman is authorized to sign and label as “adopted” the final reproduced documents of said Chapter; and
3. The Planning Department is authorized to forward a certified copy of the adopted Chapter to the Office of Planning & Development, as required by RSA 675:9.

## AUTHORIZATION

Approved as to Legal Form:

  
 Joshua Wyatt  
 City Attorney

  
 Gina Cruikshank  
 Planning Board Chair

Date of Adoption:  
 7/25/2023

Members in Favor: 9

Members Opposed: 0





**CITY OF DOVER**

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**Agenda Item#: 4A**

Adopting:

Vision Chapter of the Master Plan

## BACKGROUND MATERIAL:

According to New Hampshire Planning and Land Use Regulation 674:2, the Master Plan is intended to clearly and practically propose the best and most appropriate future development of the City under the jurisdiction of the Planning Board, to aid the Board in designing ordinances, and to guide the Board in the performance of its other duties in a manner that achieves the principles of smart growth, sound planning and wise resource protection.

The Master Plan is a set of statements about land use and development principles for the municipality with accompanying maps, diagrams, charts and descriptions to give legal standing to the implementation of ordinance and other measures of the Planning Board. A Master Plan should lay out a physical plan which takes into account social and economic values describing how, why, when and where the community should build, rebuild and preserve. This physical plan should be comprehensive in nature, and have a long range vision – 10 years is the average. The master plan shall include, at a minimum, the following required sections:

- A vision section
- A land use section

The master plan may also include the following sections:

• A stewardship of resources section	• A cultural and historic resources section
• A community facilities section	• A regional concern section
• An economic development section	• A neighborhood plan section
• A natural resources section	• A community design section
• A natural hazards section	• A housing section
• A recreation section	• An implementation section
• A utility and public service section	• A climate adaptation section
• A transportation section	• An energy section

Dover has completed Master Plans in 1963, 1978, 1988, 1998, 2000, 2007, 2009 and most recently in 2012. It is the intention of this cycle to be revised again in 2024, which will continue the community on a proactive revision cycle. The Vision is the guiding chapter for the rest of the Chapters and is intended to be revised again around 2033.

The Master Plan process involves 8 steps:

- Collect data about the community
- Analyze the data
- Define a community vision
- Evaluate alternative development scenarios
- Select a preferred alternative
- Implement recommendations
- Monitor the plan
- Amend the plan as necessary





# DISTINCTLY DOVER

A COMMUNITY VISION FOR 2035



City of Dover  
Master Plan  
Adopted July 25, 2023





# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thank you to all the people who have contributed to the creation of this Master Plan chapter, especially the Vision Committee and the City of Dover staff. Their contribution and optimism for the future of Dover shaped this vision. Special thanks are given to City Staff, the consulting team, and the Vision Committee for providing critical support and guidance through the completion of the chapter.

## **City of Dover Staff**

- Donna Benton, AICP, Director of Planning and Community Development
- Erin Bassegio, Outreach Coordinator

## **Vision Committee Members**

- Doug Glennon, Chair
- Benjamin Bradley, Vice Chair
- Deputy Mayor Dennis Shanahan
- Councilor Linnea Nemeth
- Hayley Harmon
- Lina Shayo

## **Consulting Team**

- Resilience Planning and Design
- CJW Consulting LLC



**CJW CONSULTING LLC**



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# 1. INTRODUCTION

**A community-wide vision describes the desired future of Dover as imagined by residents and the broader community.**

Over the course of nine months, the City engaged with residents and other community members to envision the future of Dover. Informed by public input, the vision was written to capture the collective priorities and aspirations of Dover’s people, while painting a vivid picture of what the City will strive to become by the year 2035. The benefit of this approach was the emphasis on public engagement and dialogue which drove the development of the vision. This allowed interested participants to engage in each phase of the vision development process.

**Distinctly Dover: A Community Vision for 2035** will guide and inform the City of Dover’s Master Plan, a comprehensive policy document which guides land use changes and development. The City of Dover reviews and updates each Master Plan chapter every ten years to inform long-range land use planning, infrastructure planning, and other related policies.

The Vision Chapter is unique in that it serves as the foundation for all other chapters in the Master Plan. Over the next decade, the vision will be used to inspire and inform the priorities and actions detailed in all other Master Plan chapters. The vision is also meant to reflect the desires and priorities of Dover residents, businesses, and other stakeholders. Moving toward this vision over time will require changes to land use regulations, non-regulatory initiatives and investments, and the results will reinforce the preferred pattern of development that has been identified by Dover residents.

Distinctly Dover: A Community Vision for 2035 includes three major components:

- **Vision Statement:** Composed of eight distinct pillars, which represent the core aspirations Dover will be working toward.
- **Community Values:** Identified strengths to be retained and priorities for change.
- **Vision Pillars and Elements:** A description of each vision pillar through a series of elements that provide additional context and ideas.





## 2. VISION STATEMENT

1. We are a **welcoming, connected, and engaged community** with a high level of civic participation and a transparent, responsible local government.
2. We are a City with an **emerging urban vibrancy**, guided by intentional growth to create **connected neighborhoods, attractive streetscapes, and accessible open space**, while maintaining what makes Dover distinct.
3. We have an **attractive, thriving downtown**, connected to a **lively waterfront**, that serves as a City center and gathering place, and is known as a **destination** for visitors, businesses, and community events.
4. We have **affordable and attainable housing and support services** that are accessible to, and utilized by, individuals, families, and households of diverse backgrounds and needs.
5. We are a community committed to supporting, attracting, and **expanding business and employment opportunities** that foster economic growth and community well-being.
6. We have a **robust transportation system** that encourages safe and appealing pedestrian, transit, and other alternative transportation options that connect us to the broader region.
7. We have **outstanding schools, recreation, and cultural activities** for all ages, and our community organizations collaborate to provide us a strong foundation and promising future.
8. We are leaders in incorporating innovation to create **resilient and environmentally focused infrastructure, energy, and utility systems** to responsibly steward our resources and cherished environment.



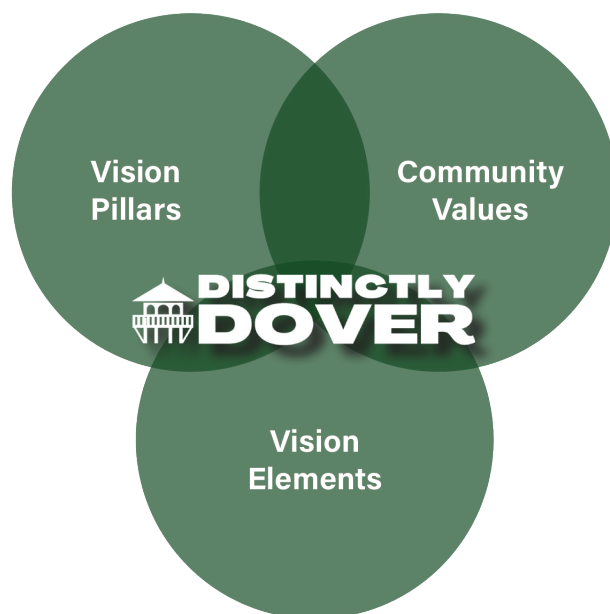


# 3. UNDERSTANDING THE VISION

**Dover’s vision statement is composed of eight distinct and equally important aspirations, referred to as vision pillars.**

A series of vision elements correspond with each vision pillar and provide a more detailed description of the different aspects and priorities of the pillar. The community values section of this chapter reflects where this visioning process began and how residents view Dover’s current strengths to be retained, as well as current challenges that are a priority for change. Taken together, the community values, vision pillars, and elements describe the desired future, or vision, for the City of Dover. The vision pillars and elements are interrelated and interdependent and one is not a priority over another. The numbering system used in the Complete Vision Description section is provided for ease of reference and does not indicate ranking.

The vision paints a picture of Dover in the future. There are aspects of the vision that describe what the City is now, but the focus is on what residents and other stakeholders want Dover to become. Naturally, not every value, vision element, or even vision pillar will resonate the same with every Dover stakeholder, but these themes emerged from community engagement and were heard repeatedly. Together, they provide a direction for Dover to work towards. While the Vision Chapter sets the tone and direction, and is the foundation to inform all the other Master Plan chapters, achieving this vision will require action. The necessary actions will be identified in each of the other chapters of the City of Dover’s Master Plan.



**HOW DID DOVER ENGAGE COMMUNITY MEMBERS IN CRAFTING THE VISION?**

- **Tabling at Dover’s 2022 Apple Harvest Day and 2022 Festival of Trees Event**
- **Online polling**
- **“First 5 Minutes for Dover’s Future” at City meetings**
- **Virtual Visioning Session**
- **Vision “On-The-Go” Events**
- **Draft Vision Drop-In Event**

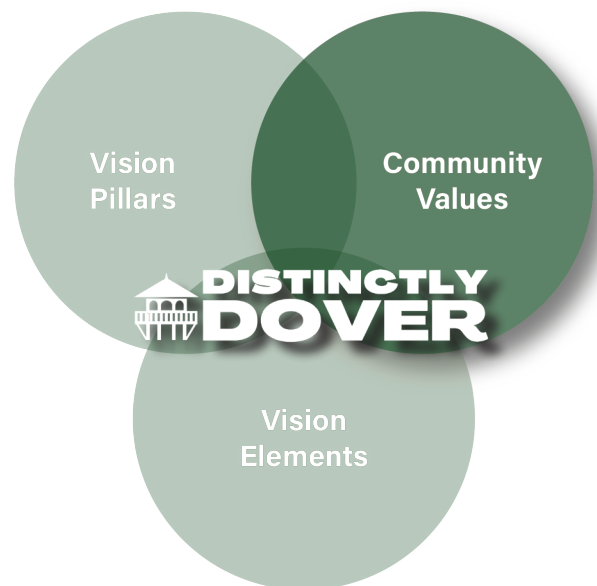




## 4. COMMUNITY VALUES

When thinking about the future, it is also important to reflect on Dover's current strengths and challenges.

Residents and community members value Dover's distinct character and high quality of life. However, when asked about Dover's challenges and priorities for change, participants emphatically named issues that they are most concerned about. Together, these strengths and challenges help to frame what residents want to see retained, as well as what they see as priorities for change in order to reach a better version of Dover.





## DOVER'S STRENGTHS: WHAT IS TO BE RETAINED AND BUILT UPON

- **WELCOMING**, friendly, and connected community with a diverse population. A community with a sense of history, well-attended community gatherings, and a feeling of safety.
- **HIGH-QUALITY COMMUNITY SERVICES** and resources including, the library, school system, City services, and healthcare and emergency services.
- **URBAN AND RURAL CHARACTER** that balances a small-town feeling and access to rural areas with the amenities and energy of a City.
- **WELL-MANAGED CITY GOVERNMENT** with long range planning, resident committees, and accessible community engagement with a willingness to listen.
- **ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERSHIP** in infrastructure and resiliency, with thoughtful stewardship and access to natural resources.
- **ATTRACTIVE DOWNTOWN** that serves as the nucleus of the City, with walkable local businesses and restaurants, and provides opportunities for business growth.
- **RECREATION** activities, nonprofit organizations, and volunteer opportunities that are attractive to a variety of ages.
- **LOCATION** and proximity to major cities, the ocean, and mountains.

## DOVER'S CHALLENGES: TOP CONCERNS AND PRIORITIES FOR CHANGE

- **HOUSING** can be unaffordable, with fewer housing options and limited supply; also, more people in Dover are experiencing housing insecurity and homelessness, some of whom are also experiencing mental and behavioral health challenges.
- **GROWTH IMPACTS**, or the impacts on existing resources, infrastructure, community, and the overall cost of living as a result of a growing City.
- **TRANSPORTATION**, especially limited public transportation options or frequency, and the need for improvements to support walkability and pedestrian safety, and traffic calming.
- **DOWNTOWN** changes and business opportunity and affordability is becoming more constrained and limited.
- **CLIMATE CHANGE** impacts, energy costs, and environmental resiliency.
- **PARTICIPATION** in local government and civic life is not always representative or convenient to the Dover community as a whole.

*Please note that this list of strengths and weaknesses is not prioritized by importance.*





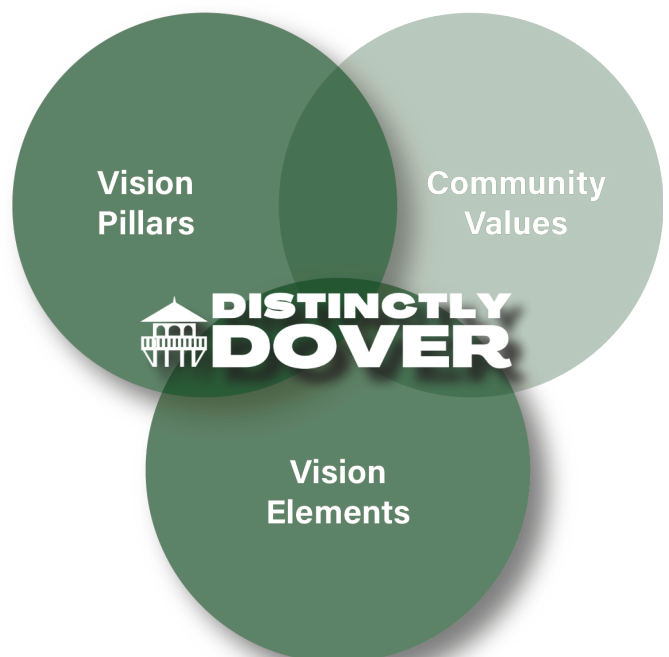


# 5. VISION PILLARS AND ELEMENTS

The vision statement describes the desired future of Dover as imagined by residents and the broader community. The statement is comprised of eight sentences referred to as vision pillars. In conjunction with each vision pillar are a series of vision elements that provide a more detailed description of aspects and priorities of each pillar.

The eight vision pillars reflect the public input provided during the outreach and engagement process to develop this chapter. Also developed through public input, the elements provide descriptive ideas to guide other Master Plan chapters and implementation efforts in Dover over the coming decade. Some of the elements may reflect what the City is now, but the focus is forward-looking toward

what residents want Dover to be in 2035. The vision pillars and their corresponding elements are included in the following pages.







# PILLAR 1.

**We are a welcoming, connected, and engaged community with a high level of civic participation and a transparent, responsible local government.**

**1.1.** We are a welcoming community to all.

**1.2.** We are an inclusive community where everyone can find a sense of belonging and where diversity of identity, culture, and background is embraced.

**1.3.** We have an awareness and see value in Dover's history and people, past, present, and future.

**1.4.** We share a community commitment to connect, respect, and take care of one another.

**1.5.** Intergenerational civic engagement is strong, especially among younger people participating in civic life, volunteering, and local government.

**1.6.** Community members are informed and empowered to participate in civic life, and there are accessible pathways for all people to get involved.

**1.7.** Local government is representative of Dover's community demographics.

**1.8.** There is clear, consistent communication and information among and between community and local government, with local government conducting active outreach.

**1.9.** Local government is responsive to community needs and there is transparent information and decision-making in City operations.

**1.10.** An equity lens is applied in local government decision-making and there are collaborative relationships with community groups built on trust.

**1.11.** Emergency services and law enforcement are responsive and built on positive relationships with community groups, helping to keep us safe and healthy.

**1.12.** Local government and City operations are fiscally responsible, and there is a thoughtful tax structure that remains competitive and affordable.





## PILLAR 2.

**We are a City with an emerging urban vibrancy, guided by intentional growth to create connected neighborhoods, attractive streetscapes, and accessible open space, while maintaining what makes Dover distinct.**

**2.1.** Current needs and quality of life of Dover's community are maintained in an effort to plan for and balance future development, growth, and change.

**2.2.** We have well-planned and thoughtful infrastructure and residential and commercial development that complements current neighborhoods and business areas.

**2.3.** Dover maintains distinct areas that have defining land uses and characteristics, such as an urban, historic downtown center, residential neighborhoods, business districts, and rural residential, agricultural, and open lands.

**2.4.** New development and the pace of growth is thoughtfully and intentionally considered in the context of community need, character, and affordability.

**2.5.** New development takes into account impacts on services, infrastructure, tax structure, and natural resources, especially on finite resources.

**2.6.** Well-designed development includes density, mixed use, and multi-story structures where appropriate, yet conserves land and open space where beneficial.

**2.7.** Riverfront development and our connection to waterways and the ocean is guided in a way that highlights our relationship to our broader geography.

**2.8.** Development is visually appealing, creating cohesion and connectivity within its surrounding context, especially in the downtown and our neighborhoods.

**2.9.** Building styles and facades have continuity, are visually appealing, and incorporate creativity and variety within a form-based code.



**2.10.** Preservation of historical buildings, architecture, and the visual charm of the downtown core is maintained.

**2.11.** Sense of history, geographical heritage of land use, buildings, and people is present, acknowledged, and appreciated.

**2.12.** Impacts of climate change, including severe weather and rising water levels are considered in development guidelines and decisions.

**2.13.** Streetscapes are attractive with resilient greenscapes, permaculture, and trees and serve as corridors and connectors between neighborhoods and commercial areas.

**2.14.** Universal design guides development and complete streets infrastructure create a built environment that can be accessed, understood, and used to the greatest extent by all people.

**2.15.** Services, businesses, and activities are easily accessible, walkable, and close by.

**2.16.** Neighborhoods include green space, parks, and community-gathering spaces.

**2.17.** Rural neighborhoods, undeveloped land, and agricultural areas are maintained.

**2.18.** Conservation lands and green spaces are encouraged and accessible throughout the City.







## PILLAR 3.

We have an attractive, thriving downtown, connected to a lively waterfront, that serves as a City center and gathering place, and is known as a destination for visitors, businesses, and community events.

**3.1.** Our historic downtown is vibrant, charming, and fully occupied with a variety of local businesses, retail, and residences.

**3.2.** While there is an urban experience downtown, the City retains a small town feeling of community.

**3.3.** There is a walkable City center, with some pedestrian-only areas.

**3.4.** Waterfront development complements the downtown area and there are gathering places for community, arts, shops, restaurants, and connection to the Cochecho River.

**3.5.** Downtown development is consistent and attractive alongside the historic architecture and mills.

**3.6.** There are gathering places and opportunities downtown that create a sense of connection and community, including cultural, entertainment,

and recreational activities for all ages and multigenerational groups.

**3.7.** Downtown parks are connected as a special feature along the river and there are places to sit to enjoy and access the Cochecho River.

**3.8.** There is a riverwalk pathway to enjoy downtown and the Cochecho River.

**3.9.** Downtown residences and neighborhoods have all the basic amenities, including a grocery store, within walking distance and public transportation to allow for car-free mobility.

**3.10.** A variety of downtown businesses serving community members and visitors can afford to be located downtown.

**3.11.** There are access points and recreation infrastructure on the Cochecho River.



**3.12.** Parking is accessible and adequate for downtown, but does not detract from the walkable experience.

**3.13.** Traffic volume and direction benefits the experience and access to downtown.

**3.14.** Well-developed wayfinding brings people to areas not easily discovered.

**3.15.** Clean, permanent public restrooms are accessible downtown.

**3.16.** Dover has a reputation for creative placemaking and is a destination for visitors and overnight stays.

**3.17.** Seasonal festivals, winter amenities, and downtown fairs and events draw community members and visitors.

**3.18.** Trees, greenscapes, and permaculture replace pavement to create an environmentally-focused downtown.







## PILLAR 4.

We have affordable and attainable housing and support services that are accessible to, and utilized by, individuals, families, and households of diverse backgrounds and needs.

**4.1.** Housing is affordable, and attainable to a variety of individuals, families, and households at a range of income levels.

**4.2.** Diversity of housing options are available, including single family and multi-family homes, and safe, well-maintained rental units.

**4.3.** Housing types are interspersed to foster neighborhoods that are multigenerational and socioeconomically diverse.

**4.4.** We are supporting varying housing needs including availability of one-level housing, assisted living, and long-term care options to meet the needs of residents of all ages and abilities.

**4.5.** Housing and property taxes are affordable to older residents on fixed incomes seeking to age in place in Dover.

**4.6.** Housing in the downtown area is available for walkable, car-less living.

**4.7.** Large single-family housing can be converted into multi-family housing where appropriate.

**4.8.** Housing is available to adults with disabilities.

**4.9.** High quality healthcare and specialists, including behavioral and mental healthcare, are accessible and available to all community members.

**4.10.** Low-barrier shelter and support services are available and utilized by people experiencing housing insecurity and homelessness.

**4.11.** Creative housing solutions, incorporating the 'housing-first' model of shelter and case management, that meets the needs of residents experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity.

**4.12.** Collaborative public and private partnerships address homelessness and housing needs in Dover, including supportive resources and specialists within local government and departments.





## PILLAR 5.

We are a community committed to supporting, attracting, and expanding business and employment opportunities that foster economic growth and community well-being.

**5.1.** We are a regional leader and economic hub for creative innovation, opportunity, and growth in a diversity of industries.

**5.2.** Community members support economic development measures to ensure a strong economic base.

**5.3.** Businesses and industries are attracted to Dover's quality of life, providing greater employment opportunities.

**5.4.** Dover is able to retain an adequate workforce capable of supporting the region's businesses, including workers with a diversity of skillsets and at all stages of their careers, due to its quality of life and housing opportunities.

**5.5.** Dover is known as a regional medical center with high-quality healthcare facilities, providers, and specialists.

**5.6.** Regulations and processes are clear and predictable in order to foster business opportunity and expansion.

**5.7.** Downtown is an attractive location for small businesses to find success.

**5.8.** Businesses and entrepreneurs with a diversity of backgrounds bring cultural experiences, foods, and opportunities to Dover community members.

**5.9.** Business community actively participates in and is supportive of community efforts and events.

**5.10.** Local food production, agriculture, and farming businesses grow and thrive in Dover.

**5.11.** Business and industrial activities are conducted with careful attention to community health and safety and best practices are implemented to prevent or mitigate negative impacts to air, ground, and water resources.

**5.12.** Redevelopment and reuse of vacant or underutilized buildings and parcels is a focus City-wide.

**5.13.** Communications and technology infrastructure, including open, fast broadband internet, are reliable and accessible.





## PILLAR 6.

We have a robust transportation system that encourages safe and appealing pedestrian, transit, and other alternative transportation options that connect us to the broader region.

**6.1.** Dover is a walkable City with safe, appealing pedestrian infrastructure throughout its entirety.

**6.2.** Year-round walkability is possible with a well-maintained sidewalk network in winter months.

**6.3.** Bike infrastructure, including protected bike lanes, bike rentals, and storage are available throughout the City.

**6.4.** Regional bike trails connect to regional destinations, including Durham, Somersworth, and Portsmouth.

**6.5.** There are desirable pathways and trails along the river and other areas of interest, such as the Community Trail.

**6.6.** Complete streets development fosters non-motorized, alternative transportation options.

**6.7.** Interconnected multimodal transportation systems, including complete streets, support walking, biking, and transit throughout Dover and the broader region.

**6.8.** The Transportation Center has ample parking for increased use and is integrated into the streetscape and easily connected to downtown.

**6.9.** Transit systems support movement throughout the City.

**6.10.** Public transit is low or zero emission.

**6.11.** Car-free life is possible in Dover.

**6.12.** Infrastructure for rideshare, electric vehicles, and other transportation and safety innovations is planned for and adopted.

**6.13.** Traffic patterns, calming, and alternative options help to reduce traffic and congestion and improve safety.

**6.14.** Parking is accessible and compliments the goals of the City-wide transportation system.





## PILLAR 7.

**We have outstanding schools, recreation, arts and cultural activities for all ages, and our community organizations collaborate to provide us a strong foundation and promising future.**

**7.1.** We have high-quality community services that create a foundation for community life and opportunity in Dover.

**7.2.** We have an excellent public school system that is recognized for its quality education in the region and the state.

**7.3.** Our school system is supported by committed educators with competitive teacher salaries and valued by community members.

**7.4.** Schools are prepared for population growth and change and development is paced to align services and tax structure.

**7.5.** Quality dependent care is available with options for all ages, and our community invests in children, families, and older adults.

**7.6.** Community-serving City departments, organizations, nonprofits, and volunteers provide educational, cultural, arts, and recreation activities for all ages, especially younger and older Dover residents, and intergenerational groups.

**7.7.** The Community Trail is enjoyed and well-used by all, has good visibility, and is safe.

**7.8.** The Community Trail is extended and connected as part of a comprehensive transportation system.

**7.9.** Recreation opportunities are available on Dover's waterways, including access for paddlesports and other activities.

**7.10.** Recreation opportunities are available on Dover's waterways, including access for kayaks and other activities.

**7.11.** Bicycle trails are created and expanded on and recreation trends inform Dover's recreation options.

**7.12.** Recreation facilities include outdoor playing fields, indoor sports complex, aquatic pool facilities, and more.

**7.13.** Community arts and culture, including visual art and performance, is part of the fabric of the City and community experience.





## PILLAR 8.

We are leaders in incorporating innovation to create resilient and environmentally focused infrastructure, energy, and utility systems to responsibly steward our resources and cherished environment.

**8.1.** We are a regional and statewide leader in creating innovative, resilient, and environmentally-focused infrastructure, energy, and utility systems.

**8.2.** We have accomplished our resiliency plan goals.

**8.3.** We use a resilience-based and long-term costs reducing approach to managing facilities and utilities, energy use, watershed impacts, and climate adaptation.

**8.4.** We are a leader in environmental regeneration, reducing energy use, and are striving to be a net zero community.

**8.5.** We have local and regional renewable energy sources, including community solar that powers our public facilities, utilities, and fleet.

**8.6.** Residential solar and other environmentally-focused home improvements are promoted and incorporated by homeowners, rental property owners, and renters.

**8.7.** New development incorporates passive and active solar design into its construction.

**8.8.** Development and road infrastructure updates include electric vehicle charging stations and are prepared for new technology and innovation.

**8.9.** Regulations and land use ordinances are adapted to evolving technology and innovation.

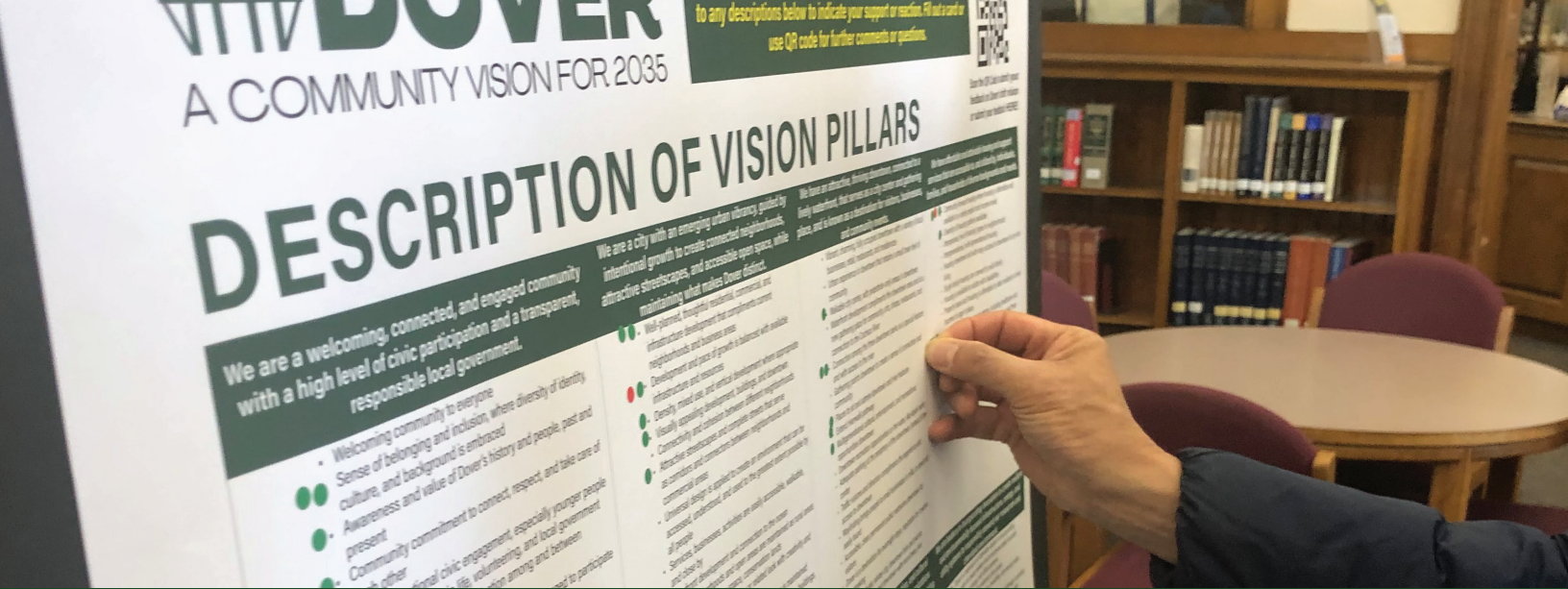
**8.10.** Infrastructure incorporates resilience-based design including permaculture, stormwater infiltration, street trees, and landscaping that helps to manage water resources, temperature, and climate change impacts.

**8.11.** We responsibly steward the Cochecho River habitat for its ecological, cultural, and economic value in Dover.

**8.12.** Reduction of single-use plastics is encouraged and we are reducing solid waste, while also providing composting services.

**8.13.** We are prepared for climate impacts with emergency plans and emergency shelters as the likely center for regional response, including anticipated climate migration.





# 6. ABOUT THE VISION PROCESS

The Master Plan Vision Chapter presents a shared vision of Dover in the future. To create such a statement about the future of the City, it was necessary to hear directly from community members.

A public outreach and engagement process was designed and launched during the Fall of 2022 to help get the word out about this project, and to provide a variety of ways for the public to participate over the next several months, which is shown in the summary timeline on page 19.

Titled **Distinctly Dover: A Community Vision for 2035**, the project was guided by a Vision Committee and City staff and engaged a wide variety of participants through a series of accessible engagement opportunities. A City-hosted webpage provided project updates, advertised events, and ensured access to background documents. Opportunities for event participation and project engagement were also communicated through the City’s social media accounts, Dover Download newsletter and podcast, announcements at public meetings, and through other media channels.



## VISION COMMITTEE

In September 2022, a Vision Committee was established to provide guidance and direction for this planning process and the development of the Vision Chapter. Over the course of the project, the Vision Committee met periodically with the consultant team and City staff to collaboratively create an outreach and engagement plan, review public input received, refine materials, and to invite public participation. To help initiate the public input process, the Committee selected the title, **Distinctly Dover: A**



**Community Vision for 2035.** The title was chosen to reflect the unique character and sense of place that Dover embodies and to look beyond the next ten years.

## DOCUMENT REVIEW

One of the Committee’s other early tasks was to consider the findings from a review of Dover’s major guiding plans and documents, including the 2012 Vision Chapter. The findings of this document review helped to identify topics that were then used to engage the public and inform the drafting of the new vision. Contributions from Committee members helped to shape the overall project and the final Vision Chapter.

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

Distinctly Dover: A Community Vision for 2035 is grounded in the input provided by community members about their vision and priorities for the future of Dover. Outreach and engagement efforts were focused on reaching residents and other stakeholders where they are with simple, accessible ways to provide input. With the Vision Committee

guiding the process, public input was gathered through tabling at community gatherings, online and in person community sessions, online poll questions, and a series of drop-in discussions.

To better understand the hopes, values, concerns, and desired future for Dover, a simple open-ended question was posed: “What is your one wish for Dover’s future?” This question was offered at tabling events and as an online poll. A Virtual Visioning Session early in 2023 provided a longer, interactive meeting opportunity online to discuss Dover’s future and vision in facilitated large and small group discussions.

Vision Ambassadors were then trained to bring a similar facilitated activity titled “Vision on the Go” to community groups around the City. Finally, the draft community vision was shared in a series of drop-in discussions around the City and feedback was gathered both in person and in an online poll. Together, all of these methods drew hundreds of responses (approximately 400) to provide thoughtful contributions that led to the creation of Dover’s Vision.

## COMMUNITY VISIONING OUTREACH TIMELINE SUMMARY

Festival Outreach Fall 2023	Get the Word Out Winter 2023	Virtual Visioning Session February 2023	Vision On the Go Events February/March 2023	Draft Vision Drop-In Event April 2023
<p><b>TABLING:</b> What’s your ONE wish for Dover’s future?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apple Harvest Day</li> <li>• Festival of Trees</li> </ul>	<p><b>COMMUNICATIONS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Website</li> <li>• First 5 Minutes for Dover’s Future at meetings</li> <li>• Fliers in all Dover communications</li> </ul> <p><b>ONLINE POLL:</b> What’s your ONE wish for Dover’s future?</p>	<p><b>INTERACTIVE ONLINE COMMUNITY CONVERSATION:</b></p> <p>What makes Dover special to you?</p> <p>What do you see as Dover’s biggest strengths?</p> <p>What are Dover’s major challenges?</p> <p>What’s your vision for Dover in 10 years?</p> <p>What’s missing now that you want to see in Dover in 10 - 20 years?</p>	<p><b>VISION ACTIVITY WITH:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vision Ambassadors</li> <li>• Dover Rotary Club</li> <li>• Dover Arts Commission</li> <li>• Children’s Museum of NH</li> <li>• Dover Planning Board</li> <li>• Dover Downtown Businesses</li> <li>• Woodman Museum</li> <li>• Dover Business and Industrial Development Authority</li> <li>• Dover Main Street</li> <li>• Dover Committee for Racial Equity and Inclusion</li> </ul>	<p><b>PROVIDE FEEDBACK ON DRAFT VISION VIA STICKER ACTIVITY/ ONLINE POLL:</b></p> <p><b>EVENT LOCATIONS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dover Community Senior Center</li> <li>• Dover City Hall - Customer Service Center</li> <li>• Dover Public Library</li> <li>• Seymour Osman Community Center</li> <li>• Dover City Hall - Council Chambers</li> </ul>





# 7. CONCLUSION

**Distinctly Dover: A Community Vision for 2035** presents a holistic and inspiring vision for the future of Dover. In naming Dover’s desired future, we set the goals and destination and now we must determine how we will get there. Unlike the other chapters of the Master Plan, the unique role of the Vision Chapter is to be the inspiration that guides and informs all other chapters. The action steps needed to reach this vision are to be determined and detailed in the implementation sections of each of the other chapters of the City of Dover’s Master Plan.

Looking ahead, the City should:

- **Review the Vision Chapter annually in conjunction with other chapter updates:** As the City of Dover continues the annual review and updating of Master Plan Chapters, the first place to start will be with a careful review of this Vision Chapter. The vision elements that relate to a specific chapter topic will then inform the guiding goals of that chapter and the drafting of implementation actions.
- **Use the vision as a guiding document in all planning and policy decisions:** Given that the world around us is always changing and evolving, the Vision Chapter should be grounded in discussions of the current conditions of the City of Dover when informing planning and policy decisions. This includes opportunities for the City of Dover to reflect on the Vision Chapter when considering land use regulation updates, capital

improvement plans, and policy decisions that arise outside of the Master Plan process.

- **Share the community vision far and wide to build ownership and excitement around achieving it:** Distinctly Dover: A Community Vision for 2035 will serve as a useful document for other organizations in the community. Non-profit organizations, businesses, economic development groups, and other long-range planning efforts will benefit from the identified priorities and goals for the next decade. This vision was guided and informed by community members and is more likely to be accomplished when many groups and efforts are working together to move toward the same exciting future.

## REVISIT



## GUIDE



## PROMOTE



## NEXT STEPS

### REVISIT

- Review the Vision Chapter annually in conjunction with other chapter updates.

### GUIDE

- Use the vision as a guiding document in all planning and policy decisions.

### PROMOTE

- Share the community vision far and wide to build ownership and excitement





# 8. APPENDIX

The 2023 Vision Chapter Update appendix items and corresponding pages are listed below. Feedback has not been edited and has been included in this Appendix as received.

A. One Wish Tabling and Poll Responses	22
B. Virtual Visioning Session	31
C. Vision On the Go	42
D. Distinctly Dover, Draft Community Vision, Drop-In Day and Poll Responses	53



# ITEM A

## ONE WISH AND TABLING POLL RESPONSES

To better understand the hopes, values, concerns, and desired future for Dover, a simple open-ended question - What is your one wish for Dover's future? - was offered at tabling events and as an online poll. The following responses were shared by participants and themed by City of Dover staff to inform Dover's vision.

**Apple Harvest Day, October 1, 2022: 70 responses**

**Festival of Trees, December 2, 2022: 32 responses**

**Online poll question, December 2022 - February 2023: 114 responses**

**Apple Harvest Day, October 1, 2022: 70 responses**

### **City operations**

- Greater transparency on tax breaks for developers to justify residential property tax increases
- All residents and business owners feel empowered to participate in how the City operates
- Improved winter maintenance (snow plowing)

### **Development**

- I wish that a hold would be put on all this condo/townhouse development. I'm concerned about water resources- we're being asked to conserve water because there's not enough- how is the new development going to help the situation?
- No new development
- Turn all the multi-unit rentals into condos- owners who take pride in their investment. Offer incentives to investors to convert/sell rather than rent.
- Please be super aware of how future development will affect driving patterns for the elderly tenets of Central Towers. Put in a left turn light!

### **Waterfront Development**

- For the waterfront to be developed and to become a new gathering place for the City that highlights arts/access to the river and new restaurants and shops
- Kayak racks on waterfront so people have easy way to use on the water

### **General City Improvements**

- New roads
- Plant more trees in the City
- Aquatic center
- Clean up drug paraphernalia
- Skate rink on Willand Pond
- Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle sewer branding
- Signs to use caution around wild animals (ex. Woodchucks)
- Bigger farmer's market
- Downtown grocery store
- Traffic circle at Pointe Place
- Keep the parks the way they are- keep open land as much as possible

### **Housing Needs**



- Condos on single floor, 3 bedrooms, affordable for seniors. A single-family house with a condo fee also okay. But needs to be affordable.
- Address homelessness in Henry Law Park
- More affordable housing
- More affordable and workforce housing
- Address homelessness and affordable housing
- Another mobile home co-op park
- Affordable housing so that low to middle income can find housing. Also more subsidized housing for seniors
- Help for the homeless
- Helping the homeless encampment on the Trail by train station
- Please address the homeless issues, drug use, and trash

### **Walkability**

- Connection over the train station so can bike straight over without going around
- Cycling routes
- A bike path between Dover and Durham
- A more bike-friendly downtown area- cars aren't looking out for cyclists here at all
- More walkable
- Sidewalks in the neighborhoods
- Bike routes all over town
- Crosswalk over tracks by train station
- Better sidewalks from Washington St. to River St. along Henry Law
- Commercial area that is only walking, no cars, with outdoor dining and maybe skating rink in winter
- Protected bike lanes
- Pedestrian friendly infrastructure (ex. bike paths)

### **Community Trail/Increased Trail System**

- Expanded Community Trail
- Extend the Community Trail to Spur Road
- Connect the Trail to Spur Road and to Newington
- Extend Trail from Watson Road toward Gonic along the old rail bed.
- Extend the paved biking trail, North to South and East to West
- Have Scouts mile marker the Trail
- For the Trail- putting distance markers or signs at each entrance with distance to next section
- Would like to see a single-track mountain bike trail from Rt. 16 underpass to Watson Road along the river
- Better Community Trail vegetation management
- Walking bridge across the river- Whittier St. side of Trail
- I would love to have the Trail longer or more trails
- Running trails
- More paved trails that connect together
- More bike friendly trails
- I love the trail system
- Longer Community Trail with more paved sections
- ADA compliance options along Community Trail, roots and smoother



- Cleaner Trail on Silver St.
- Extending the Community Trail/add improvements (water stop/fountain)
- Walking trail from Dover to Portsmouth (safe walking access)
- Lighting on the Community Trail to make it safer at night
- Expand Community Trail south down Stark Ave.
- More trails
- Green spaces for adults with work out equipment, walking trails for winter access, and wooden walkway in swampy area on Community Trail
- More bike/walking trails
- More info about Community Trail access
- Stripe Whittier St. lot for Community Trail head

### **Festival of Trees, December 2, 2022: 32 responses**

#### **Development**

- Stop overdevelopment of Dover (fear that there are not enough services available for population increase)
- Another parking garage
- A new route through the City
- Open spaces where commerce and entertainment can come together
- Space for art galleries
- More public art
- Community multifunctional fitness/outdoor athletic facility (Skate park, climbing walls, gathering spaces, etc.)

#### **Waterfront**

- Waterfront Park
- Waterfront developed
- Waterfront development completion
- Waterfront project to be completed
- Waterfront development

#### **Commerce/Community Events**

- Wine bar/more businesses to attract more people, more diversity
- More adult activities (paint bar, arcade, etc.)
- Bigger Farmer's Market in Henry Law Park (vendors, music)
- Performing Art Center
- Want to be a "Winter City" with firepits and events
- Wish to see more stores and coffee shops
- Events where stores are open late with activities in the Cocheco Courtyard
- Ice skating rink

#### **Housing Affordability/Homelessness**

- Affordable housing
- Mini housing for people that are unhoused
- Low income housing and homeless shelter



- A plan for affordable housing for workers and young people to sustain our community

### **Pedestrian/Bike Access**

- A safe bicycle lane that links Dover and Durham
- Improved bike trails

### **Community Trail/Parks**

- Fitness stations on Trail
- Public bathrooms by the parks
- Expand the Willand Pond trail from the High St. parking lot to Dover Marine
- More Community Trail maintenance (trash cans, clean ups, etc.)

### **Education**

- Smaller classes (high school), Well treated faculty, keep teachers
- Diversity, tolerance, kindness

### **Online poll question, December 2022 - February 2023: 114 responses**

#### **Community/Welcoming**

- I'd like to see Dover become a truly diverse community known for our commitment and consistent action in taking care of each other. This means that inclusivity and environmentalism are institutionalized at every level, jobs are created for all, and that the most vulnerable in our community know they belong here and have access to resources they need.
- High-tech, cutting edge-jobs and a strong economy with professionalism, friendliness, great education (including a college) and distinguished work ethic to match
- That it be a community that is accessible and welcoming to everyone; low/no income, elderly, disabled, BIPOC, LGBTQ, young families.
- A vibrant mix of ages and cultures merging to form a diverse community who can appreciate both Dover's historical past (and historic architecture) while also embracing future change.
- I am looking for a welcoming environment in which ALL laws are respected and our residents look out for each other's well-being with courtesy and dignity.
- Diversity, inclusion and equality
- To be a place of community providing adequate and affordable housing in safe locations while building a stronger sense of walkability and community among all of our residents. Create a strong, resilient, and welcoming community.
- Keep adding and sustaining housing, schools and amenities that are accessible and attractive to a mix of cultures and economic status. I want Dover to be a model community in a diverse democracy.
- My one wish for Dover is a vibrant downtown, diversity of housing, strong educational opportunities, and a city for families.

#### **Development/Growth**

- Continue to grow the City including completing the water front space
- I wish Dover would leave open land alone.
- An increase in citizens understanding of the development process and especially regarding tax incentivized development.

- Approve new buildings and refurbishments to preserve history and give the center of Dover more of a feel like Portsmouth.
- Build taller buildings to keep the population growing but avoid tearing down green places
- Stop all the building on every parcel of land!
- Slow down growth... If I wanted to live in Portsmouth, I would have moved there.
- Stop trying to become portsmouth keep the Dover image stop building over priced under rented ugly apartments that have no parking downtown.
- Build taller buildings to avoid deforesting city and stop enabling Portsmouth to take credit for being "the city" in NH's seacoast
- Remove height limitations for new development so that more apartments can be built on the same footprint.
- Stop growing!
- my wish is we dont turn into portsmouth. we still have some charm and local input. we dont need ugly buildings like the bradley commons building, nothing higher then 3 stories. lets not forget the charm and architecture that is visually appealing. please no more tattoo parlors and game stores
- Stop trying to be Portsmouth we're not! Too much overdevelopment for one. A lot of Dover public space getting redeveloped where it shouldn't.
- Don't develop the train station parking lot we need that and slow your roll on approving new developments.
- Stop building , the infrastructure cannot handle it.
- Please, God, make central Ave and main street two way. We have a plan, we've had a plan for years. Implement it!
- Stop expanding and building all these new ugly buildings. Keep Dover small and stop encouraging people to move here. My family founded Dover 400 years ago and you are ruining it with what you've been doing
- That Dover is the best community in which to age in place.

### **Municipal Services/Operations**

- Fiscal restraint. Just because we can doesn't always mean we should invest in a good idea.
- Modern progressive city. Mixed zoning, fast cheap Internet, etc.
- I'd like to see evidence that the infrastructures of water supply and waste water management are keeping up with the population growth of Dover.
- Drastically reduce spending. Stop taking advantage of the taxpayers.
- A brand new library building, made for a 21st century community.
- Mounted Police
- Adhere to tax cap
- trash removal without green bags
- Cleaner, less garbage on the streets and throughout the city.
- Bring back mounted police
- To stop being charged for Dover specific trash bags
- Eliminate the cost of garbage bags for residents.
- Homeless clean up on Dover trails.

### **Affordability/Taxes**

- To make Dover an affordable place to live for all.



- Fair, livable wages; comfortable and affordable housing; zero tolerance for bigotry and discrimination of any kind.
- Lower property taxes.
- lower property taxes. no one wants to buy here because they are so ridiculously high
- Lower taxes
- A focus on the well-being of the existing residents of Dover while moving forward with progress. Dover is moving towards being unaffordable to most, and that does not make a community.
- lower taxes for Seniors
- Lower property taxes.
- Lower Taxes

### **Vibrant Downtown/Attractions**

- A vibrant town center that's walkable, beautiful, and safe with diverse entertainment, hospitality and retail. Not needing a car to get the best of what Dover has to offer.
- For the city to be the pedestrian friendly mecca of New England full of unique shops and eateries and life.
- More small restaurants and businesses downtown
- A fun downtown fair/carnival every summer!
- More trees along streets + empty spaces in buildings filled with restaurants/shops. Add features for a more historical vibe to the city
- An easily accessible vibrant downtown with restaurants, attractions, and galleries that make it an area destination.
- More shops and restaurants downtown
- I understand the need and desire to grow this city, but making sure downtown stays the heart. Keep business affordable on central ave. The reason I love Dover is because it feels like a small town. Don't lose that charm.
- Improved downtown shopping area, less restaurants and apartments, and better shopping -- maybe a few chain stores like the Paper Store or Stonewall Kitchen.
- Beautify Broadway, add more businesses, bike lanes
- Re-imagined streetscape in the downtown that gets rid of one way traffic and incorporates more trees and less pavement.
- Dover to be the next Portsmouth - with more restaurants, parades/community events, dog parks
- please look for quality sustainable businesses... we don't want or need a Portsmouth disaster where the local flavor and charm have been sold out to corporation interests
- Remove the parking meters so that we can rebuild the downtown shopping.

### **Preservation**

- Would like to see Dover promote its unique historical and geographical heritage. Continued development of riverfront and connection to the ocean.
- That despite its growth, Dover will honor and retain its architectural history and make every effort to keep downtown Dover a vibrant charming historical city center. The city council should be conscious of projects away from the city center, like Dover Point and the Cocheco River Development, and the scheduled development on Littleworth, that would draw business away from the city center. There are too many vacancies in downtown Dover.
- That in some way Old Dover can still be acknowledged, and appreciated and not forgotten..

### **Housing Needs**

- A balance of affordable housing for families.
- Affordable housing/rentals that will enable vulnerable individuals, particularly single adults beyond college age and seniors on limited incomes, to continue being part of the Dover community. "Luxury" apartments aren't affordable.
- I'd like to see a diverse base of housing that would accommodate lifestyles of the more affluent residents as well as those who cannot afford expensive housing, but wish to be a part of this beautiful community.
- Economic diversity in home ownership. Development of sub 200,000 properties should be targeted by the city approving permits only that cost and running city sewerage extensions to such developments.
- Enough affordable housing for everyone! Maybe a community land trust.
- Affordable safe housing for all who want it
- Affordable housing
- One that requires affordable housing that are income based and low barrier (ie housing first models) and not just workforce housing, but creates a mix of market, workforce and affordable. The gentrification where developers are allowed to reap benefits of top end market rates while homelessness is swept and criminalized and even social services get pushed out of downtown areas by developers (ie transportation center).
- Create housing for those experiencing homelessness.
- Stop building all the high-end apartments!
- To ensure that every citizen in our city, regardless of their economic status, has safe, affordable, equitable, accessible choices in where they live, and access to supportive services to reach their fullest potential.
- Affordable Housing for all is important and giving homeless people ways to access safe housing. Local government should support reasonable and creative approaches to tackle homelessness and substance abuse disorders.
- Another Dover Housing Apts for people who cannot afford Dovers high rents
- We need to house everyone. One principle of the indigenous Northeastern people was, "No one goes hungry." No one.
- A roof over everyone's head. No houseless/homeless people in our community., I think some public/private partnerships could make this happen to the benefit of all.
- Inclusive Housing options for individuals with disabilities, in conjunction with more affordable workforce housing.
- Higher density housing downtown
- Affordable housing

### **Active Transportation and Public Transportation**

- Easy, safe, comfortable pedestrian access across the city.
- Add more bike paths to include all the way down and thru Dover Point.
- Flashing crosswalks downtown. Specifically on Main Street for the Mill building. Cannot tell you how many times I or other people almost get hit.
- So much to be proud of in Dover! My one wish is to continue efforts to make Dover a walkable city. That would mean extending and maintaining the network of sidewalks which includes clearing them quickly in the winter months so they can be safely navigated. The benefits to the residents will be better health, more community engagement and less demand on downtown parking. Thank you for the opportunity to weigh in!
- I wish Dover would become more pedestrian-and bicycle-friendly. A car free downtown area, more sidewalks (even consistent sidewalks on the streets that have them would be nice!) I



would love to feel comfortable walking and biking through our city but there's so much traffic i would never feel safe on my bike. And the sidewalks are sporadic and in disrepair in many areas. People drive quickly and distractedly around town. Better public transportation would also cut down on some of the heavy traffic. We don't need to be in our cars all the time! Dover is lovely and getting people outdoors would be a great goal for us all.

- One of Dover's greatest quality is that a car isn't needed for everything like some places. I wish Dover had a separated bicycle path that connected with a nearby city. Cycling to Somersworth, Portsmouth, or Durham/UNH. Right now requires being on the road with high speed cars at some point, so most people won't do it. It would be nice to have a bicycle path or greenway that was separated from the cars and was intended for transport rather than just recreation. I'm assuming that by 2035 the East Coast Greenway section being built from MA to Portsmouth will be completed. I hope Dover will have developed its own cycle paths so that we can become a spur/hub on the greenway.
- Extend the Willand Pond trail from the liquor store to Dover Marine
- That we embrace our new identity as kind of city and make it more walkable--more public transit and fewer ground floor garages downtown. A city needs a street life and the parked cars just kill it.
- I'd like to see an embrace of walkability for the majority of the city. Walking, biking, scooters, and other similar styles of mobility becoming the dominant method of how people choose to come to Dover. I'd like to see a few streets that don't allow cars and have become community hubs. I'd like to see a few parking lots deemed unnecessary and transformed into more valuable spaces. I'd like to see a city designed with infrastructure that prioritizes people first.
- I would like to see more sidewalks and walking trails as well as more bike lanes throughout the city
- A more walkable community with greenspace for gatherings and events.
- A place with innumerable, safe, well maintained, year-round, on- and offroad options to ride my bicycle for commuting, running errands, and recreation that get used by the majority of the population.
- Increase walkability
- That it continues to be a walker/runner friendly town.
- More public transportation - ability to truly live a car free lifestyle with no sacrifices
- Turn Central Ave into a no-cars walking mall with outdoor seating and art from 3rd St to Washington St.
- Fast reliable and cheap public transit connections good enough you don't need to think about it

## Recreation

- Increased access to outdoor play fields.
- 65+ Dover Residents Social Club Hall (open daily w/Dover sponsored fun activities and Dover sponsored transportation), this group pays good amount in property taxes and do not utilize schools, but sure would be nice for them to socialize here and meetup and build up our local community projects. Give this group a place to be daily with friends and enjoy themselves and they will give back, this way they won't move other states. Better for City of Dover's Tax budget if you cater a little to this group without children. Most 65+ leave Dover because high taxes and nothing benefits them, this would benefit Dover greatly from a cost accounting point of view.
- I wish for Dover to invest in families of young children by investing in parks and rec, and expanding/renovating existing parks in Dover, possibly adding public pools (Concord has many great public pools for residents).
- a new sports recreation complex which would contain a state-of-the-art aquatic facility

- A quality indoor sports and recreation facility, including a new aquatic center
- indoor sports recreation complex with an aquatics center
- Indoor sports facility
- I'd like to see Dover build a large, quality indoor recreation facility to accommodate the city's growing population of active citizens.
- Dover (and the region) needs a multi-faceted, quality indoor aquatics and recreation facility for people of all ages and abilities. As the city continues to grow, we must have great recreational opportunities for our residents.
- A sports and recreation multi-activity complex.
- My Family of 6 would love to see Dover have a quality indoor sports and recreation facility, including a new aquatic center. We are an athletic family with soccer players at all levels, basketball, tennis and swimmers.
- I would like to see Dover get a sport complex it would benefit both the young and the old!! It would be a great addition to bring more healthy programs to all
- A top quality inside / outside sports complex ensuring that health and fitness is a priority for all ages from pre K to Seniors.
- More community events.

### **School System Needs**

- Top-notch public schools with terrific teachers who are paid what they deserve (which is more than they get now).
- Increased funding for Dover's public schools so that we no longer have the state of New Hampshire's second lowest per pupil expenditures. Also, respect and admiration for the students, teachers, paraprofessionals, administrators, staff, volunteers and school board members who make our schools such great educational communities.
- That we are known for having excellent public schools at all levels
- Safe schools, quality education taught by valued and invested educators.
- That we foster the future of local children, through education and support of both children and their families. This is the best investment anyone could ever make.
- Make sure schools are sufficient for all this growth.
- Field trips at school should be free.

### **Resiliency**

- Charging stations for electric vehicles
- To have one! If we don't address climate and other urgent conservation issues now - we won't. And not just lip service, real, tangible action is needed. We need to change and change fast if we want to survive. I do see that Dover is working toward this goal, but we need to continue to grow those efforts as much as possible.
- Be a leader in environmental regeneration. Be a net zero energy user, create edible landscapes, plant mini-forests to sequester carbon, use building materials that are eco-friendly, design urban environments for people and nature.
- That everyone composts.



# ITEM B

## VIRTUAL VISIONING SESSION

On Thursday, February 9, 2023, a Virtual Visioning Session was held online to gather input from Dover residents on their thoughts for the future of Dover. Twenty-five Dover stakeholders participated, including small group facilitators. During the interactive 1.5 hour session, participants discussed and provided input on what they saw as Dover’s strengths, challenges, and vision for Dover in 2035. A recording of the [Virtual Visioning Session](#) was posted on the project website.

**DISTINCTLY DOVER**  
A COMMUNITY VISION FOR 2035

**What's your VISION for Dover's future?**

For more information on upcoming events and ways to participate, visit:

[rebrand.ly/DistinctlyDover](https://rebrand.ly/DistinctlyDover)

SCAN ME

**PLEASE REGISTER!**  
February 9th, 2023  
Virtual Visioning Session



**VIRTUAL VISIONING SESSION**  
**FEB. 9, 2022**  
**6:00 PM - 7:30 PM**  
*Virtual doors open 5:45 PM*  
**AGENDA**

- 5:45 PM**                    **Virtual Event Doors Open:** Join Zoom early to sign in
  
- 6:00 PM**                    **Welcome:** What is a Master Plan Vision Chapter?
  
- 6:20 PM**                    **Building on Strengths & Priorities for Change**  
What’s going well? What do you see as Dover’s biggest strengths?  
  
What are Dover’s major challenges? What are you most concerned about over the next few years?
  
- 6:50 PM**                    **Vision for Dover**  
What’s your vision for Dover in 10 years?  
What’s missing now that you want to see in Dover?
  
- 7:30 PM**                    **Adjourn**

**More Information:**  
Event participation is best from a computer, but attendance is available from any device.  
For questions, please contact Erin Bassegio ([E.Bassegio@dover.nh.gov](mailto:E.Bassegio@dover.nh.gov)).  
Additional project information: [rebrand.ly/DistinctlyDover](https://rebrand.ly/DistinctlyDover)



The following notes were collected in chat and heard during small group discussions as noted by recording facilitators.

**IN CHAT: What makes Dover special to you?**

- welcoming community
- The nice community
- The people
- The community is great. So many activities that make you feel like a part of something.
- great people, its potential to be an even more livable city
- I like that Dover residents have a strong commitment to volunteerism and making the city a better place.
- As there City grows, there are independent efforts to create more close knit relationship in the community through organizations and groups like this.
- The wonderful women of Dover Area Women’s Club and welcoming Chamber of Commerce.
- The city council and the mayor
- Feel very happy with my personal history with family in Dover, and now with my children choosing to raise their families here.
- like all of the local businesses, local places, in the downtown area.
- Downtown is great. Food is awesome.
- it is beautiful. I love the way downtown looks with the trees and buildings.
- Small town feel with amenities of a much larger city
- Dover pools
- I enjoy that Dover is a complete community; I don't need to leave the city to get anything done, nor do I need to get in a car. Nice place to be.
- Pockets of wildlife and nature that are walkable, community trail, strong and extensive library, good neighbors, the river, public transport nexus
- location near to ocean, lakes, Boston. Small city but yet it has all the amenities you could ask for.
- Leadership in environmental stewardship
- All lands in easement
- The river and being part of the Great Bay Estuary
- Access to the water; mix of rural and urban; our neighbors; commitment to environmental stewardship

**STRENGTHS:** What’s going well? What do you see as Dover’s biggest strengths? Star repeat themes or biggest strengths.

**Group 1:**

- Wonderful recreation **STAR**
- Services and resources for townees **STAR**
- Community feel **STAR**
- Downtown bustling **STAR**
- Great location but not too touristy **STAR**
- Great community friendly people
- Public transportation
- Library great service and adult education
- Committee to appoint committee members

- Parks and community trail pool recreation
- Great fire and police service
- City gov is open minded easy to work with
- Mcconnell center non-profits
- Children’s museum and woodland
- Train to boston
- Exciting new businesses opening
- Many boards and commissions over years

**Group 2:**

- Nexus between transportation systems. Can usually get to where you need to go STAR
- The development has been broad in scope. Have a broad age spectrum. STAR
- Location is great. Can get to anywhere in NE STAR
- A great first responder program. Like having a city owned ambulance element. STAR
- Enjoyed the efforts of working on the trail
- Library is a great community asset that provides multiple educational opportunities
- “Community” has made my transition to Dover, being new in Dover has helped my engaging in the community
- Love our proximity to the ocean
- Like Dover’s growth and encourage it
- Our broad population age groups
- Dover has been able to attract new business even while some are leaving downtown
- Assets such as garrison hill and the comm trail.

**Group 3:**

- Long history STAR
- Proactive focus on infrastructure STAR
- Diverse community STAR
- Fastest growing
- Not too many chick fil a or KFCs
- Age diversity
- Very popular
- New diverse, local businesses downtown. Great variety
- Nuclear town, has downtown, don’t need a car
- Shout out to Planning Dept on environ. stewardship
- Very accessible
- safe
- Leadership on environ issues.
- Great location, near boston, mountains, ocean
- Folks can have feedback
- Community trail, alternative transportation
- Community Trail Open lands recreation activities for variety of ages
- Bus service, train, good transportation
- Good participation (could use more)
- Citizens leadership academy

**Group 4:**

- Community Trail STAR



- Police and fire are very responsive
- The river as a focal point
- Commitment to resiliency
- Henry Law Park
- The library
- Access to train/Boston
- Indoor and Outdoor pool
- Pockets of nature
- Apple Harvest Festival/community events
- Restaurants, breweries throughout the area
- Feeling of safety
- Faith-based groups
- Hospital access
- Can be “outside of town” into rural areas
- City services are personable and easy to engage with
- Local businesses downtown

#### Group 5:

- Well-Managed City **STAR**
- Environmental mindfulness **STAR**
- School system
- Variety of amenities (while a small City) - surprising!
- Attractive City
- The rivers are clean, the enviro. Is a focus
- As a business owner, I like how the downtown attracts people (charm)
- Cool restos!
- Feels safe!
- ADA
- Community Trails, well-maintained
- Love the access of City services; pool etc.
- Focus on Need for Workforce housing
- Library activities
- Lots of Opp. for resident engagement
- Rural city character, sidewalks and woods!
- Small city feel
- Golf course!
- Careful (smart) growth
- Active Churches; Club for everyone in town

#### Group 6:

- People are helpful and kind **STAR**
- Welcoming to the neighborhood
- Community engagement **STAR**
- City Leadership on key issues **STAR**
- City council
- Balancing urban development with environment
- Willingness to listen and change
- Long term planning

- Warming center and resources for homeless
- Downtown walkability

**CHALLENGES:** What are Dover’s major challenges? What are you most concerned about? Star repeat themes or priorities for change.

**Group 1:**

- be aware of limited enviro resources STAR
- Affordable housing STAR
- work on statewide small footprint housing STAR
- New energy sources: solar etc STAR
- Robust Public transportation STAR
- Balance housing and employment STAR
- Need municipal broadband help bring more businesses STAR
- Homeless
- Attracting mix of employers lg companies too
- Connecting resources downtown - more signage, creating larger plan for downtown
- Cultural resources
- More diversity
- Climate adaptation
- Maintaining and affording w/out taxes sky rockinging our infrastructure

**Group 2:**

- Winter access to the comm trail esp by the ped bridge and transp center STAR
- Continue to manage Dover’s growth to make sure it fits with the environment STAR
- Pedestrian safety. Esp downtown STAR
- Housing and rent prices STAR
- Maintaining old building
- Accessibility to social services
- Safety: homeless population concerns and around the comm trail
- Maintaining trails
- Wintertime use of sidewalks downtown
- Housing for homeless
- Taxes for young families and retirees

**Group 3:**

- Housing STAR
- Needs to remain livable even with increased density STAR
- Traffic has increased STAR
- Infrastructure and services capacity STAR
- Dover’s pedestrian center turning into traffic jam as a cut through
- Renters should be engaged as much as homeowners
- Balance between new dev. and protecting history
- Renters can create transient community
- Need more engagement/ need more intuitive website
- Smart Growth. Avoid sprawl.
- Lack of pedestrian safety/comfort



- Too many multi-families too quickly
- Chaos from our diversity in terms of vision for Dover. Lack of consensus
- Cultural divide like other communities
- Need a vision that people can rally around
- Lack of interest in civic participation
- Aggregate look of all development in totality

**Group 4:**

- Maintain and improve walkability STAR
- Governing bodies being more represented of the community as a whole STAR
- Sidewalks and bike lanes STAR
- Affordable housing STAR
- Corporate chains moving into downtown
- How do we make Dover livable for people of all income levels?
- Traffic
- Graffiti
- Maintaining water quality over time
- Youth engagement
- Changing character
- Creative engagement
- “Age 8-80 streets” (accessible for all)
- Attracting businesses to Dover

**Group 5:**

- Workforce housing STAR
- Walking City STAR
- Public Transpo. - maintain as priority STAR
- Increase bus routes STAR
- Citizens need to be able to move around safely
- How to manage more people/increased population!
- Access to City resources
- Housing for adults with developmental disabilities
- “Inter-connectivity” of the City core
- Keep the river accessible to residents
- Attention & focus on walkability
- Micro-mobility
- Growth, and managing it appropriately
- Define the City core - carfree option?
- Creating alignment with City mission, priorities, values
- Infrastructure, traffic flow through center core...
- Pay special attn to kid, walking, scooter safety
- Information density challenge

**Group 6:**

- Limited land - constraints STAR
- Affordable housing availability STAR
- Public transportation availability STAR
- Boxing out lower income from being able to live in City STAR

- Densely developed areas - bigger buildings
- Sustainable growth
- Traffic
- Sidewalk improvements
- Road maintenance
- Keeping the same service levels as we grow
- Better visibility at crosswalks
- Pedestrian safety
- More public transportation options (ie bike rentals)
- Ways to create diverse housing options

**VISION DISCUSSION: Imagine you're in Dover 10 years from now,**

- What do you want Dover to look and feel like in 10 years? What do you see around you? What is community life like?
- What's missing now that you want to see in Dover in 10 - 20 years?
- Brief report out: "What key points would summarize our discussion?"

*Note – a change to 5 groups due to consolidation over the event duration.*

**Group 1:**

Report out:

- Walkable downtown with robust transportation
- Expanding the open and green spaces and having a more environmentally focused downtown
- Balancing the small town feel with the continued growth

Discussion notes:

- Seen tremendous change overtime - growth is hard but on the right path i think in town will see more enhancement of businesses and restaurants think waterfront will be done great schools, recreation people in place watching carefully within the gov dept think way going is good will be a vibrant community.
- Waterfront will be done, think a lot is already happening
- Balance of "small town" still feels like it continue to balance community feel with continued growth. Steady growth is good without losing sight of small connected community. Excitement about small businesses attracting a mix of employers
- Having a great reputation like Portsmouth. More recognition in Dover for the great things happening.
- Local farm food co-op, edible city all plantings in city to be edible, dover to become a transition town environmental friendly things, walkable for community for everyone different modes of transportation maybe have trolley more green spaces - roofs, sides of buildings, community arts center either utilizing the school theater or being more progressive with the strand focus on creating an art center culture - community pace art center, community solar people connect to, community broadband for business, intergenerational affordable housing community support, like to use resources at high school more broadly use resources we currently have: shops, etc hard to access as is.
- Dover as being an affordable city for people a walkable city easy to get around, a city that has waterfront development and parks and open space that dover continue to grow open spaces to take advantage, continuing to manage.
- Adding sidewalks or bike lanes enjoy downtown by walkability



- Ability to attract new businesses currently is great vital to survival of city been able to do that but need to be able to walk there and get to them.

## **Group 2:**

### Report out:

- All things housing and balancing the car and person, pedestrian only areas
- Making sure the things that people need, business that provides those, critical services and businesses are walkable so people don't have to drive to Somersworth or other neighboring communities
- Connectivity and cohesion between different neighborhoods. Respecting and reinforcing the streetscapes that are appropriate for each of those neighborhoods and we can make sure that there's cohesion between them.

### Discussion notes:

- Commingled, diverse housing, focused on the downtown
- Downtown the dense part, more walkable center than drivable
- Preserve the outer as more rural and natural
- Develop capacity so that green spaces protected aren't just buffer, water sources, expand open space protection
- Completion of the community trail
- Stronger focus on streetscapes. Downtown is fully developed, not a hodge podge. Good neighborhoods
- Rural neighborhoods still rural
- Less chaotic, more consistent downtown
- Natural areas have breathing space
- Rational parking, move to peripheral instead of in center
- Hidden gems such as small businesses in mills, more wayfinding to get people to the things they want but don't know about
- Attract folks from out of town
- More event space. Strand is underutilized. Bring night life to the town
- Like the concert series in the summer.
- Livability and consistency of streetscape in the downtown
- Preserving the history of the city, preserving neighborhood atmosphere (ex. Cushing St.)
- Private property should be better maintained, codes enforced.
- More involvement of people
- More younger, young parents, students more involved and increased participation
- Our public transit low or zero emission. Running in larger number of routes, more people on board, not just those who need to take public transit but want to. Need more funding from the state.
- Connection to Greenway, extension of the Community trail
- Dover Point has it's own little downtown that is separate from other downtown, needs connection and acknowledgement and connection including to Somersworth downtown
- Show some cohesion between commercial areas.
- Bike connectivity to different downtown pods, is there a shuttle between commercial areas, but needs to be frequent and reliable
- Transportation Center is a valuable resource so let's integrate it into the streetscape more.
- Chestnut St. is barren now but has much potential
- See education system that gets sufficient support and in turn gives us award winning education, recognized schools,

- Charter schools, SAU, etc. to work cohesively
- Pursuing multi-sports complex
- Waterfront development
- Neighborhood parks in town
- Traffic in downtown, will it be similar to North Conway? They have to go thru downtown rather than a bypass. We should have a bypass for those who want to get thru quickly.
- Tollbooth deleted from Spaulding Turnpike?

### **Group 3:**

Report out:

- Multimodal transportation, walkability, pedestrian only areas, interconnected trails systems, sustainable energy sources, moving to electric vehicles and ebikes
- Overall 15 min city - walking to everything, services, grocery. Or if living further out 15 driving. In general the idea of a 15 min city.

Discussion notes:

- Electric trains, trolley line downtown (alternative to buses)
- Easy access public transportation for all ages
- Keep the pools open
- Increased walkability (more bike lanes/trails)
- Increased density downtown, more diverse
- EVs, ebikes
- Walking downtown
- More extensive park system
- Solar energy, sustainable energy
- Increased green spaces
- "15 minute city" everything is accessible within 15 minutes
- Local, public utilities (alternative energy)
- Pedestrian section downtown
- Connected bike lanes (regional trails)
- Expanding the Community Trail
- More activity on the river, Waterfront park
- Younger people, increased civic engagement, volunteerism
- More public bodies that can bring forward recommendations
- Inter-generational civic engagement
- Leveraging different food stores and making larger co-op
- Regional Transportation Center at the train station with housing and office space, grocery store, child care

### **Group 4**

Report out:

- Intentional growth is fundamental
- Variety of housing options for all types of people
- Transportation - making the city hospitable to all forms not just cars
- Maintaining green space and allowing access to it as well as the river

Discussion notes:

- What is going to look like? And what do we WANT it to look like? (Different things!)
- The City will become more affluent, which we need to plan for
- Growth: different in New England than TX or FL!



**Additional notes in chat:**

- One thing I'd add for our group was a hope for local renewable energy
- More Cell towers on the outskirts of Dover!
- One thing I would add to the multi-modal transportation/complete street discussion is the importance of street trees and landscaping to help with aesthetics, stormwater, shade during the summer, etc.
- A lot of consensus and alignment between the different groups!

# ITEM C

## VISION ON THE GO

In an effort to reach more Dover residents and stakeholders, a Vision on the Go activity was developed to gather input from community groups around the city. Following the outline of the Virtual Visioning Session, a facilitated Vision on the Go activity was designed for participants to give input on Dover’s strengths, challenges, and vision for Dover in 2035. The activity was designed to be approximately 30 minutes or less (or longer if desired) in order to fit into the agendas of community groups. Vision Ambassadors attended a January 2023 training to learn how to use the discussion guide to facilitate and document input from stakeholders. Vision Committee members, Vision Ambassadors, and City of Dover staff invited community groups to participate over the course of two months (February and March 2023). A total of 10 community groups learned about Distinctly Dover: A Community Vision for 2035 through the Vision on the Go activity and 96 people provided input that informed Dover’s community vision.

<b>Group</b>	<b>Meeting Date</b>	<b>Participants</b>
Vision Ambassador Training	1/17/23	10
Rotary Club of Dover	2/8/23	20
Dover Arts Commission	2/6/23	10
Children's Museum of New Hampshire	2/8/23	9
Woodman Museum	3/2/23	8
Downtown Business & Retail Group	2/27/23	9
Dover Planning Board	2/14/23	8
Dover Business and Industrial Development Authority (DBIDA)	3/7/23	12
Dover Main Street	3/14/23	10
Dover Committee for Racial Equity and Inclusion	3/23/23	N/A



The following notes were collected at each Vision on the Go activity by recording facilitators.

### **Vision Ambassadors**

#### *Building on strengths (Vision Ambassadors)*

- Investing in the community trail, art, new businesses, variety in downtown
- Commercial activity downtown
- Attention and planning from city departments
- Energetic vibe in the city
- Leadership in environmental concerns - stormwater management
- Community trail and investment in public recreation
- Transportation options
- Wonderful place to live, work and play
- Boards and commissions value and understand arts' role in planning - tied to community trail, rec, environment. Holistic city.
- Parks and rec program is an asset
- Housing density - many people need places to live
- Walkability and bikeability is good and getting better
- Major strength access reliable and world class healthcare and providers
- Energy commission exploring ways to generate renewable energy. Location of three rivers.

#### *Priorities for change (Vision Ambassadors)*

- Building consensus among people about the future direction of Dover - ex. storm water, utilities
- With growth - balance commercial development and unique characteristics of city
- Housing costs - concerns about being priced out and wanting to buy a home, making sure that opportunity is available to people
- Opportunities for renting and buying housing in Dover - affordability at many price points
- Diverse housing inventory with range of accessibility
- Rethink what affordable housing looks like - not replicating HUD housing only. Creative approaches in housing development
- Housing insecure and homeless support - not just housing, whole person support
- Keeping up with growth - infrastructure that meets needs, roads, pedestrian, internet, wireless, reliability, utilities and capacity, including schools and hospitals. Already seeing pressures.
- Food security, opportunities to support agriculture and support smaller supply chains

#### *Vision for Dover (Vision Ambassadors)*

- Best schools in the area and state
- Growing ridership and public transit - is missing.
- Robust public transportation system and alleviate traffic and parking issues that are likely to worsen
- Creativity in building styles and more variety
- Guidelines for building styles for continuity in look of structures
- Bike rentals and riders
- Similar to now in 10 years, more housing options
- More opportunities for adult community and competitive sports teams and rec, not driving to Portsmouth
- Thriving and resilient community that can weather economic challenges and be positioned to thrive into the future - not focusing on one industry, keeping diversity in economic industries
- Thriving businesses and destination for natural environment element and recreation opportunities

- Waterfront Park is vibrant and people came to visit and be next to the water. Feature for the city.

### **Rotary Club (20 participants)**

#### *Building on strengths (Rotary Club)*

- Good collaboration among City Departments and Library
- Mindful growth
- Strong school system, wentworth douglass hospital and association with boston medical
- Good schools
- Warming center
- Chamber and City community events (apple harvest), cochecho arts festival, movie events, family events
- Good hospital
- Accessory Dwelling Units
- Strong school system, good experiences with students, taxes aren't as high as other areas
- Responsive and well-trained fire and police forces
- Possibility of Energy Coop
- Rich history of Dover
- Community Action Program
- Small town charm, big city amenities
- Law enforcement in the community (participating in events)
- Youth outreach by police department
- Attractive, love to fish, rural areas, outdoor recreation
- Woodman museum and chamber events
- Community Trail
- Strong school system, maintain beyond basic needs
- Tax cap
- Strong school system, invest in opportunities for families, community

#### *Priorities for change (Rotary Club)*

- Homelessness
- Over-spending
- Workforce housing
- Affordable housing
- Taxes
- Extend the Community Trail network
- Insufficient services for mental health needs
- Property tax—strong dislike as a tax base
- “Too many bars,” wants a more thoughtful downtown with family eateries (family options at night)
- Drug overdoses remain a problem
- Cost of living
- Affordable housing
- Too much building density
- The middle class is disappearing
- Workforce housing is needed, want to see people come to the community
- Traffic
- 20-year waiting list for public housing
- Starter home are missing (missing middle)



- Parking expenses—would like 1 hour free
- NIMBYs
- Diversity and equity planning for the future
- Transportation—hard to live here without a car; buses have been cut back
- Workforce housing
- Unintentional growth, needs to be thoughtful
- Concern that City government may not be capable of meeting the challenges (specifically, population growth from 17,000 to 34,000)
- Affordable housing, losing culture
- Would like blue collar restaurants as well as fine dining
- Concern that City government is too vulnerable to politics (book banning, School Board candidates)
- Thoughtful planning for Downtown, tax incentive for businesses to come (not only restaurants and bars)
- Provide affordable housing
- City infrastructure is not keeping up with the population
- Waterfront development

#### *Vision for Dover (Rotary Club)*

- The waterfront is a lively place, with restaurants and a public park
- Affordable housing is available
- Downtown contains no empty buildings
- There are more interventions on behalf of homeless
- Natural gas lines are extended esp. to NW Dover
- Zoning allows existing single-family housing to convert to multi-family housing
- There are more mental health services
- Liberty Mutual facility is transformed: affordable housing, City services
- There are more restaurants
- Young receive better education about drugs and mental health

#### **Dover Arts Commission (10 participants)**

##### *Building on strengths (Arts Commission)*

- A welcoming sense of community
- City officials are willing to listen to new ideas
- Nice downtown area to build on for the future
- Good opportunities for engagement with organizations and business
- Dover is creative and resilient
- Children’s Museum and Woodman
- Creative culture
- A rich history of culture which gives Dover great potential for tourism

##### *Priorities for change (Arts Commission)*

- Resources for water with increasing population
- Limited entertainment options for families— movie theatre, indoor skate park that are free or low cost
- Increase other safe transportation options, biking, trolley better walkability
- Renewable, resilient infrastructure

- Limited space in schools for increased number of students
- Extend downtown beyond current limits
- Environmental limitations, manage finite natural resources, water, electricity
- Improve beautification of downtown area, make it flow better, have a more cohesive “look”
- Affordable housing especially for the middle class, work force housing
- Increase public art, create a performing arts space
- Improve traffic flow downtown
- Homelessness
- Quantifying costs to taxpayers to make significant improvements

*Vision for Dover (Arts Commission)*

- More cultural and ethnic diversity in the population, business and downtown
- More indoor gathering places for families to come together for activities
- Dense affordable housing
- More shopping options downtown - no more bars
- Improved transportation and transit options – bring in the T
- Continued vibrancy downtown, keep it walkable, improve the image
- Increased entertainment options to offer ethnic diversity through the arts
- Market Dover as a destination – creative placemaking
- More artistic venues close to downtown

**Children’s Museum of New Hampshire (9 participants)**

*Building on strengths (Children’s Museum)*

- Strong City government with a focus on new business
- Good community events – Coheco Arts Festival
- Strong sense of community – welcoming
- Walkable downtown
- Sense of community pride
- Children’s Museum
- Well rounded – good restaurant choices for all ages
- Resources for youth
- Forward thinking community

*Priorities for change (Children’s Museum)*

- Affordable housing
- Increase walkability beyond downtown – over to the HS
- Homelessness
- Add lights to crosswalks – add a crosswalk by CMNH
- Graffiti
- Keep crosswalks painted
- Affordable parking
- Improve shopping options downtown – with all the new dwellings downtown, add everyday options, pharmacy, specialty food options
- Traffic flow downtown area
- Continued investment in parks and other public spaces

- Accessible bathrooms for the public. Although the port-a-potties in lower Henry Law Park are available during the summer, there are big issues with cleanliness and drug paraphernalia being found in and around them. This will be even more important once the waterfront is developed.

#### *Vision for Dover (Children’s Museum)*

- CMNH expansion
- Improved walking areas beyond downtown with increased shopping options
- Dedicated museum parking
- Improved transportation options so that if you live downtown you don’t need to have a car
- Increased multi-generational living with easy access to downtown
- Improved walking area all the way around the river
- Affordable housing
- Easily accessible and clean permanent public restrooms in downtown Dover for visitors
- Quality daycare options
- Public parks offer more interest – better designed areas with low maintenance gardens, public art and interactive options – swings, music makers, display
- Improved image of downtown but retain the small town feel it has now with more small businesses and shops downtown
- Performing Arts space – Cocheco Arts Festival becomes more like Prescott Park
- Make Dover a destination as an overnight stay – creative placemaking

#### **Dover Planning Board (8 participants)**

##### *Building on strengths (Planning Board)*

- Location and proximity of Dover, variety of amenities like pool, rec center, community trail, desirable area for young families
- Location of the city to waterfront, mountains, etc., open minded community
- Community receptiveness to new ideas, collaborative, “young, receptive, reactive community”
- Physical location, progressively and well-managed city, continuous improvement, “not touristy” but bustling downtown
- “Dover First,” not resting on laurels of the past 400 years, continuous input, feedback, and modifications to city planning to make Dover a place people want to move to
- Amenities of a bigger city but small-town feel, forward thinking, economic growth, environmental protections, balanced growth, resilience measures
- City leadership on environmental issues
- Business friendly environment, “vibe” of the city

##### *Priorities for change (Planning Board)*

- Connectivity, walkability, safety, safe travel by ebikes, scooters, define the center of the city (ex: village green, a protected zone)
- Traffic handling, traffic increase with population increase
- Attainable housing, keeping current residents while growing (economically, culturally, etc.) for future generations
- Traffic, congestion, lack of affordable housing
- Aging infrastructure, rising costs to replace or maintain infrastructure, Dover needs to grow sustainably
- Influx of traffic



- Affordability, younger people should be able to stay in Dover, city needs to encourage new developments that are rent restricted and not just market rate
- Housing accessibility/affordability, well positioned but “hard to get to” (accessibility for commuting)

#### *Vision for Dover (Planning Board)*

- Successful completion of the downtown improvements project (downtown pedestrian and vehicle access), transformative arts and entertainment center, respecting history of Dover, valued and thriving public transportation system, “neighborhood bistros” in walking neighborhoods
- Downtown has two-way traffic, more street trees and landscaping, and a connection to the Cochecho river, and increased access and use of the Cochecho in general
- Tourism opportunity (particularly with train access), NH does not have a convention and visitor bureau and Dover should form something of that sort to market the area, a vibrant and modern city that is highly walkable
- Vibrant downtown that has more retail, a conference center, gathering points throughout the city. With any changes, Dover must maintain its sense of community.
- A city that is thought of as a place that people want to gather and not just a pass through, walkable neighborhoods in conjunction with a central, vibrant downtown
- Dover has utilized the increasing wealth of the city to build what the community values
- A full commitment to universal design in public and private spaces making it

#### **Downtown Dover businesses (9 participants)**

##### *Building on strengths (Downtown Businesses)*

- Organic and Artistic mix of people
- Walkability, friendly atmosphere
- Connected business community
- Green spaces
- Diversity of commercial space available
- Sense of community, and business owner collaboration, connection with customers is created because of this
- Walkability, feel safe, river run through, like the feel of the old mill town
- A lot of room to grow, not as established as something like Portsmouth, makes for great new business potential
- Like the business mix diversity, a good mix that is not being overrun by any one area.

##### *Priorities for change (Downtown Businesses)*

- Natural resources, primarily water, climate changing, we're getting drier, Dover needs to ensure that it has the resources for current development and proposed future development
- Making walkability safe, better illuminated at night for that purpose, would like a digital map of downtown in the parking garage
- Challenge in new businesses coming in and feeling welcome
- Challenge to continue to have that balance and culture that supports smaller business, mixed use development has gone well but we cannot see potential challenges, so proceed with caution
- Preserve natural resources, parking/traffic flow
- Lived in Portsmouth and saw how small businesses started to dwindle as it grew larger.
- Protect downtown in a way that still maintains that small town vibe.

- Miss the mounted police, created police presence downtown and it's limited now, people behaving badly in dark areas, don't want two-way traffic, traffic congestion
- Pedestrian safety is a concern

#### *Vision for Dover (Downtown Businesses)*

- The Cochecho Mills courtyard is under-utilized, we should do something with the space
- Everything is done with intention. Safety and police presence on foot. Something for people of all ages. With mixed use and more residents downtown. More playground and public art. Spaces where people can congregate. More green space so that it doesn't feel like a "city". It's going to be key to nail two or three things that Dover is known for.
- More green space, more walkability
- Public art, lighting, small amenities, walkability.
- A clean city, a place where people want to spend the day.
- Would like to see a downtown business association that is charged with getting more people downtown. Less vacant buildings, more small business to bring a vibe to Dover
- Create actions that can be implemented at the business level - that is, what can we do. Break them out into bit size pieces so that we can use those.
- Seeing artists out and in the street
- A destination, a location that people want to take pictures of - a pretty location. A space where people want to come and sit. Comparison to Woodstock VT, it's clean, pretty and maintained. Community events like walking tours downtown that maybe the Chamber could run, or some sort of historical society. Something like a haunted walk in the fall.

#### **Woodman Museum (8 participants)**

##### *Building on strengths (Woodman Museum)*

- Sense of community, small town feel, cooperative relationships with community organizations
- "Small town vibe," easy to commute to Boston, well positioned in relation to mountains, airport, Maine, etc., history of area
- Wide range of food, the downtown area/restaurants are easy to access
- Size of the city now (overdevelopment concern), close to train and highways, geographically central, nice people
- Walkability to downtown core, trail, wide sidewalks throughout the city
- Location as a gateway to beaches and the North Country (tourist hubs)
- Location, geographically
- One of the only cities to be getting younger, attracting younger families, attractive downtown choices (restaurants, bars) retail downtown, business friendly

##### *Priorities for change (Woodman Museum)*

- Affordable housing, particularly for artists, educators. Support for education is lacking, "never would have applied as a teacher to Dover schools," safety on the community trail, resources for the unhoused
- Overdevelopment leads to affordability issues, public servants can't afford to live in the city, have enough bars in Dover, need entertainment and recreation (family friendly), affordable housing, drug addiction, resources for the unhoused
- Affordable housing, more engagement in civic life (council and other elected officials), involvement in committees, commissions
- Property tax rates (large assessment increases), cap taxes for seniors, current tax trends will push out older residents, traffic in the City, overgrowth, workforce housing needed

- Parking needed downtown, infrastructure must be reliable, business owners should be taken into account on projects (traffic, construction)
- Marketing what the City has (for tourists and current residents), City should promote Woodman, other assets
- Bringing in the private sector to assist with building affordable housing, need for senior housing
- Taxes, being able to stay in home as you age, if you're born here you should be able to stay here, planning needs to be cohesive with the feel of the city, resources for the unhoused, resources for addiction, safety

*Vision for Dover (Woodman Museum)*

- Dover community trail expanded and safer
- Expand trail to dover point
- Complete waterfront development
- More middle-class affordable housing, (missing middle), "normal people should be able to live here", waterfront project, more things to do
- The city has marketing plans to promote the city and attractions
- Make Dover a destination to stay, not a pass through
- The city has retail and entertainment. Getting people out of their homes to participate in entertainment, recreation. Retailers are open later to encourage that participation.

**Dover Business and Industrial Development Authority (12 participants)**

*Building on strengths (DBIDA)*

- Small, mid-size operations
- Business development mind set, receptive to new challenges
- Active involvements of citizens
- Agreeable climate for small businesses
- There's been growth in the city with both residents and businesses, "different energy"
- Small town community
- Dover HS and career technical center (school system)
- An involved community (volunteer groups/events, public bodies)
- Facilitative staff and city operations, response from city staff on projects is "how do we make this happen" and getting to yes
- Geographic resources
- Community connections, attractions/restaurants
- Dynamic growth for the city, community members speak highly of the city

*Priorities for change (DBIDA)*

- Housing affordability, housing density (too much)
- Ripe for enormous growth, proximal resources must match growth
- Supporting housing needs but balanced with businesses to offset the cost of increased resource needs
- Parking availability must match development needs
- Traffic concerns, managing influx of development, another parking garage, staffing needs, affordability for working class
- Staffing needs (affordability), housing costs and availability, infrastructure, traffic and parking, challenges with running out of development spaces



- Workforce affordability
- Labor shortage, lack of transportation (accessibility), workforce housing, traffic and parking,
- Senior housing, traffic and parking, staffing shortage
- Affordable housing, short on space for development, balancing commercial and residential, openness to zoning amendments
- Infrastructure, quality of roads, school resources
- Climate control measures, cost of environmental cleanup

#### *Vision for Dover (DBIDA)*

- Expanded walkability, Cochecho River access
- Affordability
- Dover just the way it is but modernized
- More of the same, continue on the current trajectory
- More of the same but a more diverse economy and taller buildings
- Thriving downtown, beautiful mix of restaurants
- Carefully curated growth, smart growth
- Waterfront is completed and there is a park in the city, parking that is accessible, balance commercial/residential development, property taxes are manageable
- Don't gentrify the community, careful growth to be a diverse community, second parking garage, public transportation
- Adjust for growth and change (mindset for regulatory change, etc.), evolvable community, keeping flexibility in mind
- Dover becomes an early adopter of innovation and leveraging new ideas, an example for the rest of the state and region, nimble regulation, successful economy
- Better transit system, more parking needed, everybody feels part of the community, residents sleep here but don't work here and they need affordable housing. Make Dover "a destination"

#### **Dover Main Street (10 participants)**

##### *Building on strengths (Main Street)*

- Influx of new community members, balancing with advantages,
- Great community, safe, vibrant, great arts and culture, good downtown, moving forward, safe community, new community members
- Public transportation, (COAST, train, Wildcat), restaurant diversity, community spirit
- Diversity of community, children's museum, attractions, industry and businesses, beautiful downtown, arts and culture, restaurants, unique community
- "A little bit of everything," big and small businesses, great parking downtown, community events/attractions
- History of Dover, heritage of the community, Dover doesn't take it for granted (history),
- Small businesses, lack of chains in the downtown area, stop off the train
- Green spaces, community trail, Henry Law, community garden, ability to get things that you need downtown, walkable
- Diversity of businesses, diversity of restaurants, passion from the community and involvement by community members
- Vibrant community, growth, downtown waterfront, community services and leaders

##### *Priorities for change (Main Street)*

- Traffic flow for the city, outskirts of the city (getting them involved downtown)

- Parking downtown
- Infrastructure and resources (water, traffic)
- Affordable housing, affordability in all areas of life, housing for all ages and situations to support businesses
- Community engagement such as events or programs, clean up days, and civic engagement
- Traffic issues, vacancies downtown (thoughtful attraction of businesses), more retail options, effects of climate change
- EPA mandate on stormwater management, concern for utility improvement needs and cost
- Traffic, making Washington St. two-way, homelessness, workforce housing and affordable housing, workforce can't afford to live in Dover, shelter system needed, school employee salaries are too low (3rd lowest in the state), school system is losing employees/educators
- EPA mandates, homelessness, drug addiction, affordable housing
- Maintaining infrastructure that we have (amenities, utilities, city services), being able to live in Dover when older, affordability

*Vision for Dover (Main Street)*

- *Did not have time to complete*


**Dover Committee for Racial Equity and Inclusion (4 participants)**

- *City staff attended regular meeting and committee elected to submit input via email*
- *No responses were received*

# ITEM D

## DISTINCTLY DOVER, DRAFT COMMUNITY VISION, DROP-IN DAY AND POLL RESPONSES

On April 18, 2023 the draft community vision was shared in a series of drop-in discussions around the city and feedback was gathered both in person and in an online poll. The draft vision resonated with participants who provided feedback through colored stickers, comments to staff and consultants, comment cards, and an online poll. Over 50 people attended drop-in discussions at multiple locations in city center and approximately a dozen provided input via online poll. The draft vision was shared on poster display in city hall for the remaining weeks in April.


**DISTINCTLY DOVER**  
A COMMUNITY VISION FOR 2035

**Check Out Dover's  
DRAFT COMMUNITY VISION!**

**A Distinctly Dover  
Drop-In Event  
Tuesday, April 18th**

9-10 AM	Dover Community Senior Center
11-12 PM	Dover City Hall - Customer Service Center
12:30-1:30 PM	Dover Public Library
2:30-4 PM	Seymour Osman Community Center
5-6 PM	Dover City Hall - Council Chambers

SCAN ME



For more information:  
[rebrand.ly/DistinctlyDover](https://rebrand.ly/DistinctlyDover)

**← Pick a  
time to  
attend!**





A **COMMUNITY-WIDE VISION** provides direction for the City's development and priorities over the next 10 years. Dover's vision for the future will help guide future change in our city and should reflect desires and priorities of Dover residents. This vision will be embedded in the City's Master Plan which guides future land use, growth, and development.



Scan the QR Code to submit your feedback on Dover's draft vision or submit your feedback **HERE!**

## ENGAGING OUR COMMUNITY

- Festival Outreach**  
Fall 2023
- Get the Word Out**  
Winter 2023
- Virtual Visioning Session**  
February 2023
- Vision On the Go Events**  
February/March 2023
- Draft Vision Drop-In Event**  
April 2023

**TABLING:**  
What's your ONE wish for Dover's future?

- Apple Harvest Day
- Festival of Trees



**COMMUNICATIONS:**

- Website
- First 5 Minutes for Dover's Future at meetings
- Fliers in all Dover communications

**ONLINE POLL:**  
What's your ONE wish for Dover's future?



**INTERACTIVE ONLINE COMMUNITY CONVERSATION:**

- What makes Dover special to you?
- What do you see as Dover's biggest strengths?
- What are Dover's major challenges?
- What's your vision for Dover in 10 years?
- What's missing now that you want to see in Dover in 10 - 20 years?

**VISION ACTIVITY WITH:**

- Vision Ambassadors
- Dover Rotary Club
- Dover Arts Commission
- Children's Museum of NH
- Dover Planning Board
- Dover Downtown Businesses
- Woodman Museum
- Dover Business and Industrial Development Authority
- Dover Main Street
- Dover Committee for Racial Equity and Inclusion

**YOU ARE HERE!**

**Check out Dover's DRAFT Community Vision and provided feedback.**

*What parts of the vision do you like?*

*What is missing or does not reflect your vision for Dover's future?*

*What questions or comments do you have?*

## VISION PILLARS

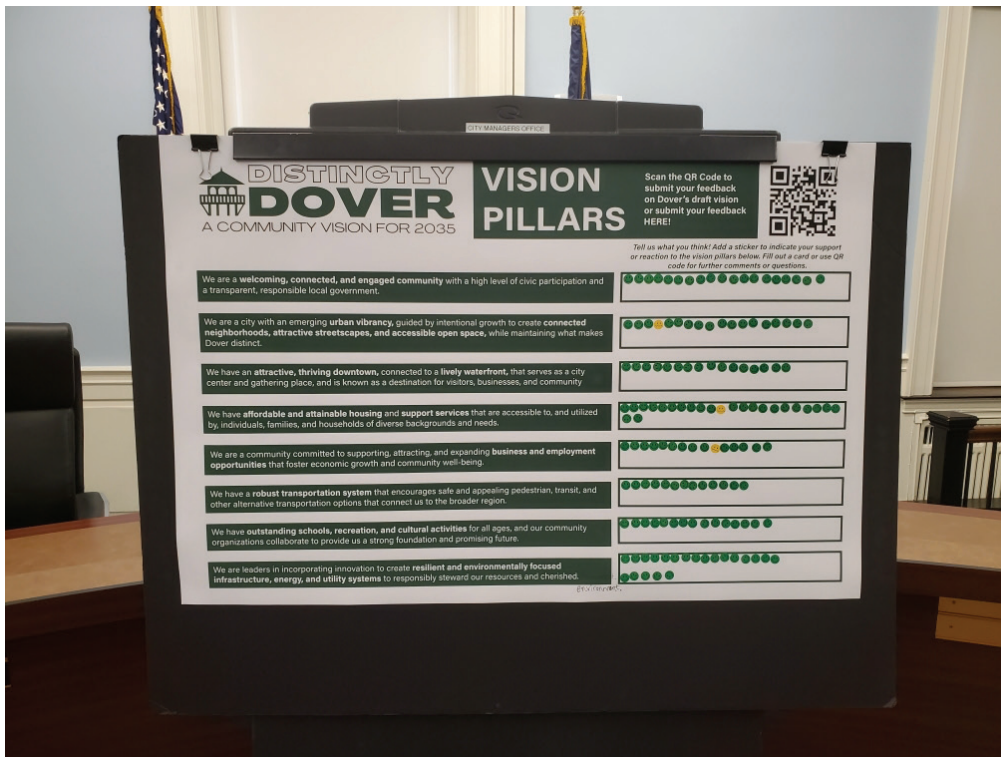


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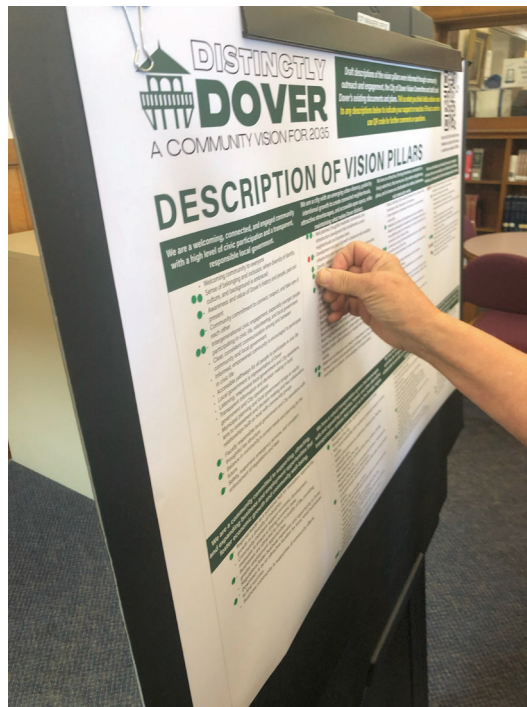
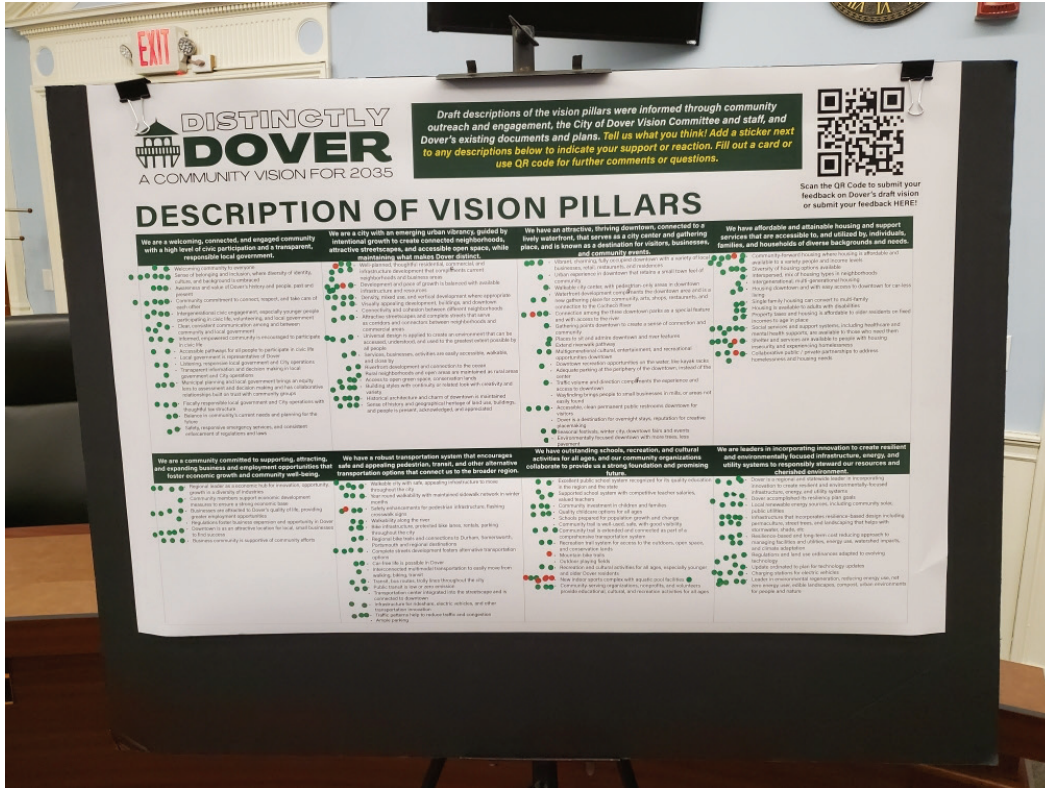


*Tell us what you think! Add a sticker to indicate your support or reaction to the vision pillars below. Fill out a card or use QR code for further comments or questions.*

We are a <b>welcoming, connected, and engaged community</b> with a high level of civic participation and a transparent, responsible local government.	
We are a city with an emerging <b>urban vibrancy</b> , guided by intentional growth to create <b>connected neighborhoods, attractive streetscapes, and accessible open space</b> , while maintaining what makes Dover distinct.	
We have an <b>attractive, thriving downtown</b> , connected to a <b>lively waterfront</b> , that serves as a city center and gathering place, and is known as a destination for visitors, businesses, and community	
We have <b>affordable and attainable housing</b> and <b>support services</b> that are accessible to, and utilized by, individuals, families, and households of diverse backgrounds and needs.	
We are a community committed to supporting, attracting, and expanding <b>business and employment opportunities</b> that foster economic growth and community well-being.	
We have a <b>robust transportation system</b> that encourages safe and appealing pedestrian, transit, and other alternative transportation options that connect us to the broader region.	
We have <b>outstanding schools, recreation, and cultural activities</b> for all ages, and our community organizations collaborate to provide us a strong foundation and promising future.	
We are leaders in incorporating innovation to create <b>resilient and environmentally focused infrastructure, energy, and utility systems</b> to responsibly steward our resources and cherished.	









## Polco Responses: “Please provide your feedback on the draft for Dover's Community Vision!”

- Add slowing new development. Enough is enough. No one wants or needs new buildings. Use what’s we have and concentrate on PLANTING and caring for the water.
- Keep the senior population in mind
- this is a nice vision but it seems a bit like a wish list. The things I am most passionate about are creating way way more affordable housing and cleaning up the cocheco river
- Agree with the vision to provide affordable housing, and support to community members, and better public transportation/walkability above other priorities. We need to prioritize safe affordable housing and social support systems for our community.
- Dover has been such a welcoming, caring place and stands as a center of growth in NH for so many people. I think we need to continue providing for that aspect of the town. We need to invest more in local education and teacher salaries; push to revamp and provide more accessible social services for our current residents; and ensure that people who are living in Dover of all ages, backgrounds, and views have access to affordable and well maintained housing. It is not reflective of Dover's values for us to see so many locals, family businesses, and long-term residents being pushed out by higher income developers. We should not be allowing that elderly residents are left to fend for themselves in intense winter snows because their landlord did not send plows or crews as promised. Opportunity doesn't necessarily mean new or exciting, and we need to ensure that the foundations of our community are maintained and enriched.
- I would like to see a plan for housing for all unsheltered people.
- As a Dover resident, I appreciate the aspirational nature of this community vision. I’d like to emphasize the importance of seeing the following item come to pass with intentionality and with special focus on the unhoused population. “We have affordable and attainable housing and support services that are accessible to, and utilized by, individuals, families, and households of diverse backgrounds and needs.”
- Need for move affordable housing and housing for homeless
- The 8 point Vision Statement does an excellent job of capturing most everything I'd want to see in it for Dover. In point 2, the issue of "balancing" open space with developed space, being careful to not "overdo development, is crucial. In Point 4, offering services and programs for the homeless and mentally challenged strikes me as an area warranting particular focus.
- We need truly "affordable" and accessible housing, including a "housing first" supportive housing model for our most vulnerable community members as well as a low-barrier shelter model. Dover cannot and should not push unsheltered individuals out of their hometown and away from their friends, family and communities due to aesthetics and/or an unwillingness to support their basic needs. Dover also needs to prepare for the increasingly aging population and prepare assisted living and long-term care options for older adults who are unable to live in their homes independently. These are the people who built this city over the past century and deserve a more accommodating space than Riverside has to offer.
- having some sort of social safety net for those who are unhoused should be in the document. no matter how “affordable” housing is, there will always be some amount of unhoused people. also ensuring that pedestrian walkways, crosswalks, and accessibility should be at the top of the list. A truly thriving community has a healthy area to walk around to get necessities without the need for a vehicle