



City Council Goals

2026-2027

AS ADOPTED FEBRUARY 11, 2026

Goals and Objectives

At a January 2026, Goal Setting session, the City Council developed short and long-term goals to move the City's Vision forward.

These mission focused goals provide a framework for the Council and Management staff to develop action plans.

The Council goals support:

Attainable Housing

Quality of Life

Infrastructure

Process Improvement

Civic Engagement

Goal #1: Keeping Dover Affordable and Growing Starts with Housing

Need: Dover needs a diverse housing supply at all price levels for existing residents seeking to move among rungs on the housing ladder, and for new residents who want to move to Dover and help our community grow, while maintaining Dover's character and long-term financial stability.

Challenge: Demand for housing is regional in nature. The private sector is incentivized to produce new housing at market prices, not at prices that are attainable for all income levels.

1-A: Increase the supply of new housing, with a specific priority of creating hundreds of more attainably-priced units below the median cost of housing in Dover. To achieve this at scale requires the development of multi-family projects and mid-rise buildings. Such projects may be mixed-use and mixed-income in nature. The city shall seek partnerships with interested private developers; facilitate creative financing using levers such as the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC), state grants, and potential new TIF districts; and proactively identify viable sites for development or re-development.

1-B: Continue to incentivize and accelerate the approval process for smaller infill density projects that result in smaller numbers of additional housing units, with a specific priority on adding more attainably-priced units. These include an updated Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) process, small multi-family conversions, duplex-by-right, and ADUs.

1-C: Establish a coordinated housing education and data initiative to inform staff, policymakers, and the public about housing needs, market absorption, development costs, financing constraints, and emerging opportunities. This objective will leverage trend forecasting, transparent reporting, and regular public engagement to improve understanding of supply and demand dynamics, support evidence-based decision-making, and align policy, investment, and development strategies with current and future housing conditions.

Goal #2: Dover is a Community with a High Quality of Life, Where Everyone Feels Safe, Welcome, and At Home making Dover a great place to live for all residents.

Need: Public safety and service are the primary purposes of government. Dover needs to continue to be an inclusive, socio- and economically-diverse community where everyone feels safe, everywhere and at all times; and where anyone can feel welcome and at home.

Challenge: We live in turbulent times when local communities are not immune from pressures caused by social, political, and economic tensions at the national level.

2-A: Policing shall continue to provide for public safety, resident well-being, and commercial activity in a trusting partnership with the community. Both the police and the public are guided by Sir Robert Peel's maxim: "The test of police efficiency is the absence of crime and disorder, and not the visible evidence of police action in dealing with them." (Principles of Law Enforcement, 1829)

2-B: This specifically includes partnering compassionately with social service providers working with Dover residents experiencing non-criminal personal challenges, including mental health, substance abuse, and homelessness, that can negatively impact the quality of life for others.

Goal #3: Continue to Invest in Infrastructure

Need: Dover needs infrastructure that meets the needs of current residents and supports future growth so the City can function safely, efficiently, and sustainably over time.

Challenge: New Hampshire's Oldest Settlement relies on aged infrastructure. Infrastructure investments can struggle to compete for prioritization and limited budgets, and get put off and delayed.

3-A: Maintain a proactive, data-driven Capital Improvements Program (CIP) that prioritizes long-term lifecycle value, infrastructure performance, and fiscal sustainability. Be nimble in adapting to changing federal and state funding by diversifying revenue sources and pursuing alternative financing strategies.

3-B: Incorporate environmental and social sustainability goals into infrastructure planning where appropriate and feasible to promote resilient growth that protects natural resources and enhances quality of life for future generations.

3-C: Strengthen operational reliability to ensure uninterrupted delivery of essential services including water, wastewater, transportation, and public safety. This objective emphasizes contingency planning, preventative maintenance, disaster planning, asset security, supply chain risk mitigation, and the deployment of innovative technologies.

3-D: Planning continues to consider residential and commercial development proposals with transportation systems, workforce mobility, and access to employment centers, services, and public amenities in mind. Improve transportation systems to support new housing development, workforce mobility, and economic growth by expanding multimodal connectivity, improving roadway safety, and increasing access to employment centers, services, and public amenities. This objective aligns transportation investments with housing growth to reduce commute burdens, improve accessibility for seniors and vulnerable populations, and attract employers and businesses seeking reliable infrastructure and workforce access.

Goal #4: City Government is Innovative, Forward-Thinking, and Invests in Human Capital

Need: City government needs to continue keeping up with changing technology.

Challenge: "Good enough" systems, and competing budget priorities, can lead government departments to fall behind the times.

4-A: Leverage modern, integrated technologies to streamline and standardize departmental workflows, drive innovation, and improve operational efficiency. Enhance transparency through real-time data tracking, performance metrics, and public reporting. This will improve internal systems, coordination, and decision-making to ensure services are delivered effectively, responsibly, and with accountability to taxpayers.

4-B: Invest in and develop our employees. Continue to support training and learning and implementing best practices to help attract and maintain "Wins Above Replacement" quality employees. Maintain competitive compensation and benefits and opportunities for professional growth and development. Continue to engage in proactive succession planning to maintain continuity in institutional knowledge and the high-quality delivery of public services.

Goal #5: Dover is Informed and Civically Engaged

Need: City government needs to do a better job at communicating with members of our community, strengthening trust and participation in local government.

Challenge: Traditional communications channels have disintegrated, replaced by stratified social media. Misinformation, often spread on social media, is hard to correct and often has a negative impact on civic dialogue. City governments have struggled to adapt.

5-A: Foster a more connected, informed community by improving citywide communications to increase public understanding of municipal projects, policies, and legislative activities. Be the trustworthy provider of factual information that is clear, accessible, and provided across digital platforms.

5-B: Make it easy for any resident who wishes to become more civically-engaged and contribute to the community to do so. Strengthen connections between the City and residents by expanding inclusive in-person and digital engagement opportunities. This objective focuses on listening to community concerns, improving outreach strategies, supporting shared public events, and strengthening two-way communication with residents and staff. By engaging underrepresented populations and creating meaningful opportunities for dialogue and collaboration, the City will foster a more connected, informed community.

5-C: Increase voter registration, education, and turnout by providing accessible, accurate, and nonpartisan election information. This objective emphasizes outreach to less-engaged populations, reducing participation barriers, modernizing communication tools, and expanding public education efforts. Through coordinated engagement strategies and transparent election administration, the City will promote higher participation and a more representative democratic process.