

CITY OF DOVER MASTER PLAN

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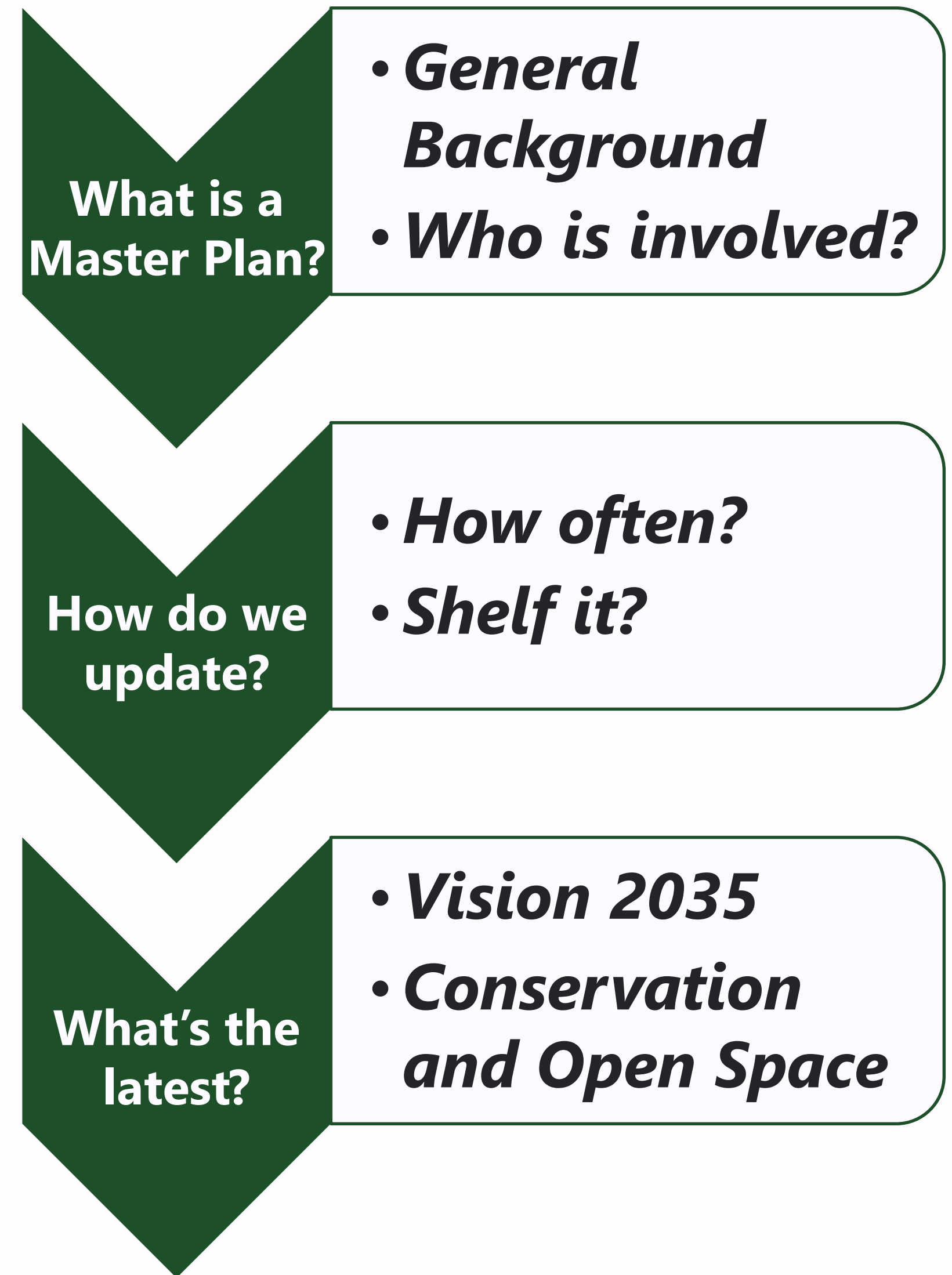
City Council Workshop
February 4, 2026

City of Dover Planning & Community Development Department



Presentation Foresight

- Background information on a Master Plan
- Dover's Master Plan
- What's involved with updating it?
- Recent, Current, and Future updates
- Implementation
- Public engagement
- Questions and Answers

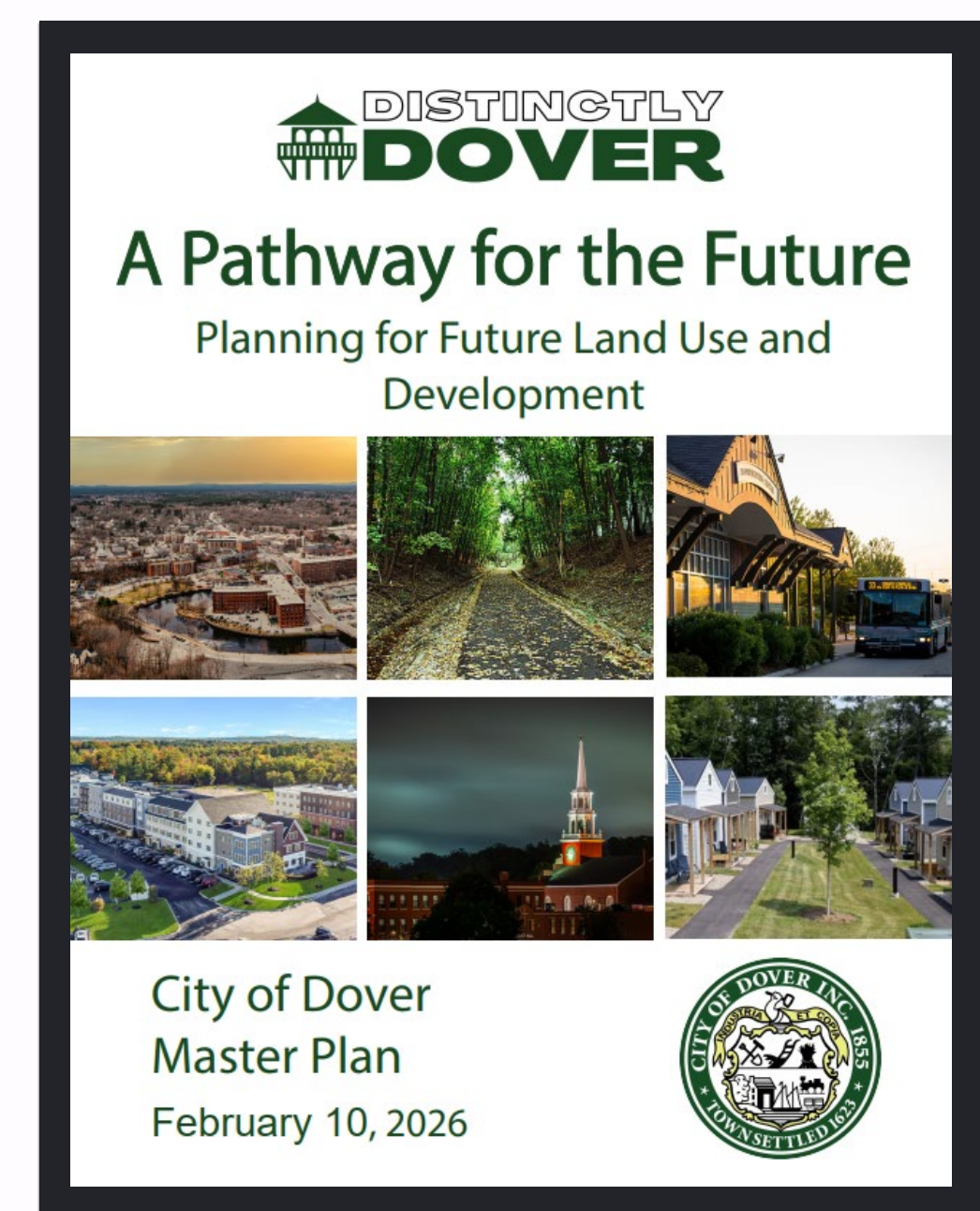
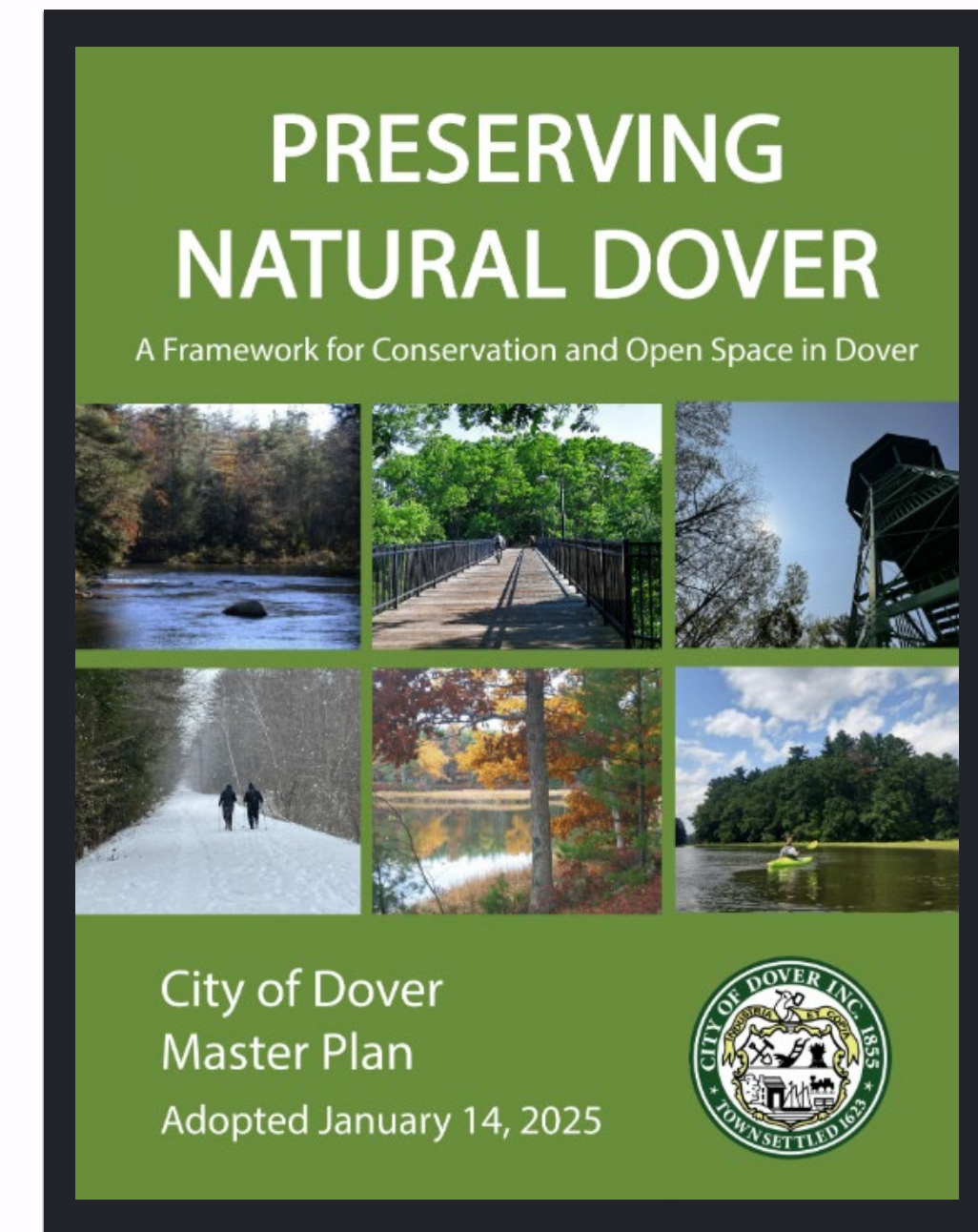
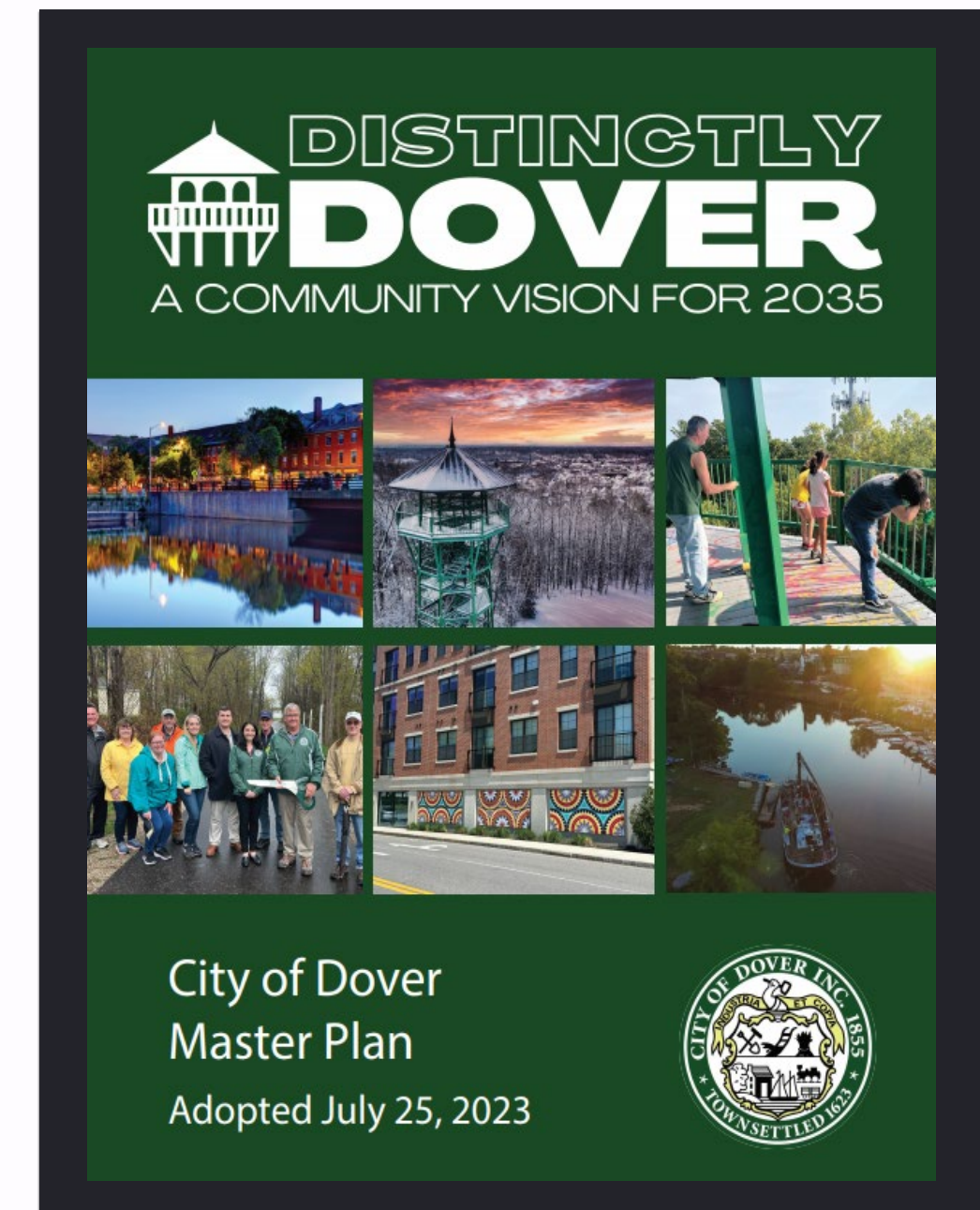
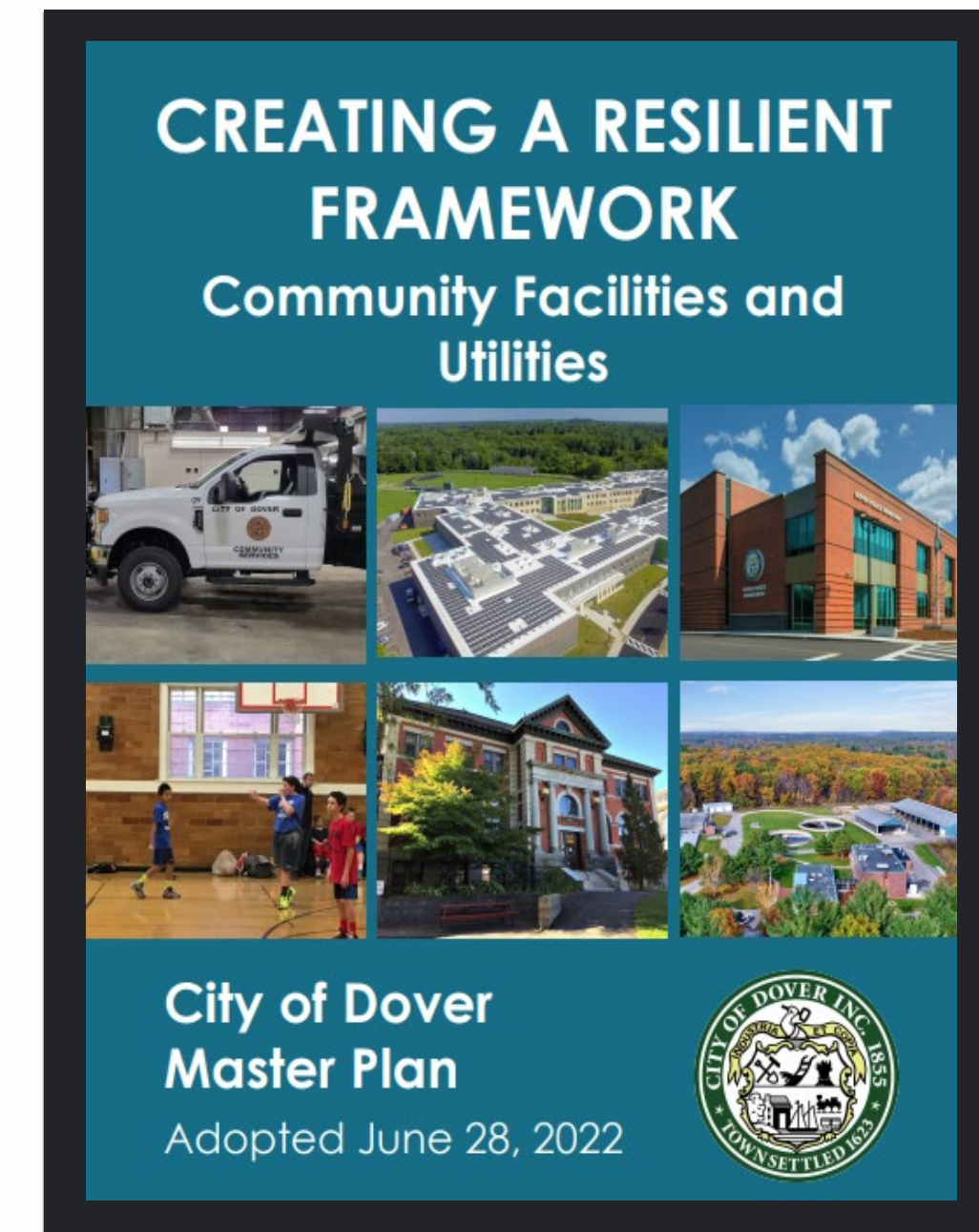


MASTER PLAN REMINDERS

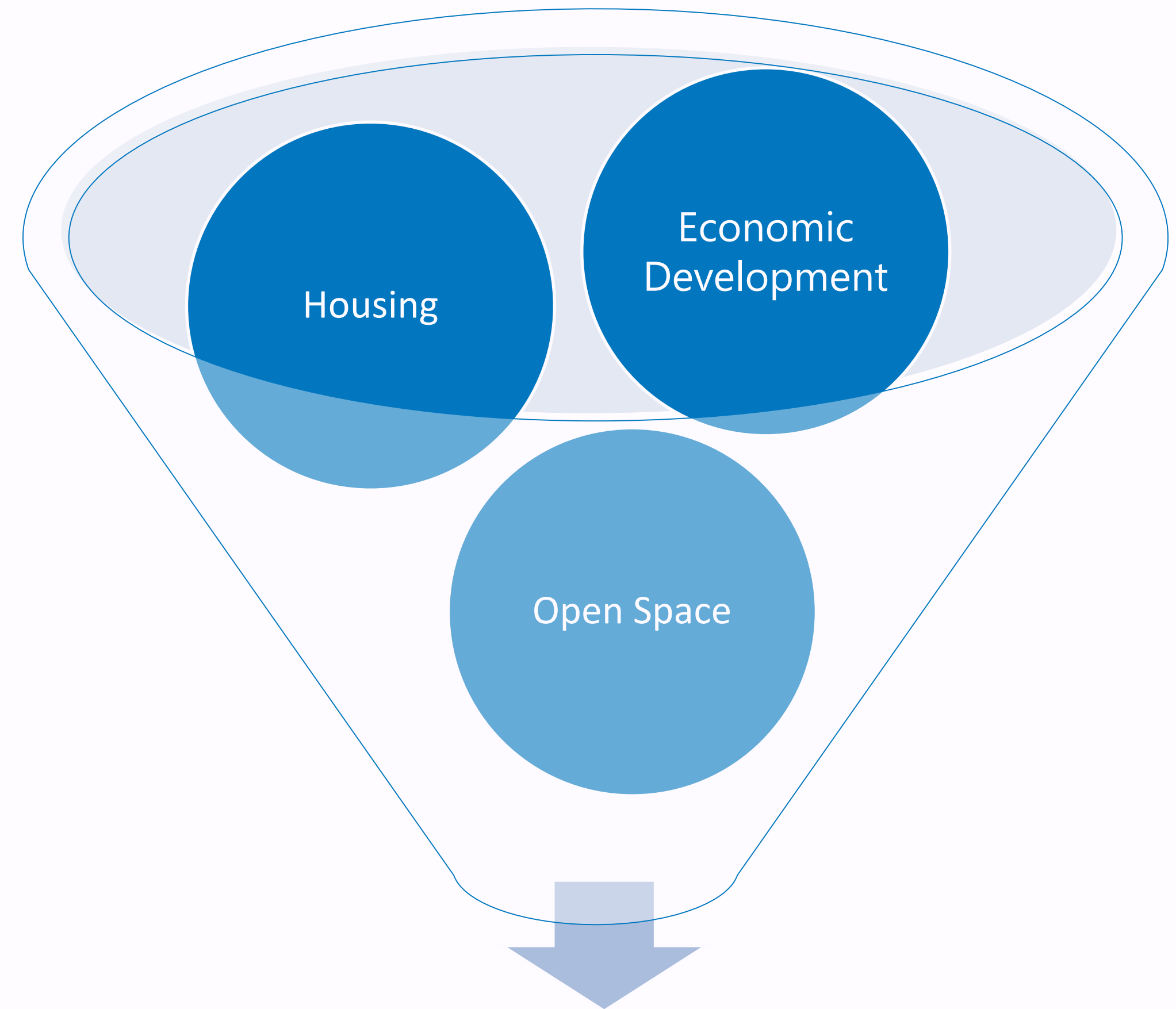
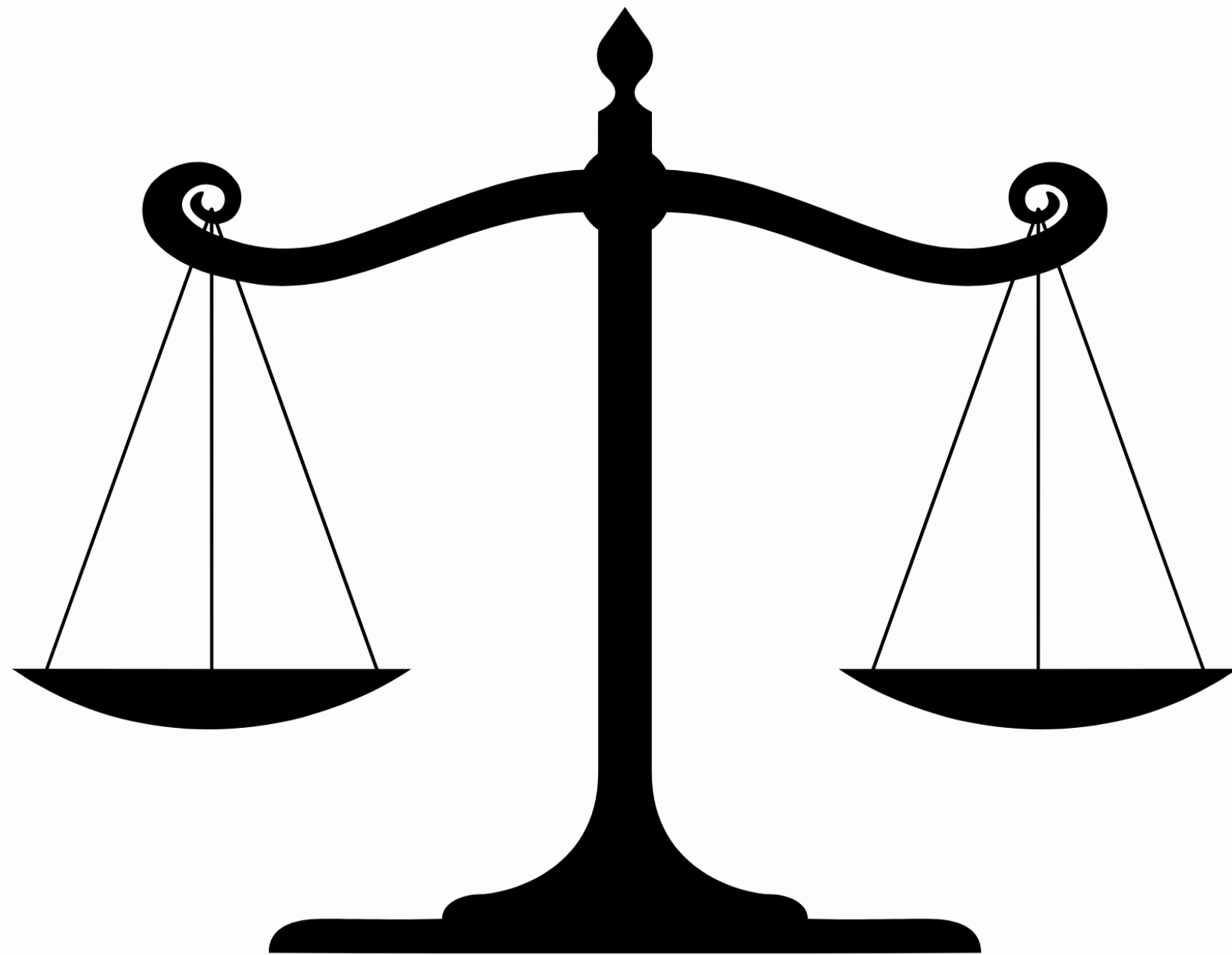
A Master Plan is a comprehensive plan which guides the long-term physical development for a community.

It is used to shape city and community policy decisions and is particularly useful in defining land use regulations and long-term capital budgeting priorities.

The Master Plan prioritizes sustainable resource management and smart growth strategies, integrating input from residents through public engagement to reflect community needs and interests.



THE BALANCING ACT



Well-balanced community

PLANNING BOARD ROLE

Guided by RSAs 674:1 - 4 and 675:6, the Planning Board oversees the following in the master planning process:

- The Board may adopt the master plan as a whole, or in sections or parts.
- Plan updates should be every 5 to 10 years.
- The Board shall inform the general public and the Office of Planning and Development and regional planning commission of updates.
- Public hearings are part of the adoption or amendment.



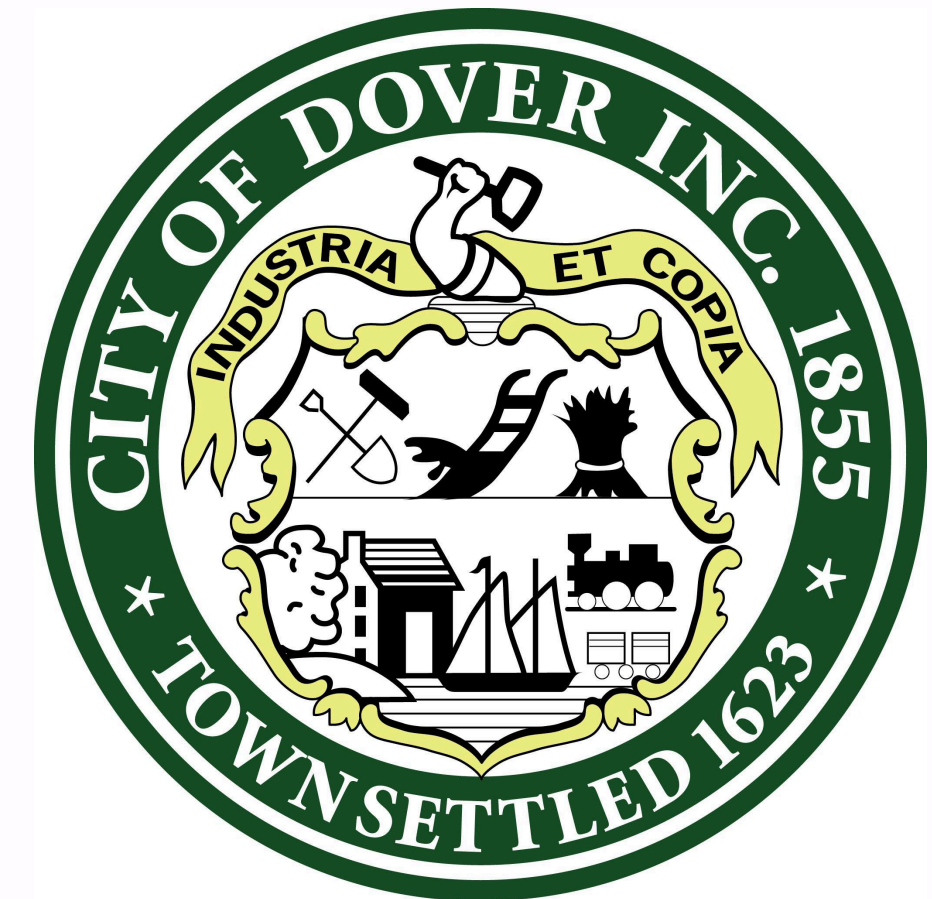
REQUIREMENTS

RSA 674:2 states that the following sections should be included in a master plan, at a minimum:

- **Vision Section**
- **Land Use Section**

A master plan may also include the following sections:

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| • Transportation | • Regional Concerns |
| • Community Facilities | • Neighborhood Plan |
| • Economic Development | • Community Design |
| • Natural Resources | • Housing |
| • Natural Hazards | • Implementation |
| • Recreation | • Energy |
| • Utility and Public Service | • Coastal Management |
| • Cultural and Historic Resources | • Waste Reduction |



CHAPTERS OF THE MASTER PLAN

The City of Dover's Master Plan has eight sections, with each section containing an implementation section.

1. Vision (2023)
2. Land Use* (Expected adoption, 2026)
3. Transportation (2016)
4. Stewardship of Resources (2017)
5. Community Facilities and Utilities (2022)
6. Climate Adaption (2017)
7. Culture and Recreation (2020)
8. Conservation and Open Space (2025)

*The Land Use Analysis Chapter also includes sections on Housing and Economic Development.

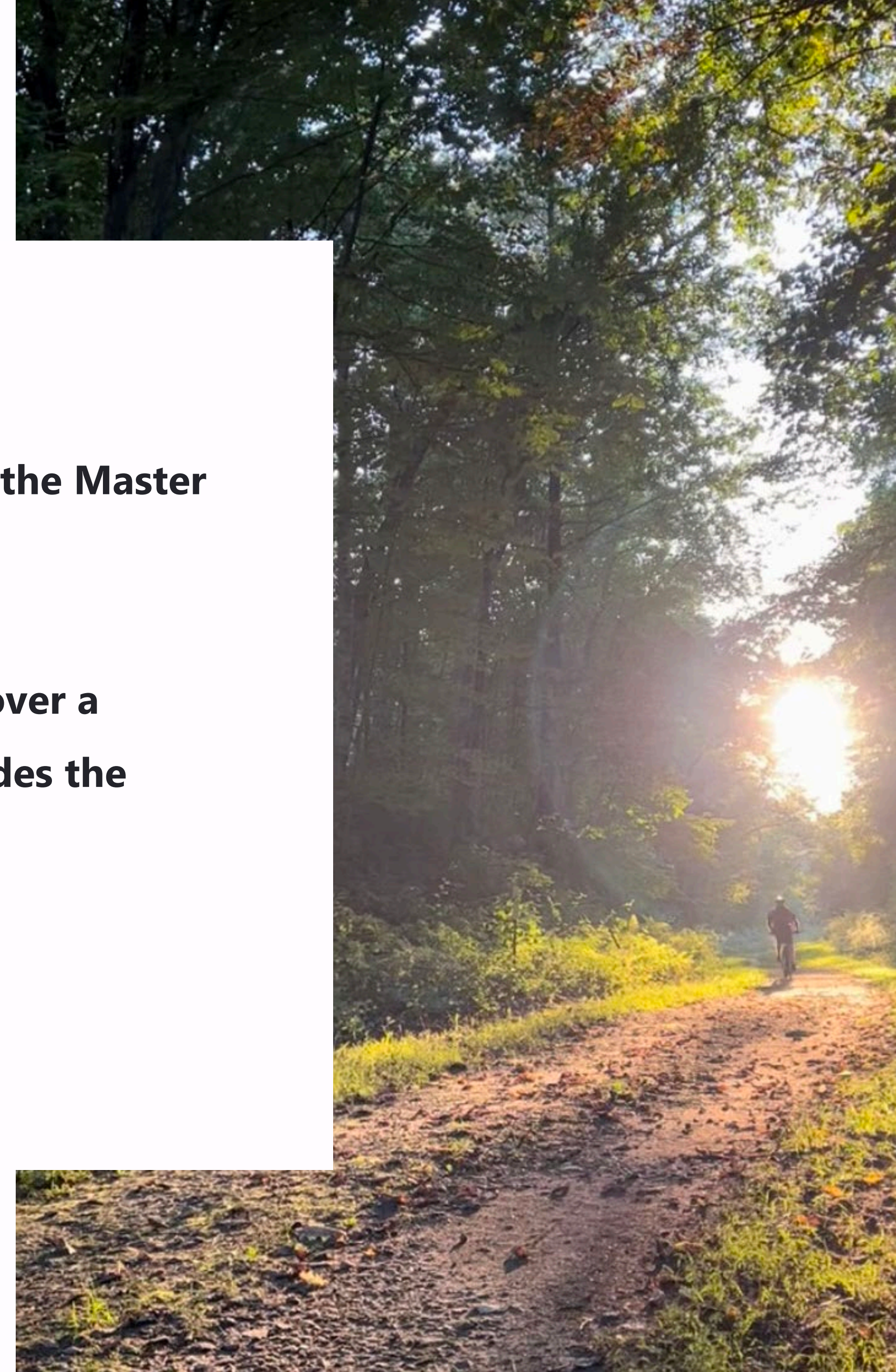


CHAPTER UPDATES

Unlike other communities, the City of Dover updates the chapters of the Master Plan on a rotating basis every 5-10 years.

The rotating basis for updating chapters of the Master Plan offers Dover a strategic and adaptable approach to long-term planning which includes the following advantages:

- **Flexibility and Responsiveness**
- **Continuous Improvement**
- **Ongoing Public Engagement**

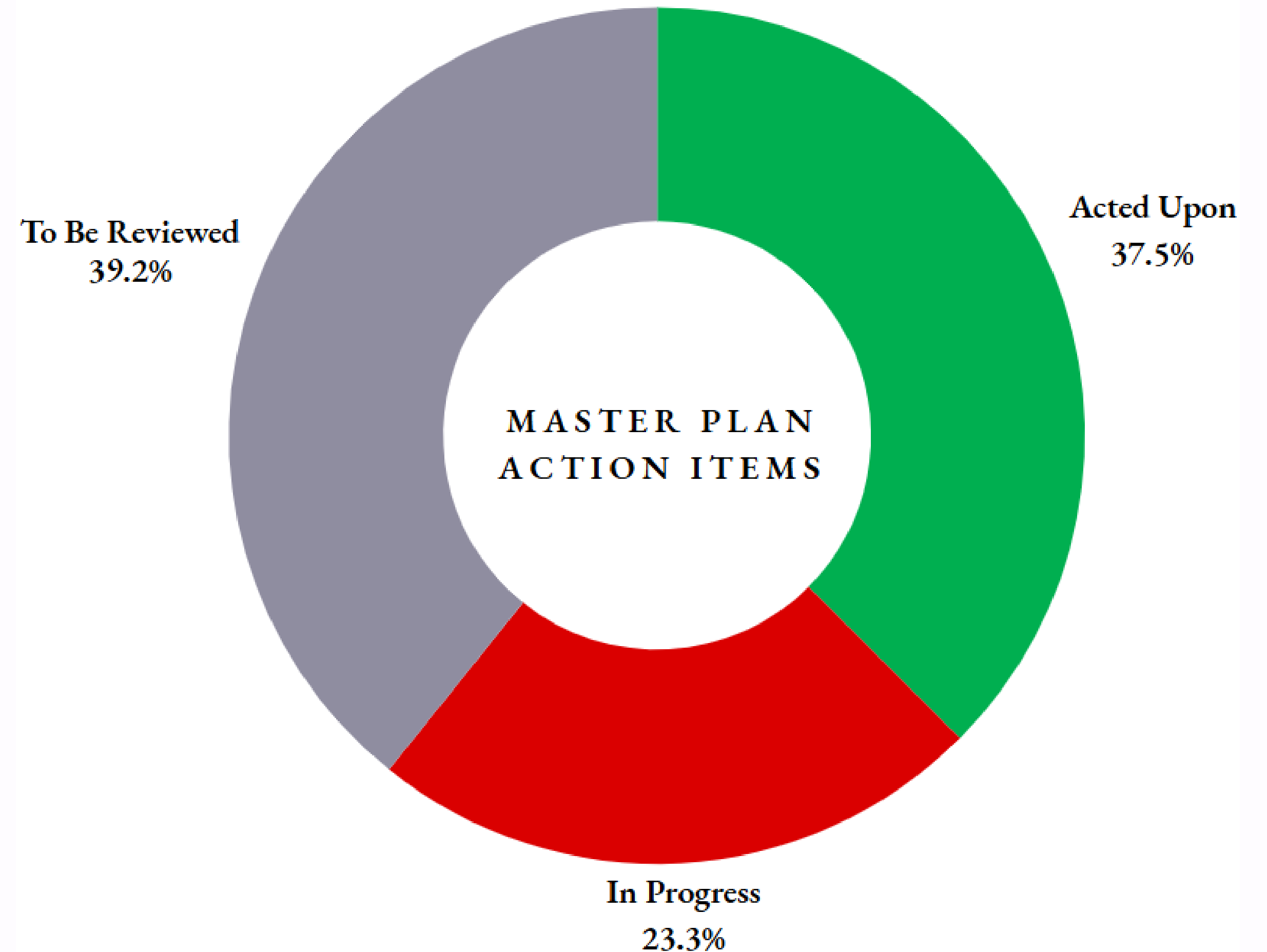


IMPLEMENTATION

Each chapter of the Master Plan includes an Implementation Table with the following:

- Recommendations for goals and action items
- Timeframe for action
- The identified party or municipal department that is responsible for implementation

Summary document/overall implementation table also updated annually.



**627 Goals and Action Items across
eight chapters**

IMPLEMENTATION TABLE

- Each Chapter of the Master Plan has associated goals and recommendations in an implementation table which are a non-regulatory guide for land use decisions.
- The Executive Summary provides an overview of the goals, adoption dates, and progress of each Master Plan chapter as part of Dover’s annual Strategic Planning review, reflecting the efforts of volunteers, city officials, and staff in shaping the community’s vision.
- 33 new action items were added to the Master Plan.

ACTION MATRIX FOR DOVER’S CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE	
#	Organization
1. Conservation Priorities	
1.1	Continue permanently protecting lands with conservation value through available methods including but not limited to conservation easements, fee ownership, deed restrictions, agricultural preservation restriction, and protective easement for water supply lands.
1.2	Prioritize Conservation efforts that address at least one of the three priorities identified in this Chapter: • Groundwater Quantity and Quality Lands • Hazard Mitigation Lands • Important Wildlife Habitat Lands
1.3	Use the co-occurrence analysis to inform and guide future conservation efforts, including: • Identifying potential natural resource or recreational connections between existing conserved lands. This could include smaller and more targeted parcels to achieve connectivity. • Identifying larger blocks of remaining land and preventing further fragmentation. • Identifying lands with the greatest conservation value and advantageous co-benefits.

IMPLEMENTATION TABLE- *EXAMPLES*

• **New action items in the Land Use Analysis Chapter:**

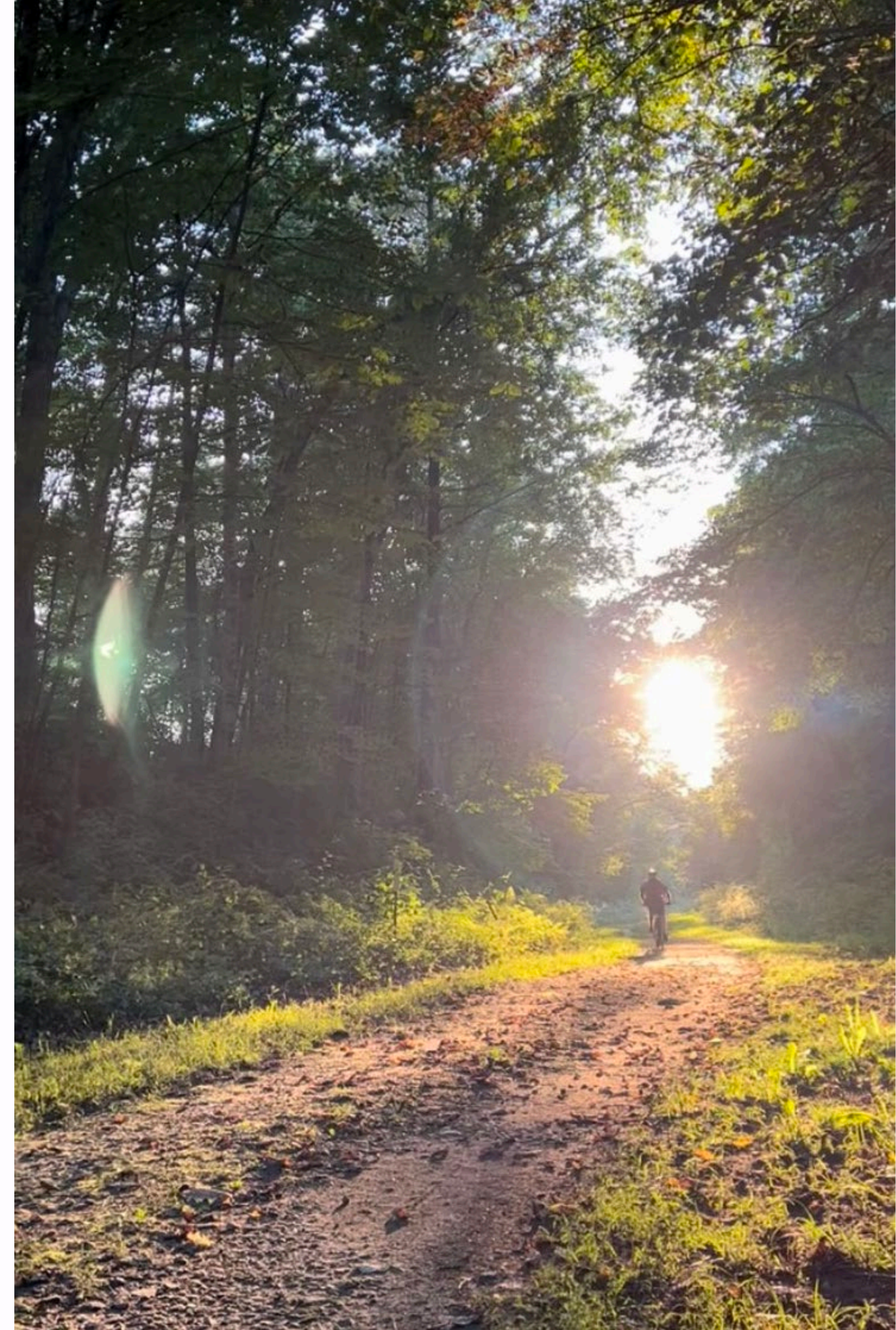
3. Economic Development				
3.1	Collaborate with the Dover Business and Industrial Development Authority and other partners to ensure Dover’s regulations, within appropriate areas of the city, are business friendly.	Medium	Planning, Office of Business Development	Medium
5. Land Use				
5.1	Continue implementing and refining form-based zoning and design standards to ensure high-quality, context-sensitive infill development and redevelopment projects.	Medium	Planning	Medium

• **Completed/In Progress action item:**

Complete renovations for separating Inspection Services and Fire Department Administration and creating additional office space. Improve physical workflow of Inspection Services. Reduce noise in renovation of Inspection Services reception area. Consider how to reconfigure space to better facilitate plan review and short-term plan storage to better meet service demand.

VISION FOR THE FUTURE

- **The Vision Chapter**, updated in 2023 after **nine months of outreach and engagement**, captures Dover residents' **long-term vision for the community**.
- **Distinctly Dover**: A Community Vision for 2035 consists of three key components:
 - **Eight vision pillars** outlining aspirations;
 - Corresponding **vision elements**;
 - A **community values section** highlighting strengths to retain and challenges to address.





VISION PILLARS

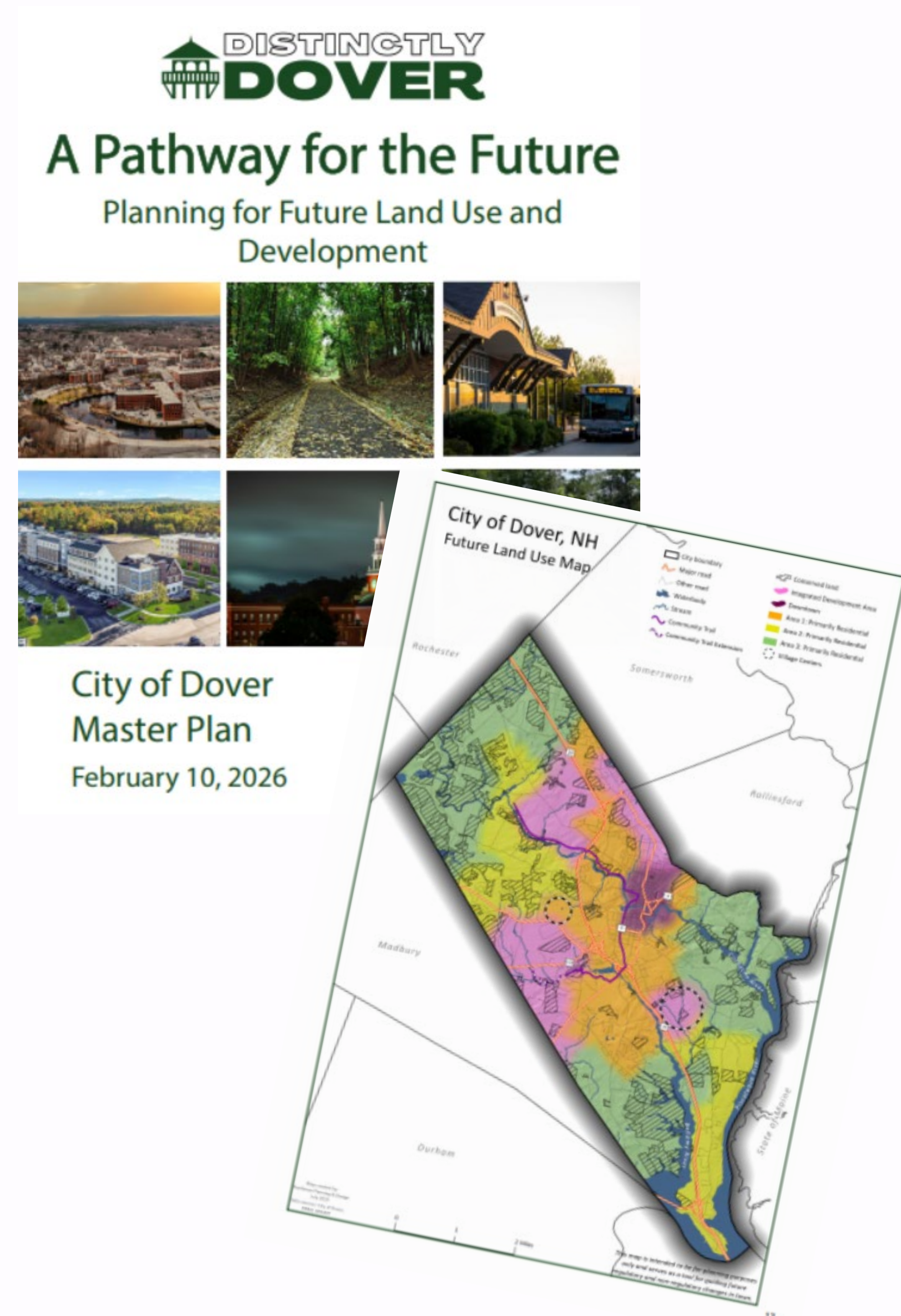
1. We are a **welcoming, connected, and engaged community** with a high level of civic participation and a transparent, responsible local government.
2. We are a City with an **emerging urban vibrancy**, guided by intentional growth to create **connected neighborhoods, attractive streetscapes, and accessible 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.

RECENT UPDATE

The **Land Use Analysis** was most recently updated and is scheduled for consideration and potential adoption by the Planning Board on **Feb. 10, 2026**.

The Land Use Chapter offers a **strategy and roadmap for guiding future growth** and **preserving the city's valued resources** while **addressing emergent challenges** and issues that impact the city.

The **Steering Committee** for the project included members from **City Council, Planning Board**, and other **community members**.



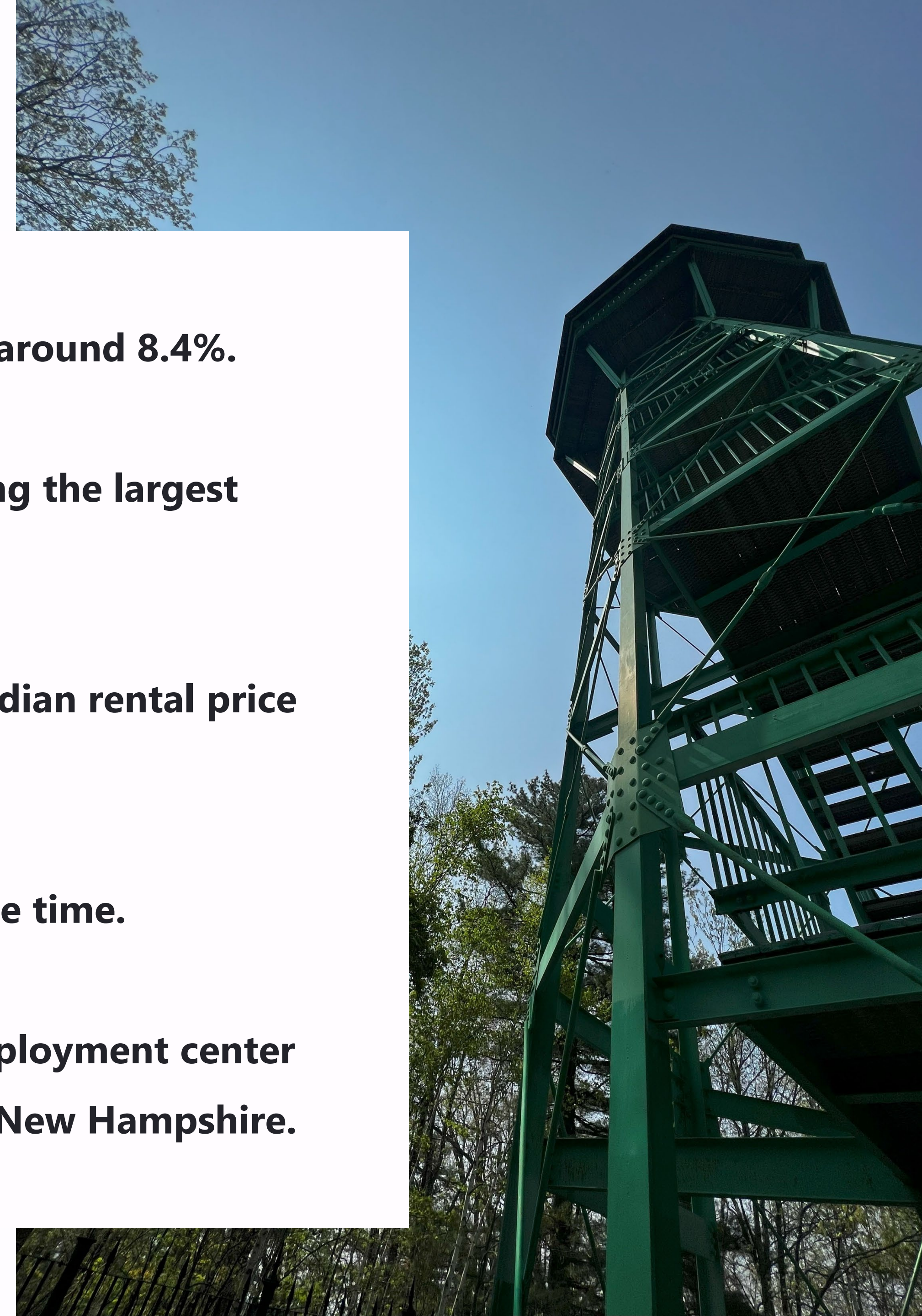
A PATHWAY FOR THE FUTURE

- **Dover Today** – Existing conditions and trends, public feedback.
- **Where We Are Going** – Vision pillars and priorities.
- **How We Will Get There** – Future Land Use Strategy and Map.
- **Next Steps** – Implementation actions.



EXISTING CONDITIONS

- Since the last update, adopted in 2015, Dover's population grew around 8.4%.
- Dover's median age is 37.6, with the 25–34 age group representing the largest demographic, growing 37% from 2013–2023.
- The median home price in Dover rose by around 88% and the median rental price increased by 93% .
- The median household income increased by 62% during that same time.
- With over 1,500 business establishments, Dover is the largest employment center in Strafford County and among the top ten employment hubs in New Hampshire.



WHAT DID THE COMMUNITY SAY?

- **Growth and Preservation:**

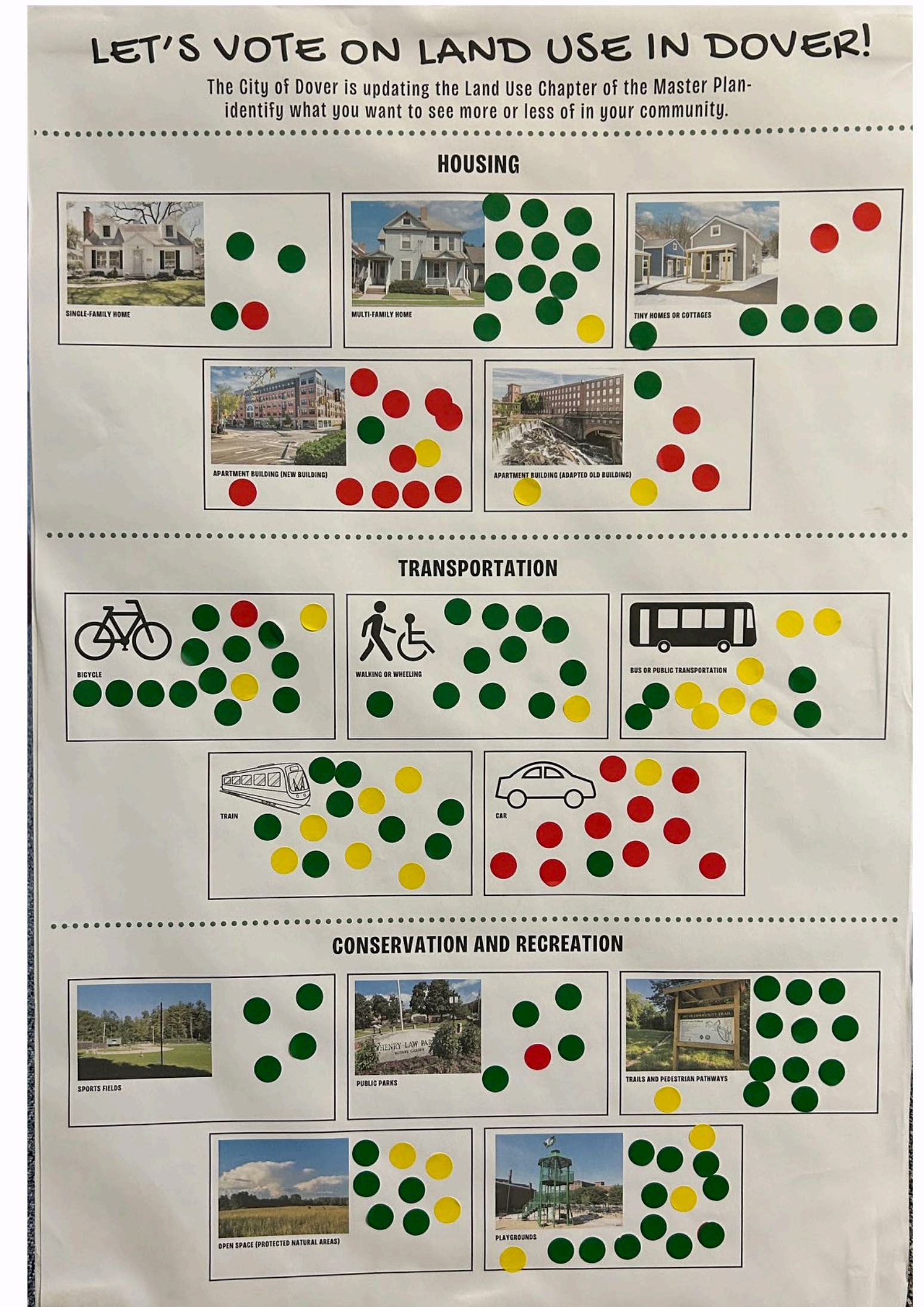
Residents value targeted growth and also emphasize preserving open spaces, rural character, and wildlife habitat.

- **Housing Diversity and Neighborhood Integrity:**

The need for affordable, flexible housing options (including accessory dwelling units and rental units) appears alongside a strong desire to maintain established neighborhood character and support homeownership opportunities.

- **Fiscal Sustainability and Quality of Life:**

Some residents stress thoughtful development to support the tax base and fund city services, while others worry about impacts on long-term livability, community feel, walkability, access to amenities, and rising costs.



FUTURE LAND USE STRATEGY

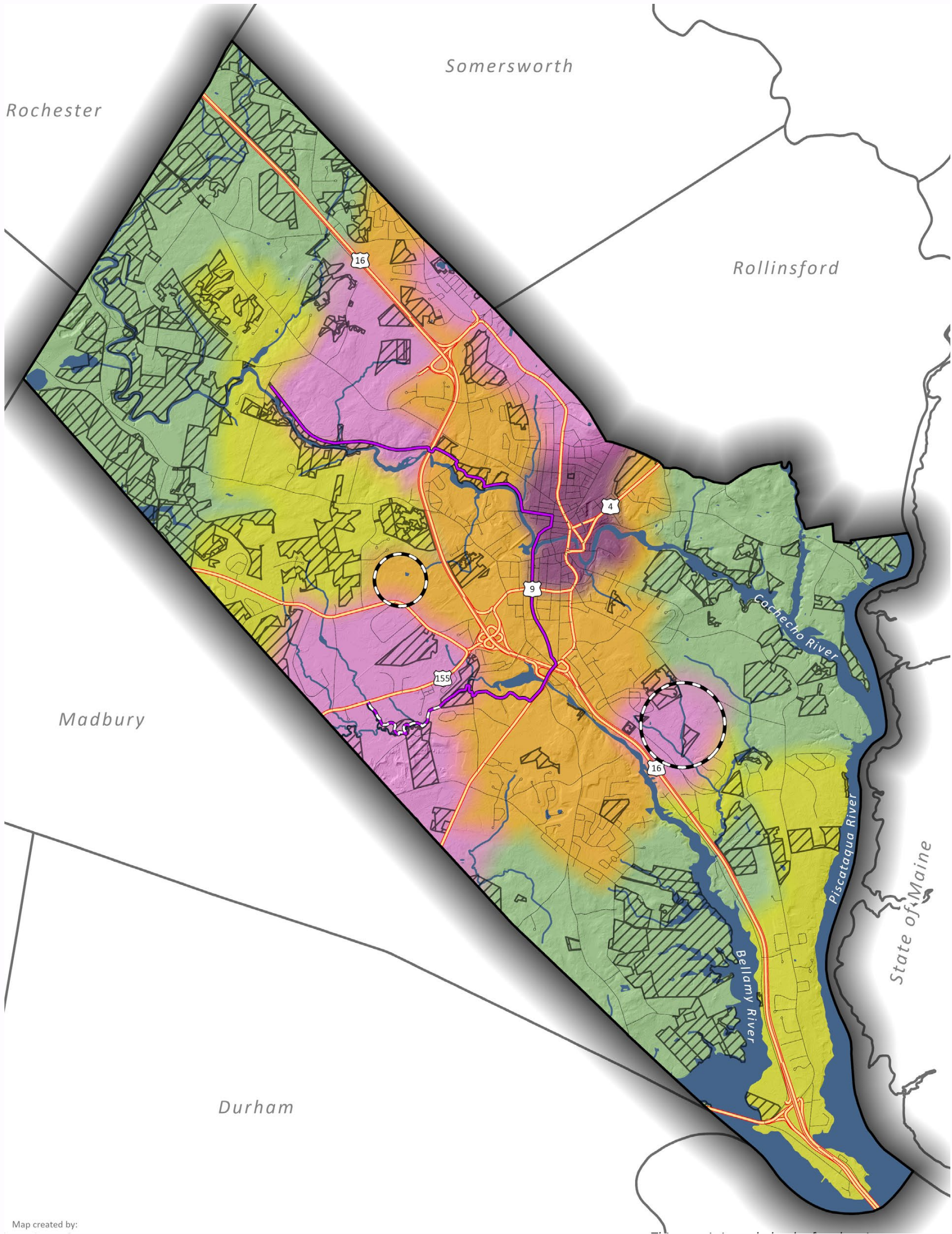
- **Core component** of the Land Use Chapter
- Guides where areas will **change or remain the same** over time
- **Informs land use decisions** in Dover for the next ten+ years through land use regulations, policies, and infrastructure investments
- Includes a **Future Land Use Map** with narrative
- **Not a zoning map** or an existing land use map

Though it is informed by existing land use and should inform zoning

- **Represents a high-level, "20,000-foot view"** of the city



FUTURE LAND USE MAP



- City boundary
- Major road
- Other road
- Waterbody
- Stream
- Community Trail
- Community Trail Extension

- Conserved land
- Integrated Development Area
- Downtown
- Primarily Residential Areas**
 - Area 1
 - Area 2
 - Area 3
- Village Centers

CURRENT UPDATE

- The **Transportation Chapter** was mostly recently **adopted in 2016**.
- The Transportation Chapter will incorporate **elements and themes** generated during the public engagement process for the **Vision Chapter**, and planning concepts related to **walkability, efficient transportation**, and further the City's work towards **traffic calming**.
- The **Steering Committee** for the project will include members from the **City Council, Planning Board, Transportation Advisory Commission**, and other **members of the community**.



LOOKING AHEAD

Project goals for the Transportation Chapter include:

- **Existing Conditions Analysis** that includes review of relevant plans, studies, and transportation projects.
- Identify **current, emerging and projected transportation trends** and evaluate potential impacts, constraints and opportunities.
- Assess **citywide and corridor-specific traffic calming opportunities**, speeds, volumes, and crash data.
- Develop and implement a **public engagement and communications** plan.
- Prepare **recommended transportation strategies** guided by the 2023 Vision, including complete streets, traffic calming, ordinance updates, and cross-sectional street design guidelines for integration into regulations and capital planning.



Thank you for your time!
Any questions?

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