

# **Dover Town Plan**

**Town of Dover  
Vermont**

Approved by Planning Commission:  
Adopted by the Selectboard:

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Department of Housing and Community Development*

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Purpose of the Town Plan

The Dover Town Plan is a comprehensive document that provides the community with a framework for achieving its goals. The Town recognizes that while growth and development is desirable, if not controlled and managed properly it may result in undesirable changes to the community's natural, social, and physical environment. Therefore, it is in the interest of the Town that growth occurs in a reasonable and orderly fashion that minimizes the potential for adverse impacts to the community. The Dover Town Plan identifies the means by which the Town proposes to guide its growth. The official adoption of the Plan represents a conscious community decision about the Town's future character, its priorities for land use and development, and the conservation of natural resources.

### 1.2 Planning Process

The Town of Dover adopted its first Town Plan in 1991. Since then, the Plan has been updated and readopted several times. The current update process builds on these past planning efforts and responds to changes in the community over the last eight years. The planning process was led by the Dover Planning Commission with assistance from the Windham Regional Commission and funding support from a Municipal Planning Grant from the Vermont Department of Housing and Community Development.

Different strategies were used to solicit public input during the update process. These included a community survey conducted by the Planning Commission in 2021, a public kick off meeting at the beginning of the process in June 2023, and interviews and consultations with town staff and volunteers. Through this process, several priorities were identified as listed below and these helped inform the drafting of this Plan:

- Support for preserving and maintaining valuable open spaces, natural resource areas, scenic views, and historic settlement patterns that help define the character of Dover.
- Recognition there is a need to provide more housing opportunities in the town especially for the local workforce, but that development should be directed towards appropriate areas.
- Dover has many community facilities and amenities that residents strongly value and that add to the quality of life, such as the Dover Commons, Dover Park, Town Forest, and recreational trails. The town should continue to invest in and plan for these facilities to meet current and future needs, as well as working on new opportunities.
- Support for redefining the Route 100 corridor in West Dover, including addressing traffic and pedestrian safety and encouraging new development and redevelopment opportunities.

### **1.3 Authority to Plan**

The Dover Town Plan has been prepared under the Vermont Planning and Development Act (Chapter 117 of Title 24 V.S.A). This Plan becomes effective upon adoption by the Selectboard after the required public hearings held first by the Planning Commission and then by the Selectboard. Under Vermont law, a Town Plan expires eight years from the date of adoption.

### **1.4 Using the Plan**

The Town Plan is divided into the following chapters: Economic Development, Land Use, Natural Resources, Community Facilities and Services, Housing, Transportation, Energy, Community Resources, and Flood Resilience. Each chapter contains background information on the given topic and identifies opportunities and challenges that should be addressed by the community. The objectives, policies, and recommended actions section at the end of each chapter provides a framework for the Town to implement the Plan through local ordinances, bylaws, public investments, and other means. The recommended actions are also listed in a single location under the Implementation Program in Chapter 12.

The Town Plan also serves to guide the Windham Regional Commission and state agencies in their planning efforts, assists the District Environmental Commission in judging applications submitted under Act 250, and other state proceedings such as Section 248. Act 250 requires that development projects are in conformance with the Town Plan. The Town Plan is also used in the Section 248 process in which the Public Services Board determines if a public utility project is in the public good. The Section 248 process was established via 30 V.S.A. §248 and incorporates most of the review Act 250 criteria.

In situations where the interpretation of the Town Plan is required, it will be the responsibility of the Dover Planning Commission, in cooperation with the Dover Selectboard, to conduct a review and provide an opinion. Sections of the Town Plan that contain the language “should” are recommendations only. The language “could” or “may” are only suggestions as to the direction a project may or could take. The language “shall, will, or must” is mandatory.

### **1.5 Statewide Planning Goals**

The Dover Town Plan is consistent with the 14 statewide planning goals listed in 24 V.S.A. §4302. The objectives and policies in the Plan refine these statewide goals to reflect Dover’s priorities and will allow the Town make progress on furthering the goals, as outlined in the table below. The Town Plan incorporates these goals as Dover’s planning goals.

Statewide Planning Goal	Relevant Dover Town Plan Objectives or Policies
1. To plan development so as to maintain the historic settlement pattern of compact village and urban centers separated by rural countryside.	Chapter 4 – Land Use: Objective 1, 2, 3, and 4 Chapter 5 – Natural Resources: Objective 3 Chapter 7 – Housing: Objective 2
2. To provide a strong and diverse economy that provides satisfying and rewarding job opportunities and that maintains high environmental standards, and to expand economic opportunities in areas with high unemployment or low per capita incomes.	Chapter 3 – Economic Development: Objective 1, 2, and 3
3. To broaden access to educational and vocational training opportunities sufficient to ensure the full realization of the abilities of all Vermonters.	Chapter 6 – Community Facilities and Services: Policy 1.2
4. To provide for safe, convenient, economic and energy efficient transportation systems that respect the integrity of the natural environment, including public transit options and paths for pedestrians and bicyclers.	Chapter 8 – Transportation: Objective 1 and 2
5. To identify, protect, and preserve important natural and historic features of the Vermont landscape, including: significant natural and fragile areas; outstanding water resources, including lakes, rivers, aquifers, shorelands, and wetlands; significant scenic roads, waterways, and views; important historic structures, sites, or districts, archeological sites, and archeologically sensitive areas.	Chapter 4 – Land Use: Policy 1.2 Chapter 5 – Natural Resources: Objective 1 and 2 Chapter 10 – Community Resources: Objective 3 and 4
6. To maintain and improve the quality of air, water, wildlife, and land resources.	Chapter 5 – Natural Resources: Objective 1, 2, 3, and 4
7. To make efficient use of energy, provide for the development of renewable energy resources, and reduce emissions of greenhouse gases.	Chapter 8 – Transportation: Objective 2 Chapter 9 – Energy: Objective 1 and 2
8. To maintain and enhance recreational opportunities for Vermont residents and visitors.	Chapter 10 – Community Resources: Objective 1
9. To encourage and strengthen agricultural and forest industries.	Chapter 4 – Land Use: Objective 4 Chapter 5 – Natural Resources: Objective 3 Chapter 10 – Community Resources: Objective 4
10. To provide for the wise and efficient use of Vermont’s natural resources and to facilitate the appropriate extraction of earth resources and the proper restoration and preservation of the aesthetic qualities of the area.	Chapter 5 – Natural Resources: Policy 3.3

<b>Statewide Planning Goal</b>	<b>Relevant Dover Town Plan Objectives or Policies</b>
<b>11.</b> To ensure the availability of safe and affordable housing for all Vermonters.	Chapter 4 – Land Use: Objective 3 Chapter 7 – Housing: Objective 1 and 2
<b>12.</b> To plan for, finance, and provide an efficient system of public facilities and services to meet future needs.	Chapter 6 – Objective 1
<b>13.</b> To ensure the availability of safe and affordable child care and to integrate child care issues into the planning process, including child care financing, infrastructure, business assistance for child care providers, and child care work force development.	Chapter 6, Objective 2
<b>14.</b> To encourage flood resilient communities.	Chapter 11 – Flood Resilience: Objective 1 and 2

# CHAPTER 2

## COMMUNITY PROFILE

### 2.1 History

Dover was settled in 1770 by Captain Abner Perry of Holliston, Massachusetts, but the real history of the town began when a Vermont Charter signed by Governor Thomas Chittenden was granted on November 7, 1780 to William Ward of Newfane and sixty associates. This parcel of land contained approximately 26,464 acres and was incorporated into a township named Wardsborough.

The extensive clearing of land for subsistence farming reached its height in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century along with the residential population. Dover's population peaked at 894 residents in 1810 after which it began a slow but steady decline. By the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, farms were progressively abandoned and allowed to revert to forest. The resident population declined during this period due to emigration to the cities and better farming lands to the west. By 1940, the population had declined to 244. Many of the small industries that had sprung up throughout the town (i.e., gristmills, lumber mills, tanneries, cider mills, and chair factories) began to disappear as well.

The early 1900s brought the beginning of the tourist industry in the Deerfield Valley as 'summer people' began to come to the area. Summer residences were established on 'the Handle' and Cooper Hill. Many of the local residents began taking in summer boarders. People would come by train by way of Wilmington or Brattleboro to spend from one week to the whole summer at various farms throughout the town.

In 1953, Walter Schoenknecht purchased the Reuben Snow farm and turned it into the Mount Snow Ski Area. The summer boarders became a thing of the past, and practically everyone who had a spare room or attic began taking in skiers. As the time went on, lodges and motels began to spring up as well as restaurants, stores, and ski shops. During the early years, skiers were often brought to Mount Snow by sleigh or Bombardier when the road to the mountain was dirt and impassable for cars. A new access road, now Route 100, was built and paved. Vacation home development began to spring up near the base of the mountain.

Due to the physical growth beginning in the 1950s and into the early 1970s, community facilities needed to be redesigned and new services added. In the 1950s, the two remaining one room schools in town were closed and a new consolidated school for grades one through six was constructed on the Dover Common. The West Dover school building was sold to the Town and it was remodeled to be used as a Town Clerk's office. The Library moved from private homes to the upstairs of the building that is now the Town Office.

In 1968, the North Branch Fire District #1 was formed and construction on the Waste Treatment Plant and sewer lines began in 1971. The construction of this facility contributed greatly to the development of the area. Land that had been deemed unbuildable because it could not support a septic system could now be used for development. As a result, lots could be smaller allowing village-type development to begin to appear along the route of the sewer line. Wastewater

facilities also helped support the continued expansion of the Mount Snow Ski Area.

In 1971, the school building on the Dover Common was outgrown and a larger school was built at the top of the hill between East Dover and West Dover, known as the Dover School. A kindergarten was established soon thereafter. The Library moved into the old school building on the Common, and the Town Offices expanded to the second floor. In 1996, a large addition was added to the Dover School.

Growth also necessitated the establishment of a Police Department, which started in 1971 with one officer. After the first year, the department was enlarged to include a Police Chief and a patrolman and a station was established at the back of the Town Office. By the 1990s, the Department had grown to a Police Chief, four officers, and a secretary/dispatcher. In 1995, the old West Dover Fire Station was converted into a new police station.

The Town of Dover is served by two volunteer fire departments, one in East Dover and one in West Dover. Due to rapid growth on the west side of Dover and the lack of adequate firefighting equipment, and manpower, the Town took over the West Dover Fire Department. In 1995, a new Fire House was completed across Route 100 from the original firehouse. The East Dover Volunteer Fire Company, Inc. has remained independent, but receives annual allocations from the Town in order to operate and update equipment.

In 1967, the Town purchased a 40-acre parcel of land mid-way between East Dover and West Dover to locate a Town Landfill. The purchase also provided a place to build a Town Garage, and allowed the Town to purchase its own highway maintenance equipment. By 1992, the Landfill was closed due to State regulations. In its place a Transfer Station was constructed where residents could deposit their trash and recyclables.

Beginning in 1971, Mount Snow went through a series of ownership changes and new investments in the resort. Snowmaking and uphill capacity were increased in the late 1970s which corresponded with an increase in tourism and private home development through the 1980s. Mount Snow also established a Golf School in the late 1970s allowing it to become a year-round resort. The Grand Summit Hotel and Conference Center were added under the American Skiing Company ownership of the resort in the late 1990s. Mount Snow was purchased by Peak Resorts in 2007. Vail Resorts acquired Peak Resorts in 2019.

## **2.2 Topography**

The Town of Dover is in the center of southern Vermont, approximately equal distance from the boundaries of New York, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts. The entire Town is 22,912 acres and covers 35.8 square miles. It is characterized by high, mountainous terrain. Significant topographic characteristics include a mountain ridge that runs north to south across the western border of the community. A second ridge runs down the center of the community from the north, geographically separating the west half of Dover from the east half. These ranges have elevations reaching over 2,500 feet and are characterized by many fragile, thin soils and significantly steep slopes.

Roughly two-thirds of the Town lies in the southern end of the Green Mountains. Elevations range from 3,556 feet at Mount Pisgah (Mount Snow) to 2,350 feet at the Cooper Hill Inn, to 1,060 feet at the East Dover Fire Department, to 1,958 feet at the former Deerfield Valley Airport. The North Branch of the Deerfield River and its tributaries drain through the West Dover valley, while streams flowing through East Dover make up a portion of the headwaters of the Rock River, flowing down to the West River watershed. The eastern one-third of the Town slopes to the east forming a valley with a number of streams, the largest of which is the Rock River, which flows into Newfane at East Dover. This is at an elevation of 1,000 feet, the lowest in Town.

## **2.3 Geology and Ecology**

Dover's geology consists of tilted metamorphic rock, mostly gneiss and schist. The area was heavily glaciated up to 10,000 years ago, leaving deposits of boulders, gravel, sand and clays in the valleys, with exposed bedrock in the higher areas, now covered with a thin layer of topsoil. Aside from small veins of high-grade iron ore, mined briefly over a century ago, and occasional limestone outcropping, there are no mineral resources in Dover other than glacial deposits of sand and gravel.

The major soil association found in Dover is Houghtonville-Rawsonville-Mundel. These soils are comprised of deep, loamy glacial till and support a forest vegetation of northern hardwoods. In a few gently sloping to moderately steep areas, for example in the eastern one-third of the Town, lands have been cleared and are suited for farming. In most areas, however, these soils are not suited to cultivate crops and hay because of stones and boulders on the surface. The potential productivity for trees on these soils ranges from moderate to very high, depending on the species. In very steep areas, slope limits the use of these soils as sites for dwellings and septic systems. Depth of bedrock and seasonal high-water table also limit the development potential of these soils.

Dover's high elevation results in a relatively harsh climate with cold winters and heavy snowfall. When Dover was settled, the landscape was forested with both evergreen and deciduous trees. The forests were extensively lumbered and cleared for subsistence farming in the 1800s, creating habitat for deer and smaller forest edge animals. In the 1900s, second growth forests replaced the original forests on much of the once-cleared land.

The North Branch of the Deerfield River flows in a shallow, broad course meandering through West Dover's former agricultural and forestlands. The tributaries of the river that originate in Dover are Blue Brook, Ellis Brook, Cheney Brook, Negus Brook, and Cold Brook. Some of these tributaries contain unaltered, natural segments that cascade over steep terrain. There are various wetlands and other water-related natural features associated with this drainage basin.

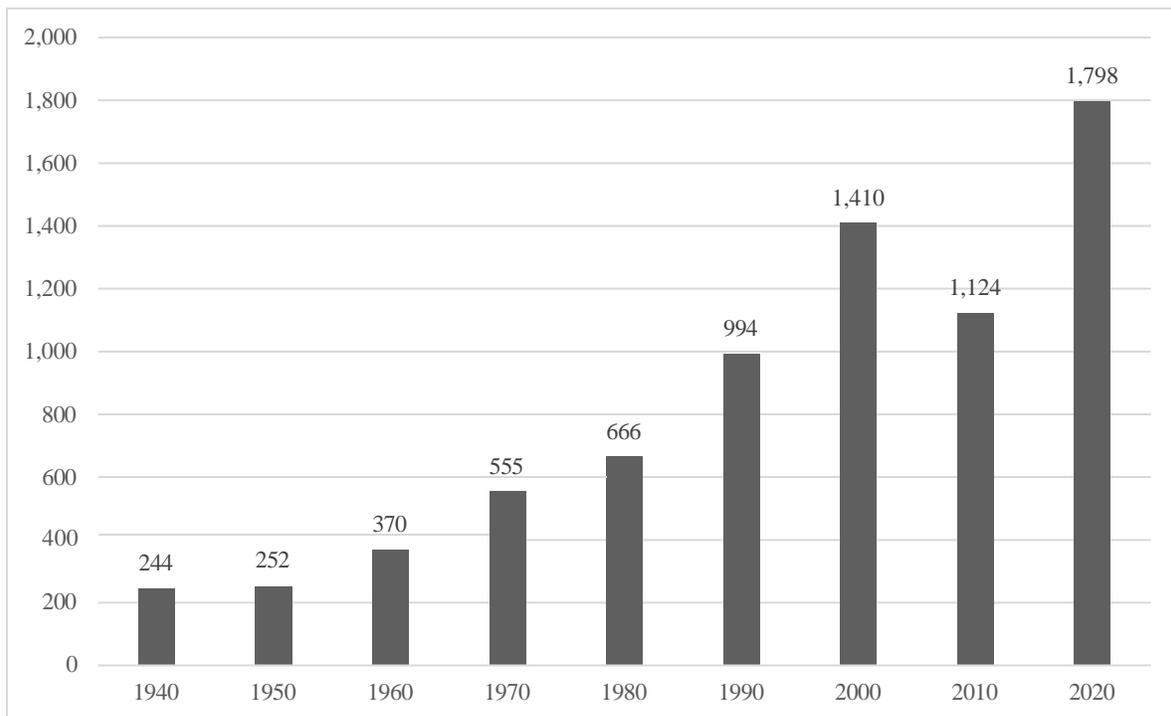
## **2.4 Population**

The following section provides a summary of key demographic data and trends in Dover. This section addresses population growth and characteristics. Data on housing characteristics can be found in the Housing Chapter and data on economic characteristics can be found in the Economic Development Chapter.

### **Resident Population Trends**

Dover’s population increased by 674 between 2010 and 2020 to 1,798 residents, a growth rate of approximately 60%. This follows a population decline between the 2000 and 2010 census. The 2020 Census counted where people resided as of April 2020 during the height of the COVID- 19 Pandemic at a time when many second homeowners had temporarily relocated to Dover because of the perceived relative safety of Vermont. Some of the population growth between 2010 and 2020 may be attributed to this. Time will tell whether those that relocated to the area during the Pandemic will continue to make Dover their primary place of residence.

**Figure 2-1: Year-Round Resident Population, 1940-2020**



*Source: US Census*

As indicated in Table 2-1 below, Dover’s growth rate has generally surpassed that of the neighboring towns as well as Windham County and the State of Vermont from decade to decade going back to 1980, except the decline between 2000 and 2010. As noted, Dover saw a 60% growth rate from 2010 – 2020 and other communities in the region with a high percentage of seasonal homes saw a similarly high growth rate, including Stratton and Wilmington.

**Table 2-1: Population Trends, 1980-2020**

	<b>1980</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>% Rate of Growth, 2010 - 2020</b>
Dover	666	994	1,410	1,124	1,798	60%
Newfane	1,129	1,555	1,680	1,726	1,645	-5%
Wilmington	1,808	1,968	2,225	1,876	2,255	20%
Marlboro	695	924	978	1,078	1,722	60%
Wardsboro	505	654	854	900	869	-3%
Stratton	122	121	136	216	440	104%
Windham County	36,933	41,588	44,216	44,513	45,905	3%
Vermont	511,456	562,758	608,827	625,741	643,077	3%

*Source: US Census*

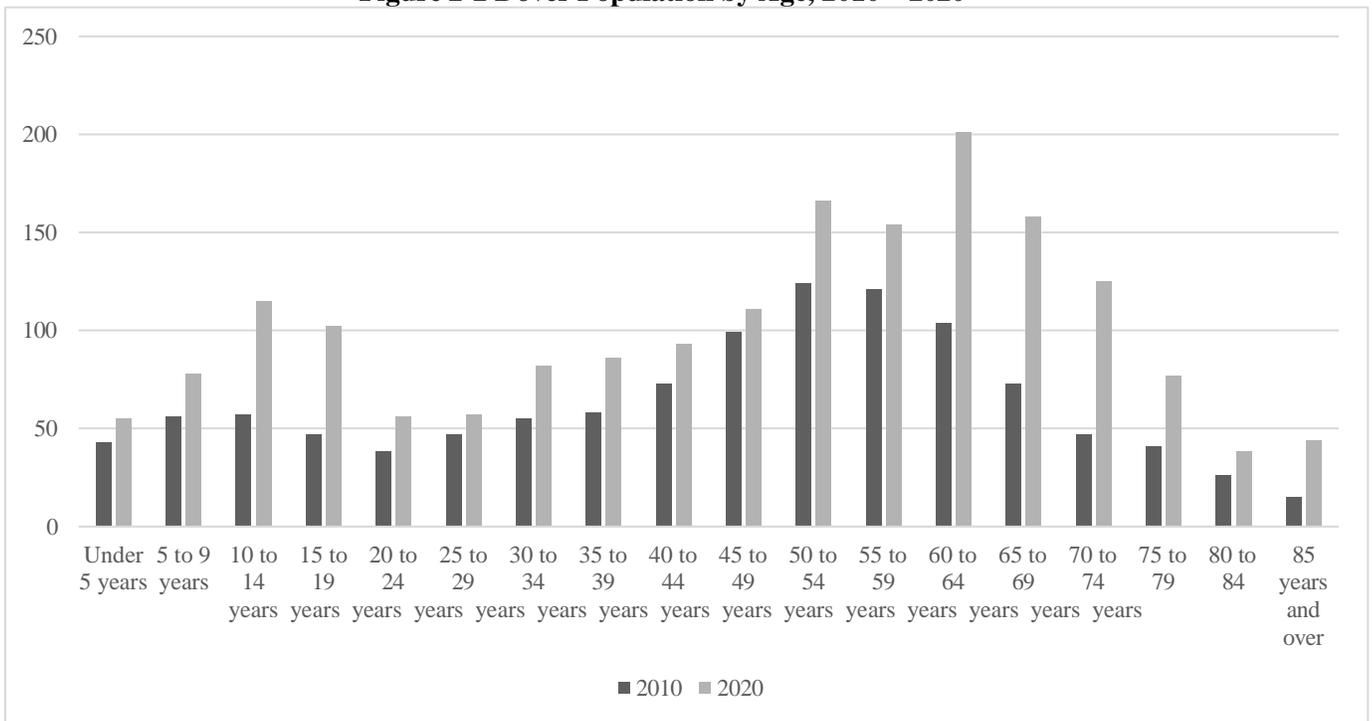
### **Seasonal Population**

In resort communities like Dover, it is important to recognize the consequences of the visitor population. Dover’s population varies significantly over the course of the year. Once primarily a winter resort town, Dover has experienced an increase in the number of visitors during the summer and fall. The high proportion of seasonal units in Dover (approximately 80%) provides a measure of seasonal population flux. This can have a significant impact on community facilities, services, and infrastructure.

### **Age Distribution**

As shown in Figure 2-2 below, the largest increase in age cohorts between 2010 and 2020 was residents aged 60 to 74 years in age. This is a trend that is occurring statewide and has significant implications in terms of providing services and housing to meet the needs of aging residents. However, at the same time there was a reverse in the decline in school-aged children with the group aged 5 to 19 years increasing from 160 in 2010 to 308 in 2020. As discussed in the Community Facilities and Services Chapter, the current number of elementary and secondary students appears to be lower than these numbers, which may also be a result of families with children relocating to Dover temporarily during the pandemic. While there was growth in the age groups in prime working age, this growth was significantly less than those aged 60 years or older.

**Figure 2-2 Dover Population by Age, 2010 – 2020**



Source: U.S. Census

**Race and Ethnicity**

Dover’s population become more diverse between 2010 and 2020, reflecting a similar trend seen region-wide. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, 95.6 percent of the population identified as white and this dropped to 92.3 percent in the 2020 Census. The group not identifying as white with the largest increase in Dover were those identifying as two or more races, which increased from 1.5 to 2.1 percent of the population. The percentage of the population of Hispanic or Latino heritage also increased from 1.6 to 3.4 percent between 2010 and 2020.

# CHAPTER 3

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### 3.1 Economic and Workforce Characteristics

#### Local Businesses and Workforce

Dover’s economic base relies heavily on the recreation industry and the large number of seasonal homes in the community. According to the Vermont Department of Labor, as of 2022 there were 31 businesses in Dover in the leisure and hospitality sector and 16 in the construction sector. Other large sectors included professional, scientific, and technical services with 32 businesses and administrative and support services with 20 businesses.

According to the 2016-2020 American Community Survey, the arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food service industries employ the largest number of workers (108) who reside in Dover (see Table 3-1). These activities largely serve visitors and are strongly affected by the amount of disposable income they have to spend. Dover also has a high number of residents (71) working in construction, which is supported by the high number of seasonal dwelling units in the Deerfield Valley and the need for home maintenance and repair work. Between 2010 and 2020, there was also a noticeable increase in residents working in finance, insurance and real estate, rental and leasing industries from 44 to 102. This may be in part due to an increase in remote work opportunities in these types of businesses.

**Table 3-1: Employment by Industry of Dover Residents, Age 16 and Older**

Industry	Total Employed		Percent Employed	
	2010	2020	2010	2020
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting & mining	12	0	2%	0%
Construction	82	71	12%	14%
Manufacturing	46	21	7%	4%
Transportation and warehousing	21	30	3%	6%
Wholesale trade	25	3	4%	1%
Retail trade	35	45	5%	9%
Information and communication	0	14	0%	3%
Finance, insurance and real estate, rental and leasing	44	102	6%	20%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food	207	108	30%	21%
Educational, health and social services	103	80	15%	16%
Other professional services	65	32	9%	6%
Other services	29	0	4%	0%
Public administration	24	9	3%	2%

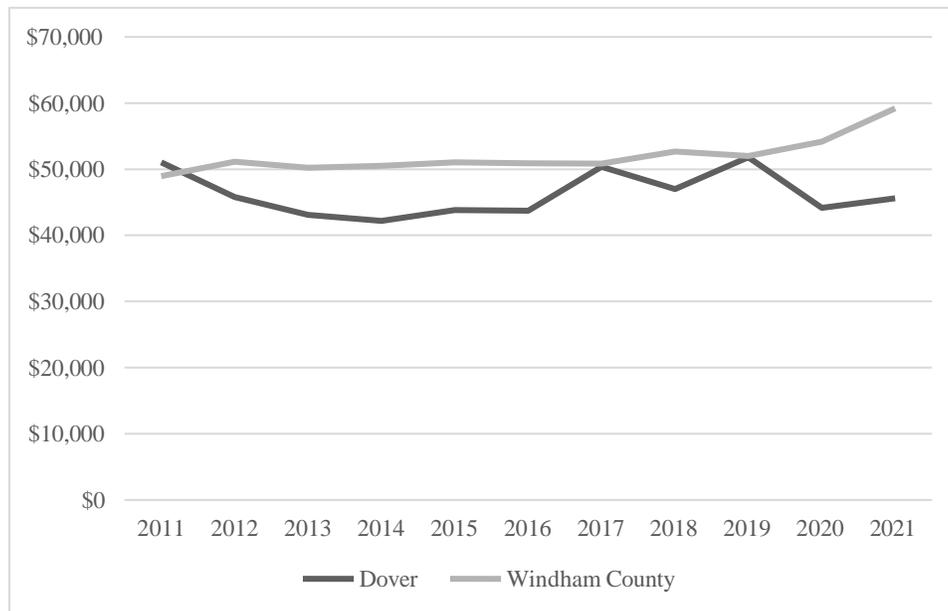
Source: Vermont Department of Labor

Between 2010 and 2020, the overall number of residents in the workforce decreased from 693 to 515. Part of this decrease was from the number of employees in the arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food sector dropping from 207 to 108, which may be temporary due to business closures during the COVID pandemic. However, Dover’s population is also aging and there is expected to be a continued decrease in the local workforce as more residents retire in the upcoming years. A shrinking labor force puts strains on local businesses as they may struggle to find the right types of workers to fill open positions.

**Median Household Income**

While Figure 3-1 below shows the median household income in Dover has declined over the last decade, there are several factors that may be contributing to inaccuracies in this data. For example, there was a decline in median household income between 2019 and 2021 that may be a result of the local tourism economy being impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and temporary business closures. It is also important to note that as the population ages and residents retire more are relying on social security, which may not be counted as income. This will have the effect of reducing the median household income.

**Figure 3-1: Median Household Income Dover vs. Windham County, 2011 – 2021**



Source: US Census

Another factor is the significant role of tourism for the local economy. Jobs in these industries have lower average earnings and also higher levels of seasonality. Table 3-2 below shows the occupational wage estimates for the southern area of Vermont as of April 2023 according to the Vermont Department of Labor. This data shows the mean annual wages for many occupations in the tourism industry, along with other large employment sectors for Dover residents like construction and education, have mean annual wages below the Windham County median household income.

**Table 3-2: Occupational Wage Estimates for the Southern Balance of Vermont, April 2023**

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Mean Hourly Wage</b>	<b>Mean Annual Wages</b>
Retail Salespersons	\$18.83	\$39,170
Construction and Extraction Occupations	\$24.31	\$50,570
Educational Instruction and Library Occupations	\$29.40	\$61,150
Cooks, Restaurant	\$18.77	\$39,050
Waiters and Waitresses	\$21.49	\$44,700
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	\$18.77	\$39,040
Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	\$15.82	\$32,910
Cashiers	\$14.25	\$29,640
Childcare Workers	\$16.79	\$34,920
Office and Administrative Support Occupations	\$21.46	\$44,630

*Source: Vermont Department of Labor*

Lower median household incomes and annual wages can mean that residents are struggling with keeping up with increasing costs of housing, transportation, health care, and other essential goods and services. Businesses may have a harder time recruiting workers if they are not able to provide wages that allows workers to find affordable housing. There is also less money circulating in the local economy, which can be detrimental to businesses, especially service-based industries like retail, personal services, and restaurants.

### **3.2 Current and Future Economic Development Programs**

The following section provides a summary of current economic development programs managed by the town’s Economic Development Department and identifies areas for future work. The town collects a 1% option tax on rooms and meals, lodging and goods sold as a means to implement economic development strategies for the community. The main focus areas are: community events, marketing, improving broadband and cellular service, trails and recreation, business assistance programs, housing, and Route 100 beautification. The overarching approach to economic development and job creation in Dover is creating a business-friendly environment that focuses on building on the town’s existing local assets.

Dover’s economic development work builds on past planning efforts, including the Strategic Economic Development Plan for Dover and Wilmington by Mullin Associates (2009), Housing Analysis & Master Plan for Dover and Wilmington by Camoin Associates (2019), Dover Trails & Recreation Master Plan by Weston & Sampson (2020), and the Deerfield Valley Strategic Marketing Plan by Charrette Agency (2020). Dover and the adjacent town of Wilmington have also created a Bi-Town Economic Development Committee that assists the two towns with the implementation of the goals and strategies identified in these studies.

## **Community Events**

The community event sponsorship program is designed to assist in the sponsorship of large activities in Dover that help attract visitors to the area and increase revenue for local establishments. Grant funds are intended to supplement the budget of the sponsoring organization and typically range between \$5,000 and \$15,000. The town is working towards increasing interest in events during non-peak periods, such as April 1 – September 1 and October 15 – December 15, when there tends to be fewer visitors. Examples of events that have received town funding include the Wine and Harvest Festival and the Blueberry Festival, which are both overseen by the Deerfield Valley Chamber of Commerce.

The town also hosts a summer concert series at the Dover Town Park, which includes a gazebo, picnic tables, playground, and shade trees. Concerts are held on Wednesday and Sunday during the summer months. These events add to the quality of life for residents and offer cultural activities for visitors.

## **Marketing**

In 2020, the Bi-Town Economic Development Committee hired the Charrette Agency to complete a 5-year strategic marketing plan for the Deerfield Valley Chamber of Commerce using funds from the towns' 1% local option tax. The plan includes a vision statement and guiding principles with the goal of increasing tourism in the Deerfield Valley especially in the summer and shoulder seasons. Recommended action steps include:

- Building a compelling and authentic brand for the Deerfield Valley
- Capturing high-quality photography and videography of the area for advertising purposes
- Completing a redesign of the Deerfield Valley Chamber of Commerce website
- Increase presence on social media, including Facebook and Instagram
- Building relationships with travel writers, digital travel bloggers, and local broadcast journalists to increase media coverage and interest in the region

The towns of Dover and Wilmington have hired a consultant marketing director to oversee the implementation of the marketing plan. The plan will be implemented over the next several years.

## **Telecommunication**

As discussed in the Community Facilities and Services Chapter, telecommunications infrastructure has been improving in Dover in recent years. In 2022, Fidium Fiber completed a build out of its fiber network and now can provide service to every property within a poles distance of its fiber lines. Dover is part of the Deerfield Valley Communication Union District (DVFiber), which expects to build out its fiber infrastructure in town by 2025 providing more service options for residents. Duncan Cable also provides fiber and non-fiber internet connectivity in some areas of the Town.

There is currently good cellular coverage along Route 100, Handle Road, Dover Hill Road and around the Mount Snow resort, but service can be more limited in other areas of town depending on the provider. Currently, Verizon and AT&T maintain cell towers in the community. Verizon recently installed a Cell on Wheels (COW) at Mount Snow to boost its coverage. This should also help alleviate stress on the larger cellular network.

While broadband and cellular service options are relatively good in Dover, the town continues to monitor and keep up with community needs as technology evolves. There is an opportunity to support and encourage more remote work for Dover residents, second homeowners, and visitors, but this depends on the availability of high-quality and reliable internet and cellular service. Increasing remote work opportunities would benefit the local economy as visitors and second homeowners may be able to extend their time in Dover and provide more revenue to local businesses.

### **Trails and Recreation**

Trails and recreation are overseen by the Economic Development Department. The town recognizes that these amenities help improve local quality of life and attract and retain residents, and also contribute significantly to economic development as they bring visitors to the community. For example, the town is working on completing a professional level 18-hole disc golf course on the Horace Hill property purchased in 2019. This type of facility is not available elsewhere in the region and is expected to attract more visitors, especially in the summer season.

Weston & Sampson completed a Dover Trails & Recreation Master Plan for the town in 2020. The plan includes an implementation strategy that the town is using as a road map as it works towards enhancing and expanding trail and recreational resources. In addition to the Horace Hill project, the plan recommends other additional recreational amenities and facilities and the expansion of the Valley Trail. Past plans had called for the expansion of the Valley Trail south on Route 100, but due to cost increases this is no longer being pursued and the priority is to extend this trail north towards Mount Snow.

A significant goal in the Trails & Recreation Master Plan is for the town to create a separate Recreation Department considering the increasing number of municipal facilities and the focus on recreation. This would allow the Economic Development Department to focus on other economic development programs and strategies.

### **Business Assistance Programs**

The town has developed a variety of different programs to assist local businesses, as described below. The town regularly reviews these programs for effectiveness and makes changes and introduces new programs based on business needs. The Town is also considering future funding programs to promote energy efficiency projects and the installation of EV charging stations at local businesses.

#### *Dover Advertising Support Program*

The Dover Advertising Support Program assists local businesses with the cost of national, regional, or local advertising campaigns. The program is funded annually and distributed quarterly on a first come, first served basis.

#### *Dover Technical Assistance Program*

The Dover Technical Assistance Program (DTAP) connects local businesses with third-party providers such as staffing agencies, marketing and branding firms, professional service providers, and architectural services to address common business needs. DTAP has an application process and the town rebates 75% of the approved project cost up to a maximum of \$2,500.

### *DO-IT Program*

The DO-IT Program is an initiative to assist businesses with rehabilitating the exterior of commercial properties. Properties must be visible from Route 100 or other major town roads or the Valley Trail. Examples of eligible projects include painting, siding, roofing, paving of parking lots, and adding outdoor dining spaces. The program has an application process and the town rebates 75% of the project cost up to a maximum of \$5,000.

### *Tax Stabilization Program*

The Dover Tax Stabilization Program is meant to encourage economic development, diversify and grow the tax base, provide employment opportunities, and improve commercial and industrial properties. The length of the tax stabilization is 10 years. For the first year, the municipal property taxes remain the same as prior to the improvements, after which every year there is a 10% increase based on the value from the improvements. The town has an adopted policy for this program that authorizes the Selectboard to approve applications that are then ratified by town voters at a regular or special Town Meeting.

### *Dover Commercial Signage Improvement Program*

The Dover Commercial Signage Improvement Program assists business with improving signage to encourage additional traffic to their business. Funding is distributed on a first come, first served basis up to 50% of the project cost with a maximum award of \$2,000.

### *Revolving Loan Fund*

The town works with the Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation (BDCC) to offer revolving loans for new and existing businesses. Loans may be up to \$50,000 and include a 10% match from BDCC as technical assistance for business start-ups and a 10% match from the town of Dover in the form of an interest rate buy-down on the loan for its first 12 months.

## **Housing**

Recognizing the critical importance of providing affordable housing options to retain and recruit employees, the Bi-Town Economic Development Committee created a sub-committee in 2017 to address housing needs. The sub-committee meets on a monthly basis to discuss challenges, opportunities, and strategies for housing in the Deerfield Valley. The towns maintain the Deerfield Valley Housing website, which provides resources for tenants, landlords, and prospective homeowners. Dover is considering incentive programs for long-term rentals and accessory dwelling units, and short-term rental ordinance and registration. These efforts are discussed in more detail in the Housing Chapter.

## **Route 100 Beautification**

The objective of the Route 100 beautification program is to enhance the aesthetics of this commercial corridor. This has included installing flower barrels and landscaping on commercial properties. The town has a goal of developing a more consistent sign plan that would include updating road banners on Route 100 and the signage for municipal facilities on the corridor.

### 3.3 Objectives, Policies, and Actions

**Objective 1:** Retain and increase the local workforce.

**Policy 1.1:** Provide for recreational facilities and opportunities and social and cultural events that enhance the local quality of life for residents.

*Actions*

- a. Implement the recommendations in the Dover Trails and Recreation Master Plan.
- b. Continue to offer the Dover summer concert series and support a grant program for large events.
- c. Explore opportunities for additional town-sponsored arts and cultural events at town facilities.
- d. Promote social connection programs such as Vermont Welcome Wagon and the Southern Vermont Young Professionals network.

**Policy 1.2:** Create adequate housing affordable to a range of income levels.

*See Housing Chapter for recommended action steps*

**Policy 1.3:** Actively promote remote work by current residents, seasonal homeowners, and visitors.

*Actions*

- a. Explore opportunities for creating co-working spaces in the Deerfield Valley.
- b. Review and update zoning bylaws to support home-based businesses.

**Objective 2:** Create an environment that supports existing businesses and promotes the creation of new businesses.

**Policy 2.1:** Provide and promote programs and incentives that support local businesses, enhance community aesthetics, and increase the local tax base.

*Actions:*

- a. Continue to fund and promote existing business incentive programs using the 1% local option tax funds.
- b. Develop new business incentive programs to meet evolving needs of businesses, such as energy efficiency and electric vehicle charging stations.
- c. Highlight success stories of local businesses that have used town programs and incentives on the town's website and other communications from the town.
- d. Promote business assistance programs and services provided by the Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation.

**Policy 2.2:** Ensure that local land use regulations support business growth and development.

*Actions:*

- a. Review and update zoning bylaws to support desired business growth and development in appropriate locations in town while also ensuring environmental, public infrastructure, and community character impacts are addressed.

**Policy 2.3:** Participate in local and regional efforts to understand and respond to the needs of local businesses.

*Actions:*

- a. Continue to support town participation on the Bi-Town Economic Development Committee
- b. Meet with local businesses on a regular basis to understand current issues and challenges.
- c. Continue to participate in regional economic development planning through working with Southeastern Vermont Economic Development Strategies on development and implementation of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.

**Policy 2.4:** Improve marketing of the town as a means of increasing tourism and business revenue.

*Actions:*

- a. Implement the Deerfield Valley Strategic Marketing Plan in coordination with the town of Wilmington.
- b. Develop a plan and provide funding to update road banners on Route 100 and the signage for municipal facilities on the corridor.

**Objective 3:** Provide, maintain, and improve the physical infrastructure needed to support businesses

**Policy 3.1:** Maintain and improve public facilities and transportation networks.

*Actions:*

- a. Review and update capital plans on an annual basis and ensure adequate funds are being provided for local road, sidewalk, and trails needs.
- b. Work with the Vermont Agency of Transportation to coordinate and plan for road improvements along Route 100 with an emphasis on minimizing curb cuts, improving pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and installing traffic calming measures and landscaping.
- c. Pursue the development of a municipal water system.

**Policy 3.2:** Promote the development of modern communication facilities of all types to meet the long-range needs of the community and for economic development.

*Actions:*

- a. Ensure the Town continues to appoint a representative and alternates to the Deerfield Valley Communications District Governing Board to represent the community's interest.
- b. Establish public and private partnerships to pursue the expansion of telecommunications infrastructure.

# CHAPTER 4

## LAND USE

### 4.1 Existing Land Use

Dover has experienced several dramatic development growth periods over the last 40 years. Much of this growth took place in the 1980s during a time when no zoning regulations were in place and as a result development has spread out in a manner that does not always reflect the best use of land given its resource values. Some large lots have been subdivided into smaller lots for residential use at densities that are higher than can be accommodated given the characteristics of the land. Some development has taken place on land originally having important economic and scenic resource values that contributed to maintaining the traditional Vermont character.

Land use and settlement patterns have been significantly influenced by the presence and development of the Mount Snow resort over time. Most of the residential development that has occurred over the last 40 years is in response to the demand for housing and services by resort users. Much of the commercial development in the community is service-based and found along Route 100.

The Existing Land Use map shows land use of individual parcels as it exists in Dover in 2023. This map is different from the Prospective Land Use map, which shows a generalized land use future vision of areas across the town to be achieved through the Town's Zoning Bylaw and other means. Using a parcel map as the basis, the existing land use categories were initially derived from land use categories used by the listers and then refined using additional GIS-based information. Additional information regarding public ownership, conservation easements, and whether a parcel is enrolled in Vermont's Use Value Appraisal program is included on the map. A more detailed description of the existing land uses is as follows:

#### *Residential Development*

Residential uses represent one of the largest uses of land in Dover. There are a variety of lot sizes, ranging from small lots of less than an acre in size to large lots of greater than 27 acres. Housing units are scattered throughout the town, with larger lots and lower density development primarily in East Dover. Higher intensity residential development, a large amount of which are multi-family units and townhomes, is concentrated in West Dover and was developed to be close to Mount Snow.

#### *Commercial Development*

Commercial development is concentrated along Route 100 and in and around the base of Mount Snow. The commercial uses in Dover consist of a mix of retail, personal and professional services, restaurants, and lodging. Dover's commercial uses are primarily automobile-dependent.

#### *Industrial/Utility Development*

Industrial/utility land uses are very limited in Dover. Current industrial/utility uses include the vacant Deerfield Valley Airport site, the Fire District wastewater spray fields, and telephone and

power utility buildings.

#### *Public Services/Cultural*

The public services/cultural land use category includes facilities such as the Town Hall, Town Office, Dover Town Park, fire stations, police station, transfer station, school, churches, library, and cemeteries. These facilities are generally concentrated in or just outside of the villages of West Dover and East Dover, at the Dover Common, and on Route 100.

#### *Open Land*

Open lands are primarily forested and serve many purposes, including a scenic backdrop, source for wood products, habitat for wildlife, game for hunting, maple products, and recreation. Much of the forestland is within the Green Mountain National Forest and additional lands that fall within the proclamation boundary that establishes lands that the Forest Service could acquire in the future. There are several parcels under conservation easements held by the Vermont Land Trust or the Trust for Public Lands. The Dover Town Forest is located in the north central portion of the community. The balance of forestland is in private, non-industrial ownership.

## **4.2 Prospective Land Use**

Prospective land use is largely determined by the pattern of existing land uses and any human or physical constraints that make development environmentally or economically prohibitive. To encourage a pattern of residential, commercial, industrial and recreational development that conforms to the goals and policies outlined in the Town Plan, the following land use classifications have been developed to guide growth and development in Dover.

### **Resource Conservation District**

Resource Conservation District lands are so designated because of their special and unique value to the public and to the region's ecosystems. Lands within this district primarily include land over 2,500 feet, publicly-owned lands (either town or federal), steep slopes, and wetlands. There are also some lands in the district that are already developed as low-density residential. These have been included because of the important wildlife functions of the land.

The purpose of the Resource Conservation District is to maintain large, contiguous blocks of forestland for the purposes of encouraging forest stewardship, protecting environmentally sensitive areas, allowing animals to access suitable habitat to meet their needs, and continuing to provide attractive areas for recreational use such as hunting, fishing, hiking, skiing, and horseback riding.

Permitted uses are restricted to forestry and open space public recreational uses. Very low density (27-acre minimum lot size) residential development with a limited number of accessory uses, camps, campgrounds, kennels, and ski facilities are conditionally permitted in the District.

### **Productive Residential District**

The Productive Residential District includes land that is outside of the Resource Conservation District and the more densely settled Residential, Commercial, Resort, and Village Districts.

These are areas that are easily accessible by the existing road network and still maintain the rural character of Dover that is characterized by extensive woodlands, some agricultural land, and low-density residential development. These areas can support limited growth due to the topography and soil conditions while preserving the rural landscape and scenic and natural resources.

There are two purposes of the Productive Residential District. The first is to recognize and provide for the continuation of lands that have economic value when in productive use for agriculture or forestry. The second purpose is to preserve the rural character of Dover while accommodating low density (5-acre minimum lot size) residential development that avoids the need for public water or sewer supplies.

Agriculture, forestry, low-density (5-acre minimum lot size) residential development, and limited low-intensity commercial uses (e.g., Bed and Breakfasts, home occupations, campgrounds, country stores, cultural facilities, schools, snowmaking facilities, and veterinary clinics) are appropriate in the district.

### **Village District**

The Village District is made up of areas that provide the best example of traditional Vermont settlement pattern. The existing villages are West Dover and East Dover. These areas have relatively moderate densities of residential, civic, and small-scale commercial uses and are characterized by older historic buildings or newer buildings with traditional/historic designs and architectural features. Lot sizes are generally less than one acre in size. Development density in both West Dover and East Dover Village is limited by a lack of a centralized water supply, and in East Dover by a centralized wastewater system. The purpose of the Village District is to continue the historic development centers of Dover by encouraging compact, compatible, mixed-use development.

Appropriate uses in the Village District include residential dwellings, civic uses, personal services, professional offices, and small-scale commercial uses. Lot sizes should be one acre or less so long as the capacity of the soil to handle wastewater is not exceeded and the required well isolation distances can be met. For areas served by the wastewater system in West Dover, residential densities of a minimum of 5 units per acre should be encouraged.

### **Residential District**

The Residential District includes land that has already been committed to residential development. Much of the land in the Residential District has been subdivided into large housing developments. There are five areas zoned as Residential Districts: 1) surrounding the Commercial District northwest of West Dover Village; 2) adjacent to East Dover Village; 3) an area off Dover Hill Road that includes developments off Heritage Road, Antler Loop, and Schoolhouse Road; 4) an area off Valley View Road that includes developments off Village Loop and Ellis Brook Road; and 5) an area off Route 100 and Cross Town Road that includes developments on Sawmill Village Way, Springhill Road, and Burchard Road. These areas are located near existing village areas and services are readily accessible by the Town's existing road system. While many of these residential neighborhoods have been fully built out, there are a number of vacant lots that may provide opportunities for in-fill development.

The purpose of the Residential District is to preserve areas of Town that are suitable for one and two-family dwellings and to assure those who build houses in these areas that they may continue to dwell in their surroundings, free from the distraction of business, traffic noise and odor. The Residential District includes areas with smaller lot size and lesser frontage than other areas of town suitable for residential development.

Primary uses in the Residential District include single-family and two-family dwellings. Home occupations and home businesses, subject to appropriate standards, and other normal customary accessory uses shall also be permitted.

### **Planned Commercial District**

The Planned Commercial District encompasses lands along Route 100 to the north and south of the village of West Dover that have experienced substantial commercial development. The purpose of the Planned Commercial District is to serve the commercial needs of residents and visitors in an area with convenient access by:

- Allowing a mixture of complimentary land uses that includes housing, retail, offices, commercial services, and civic uses to create economic and social vitality and to encourage the linking of trips;
- Developing commercial and mixed-use areas that are safe, comfortable, and attractive to pedestrians, bicyclists, and public transit users;
- Providing flexibility in the siting and design of new developments and redevelopment;
- Encouraging efficient land use by facilitating compact, high-density development and minimizing the amount of land that is needed for surface parking; and
- Maintaining mobility along the corridor.

A wide range of uses should be permitted in the Commercial District including housing, retail stores, gas stations, restaurants, lodging facilities, and a range of professional, service, and recreational uses. Site planning is critical to achieving the purposes of the Planned Commercial District. Pedestrian sidewalks and bicycle paths along the roadway and between the businesses will enhance pedestrian safety and help reduce trips along Route 100. Access management will minimize traffic congestion and safety hazards. Special attention should be given to building and site design so that commercial and residential development is attractive, well-planned, and fosters a community identity. Given the availability of wastewater in this area and the proximity to commercial and public services, high-density residential development at a minimum of 5 units per acre should be encouraged in this district.

### **Light Industrial District**

The Light Industrial District includes areas with a concentration of existing industrial and warehousing uses such as the Town transfer station and Town Garage off Dover Hill Road and North Branch Fire District's spray fields and immediate areas adjacent thereto. It is the most intensive land use category.

The purpose of the Light Industrial District is to provide areas for light industry such as warehousing, manufacturing, and related operations that have a non-objectionable effect on the surrounding area and the community as a whole. The intent is to reserve these areas exclusively

for light industrial and related purposes.

Primary uses in the Light Industrial District should include the following and similar uses: light industrial and manufacturing uses, and storage. Residential uses are not encouraged. As these districts are relatively small and surrounded by residential areas, it is critical that screening be provided and other site design requirements be considered to avoid adverse impacts on neighboring properties.

### **Airport Redevelopment District**

The Airport Redevelopment District includes the land area of the former Deerfield Valley Regional Airport that was closed in 2019. This property was previously designated as Light Industrial in the 2016 Town Plan and is currently zoned Light Industrial District. The property is constrained due to its only having access from a private dirt road through a residential neighborhood. The property also extends into the town of Wilmington.

While there have not been discussions about an alternative use of the property, the site may be better suited for a mix of residential uses rather than light industrial. Given the flat terrain and openness of the site, this could also be a good area for a small-scale solar installation. Further studies and consultation with the property owner and the Town of Wilmington are needed to determine the most suitable uses for this property.

### **Resort Center District**

The Resort Center District is comprised of lands that have already been committed to resort-related residential and commercial development. This district is comprised of the Mount Snow base area as well as some land extending from Snow Vista south to Carinthia.

The purpose of the Resort Center District is to provide for tourist, resort development in the form of single-family, two-family, and multi-family units intended for use as resort lodging as well as motels and hotels. The District also provides for commercial recreation facilities and for commercial development aimed at serving visitors. The commercial development is meant to primarily service the market created by the needs and desires of the tourist population accessing the resort area.

Primary uses in the Resort Center District include a broad range of residential, non-residential, and lodging uses. Compact development is desired in this area to protect open spaces and to prevent a linear pattern of development. Pedestrian and bicycle facilities should be provided to connect with the larger transportation network in town.

### **Vacation District**

The Vacation District includes several resort-related residential developments in the area around Mount Snow, including Greenspring, Timber Creek, and Boulder Ridge. The purpose of the Vacation District is to provide for tourist, resort development in the form of single-family, two-family, and multi-family units in close proximity to Mount Snow but at a lower density than the Resort Center District. Residential uses should be at a density of one unit per half (1/2) acre.

### **Other Land Use Concerns**

The Town, throughout various elements of this Town Plan, identifies a variety of natural resources and areas of environmental concern, including: floodplain areas, river corridors, wildlife corridors, and wetlands. The density and impact of existing and potential development in and around each of these areas are the primary issues concerning these resources.

Dover's Floodplain Zones are based on the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) *Flood Insurance Rate Maps*. According to FloodReady Vermont's website, there are 76 occupied structures in the Special Flood Hazard Area. Most structures are located in West Dover along the North Branch of the Deerfield River and Route 100, and along Blue Brook. In the village of East Dover, there is a concentration of vulnerable structures at the confluence of Taft Brook with the Rock River. Development in Special Flood Hazards must meet additional standards to ensure that the development is protected against flood damage.

River Corridors are mapped by the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources and include areas susceptible to fluvial erosion from flooding. There is significant overlap between floodplain areas and river corridors in Dover. Additional segments of Ellis Brook and the Rock River are shown as being River Corridors, but do not fall within the Special Flood Hazard Area. Adams Brook is classified as a River Corridor, but no segments of this waterway in Dover are located in the Special Flood Hazard Area. A recommended action step in the Town Plan is to consider adopting fluvial erosion hazard regulations as part of the Town's zoning bylaws.

Dover has a landscape-scale Sensitive Wildlife Habitat Overlay District designated within the community. This overlay is designed to protect black bear migration areas where the bear are known to travel between their dens and food sources. The Zoning Bylaw mandates review of developments by the Vermont Department of Fish & Wildlife District Biologist and encourages clustering development within the overlay to promote additional open space and habitat.

## **4.3 Land Use Implementation**

East Dover and West Dover Designated Village Centers were first approved by the Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development in 2010 and last renewed in 2021. The next renewal date for both designations will be in 2029. The boundaries for these centers are shown on the Village Center Map. This State designation offers financial assistance to landowners of income-producing buildings through tax credits for historic structures, façade improvements, and code improvements. Additionally, this designation gives the town priority consideration in several Vermont grant programs. The Village Center designations achieve the following goals:

- Furthering the intent of the Land Use Chapter: East and West Dover Villages are important historic mixed-use districts. The Town Plan identifies the need to make public and private physical improvements in these areas. Continued designation will focus additional resources to help these areas thrive.
- Preserving significant historic, architectural, and cultural heritage: The access to historic tax credits and code improvement tax credits will support redevelopment of older and historic properties, preserving the historic character of these Designated Village Centers.
- Providing adequate and safe opportunities to travel as a pedestrian or bicyclist: The Town

has benefited from Vermont Transportation Alternatives Program to make improvements in West Dover to seek improvements as necessary.

### **West Dover**

Village revitalization efforts have focused on community and economic development and improving bicycle and pedestrian safety and opportunities. In 2012, the *Dover Landscape Master Plan* was developed with the primary goal of improving the village feel by addressing five key areas: community enrichment, transportation enhancement, aesthetic and landscape improvements, economic development, and expanded uses for public spaces. Since that time, the Town has extended the Valley Trail in the village of West Dover and helped install flower barrels and landscaping on commercial properties. There are several income producing buildings in West Dover Village eligible for tax credits if and when redevelopment opportunities arise.

### **East Dover**

Village revitalization efforts in East Dover have focused on economic development opportunities. There are currently a very limited number of commercial businesses in East Dover, including a General Store. In 2012, 4 North Street, a building that includes this General Store and the Post Office received Vermont Historic tax credits and code credits.

## **4.4 Objectives, Policies, and Actions**

**Objective 1:** Preserve the villages of West Dover and East Dover.

**Policy 1.1:** Support the continuation of existing land uses and development patterns in the Village Zoning Districts.

### *Actions*

- a. Review and update zoning bylaws to continue to allow for a diversity of uses in village areas, including civic uses, small retail establishments, professional offices, cafes, and single-family, two-family, and multi-family residential dwellings.
- b. Review and update zoning bylaws to ensure that lot dimensions, structure setbacks, and residential density standards reflect the desired settlement pattern for the village areas.

**Policy 1.2:** Protect the historic character and amenity of the villages of West Dover and East Dover through appropriate architectural design, layout and scale of public, commercial and residential structures and related infrastructure, and participation in State programs.

### *Actions*

- a. Collaborate with the Historical Society to identify and preserve historic structures.
- b. Consider whether the Town should include a historic overlay zoning district in the zoning bylaws for the village of West Dover and East Dover.
- c. Maintain Village Center Designations for West Dover and East Dover with the Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development.

**Objective 2:** Ensure that Dover is adequately served by commercial districts in appropriate

locations that meet the day-to-day needs of its residents and visitors.

**Policy 2.1:** Ensure that development in the Village District and Planned Commercial District is compatible with other land uses and follows building and site design standards that enhance aesthetic appeal and improve pedestrian and vehicular safety.

*Actions*

- a. Develop a Route 100 Master Plan to address the character and form of development and redevelopment activities on Route 100 with the goal of transforming it from an automobile dependent corridor to an area that capitalizes on the recreational, scenic, transportation, and employment resources and mitigates weaknesses in the existing development. The Plan should address: traffic circulation; sidewalks, pathways, and public transit; location of parking lots; building and site design; and infrastructure.
- b. Consider architectural and site design standards to incorporate within the zoning bylaws for properties along Route 100 based on the completed Route 100 Master Plan.
- c. Partner with the Vermont Agency of Transportation to coordinate and plan for road improvements along Route 100 including access management, minimizing curb cuts, improving pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and installing traffic calming measures.
- d. Direct public investment to enhance and maintain landscaping and streetscaping along Route 100.

**Objective 3:** Provide for adequate land areas to support a mix of residential development that meets the needs of current and future residents while preserving historic settlement patterns.

**Policy 3.1:** Direct new housing primarily to the Residential, Planned Commercial, Village, Resort Center, and Vacation Districts.

*Actions*

- a. Review and update zoning bylaws to allow for higher and appropriate residential density levels in the Planned Commercial and Village Districts where wastewater infrastructure is available.
- b. Encourage new housing development on vacant lots in existing residential subdivisions in the Residential District where site conditions allow.
- c. Review and update zoning bylaws to remove barriers for developing accessory dwelling units and two-family dwellings in all zoning districts where single-family dwellings are permitted.
- d. Consider possible reuses of the former Deerfield Valley Airport site.

**Objective 4:** Preserve Dover's rural character through land use policies that ensure the continued availability of appropriate land for forestry and agriculture and the protection of natural resource areas.

**Policy 4.1:** Maintain agricultural and forest lands and encourage long-term management for uses that promote sustained yield of crops and timber products.

*Actions*

- a. Maintain the Resource Conservation District as an area primarily for natural habitat,

forestry and recreation and with an overall density of one unit per 27 acres.

- b. Continue to provide for the Transfer of Development Rights Overlay District and to include lands in the Resource Conservation District as sending areas. Review and make updates in consultation with the Conservation Commission as needed.
- c. Create an Open Space Plan and support and encourage land conservation organizations to work with the Town to identify and preserve lands identified in the plan as conservation priorities.

**Policy 4.1:** Require that development projects protect or integrate natural features and resources into the site design so that the losses are minimized and the integrity of the site is maintained.

*Actions*

- a. Work with the Conservation Commission to review the Sensitive Wildlife Overlay District and make changes as needed to enhance the protection of sensitive wildlife habitats
- b. Consider additional regulations in the zoning bylaws for the subdivision of land to better accommodate land uses, support infrastructure, and protect natural resources.
- c. Consider regulations to limit disturbing or clearing steep slopes for development, excluding agriculture and forestry activities, recreational trails, and facilities for the operation of downhill skiing.
- d. For Planned Unit Developments, consider standards for residential density bonuses in exchange for the preservation of environmentally sensitive land and open space. The maximum density bonus should not exceed 25% of the limit otherwise established by the zoning district.

# CHAPTER 5

## NATURAL RESOURCES

### 5.1 Air Resources

Dover's air quality is generally very good and among its most attractive and valued assets. However, the potential for air pollution still exists. Local threats to air quality include combustion by-products from home heating sources and vehicular exhaust. The Deerfield Valley's air quality is also affected by pollutants from distant sources, including wildfire smoke and acid precipitation originating in other states and countries. Air pollution in significant concentrations can impact water quality, pose human health problems, especially for sensitive populations, and impair the scenic visibility the town is known for.

Outdoor hydronic heaters, also known as outdoor wood furnaces, have become more common in Vermont over recent years. These are distinct from indoor wood stoves or fireplaces. When used properly, outdoor hydronic heaters can be a clean and economical way to heat a house and provide an alternative to using fossil fuels. However, there are concerns regarding the safety and environmental impacts of these heating devices, particularly the production of offensive odors and potential health effects of uncontrolled emissions. Outdoor hydronic heaters are regulated by the State and are required to be at least 100 or 200 feet from neighboring residences depending on the emission rates of the system. As of 2016, all new outdoor hydronic heaters sold in Vermont must be certified by the EPA and meet particulate emission standards. Towns are also permitted to have their own ordinances regulating these heating systems.

### 5.2 Water Resources

#### Groundwater

Groundwater provides the primary supply of potable water in Dover. Bedrock fractures, saturated sand and gravel deposits, and springs are the most common sources of groundwater. Groundwater in rock fractures is highly susceptible to contamination because any pollution contained in water does not have an opportunity to be filtered. Once contamination occurs, control and abatement are extremely difficult.

There are approximately 60 small-scale public water sources permitted in Dover. A public water system can either be a Public Community system, which serves residents on a year-round basis, or a Public Non-Community system, which serve non-residential groups of people, such as at schools and restaurants. Some systems will have multiple water sources to meet higher usage needs, such as the Mount Snow resort and for condominiums. Dover has a large number of both Community and Non-Community systems given the higher number of condominium developments in town and the large number of inns, motels, and restaurants associated with the tourism economy and Mount Snow.

Public water supplies are regulated by the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC). Every public water system is required to develop a Source Protection Plan that identifies

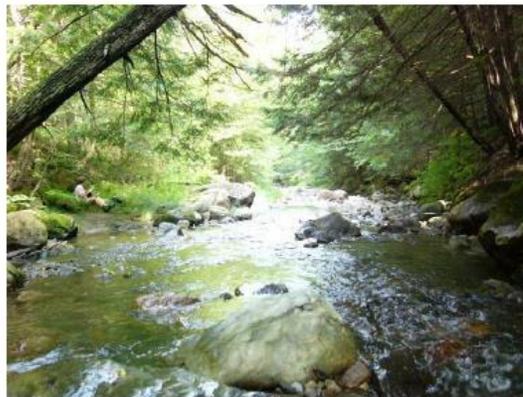
actions that will be undertaken to minimize the risk of water source contamination. Specific requirements vary between Community and Non-Community systems. Within the 200-foot radius of the primary collection area, contamination impacts are likely to be immediate and certain. Beyond that radius, source protection areas are tested and mapped to determine further sources of probable and possible contamination.

Potential threats to groundwater and wells in Dover include stormwater runoff, road salt, contaminated runoff from paved areas, underground storage tanks, and failing septic systems. For properties in the North Branch Fire District #1 service area, the Town should continue to encourage property owners to connect to the wastewater system as one strategy for reducing potential contamination to groundwater. A newer threat to groundwater is PFAS chemicals, which are found in many different commercial, consumer, and industrial products and breakdown over very long period of time. In 2022, the Town discovered the presence of PFAS chemicals in the water supply at Dover Commons, which has impacted Town Hall, Kids in the Country Childcare, and the Dover Free Library facilities. Current research indicates certain PFAS chemicals may result in adverse health outcomes, but research is ongoing to better understand the impacts on public health. The Town should continue to monitor the issue of PFAS in the community and direct property owners to the Department of Environmental Conservation for additional information and resources.

There is an increasing concern about the continued availability and quality of groundwater in West Dover as a result of development pressure. There have been a number of reported cases of well depletion in which property owners have had to dig new wells. This is of particular concern in the vicinity of Mount Snow. While the Act 250 review process requires applicants to evaluate proposed impacts of a project to wells within 1,000 feet, many wells share common aquifers and impacts can occur beyond this distance. Groundwater demand also fluctuates significantly at different times of the year. When there are higher numbers of seasonal home owners and visitors in town, the demand on groundwater increases substantially. In light of these concerns, the Town is considering the development of a municipal water system that could provide a more reliable source of groundwater for residents.

### **Surface Waters**

The predominant rivers and streams in Dover are the North Branch of the Deerfield River and its tributaries and the Rock River and its tributaries. The North Branch of the Deerfield River generally runs parallel to Route 100 and flows south into the adjacent town of Wilmington. The Rock River originates in the Dover Town Forest and flows through Newfane before joining the West River. The headwaters area of the Rock River, including the cascades, is recognized as a particularly significant natural area.



Headwaters of the Rock River  
(Credit: 2007 Rock River Geomorphic Assessment)

Vermont monitors surface water quality under Section 305(b) of the Federal Clean Water Act. The most recent report from 2020 shows that the majority of surface waters in Dover are in good condition. The report notes that Iron Stream, a tributary to Jacks Brook located near the Carinthia Park at Mount Snow, has high levels of iron. The source is believed to be from land development and is subject to ongoing assessment by the State. In addition, the North Branch Deerfield River from Tannery Brook Road to Snow Lake has high temperatures that are impacting aquatic life. Finally, Ellis Brook has high nutrient levels and temperatures and is possibly being impacted by the adjacent North Branch Fire District wastewater treatment facility and agricultural runoff.

The Town is working with Mount Snow and the Windham Regional Commission under a Flood Resilient Communities Fund grant to engineer and permit the removal of the Snow Lake dam and Snow Lake, which was historically used for snowmaking and is now used for stormwater storage. Design and permitting is expected to be completed in mid-2024 and construction completion is expected by late 2027 according to Mount Snow.



Snow Lake Dam at South Access Road (Credit: WRC)

The project would restore the North Branch Deerfield River stream channel in the area of Snow Lake, construct a full width structure to support South Access Road, and construct a gravel wetland stormwater management system for the main base area. Removal of the dam and restoration of the stream channel will improve aquatic habitat, remove an impediment to fish and aquatic organism passage, and create a naturalized setting for wildlife.

Vermont has adopted a basin planning approach to protecting, restoring and enhancing water resources. Lands within Dover drain into both the West River Watershed (Basin 11) and the Deerfield River Watershed (Basin 12). The Tactical Basin Plan for Basin 11 was completed in December 2021 and the Plan for Basin 12 was completed in May 2020. The Plans inventory uses and problems, identify strategies to remedy problems, and assign Water Management Types to maintain or attain desired water quality. Issues such as water quality, erosion control, stormwater runoff, deforestation and buffer loss, and flow regulation and flood control are addressed within the basin planning process. At the local level, tools the Town can use to address water quality are requiring stormwater management planning for town roads and private developments and erosion control plans for development projects.

### 5.3 Wetlands

Wetlands are areas that are frequently inundated by surface or ground water to support vegetation or aquatic life that depend on saturated or seasonally saturated soil conditions for growth and reproduction. Wetlands take such diverse forms as marshes, swamps, sloughs, potholes, fens, river and lake overflows, mud flats, bogs, vernal pools, and ponds. It is well recognized that wetlands provide important habitat for certain species of wildlife, filter pollutants from runoff, and provide flood storage.

The National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) Maps show approximately 97 different wetlands in Dover comprising approximately 260 acres. To date, a comprehensive field study of wetlands in Dover has not been performed. Wetland areas are scattered across Dover, but larger wetland areas are located to the east of Handle Road north of the Wilmington town boundary and around Tannery Road, and on Green Mountain National Forest land at the headwaters of Ellis Brook and Cheney Brook.



Wetland and Beaver Pond at Handle Road Trailhead (*Credit: WRC*)

DEC's Vermont Wetland Rules categorizes wetlands as Class I, II, or III. Class I wetland areas are those that are exceptional or irreplaceable in contribution and merit the highest level of protection. There are presently no Class I wetlands in Dover. Class II wetland areas are those wetland acres which are found to be significant enough to merit some protection (50-foot buffer zones). Class III wetland areas are those wetlands that have not been determined to be sufficiently significant enough to merit any protection. However, these wetlands may be protected by other federal, state, or local regulations. Class I and II wetlands (referred to as significant wetlands) are protected by the Vermont Wetland Rules and require review by DEC prior to development.

Regulatory methods of protecting wetlands from pollution and destruction include requirements for erosion and sedimentation control plans and enforcement of those plans, minimum setback requirements for buildings and septic system leachfields, and minimum vegetative buffer requirements. Currently, Dover relies on the state's regulations to protect wetlands and does not have local regulations in its zoning bylaws.

## 5.4 Wildlife Resources

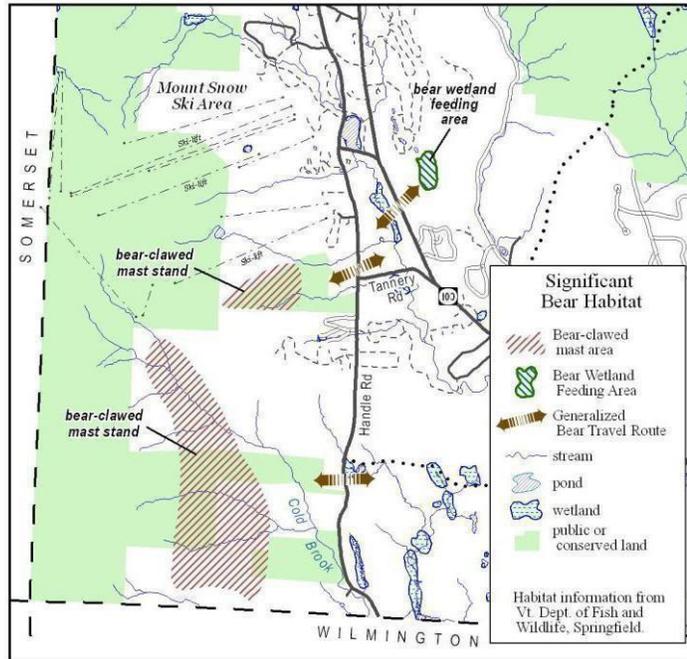
### Wildlife Habitat

There are several documented bear habitat areas in Dover that are important to ensuring a viable bear population in Vermont (see Figure 5-1). During late spring and summer, bear are known to feed on lower elevation vegetation and in wetlands. Wetlands near Handle Road and the North Branch of the Deerfield River corridor are important bear feeding areas. Bear also feed on Jack-in-the-Pulpit and skunk cabbage, both of which have been found in Dover. There is an important beech tree stand located in between Mount Snow and Haystack Mountain. Beech nuts are one of the most important food sources for bears, deer, and moose in the fall.

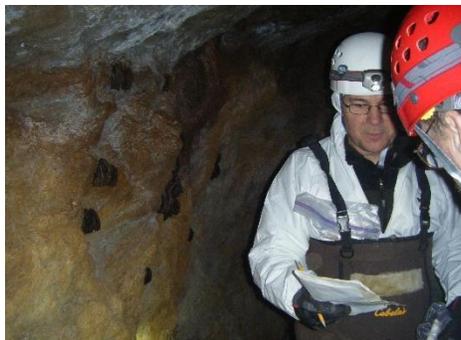
The extensive forest edges in Dover also provide deer habitat and a number of small deer wintering areas. Wintering areas are usually comprised of hemlock or pine tree stands and can be utilized by generations of deer over many decades if appropriate habitat conditions are maintained. The Department of Fish and Wildlife has mapped deer wintering areas using aerial photography, infrared aerial photos and ground confirmation. Deer wintering areas are especially concentrated in East Dover and in particular along Bemis Brook.

**Figure 5-1: Significant Bear Habitat in Dover**

In addition to large forested blocks, other important wildlife habitat areas include the floodplains and woodland areas adjacent to portions of the Deerfield River. Although the undeveloped land adjacent to the river is sometimes narrow, this area serves as an important wildlife corridor that links various types of habitat together. The Tannery Wildlife Refuge is an important part of this wildlife corridor. Located at the corner of Handle Road and Tannery Road, the refuge is comprised of 42 acres of donated land for conservation purposes.



*Source: Map prepared by the Windham Regional Commission with data from VT Department of Fish & Wildlife*



Mount Snow Bat Hibernaculum  
(Credit: Andrew McLean)

Another unique habitat area is the bat hibernaculum on Mount Snow, which is located in a former mine and provides constant temperature and protection for winter hibernation. This area is important for the continuation of the bat population and it is critical that winter access to the cave be closed off. In the past, the Dover Conservation Commission has worked with Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department to document the number and types of bat species in the hibernaculum. The bat population has been impacted by White-nose Syndrome and the total number of bats counted dropped from 537 in 2009 to 14 in 2013. Numbers have begun to recover, but are still significantly lower than before this syndrome started impacting bats.

The Town places a high priority on protecting these important habitats and has created a Sensitive Wildlife Resource Overlay District to require development proposals be reviewed by the District Wildlife Biologist from the Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife to minimize and mitigate the impacts of development on these critical wildlife resources. This Overlay District was created as a result of a natural resources inventory completed by the Dover Conservation Commission. Additional information on the Sensitive Wildlife Resource Overlay District can be found in the Land Use chapter of this plan.

## **Wildlife Species**

The black bear is native to Vermont and primarily found in remote, forested habitat. The black bear population in Dover is unique because the bears are trying to live around extensive land development. The result is that bears are somewhat dependent on humans for food. There have been a high number of incidences of encounters between bears and humans along the Route 100 corridor. To decrease these encounters, Vermont Fish and Wildlife Biologists recommend securing garbage containers and only placing bird feeders outdoors from December 1 to April 1.

Bicknell's thrush is one of eastern North American's most at-risk songbirds. This breeding bird has been found at high elevations within the Green Mountain National Forest, including on Mount Snow. Threats to the bird population come from the warming climate, degradation of bird habitat from both acid rainfall and habitat fragmentation. The bird is included on the Audubon Society's Watch List, which identifies declining bird populations.

Native brook trout were once abundant in most of Dover's streams. Extensive lumbering in the last century has impaired or destroyed this fish habitat. Some trout still survive in many streams along with warmer water fishes in the lower stream portions. Erosion and siltation of streams on the high and steep slopes where development is occurring are an increasing threat to this habitat. Brown trout and rainbow trout are known to inhabit and spawn in the North Branch and in Beaver Brook.

Bear, bobcat and abundant varying hare and fox populations have always been and continue to be present. Beaver and marten, introduced in the past, have successfully established themselves. Ruffed grouse and woodcock can be found in wetland areas. Wild turkey, deer, moose, and coyotes are also common.

## **Rare Species**

The Large-leaved sandwort (*Moehringia Macrophylla*) has been documented in East Dover. This is a small perennial herb whose eastern range in North America is from Labrador to New England. There have been 17 occurrences in New England with 12 being documented in Vermont. In general, the Large-leaved sandwort is associated with serpentine habitats that receive little human disturbance. Development, logging, road and power line management, canopy closure and invasive species can threaten Large-leaved sandwort populations in New England.

## **5.5 Invasive Species**

### **Invasive Plants**

Invasive plants pose a risk to Dover's natural resources because these species can out-compete native species and result in diminished habitat quality for wildlife. Invasive plants tend to be most common in disturbed areas and along heavily travelled highway corridors, like Route 100. As the climate changes and warms, invasive plants are expected to increase in prevalence as well. According to the Dover Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (2022), the following invasive plants are thought to pose the highest risk to native species: Japanese Knotweed, Common and Glossy Buckthorn, Japanese and Common Barberry, Burning Bush, and Amur, Morrow's, Tartarian, and Bell's Honeysuckle.

### **Invasive Insects**

The biggest threat associated with invasive insects is their impact on native tree species, leading to reduced and diminished habitats for wildlife. Of particular concern is the Emerald Ash Borer, which feeds on and kills Ash Trees. Emerald Ash Borer has not been identified in Dover yet but has been found in other towns in Windham County including Wilmington. Because Dover is located at a higher elevation it has fewer Ash Trees than other communities in the region, but the Town is proactively planning for Ash Tree removal along public roads.

The Hemlock Woolly Adelgid is another invasive insect that feeds on Hemlock Trees and can weaken trees so they are more vulnerable to secondary stresses. The Hemlock Woolly Adelgid has not been detected in Dover, but as temperatures warm its range is expected to increase. Much of Dover's deer wintering habitats are found around large Hemlock stands and if these areas are impacted by this invasive insect it could result in the loss of important habitat area for deer.

## **5.6 Open Space Resources**

### **Agricultural Lands**

Although most of the valleys and lower hills in Dover were once cleared for subsistence farming, prime agricultural soils are present in few areas and many old farms have reverted back to forest. On the lower slopes of East Dover, farming is still practiced with operations primarily in beef cattle, goats, maple sugaring, and hay crops. Dover's agricultural resources are valuable and need protection. The presence of working farms and fields with wooded hillsides enhance the aesthetics of the Town and encourage ongoing tourism.

### **Forestland**

Forestland is the most prominent landscape feature in Dover. About two-thirds of the town is forested. Dover's forestland is primarily the northern hardwood forest, including beech, birch, and maple trees. In the higher elevations, spruce and fir are common. The Green Mountain National Forest has considerable land holdings in Dover. The western boundary is part of the Green Mountain National Forest and has been designated primarily for recreation use. The National Forest Proclamation Boundary extends further into Dover and includes land still in private ownership.

Forests contribute significantly to the natural beauty and rural character of Dover while also serving as buffers between developed areas. Forestlands provide open space for passive recreation and for other outdoor activities. Depending on the types of trees available, forests also serve as an important source of materials for wood products, firewood, sap for maple syrup and other products. In addition, forests provide critical habitat for a diversity of wildlife and allow for the migration and movement of animals and plants.

Act 171 was enacted in 2016 and requires towns to address significant forest blocks and habitat connectors within their boundaries and to develop policies on how to reduce forest fragmentation, enhance forest health, and support ecological functions. Forest blocks and habitat connectors are defined below:

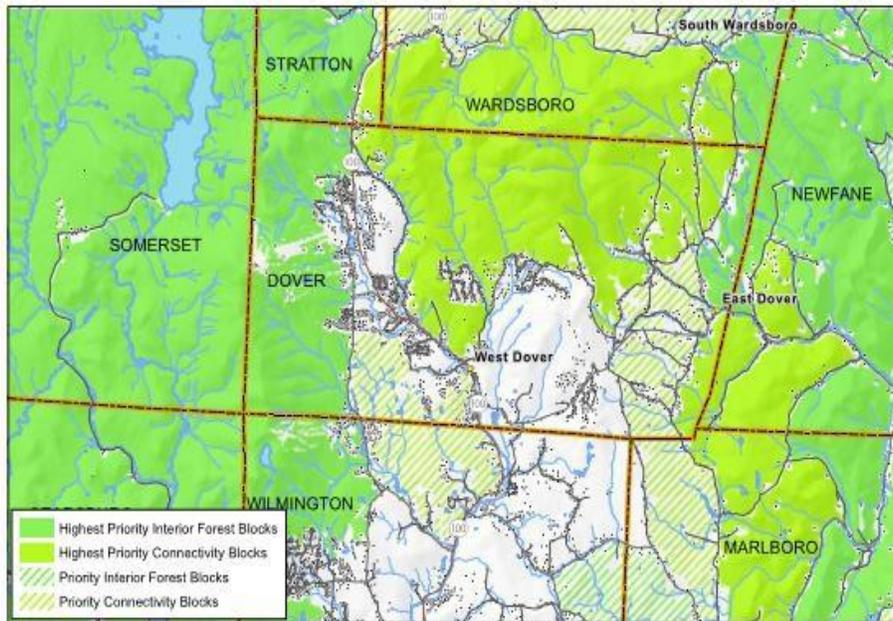
- **Forest Block:** a contiguous area of forest in any stage of succession and not currently developed for non-forest use. A forest block may include recreational trails, wetlands, or other natural features that do not themselves possess tree cover.
- **Habitat Connector:** land or water, or both, that links patches of wildlife habitat within a landscape, allowing the movement, migration, and dispersal of animals and plants and the functioning of ecological processes.

Forest pattern is the degree to which forest blocks and habitat connectors connect across the landscape or within a particular town. A healthy forest pattern is one where a town's largest forest blocks connect to one another via smaller forest blocks and riparian areas, interrupted only by a few roads or non-forest land cover. These large blocks also connect to large forest blocks beyond the town boundaries.

Habitat connectors and forest blocks should be considered at two scales: landscape and local. Landscape scale connectivity is important for connecting populations of wildlife over large areas or within a region. This allows for genetic variability and ensures migration. An example of this at the landscape scale are the connections between the Green Mountains of Vermont and the White Mountains of New Hampshire. At the local level, habitat connectors may be important road crossings between two larger forest blocks. It is important to keep in mind that very small forest blocks of minimal habitat or forestry value can still function as connecting habitat at a large landscape scale.

The map below shows High Priority Forest Blocks and High Priority Connectivity Blocks in Dover based on mapping completed by the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources. Dover has an important High Priority Connectivity Block that spans the boundary with Wardsboro and connects a High Priority Forest Block to the east that extends south to the Massachusetts border with the Green Mountain National Forest land on the western side of town. Much of the area within this High Priority Connectivity Block is Green Mountain National Forest or Town Forest land.

**Figure 5-2: High Priority Forest Blocks and Habitat Connectors**



*Source: Map prepared by the Windham Regional Commission with data from the Vermont Conservation Design by the Vermont Agency of Natural Resource*

The management of forest blocks, habitat connectors, and other important tracts of forestland is important to the environmental and economic well-being of Dover's forests and protecting recreational resources. Responsible harvesting of forest resources will support the local economy and provide access to local forest products. Considerable care should be taken during both commercial timber cuts and cuts to create open space for development to ensure the conservation of soils by mitigating erosion. Because large forested tracts are another aspect of the rural character of the community, visible clear cuts, either for commercial harvests or for development, should be carefully avoided or buffered. As discussed further below, the Town has already taken several steps to protect and minimize fragmentation of important forestland through local land use regulations.

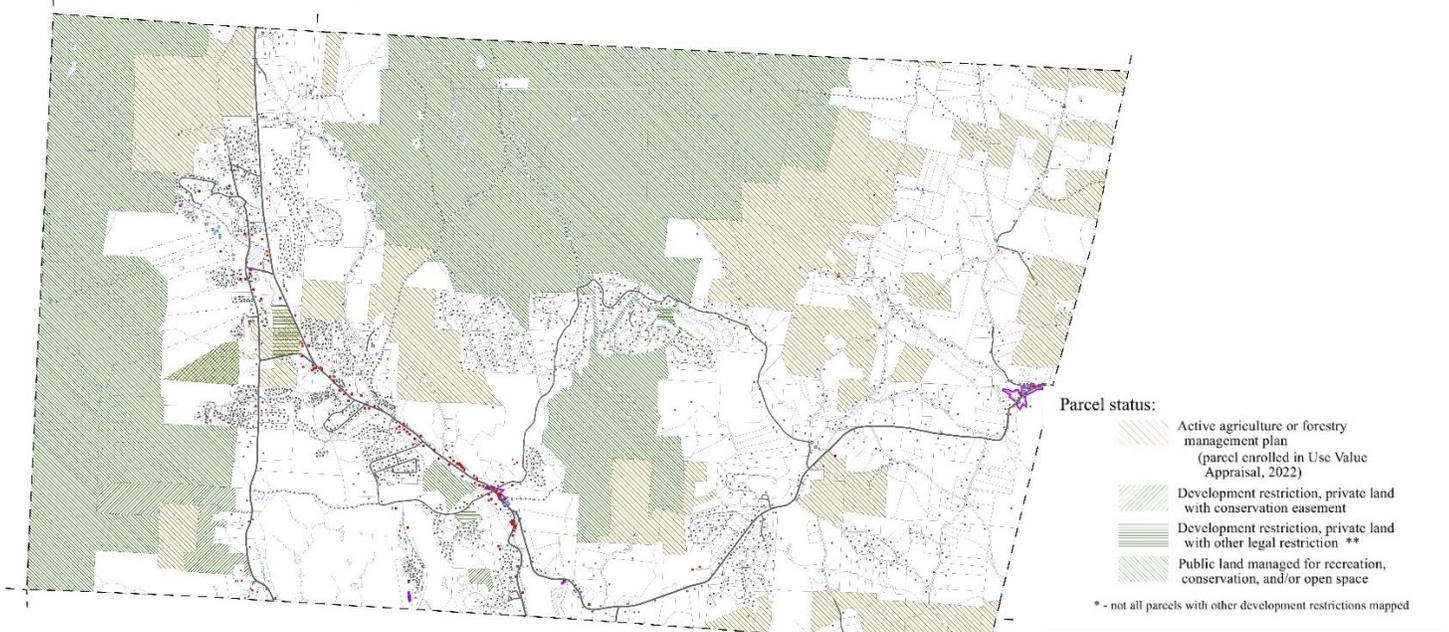
### **Natural and Fragile Areas**

Fragile and natural areas comprise some of the irreplaceable habitats, ecosystems and natural features found as a part of Dover's heritage. For example, there is unique sugar maple stand given its elevation in the Dover Town Forest. Other areas of land which are unsuitable for development include wetlands, areas of steep slopes, and high elevation lands. Dover's wetlands, as discussed above, provide wildlife habitat, aquifer recharge and flood control. All lands above 2,500 feet and steep slopes over 25 percent grades are fragile areas, often consisting of thin soils overlaying ledges of bedrock. They are susceptible to erosion and high rates of runoff, particularly when cleared for development. Generally, steep slopes should not be developed. Clearing for agricultural, forestry, and ski area or other recreational activities should be conducted with careful attention to erosion control and storm water management.

## **Open Space Protection**

Dover contains a wide variety of conservation and publicly owned open space lands. These parcels are widely distributed throughout Town. The map below shows public lands managed for recreation, conservation, and/or open space, private lands with conservation easements or some other type of legal development restriction, and properties enrolled in Use Value Appraisal.

**Figure 5-3: Conservation and Current Use Land**



*Source: Map prepared by the Windham Regional Commission with data from Vermont E911, Cartographic Technologies, Inc., and the State of Vermont*

Dover is expected to remain primarily forested because there is a large amount of land already conserved and much of the forested land in is on steep, fragile soil that is unsuitable for development or clearing. However, further conservation efforts are still important to prevent forest fragmentation and maintain forest blocks and habitat connectors.

The Town can also protect forest resources through its land use regulations. Many of the large forested tracts of land, including the identified High Priority Forest Blocks and Connectivity Blocks, are located in the Conservation Zoning District where low development densities of not less than one dwelling unit per 27 acres are required. The Sensitive Wildlife Resource Overlay District discussed above also covers many of these forest resource areas in town and allows the DRB to require the clustering of development, reducing the density, or increasing vegetated buffer requirements. In addition, the Town has had a Transfer of Development Rights Overlay District in place since 2007 to help retain the rural character of Dover. Current sending areas include parcels located along Jockey Hollow Road in East Dover and on Blue Brook Road in the vicinity of Blue Brook Farm.

Vermont's Use Value Appraisal Program (commonly referred to as "Current Use") provides a strong incentive for maintaining large blocks of private forest and agricultural land. To provide

greater tax equity for forest and agriculture landowners, and to encourage long-term productive use of Vermont's agricultural and forest land, the program allows farm and forest lands to be taxed on their resource production rather than their value for development purposes. Forest parcels must have a minimum of 25 contiguous acres to enroll in the program (not counting the 2 acres surrounding any dwelling). Forest land is required to be managed according to the provisions of an approved 10-year forest management plan. Agricultural land has a different set of eligibility requirements that are similar to the forest requirements. Land can be taken out of the program and the owner must pay the Land Use Change Tax if the land is developed in the future. Therefore, the Current Use program does not provide the same level of protection as land owned or held under conservation easement by a governmental entity or non-profit organization.

## 5.7 Earth and Mineral Resources

Earth and mineral resources in Dover are very limited. Limestone and iron were mined in the past, but small quantities make this no longer feasible. Some sand and gravel deposits are still actively used but do not have a significant amount of material. None of these sites are owned by the Town of Dover and the Town relies on sources outside its boundaries for sand and gravel resources for road maintenance and construction projects. These sources have declined in recent years and it is becoming increasingly challenging for towns to get sand and gravel materials.

## 5.8 Objectives, Policies, and Actions

**Objective 1:** Maintain and protect the Town's water resources, including its aquifers, surface waters, and wetlands.

**Policy 1.1:** Manage current and future drinking water sources to ensure adequacy and quality of water supply.

*Actions:*

- a. Complete a study on the effects of development on supply and quality of drinking water from aquifers, especially as it relates to peak or seasonal usage and climate change effects.
- b. Pursue the development of a municipal water system to provide a reliable water source for residents and businesses.
- c. Promote best practices for the efficient use of water and water conservation strategies with property owners.
- d. Monitor the presence of PFAS chemical contamination in public and private drinking supplies and direct property owners to the Department of Environmental Conservation for information and resources.

**Policy 1.2:** Protect, maintain, enhance, and restore the biological, chemical, and physical integrity of Dover's surface waters.

*Actions:*

- a. Maintain the Town's Municipal Roads General Permit with VTrans and implement the road maintenance methods described in the *Vermont Better Roads Manual* to address projects identified in the Town's Road Erosion Inventory.

- b. Review existing regulations in the Zoning Bylaws on erosion and sediment control and stormwater management for development and land disturbance activities and update as needed.
- c. Work with the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources to implement the actions identified in the Tactical Basin Plans for Basin 11 and Basin 12.

**Policy 1.3:** Retain wetland areas in their natural state for wildlife habitat protection, as retention areas of surface runoff, and for recreational and resource values.

*Actions:*

- a. Evaluate options to identify and further protect significant wetland areas.

**Objective 2:** Identify, protect, and enhance the ecological integrity of Dover’s diverse wildlife species and their habitats.

**Policy 2.1** Discourage new development in areas identified as High Priority Forest Blocks and High Priority Habitat Connectors, flood hazard areas, River Corridors, and rare and sensitive wildlife areas.

*Actions:*

- a. Enforce the Flood Hazard Regulations in the Zoning Bylaws to limit development within designated floodplains and make updates as needed to stay in compliance with NFIP.
- b. Consider the adoption of River Corridor Regulations in the Zoning Bylaws.
- c. Evaluate whether any areas identified as a High Priority Forest Block or Habitat Connector should be incorporated into the Resource Conservation Zoning District and/or the Sensitive Wildlife Overlay District, if not already.
- d. Work with the Conservation Commission to review the Sensitive Wildlife Overlay District and make changes as needed to enhance the protection of sensitive wildlife habitats.
- e. Partner with the State to assist in the evaluation of the bat hibernaculum and discourage development in the area of the cave.
- f. Encourage and seek State funding for the Town to acquire conservation land.

**Policy 2.2:** Minimize the adverse impacts of invasive species on the environment.

*Actions:*

- a. Develop a plan for monitoring and removing invasive plant species along roads and on Town Forest land.
- b. Provide residents with information on Town’s website about identifying and managing invasive species on their property.

**Objective 3:** Preserve the rural character of Dover by protecting large blocks of contiguous forestland, fields, and other open spaces from development and by promoting sustainable forestry, agricultural, and other resources.

**Policy 3.1:** Enhance the economic viability of agriculture and forestry activities in Dover.

*Actions:*

- a. Maintain the Resource Reserve and Conservation and Productive Residential Zoning Districts

to protect large tracts of land.

- b. Work with the Vermont Land Trust, or other appropriate non-profit organizations to encourage the voluntary protection of productive agricultural, wetlands, conservation and forest lands. Techniques such as conservation easements or donation of land should be explored.
- c. Encourage participation in the Vermont Land Use Appraisal Program to support the viability and maintenance of farm and forest land.

**Policy 3.2:** Protect Dover’s fragile natural features and open spaces.

*Actions:*

- a. Consider regulations to limit disturbing or clearing steep slopes for development, excluding agriculture and forestry activities, recreational trails, and facilities for the operation of downhill skiing.
- b. Create an Open Space Plan and support and encourage land conservation organizations to work with the Town to identify and preserve lands identified in the plan as conservation priorities.
- c. Review the Transfer of Development Rights Overlay District and make updates as needed, specifically to designated sending and receiving areas.
- d. Encourage and seek State funding for the Town to acquire conservation land.

**Policy 3.3:** Review and regulate earth and mineral resource extractions to make maximum use of the Town’s resources over time and minimize damage to natural and scenic resources.

*Actions:*

- a. Continue to require conditional use review for soil, sand, and gravel extractions.
- b. Require all proposals for earth and mineral extraction include a site rehabilitation plan.

**Objective 4:** Reduce the harmful effects of poor air quality on Dover’s natural resources and public health.

*Actions:*

- a. Support the development and promote the use of alternative means of transportation to reduce vehicle emissions.
- b. Study the issue of whether outdoor wood furnaces should be regulated by the Town and, if recommended, propose either an ordinance or standards for adoption.

# CHAPTER 6

## COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

### 6.1 Town Government Administration

The Town of Dover is governed by a five member Select Board, which is elected by voters at the annual Town Meeting. The Board is assisted by an Administrative Assistant who carries out many of the day- to-day functions of the Town. Also elected at Town Meeting are the Town Treasurer, Town Clerk, Auditors, Listers, Constables, School Directors, Library Trustees and others.

The Select Board appoints the members of the Planning Commission, Development Review Board, Conservation Commission, Economic Development Department, Road Commissioner, Chief of Police, Fire Chief, Health Officer, Zoning Administrator, and others.

The Town has a Capital Paving Plan, Capital Equipment Plan, and Capital Building Plan to help plan and budget for needed capital expenses for town infrastructure and facilities. These plans are regularly reviewed and updated by the Select Board.

### 6.2 Town Facilities

#### Town Office

The Town Office is located at 102 Route 100 in the village of West Dover. The Town Office houses several departments. Town personnel currently includes a Town Clerk/Administrative Assistant to the Selectboard, Assistant Town Clerk, Treasurer, Director and Assistant Director of Economic Development, Zoning/Sign/Floodplain Administrator & Health Officer, and Town Assessor. There is an upstairs meeting room in the building used for various board and commission meetings.

The Town recently added file room storage to the Assessor's office. The Town has started the process of digitizing its land records and vault files and considering digitizing Zoning department files, legacy septic files, and the Assessors Department files. This will help free up limited office space and allow for easier searching of records.

The upstairs meeting room was recently retrofitted with two cameras, a large screen monitor, and separate microphone to improve the Town's ability to hold hybrid in-person and Zoom public meetings. This has allowed residents to attend meetings in person or remotely.

#### Town Hall

Situated on the Dover Common at the corner of Holland Road and Taft Brook Road, the Dover Town Hall serves as a function hall for various events. The Town Hall is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Town meetings are customarily held at Town Hall.

#### Highway Department

The Highway Department garage is located off Dover Hill Road. It houses the town highway maintenance equipment. A covered salt shed is also located on the property. A new

generator was purchased for the facility in 2017 to improve operations and the Town plans to replace the garage roof in the upcoming years.

### **Educational Services**

Dover is part of the River Valleys Unified School District (RVUSD), which includes The Dover School and Wardsboro Elementary School. RVUSD is part of the Windham Central Supervisory Union, which provides administrative, curriculum, and personnel support for a number of school districts and boards.

Elementary education in Dover (pre-K through 6th grade) is provided at The Dover School located on Schoolhouse Road. After-school and summer programs are also provided through the school. Total enrollment in the 2022-2023 school year was 90 students. There is adequate capacity at the school because it was built to accommodate over 200 students. The school has a Capital Building Fund for larger projects. Future projects that have been discussed include replacing the roof, replacing classroom unit vents, and various upgrades to exterior windows and doors.

Students from Dover have the choice of attending secondary school (grades 7-12) in nearby towns (Brattleboro Union High School, Twin Valley High School, and Leland & Gray Union High School), or an approved independent school. Tuition at an independent school is paid by the Town at a rate voted on each year at the RVUSD Annual Meeting. Families are responsible for any difference between the approved rate and the independent school's tuition. In the 2022-2023 school year, there were 83 secondary students.

The RVUSD School Board consists of six directors that oversee The Dover School and Wardsboro Elementary School. Each town has three representatives on the Board that are elected by ballot at the annual RVUSD meeting. The articles of agreement for the District were recently changed and residents from each town now elect the Board members from both towns.

Adult education opportunities for Dover residents are available regionally. Vermont Technical College has satellite campuses in Brattleboro and Bennington that offer Associate Degrees, career-related certificates, and credit and non-credit training programs. In July 2023, Vermont Technical College joined Castleton University and Northern Vermont University to become Vermont State University.

## **6.3 Childcare**

The Kids in the Country Child Care and Preschool is located on the Dover Common adjacent to the Dover Free Library. What began as the first licensed child care program in the Deerfield Valley has grown into a center that incorporates a pre-school, after-school program, and infant/toddler room. Using grant funding from the Child Care Services Division of the Vermont Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services, the center was able to expand its programs to include children age 6 weeks to 2 years old, which is the most challenging age range for families to find care. The after-school program serves children ages 6 to 12.

There are other registered home daycare providers and licensed early education programs offered

in Dover as well. Additional information on these child care facilities as well as information on services for families, providers, employers, and people interested in opening a new facility can be found through the Child Development Division of the Vermont Department for Children and Families (Agency of Human Services) and the Winston Prouty Center for Child and Family Development in Brattleboro.

The availability of safe and affordable child care services is important both to local residents and to the Town's economy. Due to changes at the state level in investment and programs to increase the child care supply, there have been improvements in Windham County over the last several years. However, according to the results of the community survey completed by the Planning Commission, approximately 80 percent of respondents reported there are not enough childcare options in Dover.

Given the high number of service jobs in Dover associated with the tourism industry, there may be a need for child care programs with more flexible hours of care. Childcare programs' hours of operation often do not meet the needs of parents working non-traditional hours or mixed shifts. According to the *Stalled at the Start – Vermont's Child Care Challenge* report completed in 2022 by Let's Grow Kids, most programs in Windham County open at 7:30 a.m. and close at 5:30 p.m. and it is challenging for parents to find childcare outside of these hours.

Towns can address the need for child care facilities through creating zoning bylaws that allow for these uses in appropriate settings in the community. Dover currently allows child day care facilities serving a limited number of full and part-time children in all zoning districts where single family homes are permitted, in accordance with Vermont state law. Facilities serving a larger number of children are allowed with Development Review Board approval in all zoning districts.

## **6.4 Library**

The Dover Free Library was founded in 1913 and is in the former Brick School on the Dover Common. Since occupying the building in 1972, several additions have been constructed to add to the facility's capacity to serve the community. In 1987 a two-room addition was added to the back of the building and in 2002 a Children's Room was added. The library is currently staffed by a Director, Library Assistant, and Children's Librarian. The library is overseen by a volunteer Board of Trustees and funded by the Town. Funds are also raised for the library at its Annual Dessert Social.

The library's circulation numbers for 2022-2023 was approximately 27,710 items including books, magazines, DVDs and downloadable digital media. Museum passes, snowshoes and other items are also available for loan. There are public internet access stations and "wi-fi" is available for public use. A faster, fiber-optic connection is also available. The library offers extensive public programs including pre-school story time, book discussions, family films, speakers, and displays by local artisans. Members of the public can reserve the Community Room for cultural, recreational, or educational programs.

The library has developed a strategic planning process to ensure it continues to improve its presence in Dover and the resources provided to residents. The current 2022-2024 Strategic Plan for the library focuses on partnerships, promotion and public awareness, programs, classes, and

lectures, clubs, environment, materials and resources, and website and technology. Planned improvements to the facility include upgrading the well to have suitable drinking water, and redesigning the entrance hallway to make the space more inviting. In 2022, the Town was informed of the presence of PFAS in the water supply at Dover Commons, which impacts Town Hall, Kids in the Country Childcare, and the Library facilities. Remediation work began in 2023 including the drilling of a new well, and is ongoing.

## **6.5 Wastewater Disposal**

The North Branch Fire District #1 supplies sewage treatment to a portion of Dover. The Fire District functions as an independent municipality, governed by the Prudential Committee whose members are elected annually by all registered voters in the Fire District. The Prudential Committee is responsible for the management of the sewage disposal facility, allocation of gallonage and setting of fees and taxes for its support. The Town does not have a role in planning, managing, or financing Fire District operations.

Located on Dorr Fitch Road, the sewage treatment plant provides secondary treatment for wastewater generated by the majority of commercial properties as well as residents and vacation properties in West Dover. Treated effluent is disposed of both by over-land spray and by subsurface disposal on a 20-acre field. Bio-solids are shipped during the winter months for incineration at a landfill, and during the summer months are spread onto land owned by the Fire District.

The sewage system is based on user fees with the fees going towards operational costs. Connections are made within the service area upon payment of a connection fee, which is used for capital budgeting. All users within 250 feet are required to hook into the system unless they can provide documentation from a licensed site designer or engineer that their septic system is working properly.

The amount of sewage the treatment plant processes varies seasonally. Based on restrictions for the spray fields, the total capacity of the plant is .475 million gallons per day (mgd). This will periodically be increased as the subsurface site is tested and approved by the State. At peak (holiday week during the winter), the plant processes about 1 mgd. The plant is able to process more than the total capacity of the spray fields because there are two holding ponds. Typical disposal during the summer is between 204,750 and 237,833 gallons per day. The system is currently at approximately 60% capacity and has ample room to accommodate more users.

In 2021 and 2022 the Fire District completed a subsurface disposal site and added several new elements to the treatment facility. The ditches were removed and a new reactor was constructed. New head works were added as well as new piping and electrical work. Chlorine gas was eliminated from the treatment process. The Fire District has adequate reserves to address future capital improvements if needed.

Areas not currently served by the District use individual, on-site septic systems as the principal means of wastewater disposal. The State of Vermont is the sole administrator of on-site septic systems and is responsible for issuing permits. These systems limit the growth to lots that are of a sufficient size to allow both a well and septic. Given the additional reserve capacity, the District

would consider extending service to areas not currently in their service district.

## **6.6 Water**

The Town does not have a municipal water system and properties are required to provide for their own potable water supply. However, Dover does have a significant number of small-scale public systems due to the larger number of commercial properties and condominium developments in town. As discussed in the Natural Resources Chapter, there is a growing concern in the community about the continued availability of the groundwater supply due to increased demand on common aquifers. The Town will need to investigate the development of a municipal water system to address this concern. In addition, a public water system would support more efficient use of lands and benefit commercial and multi-family properties required to provide fire suppression systems under state regulations.

## **6.7 Public Safety**

### **Health and Emergency Services**

Health care and emergency services are provided by local organizations as well as other organizations in adjacent communities. There are medical professionals located throughout the Deerfield Valley that provide primary care services to residents, in addition to the larger communities of Brattleboro and Bennington. The Deerfield Valley Health Center located in Wilmington and the Mountain Medical Services in Dover are staffed by Southwestern Vermont Healthcare Center. The Mountain Medical Services is located at the Mount Snow resort and is open weekends and school vacation holidays during the ski season.

Hospitals in the region that serve Dover residents include Grace Cottage Hospital in Townshend, Brattleboro Memorial Hospital in Brattleboro, and Southwestern Vermont Medical Center in Bennington. Residents may also travel to larger hospital facilities in Hanover, New Hampshire and Albany, New York for major medical and surgical needs.

Support and Services at Home (SASH) is an initiative that provides services and support for Medicare recipients living independently at home. The program is designed to help people be able to remain in their homes as they age. SASH is implemented at the regional level by non-profit housing organizations and Shire Housing oversees the program for Dover residents. As Dover's population ages, programs like SASH will be important to supporting the health and well-being of residents.

Deerfield Valley Rescue, Inc. (DVR) provides 24-hour ambulance coverage to Dover, Wilmington, Searsburg, Somerset, and parts of Marlboro and Stratton. DVR is staffed by two full-time paid staff members and volunteers trained in emergency care and transport. The company's main facility is located in Wilmington on Adams Drive just off Route 100 and in relatively close proximity to Dover. DVR also has one ambulance stationed in West Dover. DVR is funded through a combination of subscription services, billing for services rendered, and donations.

The East Dover Volunteer Fire Company, Inc. also provides emergency care to East Dover residents and assists DVR with its volunteer rescue squad emergency care attendants. The West Dover Fire Department includes a Search and Rescue team that responds to emergency calls for

persons lost or injured in remote recreation areas.

### **Police Department**

Dover is one of the few towns in the region that has its own police department. The Dover Police Department is a full-time department with a central station located on Route 100. The department consists of 8 members, including a Chief of Police, Sergeant, Investigator, 3 additional full-time officers and 1 part-time officer, and a full-time Dispatcher/Office Manager. Vermont State Police and other law enforcement agencies assist in providing law enforcement coverage in Dover. The current facility meets the needs of the department and there are no plans for significant updates.

### **Fire Departments**

The Town is served by two fire departments: East Dover Volunteer Fire Company, Inc. and the West Dover Fire Department. Both departments participate in a mutual aid program, making personnel and equipment available to neighboring towns in the event of a shortage.

The West Dover Fire Department station has two engine trucks, one tanker truck, one utility truck, and one pickup truck. The replacement of vehicles is included in the annual town budget under the Capital Equipment Plan. The Town has budgeted for adding a bunkroom to the station and is planning to install a generator in the future. The East Dover Fire Company station has two engines, one tanker, and one rescue vehicle. The station's parking lot is scheduled to be paved in 2023. Future improvements to the station will include replacing the roof.

The Town recently installed hydrants on Handle Road along the water pipeline constructed by Mount Snow for snowmaking purposes. There are also several dry hydrants located across the community. Many of the larger residential and commercial developments in Town have installed their own water systems and hydrants for fire protection. In areas that are not served by any water system, the fire department must obtain water from surface waters.

## **6.8 Solid Waste Disposal and Recycling**

Dover is a member of the Windham Solid Waste Management District, which provides solid waste management services for 18 municipalities and their residents in the region. Membership in the District establishes a guaranteed waste disposal option for the Town. Each member-town has two representatives to the District.

Dover maintains a transfer station on Landfill Road for use by property owners and residents. The transfer station includes trash collection, a recycling compactor, and a 4-yard dumpster for food scrap collection. A generator is needed at the transfer station to provide backup power in the event of a power outage.

The Town has a Solid Waste Ordinance that establishes fees for the use of the transfer station. Current rates for household trash are \$3 per bag with a valid transfer sticker. Residential stickers are \$10 per household and commercial stickers can be obtained for \$20. There is a bulk rate fee of \$40 per cubic yard as well as fees to dispose of miscellaneous items. Citizens 62 and older can get a free transfer station pass. There is no charge for disposing recyclable items and food scraps. Weekly drop-off of household hazardous waste is available to Dover residents at WSWMD in Brattleboro seasonally from May to October.

## **6.9 Telecommunications**

Cellular phone services are limited in the Deerfield Valley, but have improved over recent years. Based on drive testing completed by VTrans in 2022, there is relatively strong coverage along Route 100, Handle Road, Dover Hill Road and around the Mount Snow resort. Service is more limited in other areas of town.

Currently, Verizon and AT&T maintain cell towers in the community. In addition, Verizon installed a Cell on Wheels (COW) at Mount Snow to boost its coverage in the resort area. The Town has adopted a Telecommunications Ordinance that regulates construction and alteration of telecommunication facilities to protect public health, safety, and general welfare while also accommodating communication needs. Local and long-distance telephone service over physical lines is provided by Consolidated Communications. Duncan Cable also provides cable to some residents in West Dover.

With new opportunities for remote work and an increase in basic services being accessed online, improving broadband access in Dover is increasingly important. Local internet providers include Fidium Fiber, Consolidated Communications, and Duncan Cable. Other fiber service is available for business-to-business use from FirstLight and satellite services also provide connectivity. Mount Snow recently completed a project to extend a fiber line to the mountain's base, which will help to improve emergency response services to the resort.

State data from 2022 showed roughly 15% of households in Dover did not have access to internet with download speeds of 25 Mbps and upload speeds of 3 Mbps, which is the FCC minimum requirement for broadband. Underserved areas were concentrated in East Dover outside of the village and away from Dover Hill Road. Since then, Fidium Fiber completed a build out of its fiber network and now can provide service to every property within a pole's distance of its fiber line.

Dover is also a member of the Deerfield Valley Communication Union District (DVFiber). DVFiber functions as a municipal entity that serves the region with the purpose of providing high-speed broadband access across the Deerfield Valley and Southern Vermont. Communication Union Districts are authorized to engage in planning, construction, management, customer service, and contract negotiations to fulfill their mission of improving broadband access. DVFiber has a universal service plan that includes all unserved or underserved areas in its member towns, including Dover. Dover's connection to the DVFiber network is anticipated to be in 2025.

## **6.10 Electricity**

Green Mountain Power (GMP) provides electricity to properties in Dover and maintains a substation at the intersection of Stugger Road and Kingswood Road. Based on data from GMP, three-phase power is currently available for properties along Route 100 to Ahmeek Road, around the Mt. Snow resort, along Tannery and Handle Roads, and on Dover Hill Road approximately to the Dover Commons. Three-phase power is especially important for commercial and industrial uses and to support renewable energy facilities.

## 6.11 Objectives, Policies, and Actions

**Objective 1:** Provide a cost-efficient system of community services, facilities, and utilities to meet present and future needs of Dover.

**Policy 1.1:** Provide a system of community services, facilities, and utilities to meet the present and future needs of Dover.

### *Actions*

- a. Evaluate and strengthen local government services where needed with technical assistance from appropriate state and regional agencies.
- b. Pursue the development of a municipal water system.
- c. Evaluate energy usage in municipal facilities and make energy efficiency improvements to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and energy costs.
- d. Maintain a capital improvement plan that includes an inventory of municipal facilities and equipment, capital projects and costs, and a financing plan.
- e. Seek state and federal grants to assist with financing town projects.

**Policy 1.2:** Provide high-quality educational and vocational opportunities for Dover residents while keeping within the financial capability of the Town.

### *Actions*

- a. Continue to plan for Dover School's long-term capital needs in order to keep tax rates and expenditures even.
- b. Rely on the School Board for leadership in efficiently developing and maintaining the highest quality educational opportunities for Dover families.
- c. Monitor population and school enrollment trends to address future needs in an efficient manner.

**Policy 1.3:** Protect water supplies by promoting reliable wastewater disposal.

### *Actions*

- a. Within the service area of North Branch Fire District #1, encourage the use of municipal wastewater disposal over the use of individual, private on-site septic systems.
- b. Maintain regular communications with the North Branch Fire District #1 through the appointment of a Selectboard Liaison.

**Policy 1.4:** Support the provision of local library service, community reading programs, and information services to all residents.

### *Actions*

- a. Continue appropriations to the Dover Free Library to meet local needs.
- b. Increase public awareness of library resources and services.
- c. Investigate alternatives to fund for capital improvements to building and property (entry hallway, former Brick School building and drinking water well).

**Policy 1.5:** Maintain a quality level of police, fire, and ambulance services

*Actions*

- a. Continue to provide financial support to the West Dover and East Dover fire departments so that an effective fire protection and fire prevention system can be maintained.
- b. Install a generator at the West Dover Fire Station.
- c. Develop a plan for dry hydrant maintenance and identify possible sites for future dry hydrant installations.
- d. Require that all new development provide adequate water availability and additional equipment or infrastructure needed for effective fire protection.
- e. Ensure adequate police services for the town by periodically reviewing the police protection available to residents.

**Policy 1.6:** Maintain a certified solid waste transfer and recycling facility for use by Dover residents and non-residents.

*Actions*

- a. Continue to participate in the Windham Solid Waste Management District.
- b. Support local recycling and composting efforts by promoting use of recycling and food scrap collection bins at the town transfer station and providing educational materials.

**Policy 1.7:** Promote the development of modern communication facilities of all types to meet the long-range needs of the community and for economic development.

*Actions*

- a. Establish public and private partnerships to pursue the expansion of telecommunications infrastructure.
- b. Ensure the Town continues to appoint a representative and alternates to the Deerfield Valley Communications District Governing Board to represent the community's interest.

**Objective 2:** Enable safe and affordable child care options for all Dover families.

**Policy 2.1:** Support the provision of safe and affordable child care.

*Actions*

- a. Review zoning bylaws and identify opportunities to better support the establishment of state registered or licensed home-based childcare facilities.
- b. Monitor the adequacy and demand of child care services, including the need for evening care.
- c. Evaluate barriers to establishing childcare programs in collaboration with adjacent towns.
- d. Update the Town's website to direct residents to the child care referral and financial assistance programs through the Winston Prouty Center for Child and Family Development

# CHAPTER 7

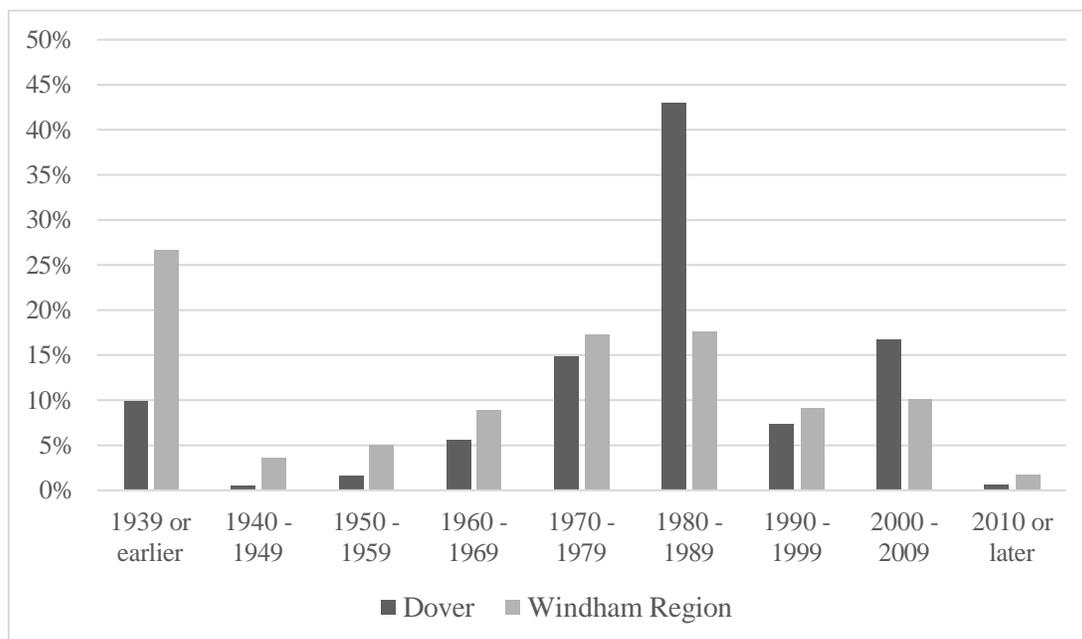
## HOUSING

### 7.1 Existing Housing Conditions

#### *Existing Housing Stock Age, Type, and Location*

As of 2020, Dover had a total of 3,067 housing units. This is a net increase of only 13 units from 2010. The housing stock is significantly newer compared with other towns in the region. Only 304 or approximately 10% of housing units in Dover were built in 1939 or earlier compared with 27% for the Windham Region. Of the existing housing stock, 1,329 dwellings or 43% of all units were built in the 1980s, a period of significant development in the community. Dover also has a higher percentage of homes built between 2000 – 2009 compared to the region. This could correspond with the increase in housing construction seen leading up to the 2008 financial crisis.

**Figure 7-1: Percentage of Total Housing Units Built by Decade**



Source: US Census

Single-family detached homes are the predominant housing type in Dover at 44% of the total number of dwelling units. Dover has a higher percentage of attached 1-unit dwellings, typically townhome style developments, and units in buildings with 5 to 9 units as compared to the Windham Region. Both of these housing types, and in particular 1-unit attached townhomes, are commonly developed as condominiums and are often used for seasonal housing.

Housing types and density vary considerably across the community based on the suitability of the land for development, proximity to major transportation corridors, and the ability to connect to the wastewater system. In general, there is a progression from more densely developed areas

around the Mount Snow resort outwards. The majority of townhome and multi-family developments are located immediately around Mount Snow, on the northern end of Handle Road, and around the Route 100 corridor.

**Table 7-1: Housing Units in Structure, 2020**

	Dover Percent	Windham Region Percent
1-unit, detached	44%	66%
1-unit, attached (Townhome)	29%	7%
2 units	5%	4%
3 or 4 units	5%	6%
5 to 9 units	11%	7%
10 to 19 units	1%	1%
20 or more units	3%	3%
Mobile home	1%	5%

Source: US Census

For the remainder of the community, detached single-family dwellings are the predominant housing type. There are several larger single-family subdivisions with average lot sizes around one-acre that were mostly developed in the 1980s. These include the Antler Loop and Heritage Drive/Sugar House Road development off of Dover Hill Road, the Valley View Road and Ellis Brook Road development, and the Country Club Road/Maple Hill Road subdivision off of Route 100. The eastern and northeastern portions of town are the most rural areas comprised of mostly low-density residential development. Much of the area is located in the Conservation Zoning District, which has a minimum lot size of 27 acres.

*Household Characteristics*

Table 7-2 below shows household sizes in Dover in 2010 as compared to 2020. There was an increase in total households from 537 to 833 during the 10-year period. The percentage of households by size remained largely unchanged, with 2-person households being the majority at approximately 40% followed by 1-person households at 34%.

**Table 7-2: Household Size, 2010 – 2020**

	2010	2020
1-person household	176	280
2-person household	222	337
3-person household	71	86
4-person or more household	68	130
<b>Total households</b>	<b>537</b>	<b>833</b>

Source: US Census

*Seasonal Housing and Short-Term Rentals*

Dover has one of the highest rates of second homeownership in the state. As of 2020, 2,137 units or 70% of Dover’s total housing units were used for seasonal use. As shown in Table 7-3 below,

there was a decrease of approximately 300 seasonal units between 2010 and 2020 and a similar increase in owner-occupied units. Overall the total number of units remained unchanged during this period and this may be the result of seasonal homeowners becoming temporary full-time residents during the COVID 19 pandemic.

**Table 7-3: Housing Unit by Type, 2000 – 2020**

	2000	2010	2020
Seasonal Units	2,044	2,443	2,137
Owner-Occupied Units	448	388	667
Renter Occupied Units	163	149	166
Vacant Units	94	74	97
<b>Total Housing Units</b>	<b>2,749</b>	<b>3,054</b>	<b>3,067</b>

Source: U.S. Census

Similar to many resort communities in Vermont, Dover has seen a significant increase in the number of short-term rentals in recent years. Historically, the community has a history of homeowners renting out rooms to visitors. With the introduction of online platforms like Airbnb it has become easier to rent out rooms and entire homes. As of December 2023, there were an estimated 735 short-term rental listings in Dover according to Air DNA, a website that compiles data on short-term rentals. This number has grown from approximately 329 listings in December 2018. Short-term rentals are concentrated in West Dover around Mount Snow and it is likely many seasonal homeowners use short-term rental services to rent out dwellings when they're not being used.

Short-term rentals present benefits and challenges for Dover. On the one hand, the availability of short-term rental units help attract visitors to the area by offering more and different types of accommodations, provide additional revenue to the town through meal and lodging taxes, and can allow residents to afford homes by providing a supplemental income source. However, there are concerns around the occupancy levels of short-term rental and whether these buildings meet current life and safety codes. In addition, the additional noise, vehicles, and garbage associated with higher occupancy numbers can have an impact on existing residential neighborhoods. Finally, there is the question of whether these housing units could otherwise provide long-term housing for rent or ownership. The Town is currently considering a local ordinance to regulate short-term rental properties.

Short-term rentals are also regulated by the Vermont Department of Taxes, Department of Health, and Department of Public Safety's Division of Fire Safety. Operators are required to complete a Safety, Health, and Financial Obligation Self-Certification form. The checklist includes fire, life, and health safety measures, such as having smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, inspection of heating systems by a certified technician, proper guards and railings for decks and stairs, and adequate refuse containers and collection. The form includes contact information for the individual responsible for the unit and the Department of Health and Division of Fire Safety. The form does not need to be filed with the State, but needs to be retained on site.

### *Housing Affordability*

Housing is considered affordable when a household spends no more than 30 percent of its gross income on housing costs. For homeowners, housing costs include mortgage principal and interest, property taxes, property insurance, and any association fees. For renters, costs include rent, utilities not included in rent, and any association fees. Since affordability is determined by monthly costs, the age of the home and maintenance costs are not factored into the overall costs.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development estimated the median income for a two person household in Windham County was \$72,600 in 2023. Using the affordability criteria outlined above, a median two-person household in Windham County could afford a maximum of \$1,815 per month in rent or to purchase a home got approximately \$222,750.

According to the Vermont Department of Taxes, the median home sale price in Dover in 2022 was \$296,000 based on 23 home sales. Data on median rental costs can be less reliable than home sale prices. The data reliability for the 2019 American Community Survey was considered to be relatively good and showed a median gross rent estimate of \$1,103 for Dover compared to \$881 for Windham County. Rents are often higher in Dover than other Windham County towns because of the demand for seasonal rents in the winter. Given the scarcity of rental units and increasing housing costs it is likely that average rents in Dover have increased since 2019.

According to the 2021 American Community Survey, the median household income for Dover was only \$45,625. Based on this income level, a house priced at approximately \$151,300 or a monthly rent of \$1,140 would be considered affordable. The Economic Development Chapter provides the annual average wages for some of the main occupations held by Dover residents, many of which are less than the median household income. This points to a potential affordability gap between wages and housing costs for many residents.

The lack of affordable housing options in Dover is evident in the percentage of households that are either cost burdened (paying more than 30% of their gross income on housing) or severely cost burdened (paying more than 50% of their gross income on housing). The 2021 American Community Survey estimated 124 owner-occupied and 11 households that rent are cost burdened and 56 owner-occupied and 18 households that rent are severely cost burdened. In total, this is 209 households, or approximately 25% of all households in town, that are in housing situations that are not currently affordable.

## **7.2 Housing Needs**

Based on the existing housing characteristics and the demographic and economic conditions highlighted elsewhere in the Town Plan, there are several challenges impacting the Dover housing market. Average wages are lagging behind the County average and housing costs are increasing at a significantly higher rate than incomes. This has resulted in homeowners and renters either needing to pay a higher percentage of their income towards housing costs or needing to find more affordable housing option outside of Dover. This is impacting local businesses, as many struggle to find workers due to the lack of housing options. According to 2021 data from U.S. Census OnTheMap, 74% of employees working in Dover live elsewhere.

Demographic data shows that the community is ageing. Between 2010 and 2020, the percent of residents aged 60 or older grew from 27% to 36%. Many residents will not be able to continue to live in their existing homes as they age and there is a need for housing dedicated to supporting these residents. Household characteristics have also been trending towards smaller one or two-person households, reflecting an aging population and a smaller number of families with children. These households may prefer a smaller footprint dwelling in a townhome or multi-unit type development versus a large single-family house.

The current housing market has not been able to meet the evolving needs of Dover’s residents. Since 2000, it appears that most of the 318 new housing units constructed have been for seasonal use and the number of occupied rental units has remained relatively flat. The second-home market puts upward pressure on land and housing costs, affecting costs for year-round residents. At the same time, Dover’s economy, especially service, tourism, and building trades, benefit from the business brought in by seasonal housing development.

In 2019, the towns of Dover and Wilmington hired Camoin Associates to complete a Housing Analysis and Master Plan for the two communities. The study highlighted the same trends discussed above and identified a specific need for additional year-round rentals, increasing the quality of the current housing stock, and providing more senior housing.

The tables below show the demand for housing calculated by Camoin Associates in terms of total demand and by unit type. The data shows a particular need for rental units and smaller units with 1 or 2 bedrooms. In the analysis, “In-Commuters” refers to employees working in Dover and Wilmington but living elsewhere and “Under-Housed Workforce” refers to young workers still living at home with parents. It is important to note this analysis combines the needs for Dover and Wilmington, and it was completed in 2019 with demand likely increasing since then.

**Table 7-4: Total Housing Demand for Dover & Wilmington**

	Demand for Home Purchase	Demand for Home Rentals
In-Commuters	44 – 110 units	77 – 193 units
Under-Housed Workforce	3 – 6 units	10 – 21 units
Seniors Living Alone or with Significant Other	-	57 – 143 units
Total Demand	47 – 116 units	144 – 357 units

*Source: Housing Analysis & Master Plan, Towns of Dover and Wilmington, VT, Camoin Associates (2019)*

**Table 7-5: Housing Demand by Unit Type for Dover & Wilmington**

Homes for Purchase			Homes for Rent		
# of Bedrooms	# of Units	Pct of Units	# of Bedrooms	# of Units	Pct of Units
2	21 – 52	45%	1	58 – 143	40%
3	24 – 58	50%	2	72 – 179	50%
4	2 – 6	5%	3	14 – 36	10%
Total	47 – 116	100%	Total	144 – 357	100%

Source: *Housing Analysis & Master Plan, Towns of Dover and Wilmington, VT, Camoin Associates (2019)*

### 7.3 Local Housing Policies, Regulations, and Programs

#### *Local Housing Policies and Regulations*

The primary prospective land use districts for residential development in Dover are the Residential and Productive Residential Districts. In addition, higher density residential uses are supported in the Planned Commercial, Village, and Resort Center Districts along with other compatible uses. Goals and policies for these prospective land use districts are discussed in more detail in the Land Use Chapter.

Dover has adopted zoning bylaws to implement the housing and land use policies in its Town Plan. The existing zoning bylaws allow for minimum lot sizes of 1-acre in the Residential District and 5 acres in the Productive Residential District. The Village and Commercial Districts allow for smaller ½-acre lots. The Resort Center District has a ¼-acre minimum lot size for 1 or 2-family dwellings and a 1-acre minimum for multi-family dwellings with up to 10 units per acre for multi-family uses.

In addition, the town permits accessory dwelling units in all zoning districts where single-family dwellings are allowed, Planned Unit Developments for clustering development on smaller lots, and various provisions designed to create more dedicated affordable housing units in the Affordable Housing Article in the zoning bylaw.

In June 2023, Act 47 was signed into law making changes to the Planning & Development statute regarding housing development within local development regulations. The following changes in statute impact Dover and may require updates to the Town’s zoning bylaws:

- Towns must allow two-family dwellings (duplexes) anywhere one-family dwellings are allowed for year-round use. Municipalities must apply the same or less prohibitive dimensional standards to two-family dwellings as would apply to a one-family dwelling. For example, additional lot area cannot be required for a two-family dwelling as compared to a single-family dwelling.
- Accessory dwelling unit (ADU) review, dimensional standards, and other regulations must not be more restrictive than those for a single-family dwelling. For example, if a single-family dwelling does not require conditional use approval in a zoning district than an ADU

cannot be subject to conditional use review.

In addition to changes to the zoning bylaws that will be required by Act 47, the Town should consider reviewing how it classifies residential uses in general as permitted or conditional in the different zoning districts and also allowing for smaller lot sizes and increased residential density. Allowing for a greater variety of residential uses by right and relaxing development standards where appropriate would help support additional housing creation. Given the demand for rental housing, the Commercial District on Route 100 in particular should be considered for higher density development given the availability of goods and services, employment opportunities, and public transit.

There is also an existing provision in the zoning bylaws that requires affordable housing projects to create a State recognized land trust to guarantee future affordability. This provision may be creating an unnecessary barrier for affordable housing development and should be reconsidered.

#### *Local Housing Programs*

Dover does not currently have any local housing programs that it manages. As part of its work with the Bi-Town Economic Development Committee, the Town maintains the Deerfield Valley Housing website, which provides resources for tenants, landlords, and prospective homeowners. The Town is exploring incentive programs that could provide property owners with financial support to create long-term rental units and accessory dwelling units with a commitment to keep these as long-term rentals for a certain length of time. Upfront costs to construct or complete renovations for new rental units are significant and such a program could help offset some of those costs.

The Town is also considering a short-term rental ordinance and registration that would create rules for short-term rentals, including having a local point of contact for the unit and complying the State of Vermont Fire Safety Department requirement. The registration system would allow the Town to track the number and location of short-term rental units.

An additional type of program the Town may want to pursue and that is recommended in the Housing Analysis and Master Plan is a home improvement incentive program for homeowners. Such a program could prioritize low and moderate-income households and could be in the form of a tax credit or a matching grant.

## **7.4 Regional Housing Programs**

The Windham Windsor Housing Trust (WWHT) based in Brattleboro creates and manages affordable housing through a variety of programs that serve low and moderate-income residents. WWHT completed the Butterfield Commons project in 2006, an intergenerational, mixed income housing development located on Handle Road. The project consists of a 26-unit building for seniors, seven family rental apartments, and seven townhouses in four structures for family ownership. It provides much needed affordable housing for area residents. WWHT can also provide income-eligible homebuyers with a grant towards the purchase of a qualifying home. In addition, WWHT offers the following programs eligible to Dover residents and property owners to support the continued availability of safe and affordable housing:

- *Green Mountain Home Repair*: this program provides low cost loans for home owners to

complete health and safety improvements and increase energy efficiency if income eligibility criteria are met.

- *Vermont Housing Improvement Program*: this program offers grants from the State of Vermont for up to \$30,000 (efficiency to 2-bedroom units) or \$50,000 (3+ units) to property owners to complete repairs to vacant rental units to meet the Vermont Rental Housing Health Code guidelines. Units are required to be rented out at Fair Market Rents.

Southeastern Vermont Community Action (SEVCA) provides housing stability services to assist tenants with back rent payment, security deposit assistant, referrals to area shelters, and landlord-tenant mediation. SEVCA also operates weatherization and fuel assistance programs for income-eligible homeowners and renters.

## 7.5 Objectives, Policies, and Actions

**Objective 1:** Encourage housing that meets the needs of all current and future Dover residents in terms of type, affordability, and location.

**Policy 1.1:** Promote the creation and preservation of affordable, safe, and healthy housing.

### *Actions*

- a. Explore local housing programs that would provide financial incentives for property owners to create new or renovate existing rental units and accessory dwelling units for long-term rental use.
- b. Adopt a short-term rental ordinance to address life and safety and public nuisance concerns and a registration program to track the location and contact information for short-term rentals.
- c. Explore a home improvement incentive program for low and moderate-income homeowners to complete housing maintenance work.
- d. Promote programs and resources available to homeowners and renters through the State of Vermont, Windham Windsor Housing Trust, and Southeastern Vermont Community Action using the Deerfield Valley Housing website.
- e. Continue to partner with the Town of Wilmington on the Bi-Town Housing Committee and support the development of housing throughout the Deerfield Valley.
- f. Review provisions in the current zoning bylaws that create challenges for the development of housing and encourage flexible housing alternatives.

**Policy 1.2:** Support the development of workforce, affordable, and senior housing projects.

### *Actions*

- a. Learn about site considerations and needs for workforce, affordable, and senior housing development projects.

**Objective 2:** Encourage housing development in locations that are accessible to employment opportunities, community and retail services, public transit, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

**Policy 2.1:** Promote higher density residential development and a diversity of housing types in and around West Dover Village, Mount Snow Resort, and the Route 100 corridor.

*Actions*

- a. Review and amend existing zoning bylaws for the Village, Planned Commercial, and Resort Center Districts and the Vacation Zone Overlay to allow for a greater variety of housing types at higher densities.

**Policy 2.2:** Protect the more rural areas of Dover from large scale development while also encouraging in-fill housing opportunities.

*Actions*

- a. Continue to provide for the Transfer of Development Rights Overlay District as an incentive to preserve rural areas and develop more densely in areas suitable to handle development.
- b. Investigate creating a density bonus in the Planned Unit Development provisions of the zoning bylaws to encourage housing.
- c. Revise zoning bylaws to remove barriers to create accessory dwelling units and two-family dwellings.

# CHAPTER 8

## TRANSPORTATION

### 8.1 Highway Network

Dover's highway network includes town roads and state highways. Route 100 is a State Highway and is the primary arterial route, running north-south through West Dover and connecting with the communities of Wilmington, Stratton, and Wardsboro. As a State Highway, Route 100 is exclusively maintained by the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans). Dover Hill Road is the primary east-west road connecting West Dover to East Dover and points to the east. The closest interstate highway is I-91, which passes through Brattleboro approximately 20 miles southeast of Dover.

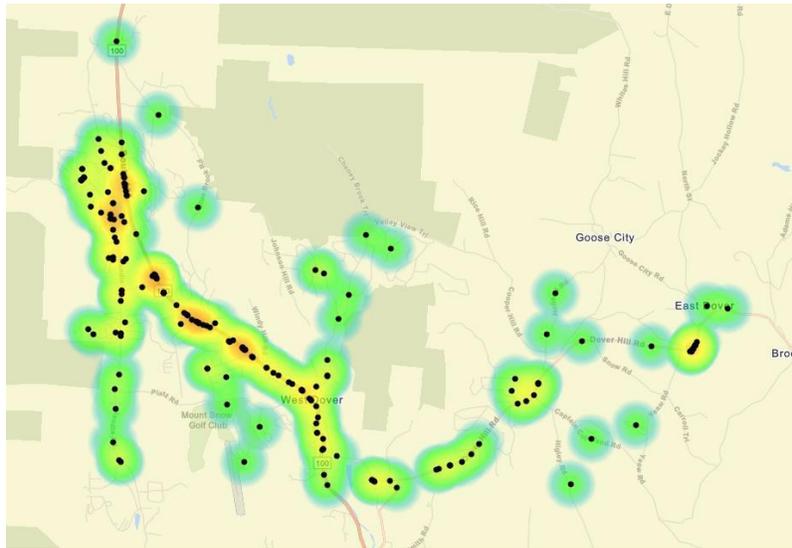
Route 100 serves multiple functions, accommodating people traveling to Mount Snow and Stratton ski resorts, as well as local and regional residents who work and shop in the business establishments located along the highway. As a major arterial route in the Deerfield Valley, Route 100 experiences seasonal peaks of intense vehicular traffic, resulting in periods of congested travel conditions.

Traffic delays at the intersection of Route 9 and Route 100 in downtown Wilmington are a well-known problem, caused by through traffic on these highways. In particular, there are significant backups on southbound Route 100 that coincide with end-of-day traffic at the resort during the winter season. This has resulted in alternative routes being used to get to and from the Deerfield Valley. Of particular concern is increased through traffic on Dover Hill Road connecting to Route 30 to the east. Similar concerns have been raised about the use of Higley Hill Road in Wilmington and Augur Hole Road in Marlboro. These routes provide a convenient and scenic bypass of the Wilmington village intersection. However, it is preferred that traffic be directed to use arterial roads rather than using dirt roads or primarily residential routes.

The Mount Snow resort is the major trip generator in Dover and has a significant impact on the overall road system. Busy winter weekends and fall foliage leaf viewing times cause spikes in traffic and congestion on the roads leading to and around the resort, including on local streets. The resort also employs a large number of workers, some of whom do not have access to a vehicle and either need to walk or use public transit to get to the resort. Southeast Vermont Transit provides public transportation to connect residential areas in West Dover to Mount Snow, which helps alleviate traffic and congestion on local roads.

The map below shows crash incidents in Dover during the four-year period from 2019 – 2022 reported to VTrans. Areas where there were a higher number of crashes are shown in yellow and orange. There is a correspondence between the more heavily travelled roads like Route 100 and Handle Road around the Mount Snow resort and crash incidents. There is also a cluster of crashes at the intersections of Dover Hill Road with East Dover Road and Captain Copeland Road, and where Dover Hill Road curves sharply south of the village of East Dover.

**Figure 8-1: Crash Incidents in Dover, January 1, 2019 – December 31, 2022**



*Source: Vermont Agency of Transportation*

The Windham Regional Commission collected traffic data on Handle Road and Dover Hill Road in the summer and fall of 2023. Traffic on Handle Road north of Tannery Road generally follows the posted speed of 35 miles per hour. The average speed was 36 miles per hour and 21% of vehicles went over 40 miles per hour. A higher percentage of vehicles (31%) travelled at more than 40 miles per hour in the northbound direction compared to southbound. This roadway sees significantly higher traffic volumes in the winter months associated with Mount Snow and has a large number of pedestrians walking on the shoulder to get to the resort from nearby residential condominium developments. Given high traffic volumes, steps should be taken to improve pedestrian safety on Handle Road.

Traffic data for Dover Hill Road was collected west of the sharp curve road before the village of East Dover. This road has is posted for 35 miles per hour and the average speed was 42 miles per hour. Vehicles travelling eastbound (downhill) and westbound (uphill) had similar rates of exceeding the speed limit, with 59% of eastbound and 65% of westbound traffic driving at more than 40 miles per hour. The Town has installed traffic signs before the sharp curve in the road to reduce speeds. Traffic speeds should continue to be monitored in this area and additional or different types of signage may be needed.

Highways are classified as either Class 1, 2, 3, or 4. Towns provide information annually to VTrans on town highways by filling out a mileage certificate. The State of Vermont Highway Map classifies Dover’s public roads as shown in Table 8-1 below. This data is current as of February 2023.

**Table 8-1: Mileage Summary of Town Highway Mileage, February 2023**

Class	1	2	3	4	Total Mileage
Town Highway	-	10.38 miles	48.85 miles	2.57 miles	61.8 miles
State Highway	5.54 miles	-	-	-	5.54 miles

Source: Vermont Agency of Transportation

Generally, Class 1 highways are maintained by VTrans. State statute allows some sections of state highway to be designated for shared state and local responsibilities, but Dover does not have any Class 1 town highways.

Class 2 highways are considered the most important roadways in a town due to their having the highest traffic volumes. While these highways are primarily the responsibility of the town, VTrans is responsible for center line pavement markings and it relies on the town to notify them if line maintenance is required. Dorr Fitch Road, Dover Hill Road, and Handle Road are the only Class 2 highways in Dover. Class 3 highways comprise the rest of the regularly travelled town highways and can include paved and dirt roads. Dirt roads in particular are known to have a calming effect on traffic speed and are an important element of defining Dover’s small town character.

Class 4 highways consist of town roads not classified as Class 1, 2 or 3. Class 4 roads may be maintained to the extent required by the necessity of the town. Typically, these roads are only seasonally functional and have a dirt surface. Class 4 roads are not eligible for state aid funds. There are only approximately 2.6 miles of Class 4 roads in Dover including Carroll Trail and Valley View Trail.

There are approximately 26 miles of private roads in Dover, accounting for about 30% of all traveled roads in town. Unlike many other towns, a significant portion of these private roads are formal roads that serve large residential subdivisions. The Town recognizes the importance of ensuring proper maintenance of private roads to prevent deterioration. When reviewing Planned Unit Development applications, the Development Review Board enforces standards that ensure private roads are built to public road standards, meet the municipal impact requirements for emergency services, and the homeowner’s association is directed to properly maintain the roads.

Like many Vermont communities, Dover also has several legal trails including Hathaway Trail, Crosstown Trail, Cheney Brook Trail, and Clyde Jones Trail. Many of these trails cross the Green Mountain National Forest land that abuts the Dover Town Forest. In total, the community has approximately 11 miles of legal trails. Trails are public rights-of-way that are not highways and are generally used for recreational purposes, including hiking, snowmobiling, and cross-country skiing. As such, they can function as an additional recreational amenity for residents and can be used to expand recreational networks.

## **8.2 Bicycle and Pedestrian Infrastructure**

The Valley Trail in West Dover starts at the intersection of Dorr Fitch Road and Route 100 and

runs north along Route 100 to the Dover Town Park and Mountain Park Plaza. From here, the Valley Trails continues on local roads and then as a trail corridor west to connect with Handle Road at Tannery Road. The Valley Trail also intersects with the Crosstown Trail that runs from Crosstown Road to Handle Road.

The Valley Trail and Crosstown Trail provide important pedestrian facilities that connect the Dover town office, inns and hotels, retail and restaurant establishments on Route 100, residential areas, and Mount Snow. According to data collected by the Windham Regional Commission in October and November 2022, there were an average of 62 daily pedestrian trips on the Valley Trail where it crosses the North Branch near Route 100. The peak count was 142 pedestrian trips on a weekend day. For the Crosstown Trail, there were an average of 90 pedestrian trips per day in October 2022, with a peak count of 326 trips on a weekend day.

There are no pedestrian sidewalks in East Dover. Generally, the roads are narrow, affording pedestrians little shoulder width. This makes it difficult to create sidewalks.

Future development of pedestrian sidewalks and trails should promote safe and efficient travel along heavily trafficked roads, encourage traffic calming, and provide alternative means of transportation around the community. Of particular concern is the section of Route 100 from where the Valley Trail currently terminates north to the Mount Snow resort. Pedestrian facilities are needed along this section of Route 100 and on South Access and North Access Roads that connect Route 100 to the resort. With the upcoming removal of the Snow Lake Dam on South Access Road, there is an opportunity to redesign this road in conjunction with the dam removal project.

Handle Road is also used by pedestrians to access Mount Snow from the residential condominiums south of Tannery Road. There is an existing paved pedestrian walkway on the west side of Handle Road from Tannery Road to Carinthia Road. However, the walkway needs to be repainted to clearly show it is for pedestrian use. Additional pedestrian and bicycle facilities are needed on Handle Road north to Mount Snow and south to the Wilmington town line.



Crosstown Trail at Handle Road  
(Credit: Windham Regional Commission)

Biking in Dover is primarily recreational in nature. Route 100 and Handle Road are amongst some of the roads that are used for biking. Neither roadway includes dedicated bike facilities, such as a bike lane, but both have shoulders adjacent to the vehicle travel lane. For Route 100 in particular, exploring whether there is sufficient room to add striping or other accommodations for bicyclists would improve safety and help reduce traffic speeds.

According to bicycle counts completed by the Windham Regional Commission in August and September 2019, there were an average of 53 bicycle trips per day on Route 100 near the Dover Police Station. Data collected in August 2019 showed an average of 22 daily bicycle trips on

Handle Road just north of Tannery Road. The Valley Trail and the Crosstown Trail are also used by bicyclist for recreational and transportation purposes.

### 8.3 Public Transportation

Southeast Vermont Transit (SeVT) provides public transit service year-round in Dover. The Deerfield Valley is served by the Wilmington MOOver system that includes local routes and resort routes at Mount Snow that run from Thanksgiving to late-March. East Dover is not currently served by any MOOver routes. All routes are fare free.

There are five year-round routes, all of which interconnect and allow users to reach destinations beyond the Deerfield Valley. The Wilmington-West Dover route runs from Wilmington on Route 100 to Mount Snow. The West Dover route only runs on school days and connects the Dover School to the Old School Enrichment Center in Wilmington. Another route connects Readsboro, Whitingham Village, and Jacksonville to Wilmington.

The fourth route connects Wilmington to Brattleboro, including the Amtrak station, Greyhound station, local Brattleboro bus routes, and the MOOver bus to Bellows Falls. The fifth route connects Wilmington to Bennington, with connecting service to Manchester, Williamstown, Massachusetts and to the bus and train stations in Albany, New York. One of the challenges the community has identified is creating an easier connection between Dover and Brattleboro and Bennington for commuting purposes and to connect with the Amtrak station in Brattleboro. There is one Amtrak train per day that stops in Brattleboro for points north and south and the bus schedule does not provide for a convenient connection.

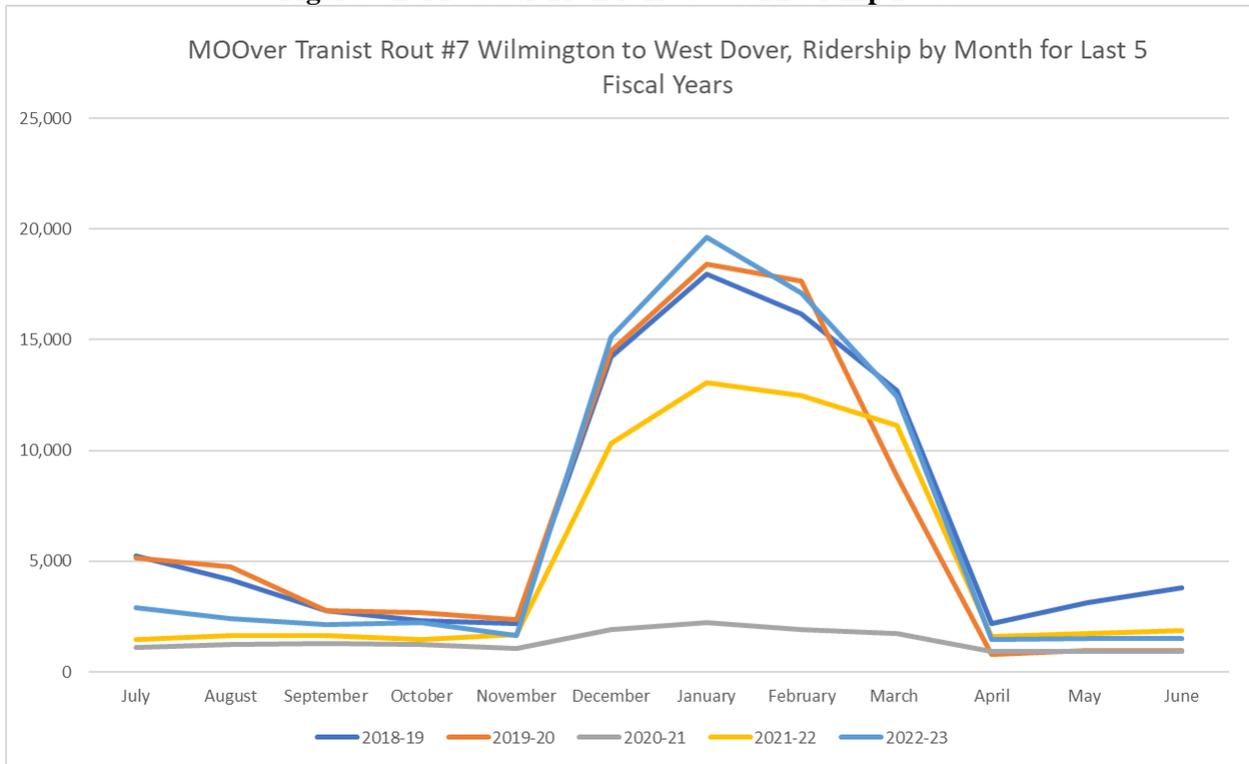


MOOver bus at Timber Creek in West Dover  
(Credit: SEVT)

There are several resort routes that connect residential condominium developments and hotels to the three base lodges at Mount Snow. These routes also provide an alternative means of transportation for Mount Snow employees that live in West Dover. The year-round Wilmington-West Dover route provides an important connection between inns and hotels in downtown Wilmington and Mount Snow during the ski season.

The MOOver service helps reduce the number of vehicles travelling on local roads to and from the resort and helps alleviate congestion during the ski season. As the chart below shows, the Wilmington-West Dover route has significantly higher ridership during the months of December through March. This chart shows ridership by month for the last five fiscal years. The COVID-19 pandemic impacted bus service during the 2020-21 and 2021-22 fiscal years. However, ridership bounced back in 2022-23 with the highest monthly ridership in the past five years at nearly 20,000 riders in January 2023.

**Figure 8-2: MOOver Transit Route #7 Ridership Data**



Data source: Southeast Vermont Transit

SeVT provides free door-to-door transportation for riders age 60 or over and for persons with ADA-defined disabilities. Destinations served include non-emergency medical trips, critical care trips, congregate meal sites, congregate shopping trips, and personal care trips. SeVT applies annually for funding through the Vermont Elders & Persons with Disabilities Transportation Program to provide this service. The MOOver Wilmington-West Dover Route has a stop at the Butterfield Senior/Disabled Housing development on Handle Road. As Dover’s population ages, it will be important to ensure residents are aware of these services and other ride share programs offered by area non-profit organizations.

The Deerfield Valley Regional Airport was a privately owned, public use airport located in West Dover south of the Mount Snow Golf Club. The airport was permanently closed by the Federal Aviation Administration in 2019. At this time, there have been no discussions about an alternative use of the property, which is constrained because it only has access from a private dirt road through a residential neighborhood. Private helicopter landing pads are prohibited in Dover.

## 8.4 Future Needs

Dover’s transportation infrastructure is subject to ongoing maintenance and reconstruction needs. In the upcoming years, anticipated projects will primarily be bank stabilization, culvert replacement, bridge repairs, road paving and grading, and tree trimming. Tree trimming will include the necessary Ash Tree inventory and scheduled removal on both roads and trails. The Town has not identified a need for the expansion of the existing town highway network, but does

have a goal of connecting Captain Copeland Road to Harris Road in East Dover.

Dover uses the Road Surface Management System to maintain an inventory of its transportation infrastructure. This allows the Town to assess the condition of local roads and develop a schedule of maintenance needs. The Town uses a Capital Paving Plan to identify paving projects over the upcoming three fiscal years and the anticipated cost of the project. This process helps to adequately budget for the ongoing repair of local roads while not unreasonably burdening taxpayers.

The Town maintains an inventory of all bridges and culverts including their condition, construction material, and dimension. All bridges and culverts must meet the Town's Bridge and Culvert standards. This requires that culverts that cross a road have an 18-inch diameter and driveway culverts be a minimum of 15 inches. Property owners are responsible for installing the initial driveway culvert and the Highway Department maintains and replaces them when necessary. Part of the reason for doing so is that unmaintained driveway culverts can cause substantial damage to Town roads.

Total highway expenses in Fiscal Year 2021-2022 were \$1,344,730, which is approximately 36 percent of the total town expenses for the year. Like many towns in the region, highway expenses have increased in Dover over recent years as a result of several factors. The cost of materials, equipment, and fuel have all increased which has resulted in larger budgets for road projects. Gravel for maintaining dirt roads remains expensive, especially since Dover does not have a municipal source to use. Currently, the Town obtains gravel for its roads from the most cost-effective source, but the number of available local gravel sites has been in decline.

As the climate changes, the Town can expect to have more extreme rainfall events that result in road damage and washouts, in particular on dirt roads. Based on the 2022 Dover Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, Goose City Road, Blue Brook Road, and Route 100 are particularly vulnerable because of their location within Special Flood Hazard Areas and River Corridors. Installing larger culverts, completing bank stabilization projects, and upgrading drainage ditches can help better manage increased runoff from these types of events. The Vermont Better Roads Program is one funding source for the Town to consider for these projects.

The Town has identified working on the Route 100 corridor as a priority in the upcoming years. Existing issues and challenges along the highway include congestion, speeding, access management, and lack of pedestrian and bicyclist facilities. Reimagining Route 100 is also connected with goals from the Land Use and Housing chapters to increase multi-family housing opportunities along this corridor and to encourage redevelopment of commercial properties. The State's Better Connections Program is one funding source the Town could consider, which focuses on technical assistance for municipalities to increase multi-modal transportation options and improve land use, water quality, public health, and economic vitality.

As more vehicles become electrified, the Town will need to consider how to increase the number of electric vehicle charging stations. There are currently only 13 EV charging stations in town: 2 at the Deerhill Inn, 2 at Greenspring at Mount Snow, and 9 at the Mount Snow Sundance Lodge. These are all Level 2 stations, which provide fast charging speeds but not as fast as a Level 3

station. There are opportunities to place charging stations at convenient locations in the community, such as shopping centers on Route 100, inns and hotels, and at the Mount Snow resort. In addition, the town can explore adding EV charging stations to existing and planned public parking areas. There may be a future opportunity to develop a park-and-ride lot on Route 100 that could be a public transit stop, provide EV charging stations, and connect with the pedestrian and bicycle network.

## 8.5 Complete Streets

Complete Streets is an approach to planning, designing, constructing, and maintaining local roads to consider all users, including vehicles, pedestrians, bicyclists, and public transit riders. This approach to transportation planning makes roads safer, improves mobility for residents without access to a vehicle, and improves public health through encouraging walking and bicycling. In 2011, Vermont passed Act 34 requiring all state and municipal transportation projects to consider “complete streets” principles (except projects involving unpaved roads). As Dover considers and plans for its future transportation needs, keeping in mind the principles of Complete Streets will be important in ensuring roads are designed with all users in mind.

Given the variety of road types in Dover, different design tools need to be applied depending on the transportation context. For example, the needs for Cooper Hill Road will be significantly different than Route 100. The legislature excluded dirt roads from the Act 34 requirements recognizing these roads already result in slower speeds and are frequently used for walking and biking. The following is a summary of the different components to consider for Complete Streets projects and how they may be implemented in Dover:

*Pedestrian Facilities:* includes sidewalks and crosswalks. Sidewalks are more important in village centers, like West Dover and East Dover, and commercial corridors, like Route 100. Roads in rural areas typically have shoulders that provide a safe place to walk. Crosswalks are most often located at intersections. For corridors like Route 100, mid-block crossings can be used too. Proper signage and warnings are necessary at crosswalks to alert drivers.

*Bicycle Facilities:* This includes bicycle lanes, routes, and paths. Dedicated lanes are located adjacent to the vehicle lane and are most appropriate on streets with low to moderate speeds and volumes, such as Route 100. Bike routes refers to the shared use of streets using Shared Lane symbols (sharrows). This type of facility works best on low volume and low speed streets designated as bicycle corridors, such as Handle Road. Examples of separated bike paths in Dover are the Valley Trail and Crosstown Trail.

*Public Transit:* includes transit stop design and amenities. It is important for transit users to feel safe while waiting for the bus. Amenities should be consistent with demand and budget, and can include signage, landing area, and shelters. Bus stops can be curbside stops or a dedicated bulb-out or turn-out to allow traffic to pass the bus when loading.

*Street Trees and Lighting:* Street trees have multiple benefits, including providing a buffer between pedestrians and traffic, providing shade, supporting stormwater management, and reducing vehicles speeds. Lighting is important for encouraging walking and bicycling in the evening hours,

especially during the winter months, and improving pedestrian safety at crossings. Towns can also use decorative light fixtures to add to the character of a village center.

*Traffic Calming:* a combination of physical measures and a supportive environment that help to slow down and control traffic. In Dover, this may include landscaped medians, intersection bulb outs, reduced travel lane widths, walkways, and entrance features to villages.

*Access Management:* standards and guidelines that offer an additional and practical way to promote safe, efficient traffic operations and avoid undesirable development practices along highways. These include requirements for minimum separation distance between driveways or between driveways and an intersection, driveways that serve more than one lot, parking areas that serve more than one business, circulation and access between two lots, and providing access from secondary streets rather than main arterials.

## 8.6 Objectives, Policies, and Actions

**Objective 1:** Maintain and improve a safe and efficient existing transportation system.

**Policy 1.1:** Manage existing roads to meet transportation demands and maintain rural character.

### *Actions*

- a. Review and update the Capital Paving Plan on an annual basis and ensure adequate funds are being raised to meet local road paving needs.
- b. Maintain town culvert inventory and complete culvert replacement, bank stabilization, road grading, and drainage ditch maintenance to manage stormwater runoff.
- c. Identify and pursue state and federal grants to help offset the cost of completing local road, culvert, and bridge projects.
- d. Develop access management standards to be used during the development review process that limit access points and require share access and interconnected parking where feasible.
- e. Consider adopting subdivision regulations that include design standards for new public and private roads, sidewalks, and multi-use paths to effectively connect to existing and planned roads. Require developers to analyze on-site and off-site transportation impacts and provide improvements required to address those impacts.
- f. Retain all existing rights-of-way, including Class 4 roads and Town trails, regardless of whether they are currently being maintained by the Town.
- g. Consider Complete Streets design guidance in planning, designing, constructing, and maintaining non-dirt local roads.
- h. Evaluate and plan for pedestrian and bicyclist safety improvements on Handle Road.

**Policy 1.2:** Coordinate with local, regional, state, and private entities to plan for Dover's transportation needs in a comprehensive manner.

### *Actions*

- a. Continue to work with the Windham Regional Commission to support local road projects and participate in the Transportation Advisory Committee.

- b. Work with the Vermont Agency of Transportation to coordinate and plan for road improvements along Route 100 and avoid negative community impacts along secondary local roads. Particular emphasis should be placed on minimizing curb cuts, improving pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and installing traffic calming measures.
- c. Continue to work with the Windham Road Foreman’s Network to bulk purchase culverts, fuel, and other transportation materials and equipment.
- d. Consider installing electric vehicle charging stations at appropriate municipal buildings and facilities and encourage the installation of charging stations at private businesses.
- e. Work with the Town of Wilmington, State Police, and VTrans to improve traffic flow at the intersection of Route 100 and Route 9 in downtown Wilmington.
- f. Coordinate with the Selectboards for the Towns of Wilmington and Marlboro to investigate ways to discourage the use of local roads to bypass State highways.

**Objective 2:** Reduce reliance on private vehicles as the primary mode of travel and support walking, biking, and transit to access places of employment, services, and community facilities.

**Policy 2.1:** Promote the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists when considering local road projects and proposed private developments.

*Actions*

- a. Evaluate and incorporate where feasible and appropriate Complete Streets design elements for pedestrians and bicyclists for all state and local road projects.
- b. Incorporate planned pedestrian and bicycle facilities into Town Capital Improvement Plans.
- c. Work with VTrans to study bicycle and pedestrian facility improvements along the Route 100 corridor.
- d. Inventory existing bicycle lanes and pedestrian walkways and ensure these facilities are properly maintained, striped, and signed where appropriate.
- e. Provide bicycle and pedestrian facilities on Handle Road from the Wilmington town line to the Snow Tree Condo Association property.
- f. Meet with representatives from Mount Snow to understand internal pedestrian routes at the resort and share the Town’s plans for improved pedestrian and bicycle facilities in proximity to the resort.
- g. Develop standards for required pedestrian and bicycle facility improvements to be used during the Site Plan Review process for commercial and multi-family residential development projects.

**Policy 2.2:** Support the MOOver transit service and other programs that provide ride shares, in particular for seniors, those with disabilities, and commuting workers.

*Actions*

- a. Explore ways to increase MOOver transit ridership numbers, such as working with SEVT on route expansions, providing information on the Town’s website, and promoting services with local businesses and housing providers.
- b. Encourage new construction or major reconstruction of roads and highways to include adequate pull offs for bus stops and amenities for transit riders.

**Policy 2.3:** Plan for and develop a safe and convenient network of non-motorized paths and trails.

*Actions*

- a. Plan for a network of non-motorized, multi-use paths to connect densely developed residential areas with commercial, civic, recreational facilities, and existing and planned sidewalks.
- b. Pursue funding options such as the VTrans Transportation Alternatives Grant Program to help offset local costs.
- c. Pursue the completion of the Valley Trail to Mount Snow.

# CHAPTER 9

## ENERGY

### 9.1 Energy Use and Sources

According to the 2022 Vermont Comprehensive Energy Plan, transportation and heating residential, commercial, and industrial buildings accounts for the largest percentage of the state’s energy consumption. Transportation makes up 38% of the total energy used in Vermont and fuel used to heat buildings and run industrial processes is responsible for 50%. The State Climate Action Plan has set a goal for the transportation sector to meet 10% of its energy needs from renewable sources by 2025 and 45% by 2040. For the thermal (heating) sector, the target is 30% of energy needs from renewables by 2025 and 70% by 2042.

Green Mountain Power provides electricity to all properties in Dover. As of 2022, approximately 75% of Green Mountain Power’s energy was sourced from hydroelectric facilities, 4% from other renewables including solar, and 20% from nuclear. The Vermont Climate Action Plan has established a goal for the electric sector to provide 100% of the state’s energy needs from carbon-free resources by 2032 and at least 75% of that from renewable energy sources.

The majority of Dover residents heat their homes using fuel oil or propane. Data from the 2017-2021 American Community Survey shows that approximately 43% of residents use fuel oil, 27% propane, 20% wood, and 8% electricity for home heating. These numbers have remained relatively consistent going back to the 2000 Census.

Based on the 2023 Vermont Energy Burden Report, Dover has one of the highest overall energy burdens in the state. The analysis, completed by Efficiency Vermont, looks at the average amount residents spend on heating fuel, electricity, and transportation as a percentage of the town’s median household income in order to calculate the energy burden. While total spending on heating, electricity, and transportation is not significantly more than the state average, Dover’s energy burden is higher because the town’s median household income is approximately \$20,000 less than the state. On average, Dover residents spend \$6,922 annually towards energy expenses compared to \$7,081 for Vermonters as a whole. However, for Dover this amounts to 15.2% of the median household income versus 10.4% statewide.

**Table 9-1: Dover vs. Vermont Energy Spending**

	Median Household Income	Thermal Spending	Thermal PCT	Electricity Spending	Electricity PCT	Transportation Spending	Transportation PCT
<b>Dover</b>	\$45,625	\$2,833	6.2%	\$1,308	2.9%	\$2,781	6.1%
<b>Vermont</b>	\$67,674	\$2,447	3.6%	\$1,417	2.1%	\$3,217	4.7%

Source: 2023 Vermont Energy Burden Report, Efficiency Vermont

Energy costs are relatively inelastic compared to non-essential household items, meaning that households have less ability to reduce their spending on heating fuel, electricity, and transportation when these costs increase. It is anticipated that energy costs in all sectors will continue to rise, which will disproportionately impact lower income households and renters who don't have the ability to make energy efficiency upgrades since they don't own the buildings where they live.

Energy use patterns have changed too during and following the COVID-19 pandemic, as well because of climate change. During the pandemic there was an increase in the rate of residents working from home and this has continued for some sectors, at least for a portion of the work week. When residents work at home, electric and heat spending may increase while transportation spending may decrease. Winters are becoming warmer, which may modestly decrease thermal spending, while summers are becoming hotter and more humid which may increase the use of electricity for air conditioning.

## **9.2 Energy Conservation**

Reducing the amount of energy needed to heat residential and commercial buildings can be accomplished through weatherization and making buildings more energy efficient. Examples of weatherization efforts include improving insulation, upgrading windows and doors, and air sealing. In addition to improving efficiency, building weatherization can reduce heating costs and help with indoor air quality by keeping out pollutants and pests.

Vermont has implemented energy building standards for new and renovated residential and commercial buildings. These standards are regularly reviewed and updated with the most recent standards becoming effective in 2020. Compliance is self-certified and the Vermont Comprehensive Energy Plan notes that this diminishes the effectiveness of the standards, especially for residential construction which is less likely to involve licensed architects and engineers. Towns can help raise awareness of the state's energy building standards by posting information on the town website and sharing information during the permitting process.

Another means of improving efficiency is through installing new energy efficient appliances and heating systems. Currently, there is a focus on installing heat pumps in place of heating systems that run on fossil fuels. Heat pumps are powered by electricity and, if using renewable-generated electricity, can significantly reduce carbon emissions. They also have the added benefit of providing cooling during the summer months.

Efficiency Vermont provides residents and businesses with energy assessments that identify cost-effective projects to improve energy efficiency and has a network of certified contractors that can complete these projects. Efficiency Vermont also offers low-interest loans, rebates, and income-based assistance to help pay for these improvements. Tables 9-2 and 9-3 below provide a summary of residential and commercial projects completed by Efficiency Vermont in Dover between 2017 – 2021.

**Table 9-2: Efficiency Vermont Residential Projects in Dover, 2017-2021**

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Total
<b>Total Residential Projects</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>598</b>
Home Performance with ENERGY STAR® Projects	4	23	17	90	8	<b>142</b>
Other Weatherization Projects	0	0	5	2	0	<b>7</b>
Residential New Construction Projects	0	1	0	0	0	<b>1</b>
Heat Pump Hot Water Heaters Installations	1	2	5	8	2	<b>18</b>
Cold Climate Heat Pump Installations	10	4	15	40	65	<b>134</b>
Wood Heating Installations	0	1	1	2	12	<b>16</b>

**Table 9-3: Efficiency Vermont Commercial Projects in Dover, 2017-2021**

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Total
<b>Total Commercial &amp; Industrial Customer Served</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>220</b>
Total Commercial & Industrial Projects	29	42	35	33	24	<b>163</b>
Small & Medium Business Walkthroughs	0	0	8	0	0	<b>8</b>
Cold Climate Heat Pump Installations	0	12	6	7	7	<b>32</b>
Heat Pump Hot Water Heaters Installations	0	0	0	0	1	<b>1</b>

Despite the benefits of energy conservation and efficiency efforts, there are several implementation hurdles. Completing projects usually involves large up-front costs with homeowners and businesses seeing energy cost savings over a longer period of time and in the form of rebates. It can be more difficult for renters to complete these projects since they don't own the structures where they live and landlord are typically not responsible for paying utilities so may not see the benefit of investing in efficiency projects. Workforce shortages can also make it hard to find contractors to do these projects. Finally, weatherization can be more difficult and costly in older homes due to issues such as needing to remediate asbestos insulation. Approximately 11% of homes in Dover were built before 1950.

Municipalities can lead by example by taking steps to improve the efficiency of town-owned buildings. These projects help reduce municipal costs and can encourage residents and businesses to implement similar strategies. For example, the Town recently completed upgrades to light fixtures at the garage, town office, and police department to install more energy efficient fixtures.

Currently, Dover is working with the state and the Windham Regional Commission on the Municipal Energy Resilience Program (MERP). The program will allow the town to complete municipal building assessments to understand current energy systems and consumption, and recommendations for improvements. The state is also offering implementation grants through the program to help town's pay for some of these improvements. A Community Capacity Building grant of \$4,000 has also been provided to towns through MERP and Dover is considering using

the funds to raise public awareness about energy efficiency programs and incentives offered by Efficiency Vermont.

Vermont State statute allows Selectboards to create an ad hoc or standing Energy Committee with the charge of suggesting community energy goals and implementation strategies. These committees can help increase awareness amongst residents and businesses about energy conservation benefits and resources, and support the Selectboard in making decisions about reducing municipal energy usage.

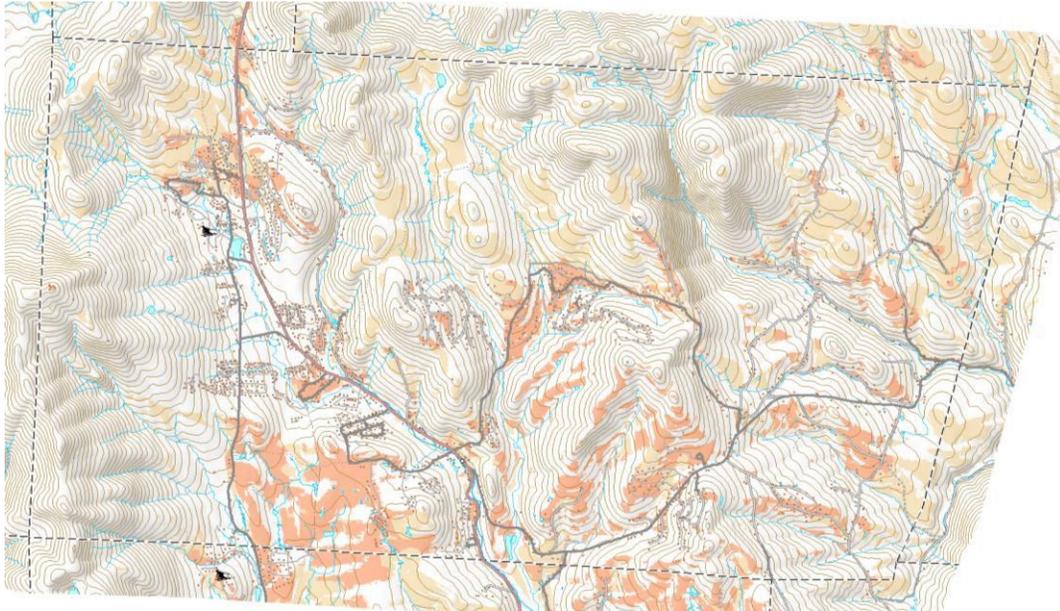
### **9.3 Renewable Energy**

The Vermont Community Energy Dashboard shows 18 solar installations in Dover generating a total of approximately 770 kW of electricity. Most installations are on residential properties and produce less than 15 kW. There is an approximately 500 kW solar installation at The Dover School and a 150 kW solar installation at the former town landfill site adjacent to the Town Garage. The town can help support these small-scale renewable energy installations on residential and commercial properties by ensuring zoning bylaws are not overly restrictive while still requiring necessary standards are met. There is also an opportunity to install solar at municipal facilities as a way to lead by example and offset electric use.

Utility-scale renewable facilities are considered to be those with a generating capacity of more than 1 mW. For both solar and wind projects, these types of facilities require a large land area. For ground-mounted solar, an average of 8 acres is needed per 1 mW. Approximately 3-4 acres is needed per 1 mW of wind, but it is recommended that at least 25 acres is identified. These targets are derived from guidance for municipal planning from the Vermont Department of Public Service. Access to three-phase power is required for utility-scale renewable energy facilities. Currently, three-phase power is available in Dover along Route 100 north to Ahmeek Road, around the Mount Snow resort area, along Tannery Road and Handle Road, and on Dover Hill Road from Route 100 to the Dover Commons.

Based on mapping completed by the Windham Regional Commission, there are several areas in Dover considered to be Prime Solar Energy Resource areas. This refers to land that may be adequate for solar in general terms and does not have any “known” or “possible” natural resource constraints as identified by the Vermont Public Service Department. These areas are shown in dark orange on the map below and are generally concentrated in West Dover between Handle Road and Route 100 south of Tannery Road, Along Route 100 north of North Access Road, in the area of Valley View Road, and several southern and western facing slopes in East Dover.

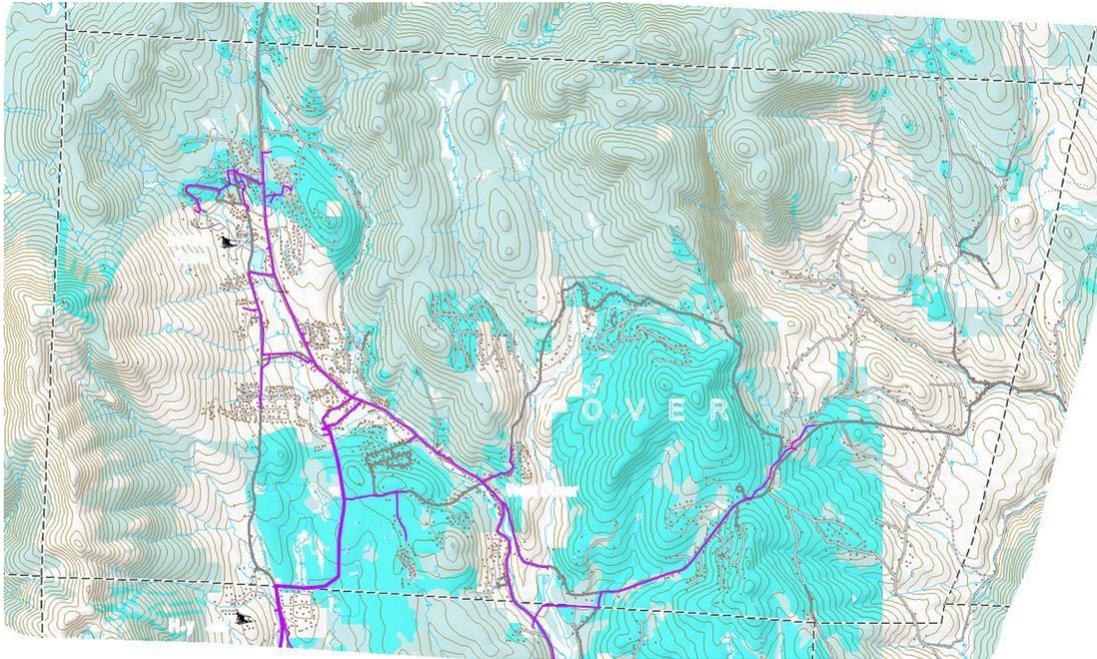
**Figure 9-1: Solar Energy Potential (April 2017, Windham Regional Commission)**



- Prime Solar Energy Resource:** generally adequate solar resources and no identified constraints (i.e., no “known” and no “possible” constraints)
- Secondary Solar Energy Resource:** Generally adequate solar resources and no “known” constraints, but at least one “possible” constraint

The Windham Regional Commission has completed similar mapping for Prime Wind Energy Resource areas. This refers to land that may be adequate for wind in general terms and does not have any “known” or “possible” natural resource constraints as identified by the Vermont Public Service Department. These areas are shown in blue on the map below and are generally concentrated in West Dover between Handle Road and Route 100 south of Tannery Road, the high area between Route 100 and Blue Brook Road, Cooper Hill, and south of Dover Hill Road.

**Figure 9-2: Wind Energy Potential (April 2017, Windham Regional Commission)**



- Prime Wind Energy Resource:** generally adequate wind resources and no identified constraints (i.e., no “known” and no “possible” constraints)
- Secondary Wind Energy Resource:** Generally adequate wind resources and no “known” constraints, but at least one “possible” constraint

While the town is supportive of the development of utility-scale renewable energy projects in Dover, it also seeks to protect critical natural resource areas in the community. For this reason, utility-scale renewable energy generation facilities are not appropriate in those areas mapped as Resource Conservation District and Sensitive Wildlife Overlay District on the Prospective Land Use Map.

The Town Plan includes similar restrictions on other commercial and industrial uses in these prospective land use districts. The Resource Conservation District only permits forestry, recreational uses, and very low-density residential development with a limited number of accessory uses. The Sensitive Wildlife Overlay District is designed to protect black bear migration areas and the zoning bylaws require that project be reviewed by the Vermont Department of Fish & Wildlife District Biologist and encourage the clustering of development within the overlay.

Areas identified as Prime Solar Energy Resource and Prime Wind Energy Resource that do not conflict with Resource Conservation Districts and Sensitive Wildlife Overlay Districts may be suitable locations for utility-scale solar and wind facilities. Projects should be encouraged in already developed or disturbed areas with access to roads and three-phase power. Proper design and siting standards should be required for utility-scale renewable facilities to protect important

natural and historic features and maintain the character of the town. One location that may be appropriate for utility-scale solar is the former Deerfield Valley Airport property off of Airport Road. The Town may wish to explore solar installations at municipal facilities as well.

## **9.4 Land Use and Transportation Planning**

Land use and transportation planning that focuses on encouraging compact settlement patterns and alternative modes of transportation, like walking, bicycling, and using transit, is an effective strategy for reducing energy consumption and costs associated with transportation. Compact settlements include a mix of residential, commercial, and civic uses near one another that allow residents to access more goods and services by walking or bicycling. Often, they also encourage smaller footprint homes, which reduces thermal energy needs.

The Land Use Chapter establishes Village Districts for West Dover and East Dover that encourage compact, mixed use development patterns. The land use plan also includes the Planned Commercial District along Route 100 which similarly encourages a mixture of complimentary residential, commercial, and civic uses. The Transportation Chapter addresses the need to promote the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists, support the MOOver transit service, and install more electric vehicle charging stations in the community.

For objectives, policies, and actions related to land use and transportation planning that support reduced energy consumption, please refer to the Land Use Chapter and Transportation Chapter.

## **9.5 Objectives, Policies, and Actions**

**Objective 1:** Support the conservation and efficient use of energy by residents, businesses, and the Town of Dover.

**Policy 1.1:** Encourage and promote energy conservation efforts.

### *Actions*

- a. Promote Efficiency Vermont programs and state Weatherization Assistance Program for low-income households on the Town's website and at community events.
- b. When appropriate, the Selectboard may appoint a committee to look at specific energy-related issues on behalf of the town.

**Policy 1.2:** Increase energy efficiency for buildings and decrease the use of fossil fuels for heating.

### *Actions*

- a. Promote Vermont's residential and commercial building energy standards by providing information on the requirements and benefits on the Town's website.
- b. Utilize the resources provided by the Municipal Energy Resilience Program to complete municipal building assessments to understand current energy systems and consumption, and pursue implementation grants.
- c. Incorporate weatherization and energy efficiency projects for municipal facilities into the town's capital planning program.

- d. The Selectboard is encouraged to monitor state recommendations and/or mandates related to energy efficiency and make an appropriate response.

**Objective 2:** Support the appropriate siting and development of renewable energy resources.

**Policy 2.1:** Encourage small-scale renewable energy resources on residential, commercial, and municipal properties.

*Actions:*

- a. Review and update zoning bylaws to ensure small-scale renewable energy resources are not unreasonably constrained on residential and commercial properties and ensure appropriate design standards to mitigate potential impacts on neighboring properties.
- b. Assess and identify municipal buildings and facilities where small-scale renewable energy resources could be developed.

**Policy 2.2:** Encourage utility-scale renewable energy facilities to locate on suitable sites while requiring that natural, scenic, and historic resources are protected and that the character of the town is maintained.

*Actions:*

- a. Update zoning bylaws to include standards for utility-scale renewable energy facilities that mitigate potential impacts on neighboring properties and natural, scenic, and historic resources.

# CHAPTER 10

## COMMUNITY RESOURCES

### 10.1 Recreational and Cultural Resources

Dover benefits from having a wide offering of recreational opportunities and arts and cultural activities. These assets contribute to the well-being of residents by improving health outcomes and increasing opportunities for social interaction. The town’s numerous walking paths provide residents with a convenient way to get exercise. Concerts at the town park in the summer bring residents together and build community. Additionally, these resources attract tourists and visitors to the town, helping to support the local economy.

**Public Recreational Lands and Facilities**

The table below provides a summary of the publicly owned lands and facilities in Dover that provide for recreational opportunities. These include town, school district, and federal properties. In addition to these public facilities, there are also several private lands and facilities that are discussed further below.

**Table 10-1: Dover Public Recreational Lands and Facilities**

<b>Land or Facility</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Description of Current Facilities</b>
The Dover School	School District	Playground, multi-use playfields, bicycle pump track
Dover Library	Town	Outdoor seating area
Dover Common	Town	Open space
Dover Town Forest	Town	1,392 acres including hiking trails, open spaces, and wetlands
Dover Town Hall	Town	Multi-use hall for indoor social activities
Dover Park	Town	Gazebo, playground, WiFi hotspot
Horace Hill	Town	54-acre multi-use recreational park
Valley Trail	Town	Multi-use pathway
Class IV roads	Town	Several Class IV roads provide for recreational opportunities (walking, biking)
Green Mountain National Forest	Federal	Approximately 5,147 acres including hiking trails, open space, wetlands, and skiing

The Town’s Economic Development Department is responsible for developing and maintaining trails and recreational facilities in the community and considering future needs and improvements. In 2020, the Town worked with a consultant to complete a Dover Trails and Recreation Master Plan to help guide future improvements to recreational facilities in the community. The Town has also formed a Trails and Recreation Committee that makes recommendations on future projects to the Selectboard.

The Horace Hill property was purchased by the Town in 2019 and is centrally located in West

Dover close to commercial establishments on Route 100 and residential areas. Based on recommendations from the Trails and Recreation Master Plan, the Town is moving ahead with the construction of a disc golf course on the property that will be completed in 2024. This will intersect with existing multi-use trails on the property.

The Trails and Recreation Master Plan and community input from the Town Plan update public meeting indicate an interest in exploring an indoor public recreational facility in town. Currently, Dover lacks an indoor recreational venue which can limit residents' ability to recreate during colder months or in inclement weather.

### **Recreational Corridors**

Recreational corridors include trails for foot travel, bike paths, and snowmobile and cross country skiing trails. Some of these facilities are listed in Table 10-11, but they are also described here in more detail. In recent years, the Town has worked on improving wayfinding and mapping for the various recreational trails in the community. Bicycling and walking also provide a means for transportation in addition to recreation and the role of these recreational corridors in the large transportation system is addressed further in the Transportation Chapter.

The Dover Town Forest includes several hiking trails that are maintained on an annual basis. There are no needs for significant upgrades to the trail system currently. The U.S. Forest Service manages over 5,000 acres of land in Dover that is part of the Green Mountain National Forest. This includes approximately 2,870 acres of land covering portions of Rice Hill and Cooper Hill between West Dover and East Dover, and approximately 2,100 acres of land along the western boundary of the Town. There are several hiking trails on GMNF land with plans to upgrade the ridge trail between Haystack and Mount Snow (Deerfield Ridge) and provide a new connection trail from Handle Road to the ridge. In coordination with this project, the Town will be constructing an off-street parking area on Handle Road. This will provide a future access point for the new USFS trail that will connect the ridgeline to Handle Road.

There are two main multi-purpose trails in Dover: the Valley Trail and the Crosstown Trail. These trails accommodate foot travel, bicyclists, snow shoeing, and cross-country skiing. The Valley Trail includes different segments on the western side of town and connects into adjacent Wilmington. One segment runs along Route 100 from the Mt. Snow Marketplace to Mountain Park Plaza. The other segment includes a north-south connect between South Access Road to Crosstown Road. The segmentation and lack of connectivity for the Valley Trail presents a challenge for the full utilization of this resource. The Crosstown Trail begins at a trailhead located on Handle Road one mile south of Tannery Road. This trail runs east-west and ends at the intersection of Country Club Road and Cross Town Road.

The Vermont Association of Snowmobiling Travelers (VAST) maintains extensive trails in Dover mainly on private lands. Snowmobiles and other motorized recreational vehicles are not permitted on most Town-maintained trails located off Class 4 roads. Cross country skiing is permitted on Dover Town Forest and GMNF trails and the Valley and Crosstown trails in the winter months. Through a partnership between the Town and the Southern Vermont Trails Association, backcountry downhill skiing areas are provided at Horace Hill and the Dover Town Forest.

### **Private Lands and Facilities**

Dover has a wealth of private recreational lands and facilities, the main one being Mount Snow which increasingly operates as a four-season resort. The winter season offers skiing, snowboarding, and tubing while summer recreation at the resort includes golfing, mountain biking, live music, and hiking. In 2019, Vail Resorts acquired Mount Snow through its acquisition of Peak Resorts. Recent investments at Mount Snow include adding six-pack and quad high-speed chairlifts. There are also several private recreational facilities including swimming pools, playgrounds, a skating rink, and tennis courts.

### **Arts and Cultural Activities**

Within the Deerfield Valley, there is a growing cultural and arts program available to residents and visitors. Current offerings include programs in the arts, art galleries, craft fairs, and food festivals. The Town supports and encourages the local Chamber of Commerce, private enterprise, and other organizations to promote cultural events. According to a 2021 report done by the Vermont Creative Network, supporting the creative economy has many benefits including diversifying local economies, increasing jobs, building community, and attracting tourists and new residents.

The Town's Economic Development Department staff manages a Summer Concert Series at the Dover Park and Open Mic Nights at Dover Town Hall in the winter. These events are funded entirely from the Local Option Tax (LOT). In addition, the Town has an events sponsorship program that provides LOT funding to local festivals including the Blueberry Festival and the Wine and Harvest Festival in October at Mt. Snow.

## **10.2 Historic Resources**

Two centuries of history have left a rich heritage in Dover. Although few structures remain from the past, there are several significant historic areas and structures in town that help define the character of the community. These are described in more detail below.

The Dover Historical Society, founded in 1975, is dedicated to gathering and preserving the town's history for future generations. The Harris House in West Dover Village is owned and operated by the Historical Society as a museum open to the public. In addition, the Society often offers free summer programs. Membership is made up of residents, seasonal residents, and former residents.

### **Dover Hill**

Home to early Dover settlers who settled on scattered hilltop farms, the Dover Hill area today combines several dwellings from the late 1790's with spectacular views. The "little red schoolhouse" and other houses along that Dover Hill Road are now some of the oldest structures in town. Situated on the Dover Common, the Dover Town Hall serves as a function hall for various events. The Town Hall is listed on the National Register of Historic Place

### **East Dover**

East Dover originally grew around a sawmill that was built in 1797 on the Rock River. The East Dover Baptist Church continues to be an important historic building in the village and dates to 1814.

## **West Dover**

West Dover village on Route 100 still maintains the atmosphere of a 19<sup>th</sup> century rural village. The village is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Consisting of over 20 buildings dating from 1805 to 1885, the village showcases several well-preserved buildings. The West Dover Inn (c. 1846), with its wide columned porches, remains an unspoiled example of vernacular Greek Revival architecture, and is the area's oldest continuously operating hostelry. Next door, the West Dover Congregational Church was built as a Meeting House in 1858 with money raised by selling pews at auction. The adjacent Dover Town Office was the District #6 schoolhouse erected in 1857. Across the street, the Harris House (c. 1820), one of the oldest houses in the village, is now home to the Dover Historical Society.

Handle Road in West Dover was historically a unique summer colony in Vermont. Bostonians and New Yorkers began buying up old farms in 1858 and devoted great energy to restoring them to their original condition. Several of these houses remain in the holding of these original summer families.

There are two historic iron mines located on the Carinthia face of Mount Snow. The mines date back to the early 1800s when they were a source of low-grade ore that was smelted locally using lime from a nearby brook. Today, the lower mine is primarily flooded with water. Tracks and veins from the mining operations remain visible in the upper mine. Access to the mines is restricted due to their value as a habitat resource, including the presence of the bat hibernaculum.

## **10.3 Scenic Resources**

Dover's hilly country provides abundant vistas of scenic quality. Views from Dover Hill, Mount Snow golf course, and the summits of the ski lifts are especially noteworthy. Many homes exist or are built to enjoy the beautiful vistas of the surrounding country. The maintenance of an attractive rural environment is of paramount importance to the community. Dover's economy is heavily dependent on the recreation industry, which in turn, depends on the rural and scenic beauty of the Town.

Route 100 has been designated as a scenic byway throughout the State and provides an important scenic corridor through Dover as it winds through the Deerfield Valley. Dover Hill Road, Cooper Hill Road, Captain Copeland Road, Higley Hill Road, and Harris Road have all been identified by the community as local roadways that offer scenic views that should be maintained.

## **10.4 Objectives, Policies, and Actions**

**Objective 1:** Provide high-quality recreational programs, facilities, and open spaces for all community users in a cost-effective manner.

**Policy 1.1:** Enhance the trail system in Dover to provide adequate and safe opportunities for recreation and transportation.

### *Actions*

- a. Retain Class 4 town roads, legal town trails, and other public rights-of-way for use as

recreational trails.

- b. Continue to develop and upgrade trails with an emphasis on improving access, connectivity, signage, and parking.
- c. Support the expansion and completion of the Valley Trail.
- d. Incorporate new pedestrian and bicycle paths into the planning of any new recreational areas in Dover.
- e. Support placement of sidewalks and crosswalks for safe pedestrian and bicycle access along high-volume roadways.

**Policy 1.2:** Facilitate the orderly development of public recreational facilities.

*Actions*

- a. Support United States Forest Service acquisition of private landholdings within the Green Mountain National Forest proclamation boundaries provided that adequate payment in lieu of taxes are made to Dover.
- b. Develop a plan for creating a Trails and Recreation Department to manage and maintain Town owned recreation facilities.
- c. Continue to support the Trails and Recreation Committee charter to evaluate recreational lands and recommend to the Selectboard the purchase or receipt of gifts of lands.
- d. Direct the Economic Development Department to pursue additional venues, grants and public-private partnerships to enhance recreational options/facilities in the Town.
- e. Continue to implement the Dover Trails and Recreation Master Plan.
- f. Explore opportunities for an indoor recreational facility, including possible partnerships with adjacent municipalities.
- g. Coordinate with the United States Forest Service on the implementation of the Deerfield Ridge project including the new access trail from Handle Road.

**Policy 1.3:** Increase public awareness and use of recreational opportunities in Dover.

*Actions*

- a. Direct the Economic Development Department to work with the Chamber of Commerce and other interested parties to promote public awareness of recreational opportunities in Dover.
- b. Publish and promote an easily accessible trail guide in multiple formats illustrating the system of trails.

**Objective 2:** Strengthen and build upon Dover's arts and cultural assets, including organizations, events, festivals, and artists.

**Policy 2.1:** Support and encourage further development of arts and cultural programs, events, and businesses that can serve as attractors for new investment as well as enhance quality of life.

*Actions*

- a. Investigate public/private partnerships to create cultural programs in Dover.
- b. Work collaboratively with other Deerfield Valley towns, the Chamber of Commerce, and other groups to use the arts to promote cultural tourism.
- c. Continue to support the use of the Local Option Tax to fund cultural programming.

- d. Explore opportunities to establish a farmers' market in Dover on town-owned or private property.
- e. Support the development and improvement of venues, facilities, and work spaces for creative programs and enterprises.

**Objective 3:** Protect historic sites and structures that contribute to the character of Dover.

**Policy 3.1:** Promote historic preservation efforts that enhances the historic resources of Dover.

*Actions*

- a. Encourage listing on the National Register of Historic Places for appropriate local structures.
- b. Support the efforts of the Dover Historical Society to preserve and promote the Town's history.
- c. Create an inventory of historically and/or architecturally significant structures/sites.

**Policy 3.2:** Protect historic and architectural integrity during the redevelopment of historic sites and structures.

*Actions*

- a. Strengthen incentives for historic preservation in the zoning bylaw by including provisions for adaptive reuse and considering the creation of a historic district or design review district in West Dover Village.
- b. The Town and Historical Society should consider the acquisition of available, significant property for conservation and preservation purposes in limited but critical cases.

**Objective 4:** Protect open spaces, vistas, farmlands, and scenic areas that contribute to the character of Dover.

**Policy 4.1:** Protect and enhance the scenic landscape and rural character of Dover.

*Actions*

- a. Identify and designate scenic vistas within Dover to be protected.
- b. Regulate land subdivision in a manner that ensures the pattern of future development does not adversely affect the Town's natural features, rural resources and scenic character.
- c. Through planned unit development standards, continue to require clustering and siting of new development as necessary to protect natural and cultural resources.

# CHAPTER 11

## FLOOD RESILIENCE

### 11.1 Addressing Flood Resilience

In 2013, Vermont enacted Act 16 relating to municipal and regional planning and flood resilience, and which requires that all municipal plans include a Flood Resilience Element. To encourage flood resilient communities, state statute requires that:

- New development in identified flood hazard, fluvial erosion, and river corridor protection areas should be avoided. If new development is to be built in such areas, it should not exacerbate flooding and fluvial erosion.
- The protection and restoration of floodplains and upland forested areas that attenuate and moderate flooding and fluvial erosion should be encouraged.
- Flood emergency preparedness and response planning should be encouraged.

Flood resiliency is addressed specifically in this chapter of the Town Plan, but it is also covered in other chapters as it related to land use, transportation, and natural resources planning. Dover has an adopted Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, last updated in 2022, that addresses flood hazards and mitigation actions in more detail, in addition to other natural hazards the community needs to plan for.

There are two types of regulatory flood hazard areas in Vermont: inundation flood areas and fluvial erosion areas. Inundation flooding refers to a rise in water levels that results in a flood event. Fluvial erosion occurs when streambanks are eroded by the movement of rivers and streams. Areas vulnerable to inundation flooding are identified by the Federal Emergency Management Agency on Flood Insurance Rate Maps and fluvial erosion hazard areas are identified by the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources on River Corridor maps.

Dover has land, homes, businesses, and public infrastructure that are susceptible to both inundation flooding and fluvial erosion. The North Branch of the Deerfield River and the Rock River, along with the tributary streams that flow into these rivers are all subject to fluvial erosion and/or inundation flooding. Planning for flood resiliency is critical for protecting public safety, reducing food risks for structures and public infrastructure, and ensuring the natural course and flow of rivers and streams.

### 11.2 Inundation Flood Hazard Areas

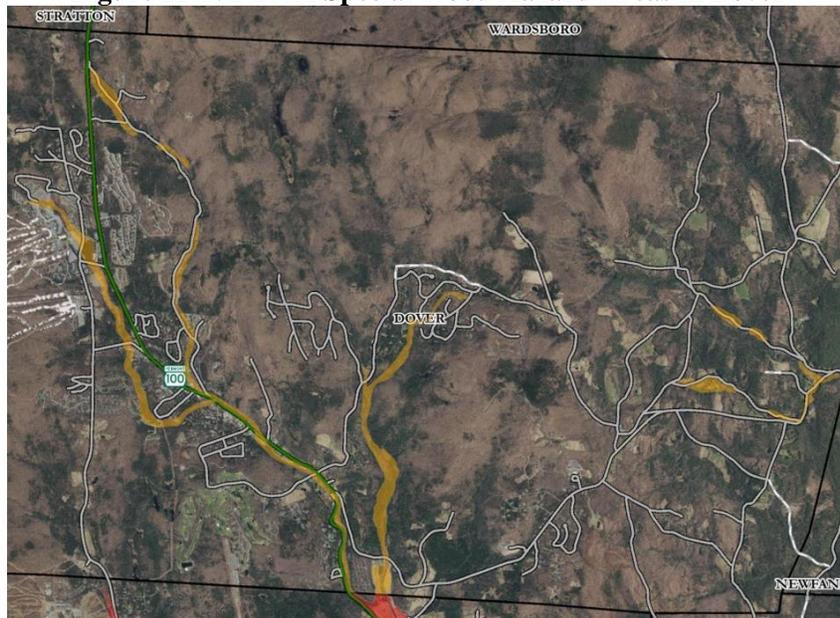
#### **Inundation Flood Hazard**

Inundation flooding occurs when there is a rise in water levels that results in a flood event. Areas vulnerable to 100-year flood events are mapped by FEMA on Flood Insurance Rate Maps and are referred to as Special Flood Hazard Areas. This includes the floodway, which is the channel of a watercourse and the adjacent land area needed to convey floodwaters, and the flood fringe, which is the remaining portion of the floodplain outside of the floodway and subject to a 100-year flood event. FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps are available on FEMA's Flood Map Service Center

website.

The map below shows the location on Special Flood Hazard Areas in Dover shaded in orange. Inundation flooding can occur along the North Branch of the Deerfield River and its tributaries, Blue Brook, Ellis Brook, and Cheney Brook. Areas that are potentially impacted by flooding include the Route 100 corridor, Blue Brook Road, and several residential neighborhoods. In East Dover, lands along the Rock River and Taft Brook are located in the Special Flood Hazard Area. Taft Brook and Goose City Roads are susceptible to inundation flooding along with residential properties along these roads.

**Figure 11-1: FEMA Special Flood Hazard Areas in Dover**



*Source: Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, Natural Resources Atlas*

According to FloodReady Vermont's website, there are 108 structures in the Special Flood Hazard Area, including 76 occupied structures. The remaining structures are non-occupied and include sheds and barns. Most structures are located in West Dover along the North Branch of the Deerfield River and Route 100, and along Blue Brook. In the village of East Dover, there is a concentration of vulnerable structures at the confluence of Taft Brook with the Rock River.

### **Inundation Flood Regulations**

For property owners to be eligible for federal flood insurance through the National Flood Insurance Program, a municipality must adopt and administer flood hazard area regulations for development in the Special Flood Hazard Area. Dover has adopted Flood Hazard Area Regulations as part of its Zoning Bylaws and has a Zoning/Floodplain Administrator responsible for administering these regulations. The Zoning Bylaws identify areas that are unsuitable for their intended purposes because of flood hazards, restrict or prohibit uses that are dangerous to health, safety, or property in times of flood, and require that uses vulnerable to flooding be protected against flood damage.

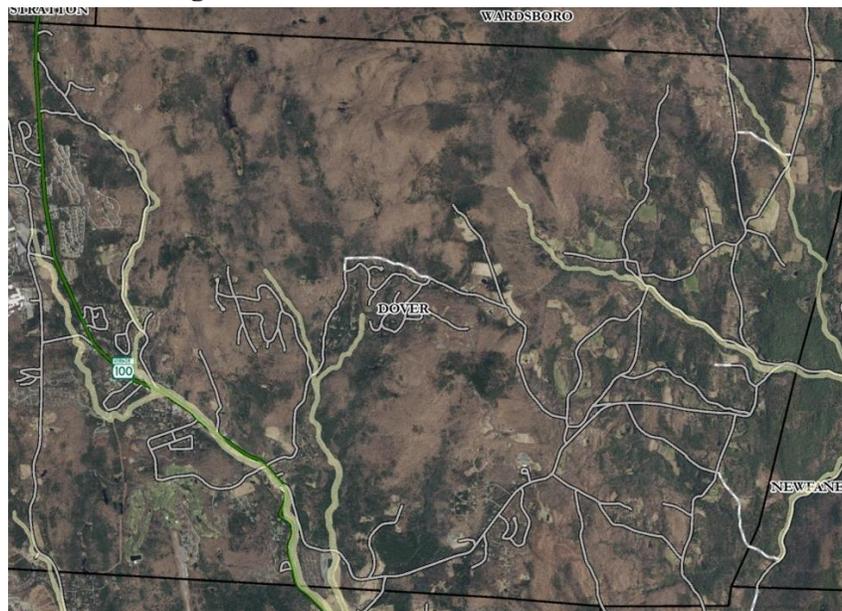
## 11.3 Fluvial Erosion Hazard Areas

### **Fluvial Erosion Hazard**

A significant portion of flood damage in Vermont occurs outside of FEMA Special Hazard Flood Areas as a result of fluvial erosion, which refers to the lateral movement of rivers and streams and associated erosion. If a stream cannot spill out of its banks, the power of the trapped water increases and the channel either digs down or cuts out further to the sides. Where roads, buildings, or culverts are nearby, these adjustments to the channel's shape can cause dramatic and costly damage. Since the Flood Insurance Rate Maps are only concerned with inundation flooding, areas that are more at risk from flash flooding and fluvial erosion are often not recognized as being flood-prone. Property owners outside of the Special Flood Hazard Area are not required to have flood insurance.

The Vermont Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) released updated River Corridor maps in 2019 showing the area needed to address fluvial erosion hazards. A River Corridor is the area that provides the physical space that a river needs to express its energy and meander without it having to dig down into the stream bed. The River Corridor also includes a 50-foot buffer on either side of the meander belt/fluvial erosion hazard area to prevent disturbance and allow for bank stabilization. The Town of Dover has areas of mapped River Corridor, as shown on the map below shaded in yellow. These maps are also available for review on ANR's Natural Resources Atlas website.

**Figure 11-2: ANR River Corridors in Dover**



*Source: Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, Natural Resources Atlas*

Comparing the mapped River Corridors with the Special Flood Hazard Areas in Dover, there is significant overlap between the two. Additional segments of Ellis Brook and the Rock River are shown as being River Corridors, but do not fall within the Special Flood Hazard Area. Adams Brook is classified as a River Corridor, but no segments of this waterway in Dover are located in the Special Flood Hazard Area.

### **Fluvial Erosion Regulations**

Towns can adopt fluvial erosion hazard overlay regulations to mitigate these hazards. Similar to flood hazard area regulations, these regulations only apply to a specific geographic area, in this case the River Corridor areas identified by ANR. Typically, regulations address and place limits on the types of structures and land use activities within the overlay district and may include vegetation and other buffer requirements. Dover does not currently have fluvial erosion hazard regulations as part of its zoning bylaws.

The benefits from adopting fluvial erosion hazard regulations include preventing development in these areas, which can reduce the potential of flood losses and risks to public safety. Additionally, allowing for rivers and streams to maintain natural courses reducing potential erosion hazards that may impact property and public infrastructure.

## **11.4 Objectives, Policies, and Actions**

This Plan identifies as flood hazard areas the FEMA mapped Special Flood Hazard Areas and identifies fluvial erosion hazard areas as those mapped on the ANR River Corridor maps. Further, this Plan designates both those identified areas as areas to be protected to reduce the risk of flood damage to infrastructure and improved property. In addition, this plan incorporates by reference the Dover Local Hazard Mitigation Plan approved under 44 C.F.R. § 201.6. Finally, this Plan recommends the following policies and actions to protect the designated areas and to mitigate risks to public safety, critical infrastructure, historic structures, and municipal investments.

**Objective 1:** To reduce the loss of life, injury, and economic impacts resulting from all flood hazards.

**Policy 1.1:** New development in identified Special Flood Hazard Areas and River Corridors should be avoided. If new development is to be built in such areas, it should not exacerbate flooding or fluvial erosion.

*Actions:*

- a. The Town will regulate any new development in identified flood hazard areas and River Corridors to ensure that development does not exacerbate flooding and fluvial erosion, and extend these provisions to development activities that might increase the amount and/or rate of runoff and soil erosion from upland areas.
- b. Built development in floodplains is prohibited unless a special permit is granted by the Development Review Board.
- c. Built development on steep slopes should be avoided if it will increase the amount and/or rate of runoff and soil erosion from upland areas.

**Policy 1.2:** Protect floodplains and River Corridors through adoption and administration of flood hazard area regulations, in order to reduce the risk of flood damage to infrastructure, improved property, people, and the environment.

*Actions:*

- a. The Town will update its Zoning Bylaws to include regulation of River Corridors, and include

provisions for advance notification of and specific limits on new development activities in identified River Corridors, based on regulatory templates developed by the ANR DEC Rivers Program.

- b. Provide funding in the town budget for the Floodplain Administrator to complete training to carry out the administration of Town regulations.

**Policy 1.3:** Encourage flood emergency preparedness and response planning.

*Actions:*

- a. Pursue the mitigation projects outlined in the Dover Local Hazard Mitigation Plan.
- b. Update culvert assessment and upgrade culverts identified in Dover's Local Hazard Mitigation Plan.
- c. The town will continue to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) which gives residents access to discount flood insurance.
- d. The Town will be familiar with Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) that delineate the 1% annual chance flood area, as defined by FEMA.
- e. The Town will be familiar with ANR River Corridor maps that delineate the River Corridor, or land area adjacent to streams and rivers (with drainage basins greater than two square miles) required to accommodate a stable channel. The Town will also note that unmapped River Corridors, in drainage basins less than two square miles, are protected in the area 50 feet from top of bank on either side.
- f. Ensure that members of the general public continue to be part of hazard mitigation and flood resiliency planning by promoting public meetings for the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan update process.

**Objective 2:** Reduce the impacts of flood hazards on the town's water bodies, natural resources, and historic resources.

**Policy 2.1** Foster the protection and restoration of river corridors, floodplains, wetlands, and upland forested areas that attenuate and moderate flooding and fluvial erosion.

*Actions:*

- a. Pursue completing projects outlined in the River Corridor Management Plan for the North Branch of the Deerfield River.
- b. Pursue completing projects outlined in the Rock River Watershed Stream Geomorphic Assessment.
- c. Work with the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources to define and clearly communicate private property owner's and the Town's responsibilities and rights for removing trees and other debris from rivers and streams and provide information for the public on the Town's website.
- d. Pursue preservation efforts on public/Town land.
- e. Promote conservation easements on private lands.

## **CHAPTER 12**

# **IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM**

The Implementation Program summarizes the recommended action steps from each chapter. The actions are intended to implement the goals, objectives, and policies identified in the Plan. The Implementation Program identifies who in the Town will lead each effort and partners when relevant. The anticipated timeline for the action steps is categorized as Short Term (completed within 1 – 4 years), Long Term (completed within 5 – 8 years), or Ongoing for activities that are part of normal Town operations. The Resources column identifies potential funding sources or other non-monetary assistance, such as volunteer time.

It is recommended that the Town regularly review the Implementation Program and coordinate efforts between different Town Boards, Commissions, and staff. Over the course of the next eight years, local priorities may change and certain actions may need to be completed sooner. Many of the action steps are also dependent on receiving grants or other funding sources.

<b>Economic Development: Chapter 3</b>			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead/Partners</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Resources</b>
Implement the recommendations in the Dover Trails and Recreation Master Plan.	Selectboard/Trails & Rec Committee	Long Term	Town Budget, Grants, Private Funds
Continue to offer the Dover summer concert series and support the grant program for large events.	Selectboard/ Town Staff	Ongoing	Town Budget, Private Funds
Explore opportunities for additional town-sponsored arts and cultural events at town facilities.	Selectboard/ Town Staff	Short Term	Town Budget, Private Funds
Promote social connection programs such as Vermont Welcome Wagon and the Southern Vermont Young Professionals network.	Town Staff	Ongoing	Town Budget
Explore opportunities for creating co-working spaces in the Deerfield Valley.	Town Staff	Long Term	Town Budget
Review and update zoning bylaws to support home-based businesses.	Planning Commission	Short Term	Town Budget, Grants, Volunteers
Continue to fund and promote existing business incentive programs using the 1% local option tax funds.	Selectboard/ Town Staff	Ongoing	Town Budget
Develop new business incentive programs to meet evolving needs of businesses, such as energy efficiency and electric vehicle charging stations.	Selectboard/ Town Staff	Short Term	Town Budget
Highlight success stories of local businesses that have used town programs and incentives on the town's website and other communications from the town.	Town Staff	Ongoing	Town Budget
Promote business assistance programs and services provided by the Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation.	Town Staff	Ongoing	Town Budget
Review and update zoning bylaws to support desired business growth and development in appropriate locations in town while also ensuring environmental, public infrastructure, and community character impacts are addressed.	Planning Commission	Long Term	Town Budget, Grants, Volunteers
Continue to support town participation on the Bi-Town Economic Development Committee	Selectboard/ Town Staff	Ongoing	Town Budget
Meet with local businesses on a regular basis to understand current issues and challenges.	Town Staff	Ongoing	Town Budget
Continue to participate in regional economic development planning through working with Southeastern Vermont Economic Development Strategies on development and implementation of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.	Selectboard/ Town Staff	Ongoing	Town Budget

<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead/Partners</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Resources</b>
Implement the Deerfield Valley Strategic Marketing Plan in coordination with the town of Wilmington.	Selectboard/ Town Staff	Short Term	Town Budget
Develop a plan and provide funding to update road banners on Route 100 and the signage for municipal facilities on the corridor.	Selectboard/ Town Staff	Short Term	Town Budget
Review and update capital plans on an annual basis and ensure adequate funds are being provided for local road, sidewalk, and trails needs.	Selectboard/ Town Staff	Ongoing	Town Budget
Work with the Vermont Agency of Transportation to coordinate and plan for road improvements along Route 100 with an emphasis on minimizing curb cuts, improving pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and installing traffic calming measures and landscaping.	Selectboard	Long Term	Town Budget, State Funds, Grants
Pursue the development of a municipal water system.	Selectboard	Long Term	Town Budget, Grants
Ensure the Town continues to appoint a representative and alternates to the Deerfield Valley Communications District Governing Board to represent the community's interest.	Selectboard	Ongoing	Volunteers
Establish public and private partnerships to pursue the expansion of telecommunications infrastructure.	Selectboard/ Town Staff	Ongoing	Town Budget
<b>Land Use: Chapter 4</b>			
Review and update zoning bylaws to continue to allow for a diversity of uses in village areas, including civic uses, small retail establishments, professional offices, cafes, and single-family, two-family, and multi-family residential dwellings.	Planning Commission	Short Term	Town Budget, Grants, Volunteers
Review and update zoning bylaws to ensure that lot dimensions, structure setbacks, and residential density standards reflect the desired settlement pattern for the village areas.	Planning Commission	Short Term	Town Budget, Grants, Volunteers
Collaborate with the Historical Society to identify and preserve historic structures.	Planning Commission/ Historical Society	Long Term	Volunteers
Consider whether the Town should include a historic overlay zoning district in the zoning bylaws for the village of West Dover and East Dover.	Planning Commission	Long Term	Volunteers
Maintain Village Center Designations for West Dover and East Dover with the Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development.	Planning Commission	Ongoing	Volunteers

Action	Lead/Partners	Timeline	Resources
Develop a Route 100 Master Plan to address the character and form of development and redevelopment activities on Route 100 with the goal of transforming it from an automobile dependent corridor to an area that capitalizes on the recreational, scenic, transportation, and employment resources and mitigates weaknesses in the existing development. The Plan should address: traffic circulation; sidewalks, pathways, and public transit; location of parking lots; building and site design; and infrastructure.	Planning Commission/ Selectboard	Short Term	Town Budget, Grants, Volunteers
Consider architectural and site design standards to incorporate within the zoning bylaws for properties along Route 100 based on the completed Route 100 Master Plan.	Planning Commission	Long Term	Town Budget, Grants, Volunteers
Partner with the Vermont Agency of Transportation to coordinate and plan for road improvements along Route 100 including access management, minimizing curb cuts, improving pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and installing traffic calming measures.	Selectboard	Long Term	Town Budget, State Funds, Grants
Direct public investment to enhance and maintain landscaping and streetscaping along Route 100.	Selectboard	Ongoing	Town Budget
Review and update zoning bylaws to allow for higher and appropriate residential density levels in the Planned Commercial and Village Districts where wastewater infrastructure is available.	Planning Commission	Short Term	Town Budget, Grants, Volunteers
Encourage new housing development on vacant lots in existing residential subdivisions in the Residential District where site conditions allow.	Planning Commission	Short Term	Town Budget, Grants, Volunteers
Review and update zoning bylaws to remove any barriers for developing accessory dwelling units and two-family dwellings in all zoning districts where single-family dwellings are permitted.	Planning Commission	Short Term	Town Budget, Grants, Volunteers
Consider possible reuses of the former Deerfield Valley Airport site.	Planning Commission/ Selectboard	Long Term	Volunteers
Maintain the Resource Conservation District as an area primarily for natural habitat, forestry and recreation and with an overall density of one unit per 27 acres.	Planning Commission	Ongoing	Volunteers
Continue to provide for the Transfer of Development Rights Overlay District and to include lands in the Resource Conservation District as sending areas. Review and make updates in consultation with the Conservation Commission as needed.	Planning Commission/ Conservation Commission	Short Term	Town Budget, Grants, Volunteers
Create an Open Space Plan and support and encourage land conservation organizations to work with the Town to identify and preserve lands identified in the plan as conservation priorities.	Conservation Commission	Long Term	Town Budget, Grants, Volunteers

Action	Lead/Partners	Timeline	Resources
Work with the Conservation Commission to review the Sensitive Wildlife Overlay District and make changes as needed to enhance the protection of sensitive wildlife habitats	Planning Commission/ Conservation Commission	Short Term	Town Budget, Grants, Volunteers
Consider additional regulations in zoning bylaws for subdivision of land to better accommodate land uses, support infrastructure, and protect natural resources.	Planning Commission	Long Term	Town Budget, Grants, Volunteers
Consider regulations to limit disturbing or clearing steep slopes for development, excluding agriculture and forestry activities, recreational trails, and facilities for the operation of downhill skiing.	Planning Commission	Long Term	Town Budget, Grants, Volunteers
For Planned Unit Developments, consider standards for residential density bonuses in exchange for the preservation of environmentally sensitive land and open space. The maximum density bonus should not exceed 25% of the limit otherwise established by the zoning district.	Planning Commission	Short Term	Town Budget, Grants, Volunteers
<b>Natural Resources: Chapter 5</b>			
Complete a study on the effects of development on supply and quality of drinking water from aquifers, especially as it relates to peak or seasonal usage and climate change effects.	Selectboard	Short Term	Town Budget, Grants
Pursue the development of a municipal water system to provide a reliable water source for residents and businesses.	Selectboard	Long Term	Town Budget, Grants
Promote best practices for the efficient use of water and water conservation strategies with property owners.	Conservation Commission	Ongoing	Volunteers
Monitor the presence of PFAS chemical contamination in public and private drinking supplies and direct property owners to the Department of Environmental Conservation for information and resources.	Selectboard	Ongoing	Volunteers
Maintain the Town's Municipal Roads General Permit with VTrans and implement the road maintenance methods described in the <i>Vermont Better Roads Manual</i> to address projects identified in the Town's Road Erosion Inventory.	Selectboard/Road Commissioner	Ongoing	Town Budget, Grants
Review existing regulations in the Zoning Bylaws on erosion and sediment control and stormwater management for development and land disturbance activities and update as needed.	Planning Commission	Long Term	Town Budget, Grants, Volunteers
Work with the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources to implement the actions identified in the Tactical Basin Plans for Basin 11 and Basin 12.	Selectboard	Long Term	State Funds, Grants

<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead/Partners</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Resources</b>
Evaluate options to identify and further protect significant wetland areas.	Conservation Commission	Short Term	Volunteers, Grants
Enforce the Flood Hazard Regulations in the Zoning Bylaws to limit development within designated floodplains and make updates as needed to stay in compliance with NFIP.	Town Staff/ Development Review Board	Ongoing	Town Budget, Volunteers
Consider the adoption of River Corridor Regulations in the Zoning Bylaws.	Planning Commission	Short Term	Town Budget, Grants, Volunteers
Evaluate whether any areas identified as a High Priority Forest Block or Habitat Connector should be incorporated into the Resource Conservation Zoning District and/or the Sensitive Wildlife Overlay District, if not already.	Planning Commission/ Conservation Commission	Short Term	Town Budget, Grants, Volunteers
Work with the Conservation Commission to review the Sensitive Wildlife Overlay District and make changes as needed to enhance the protection of sensitive wildlife habitats.	Planning Commission/ Conservation Commission	Short Term	Town Budget, Grants, Volunteers
Partner with the State to assist in the evaluation of the bat hibernaculum and discourage development in the area of the cave.	Conservation Commission	Ongoing	Volunteers
Encourage and seek State funding for the Town to acquire conservation land.	Selectboard/ Conservation Commission	Ongoing	Town Budget, Volunteers
Develop a plan for monitoring and removing invasive plant species along roads and on Town Forest land.	Conservation Commission	Long Term	Town Budget, Volunteers
Provide residents with information on Town's website about identifying and managing invasive species on their property.	Conservation Commission	Short Term	Volunteers
Maintain the Resource Reserve and Conservation and Productive Residential Zoning Districts to protect large tracts of land.	Planning Commission	Ongoing	Volunteers
Work with the Vermont Land Trust, or other appropriate non-profit organizations to encourage the voluntary protection of productive agricultural, wetlands, conservation and forest lands. Techniques such as conservation easements or donation of land should be explored.	Conservation Commission	Ongoing	Volunteers
Encourage participation in the Vermont Land Use Appraisal Program to support the viability and maintenance of farm and forest land.	Conservation Commission	Ongoing	Volunteers
Consider regulations to limit disturbing or clearing steep slopes for development, excluding agriculture and forestry activities, recreational trails, and facilities for the operation of downhill skiing.	Planning Commission	Long Term	Town Budget, Grants, Volunteers

<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead/Partners</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Resources</b>
Create an Open Space Plan and support and encourage land conservation organizations to work with the Town to identify and preserve lands identified in the plan as conservation priorities.	Conservation Commission	Long Term	Town Budget, Grants, Volunteers
Review the Transfer of Development Rights Overlay District and make updates as needed, specifically to designated sending and receiving areas.	Planning Commission/ Conservation Commission	Short Term	Town Budget, Grants, Volunteers
Continue to require conditional use review for soil, sand, and gravel extractions.	Planning Commission	Ongoing	Volunteers
Require all proposals for earth and mineral extraction include a site rehabilitation plan.	Town Staff/ Development Review Board	Ongoing	Town Budget, Volunteers
Support the development and promote the use of alternative means of transportation to reduce vehicle emissions.	Selectboard	Ongoing	Town Budget
Study the issue of whether outdoor wood furnaces should be regulated by the Town and, if recommended, propose either an ordinance or standards for adoption.	Planning Commission	Long Term	Volunteers
<b>Community Facilities and Services: Chapter 6</b>			
Evaluate and strengthen local government services where needed with technical assistance from appropriate state and regional agencies.	Selectboard	Ongoing	Town Budget, State Funds, Grants
Pursue the development of a municipal water system.	Selectboard	Long Term	Town Budget, Grants
Evaluate energy usage in municipal facilities and make energy efficiency improvements to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and energy costs.	Selectboard	Short Term	Town Budget, Grants
Maintain a capital improvement plan that includes an inventory of municipal facilities and equipment, capital projects and costs, and a financing plan.	Selectboard	Ongoing	Town Budget
Seek state and federal grants to assist with financing town projects.	Selectboard	Ongoing	Town Budget
Continue to plan for Dover School's long-term capital needs in order to keep tax rates and expenditures even.	School Board	Ongoing	School Budget
Rely on the School Board for leadership in efficiently developing and maintaining the highest quality educational opportunities for Dover families.	School Board	Ongoing	School Budget
Monitor population and school enrollment trends to address future needs in an efficient manner.	School Board	Ongoing	School Budget

<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead/Partners</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Resources</b>
Within service area of North Branch Fire District #1, encourage the use of municipal wastewater disposal over the use of individual, private on-site septic systems	Fire District	Ongoing	Fire District Budget
Maintain regular communications with the North Branch Fire District #1 through the appointment of a Selectboard Liaison.	Selectboard/Fire District	Ongoing	Volunteers
Continue appropriations to the Dover Free Library to meet local needs.	Selectboard	Ongoing	Town Budget
Increase public awareness of library resources and services.	Library Board of Trustees	Ongoing	Library Budget
Investigate alternatives to fund for capital improvements to building and property (entry hallway, former Brick School building and drinking water well).	Library Board of Trustees	Short Term	Town Budget, Library Budget
Continue to provide financial support to West Dover and East Dover fire departments so that an effective fire protection and fire prevention system can be maintained.	Selectboard	Ongoing	Town Budget
Install a generator at the West Dover Fire Station.	Selectboard/Fire Department	Short Term	Town Budget, Grants
Develop a plan for dry hydrant maintenance and identify possible sites for future dry hydrant installations.	Selectboard/Fire Department	Long Term	Town Budget, Grants
Require that all new development provide adequate water availability and additional equipment or infrastructure needed for effective fire protection.	Development Review Board/Town Staff	Ongoing	Town Budget, Volunteers
Ensure adequate police services for the town by periodically reviewing the police protection available to residents.	Selectboard/Police Department	Ongoing	Town Budget
Continue to participate in the Windham Solid Waste Management District.	Selectboard	Ongoing	Town Budget
Support local recycling and composting efforts by promoting use of recycling and food scrap collection bins at the town transfer station and providing educational materials.	Selectboard/Town Staff	Short Term	Town Budget
Establish public and private partnerships to pursue the expansion of telecommunications infrastructure.	Selectboard/Town Staff	Ongoing	Town Budget
Ensure the Town continues to appoint a representative and alternates to the Deerfield Valley Communications District Governing Board to represent the community's interest.	Selectboard	Ongoing	Volunteers
Review zoning bylaws and identify opportunities to better support the establishment of state registered or licensed home-based childcare facilities.	Planning Commission	Long Term	Town Budget, Grants, Volunteers

<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead/Partners</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Resources</b>
Monitor the adequacy and demand of child care services, including the need for evening care.	Town Staff	Ongoing	Town Budget
Evaluate barriers to establishing childcare programs in collaboration with adjacent towns.	Selectboard	Short Term	Town Budget
Update the Town's website to direct residents to the child care referral and financial assistance programs through the Winston Prouty Center for Child and Family Development.	Town Staff	Short Term	Town Budget
<b>Housing: Chapter 7</b>			
Explore local housing programs that would provide financial incentives for property owners to create new or renovate existing rental units and accessory dwelling units for long-term rental use.	Selectboard/Town Staff	Short Term	Town Budget
Adopt a short-term rental ordinance to address life and safety and public nuisance concerns and a registration program to track the location and contact information for short-term rentals.	Selectboard/Town Staff	Short Term	Town Budget
Explore a home improvement incentive program for low and moderate-income homeowners to complete housing maintenance work.	Selectboard/Town Staff	Long Term	Town Budget
Promote programs and resources available to homeowners and renters through the State of Vermont, Windham Windsor Housing Trust, and Southeastern Vermont Community Action using the Deerfield Valley Housing website.	Town Staff	Short Term	Town Budget
Continue to partner with Town of Wilmington on the Bi-Town Housing Committee and support the development of housing throughout the Deerfield Valley.	Selectboard/Town Staff	Ongoing	Town Budget
Review provisions in the current zoning bylaws that create challenges for the development of housing and encourage flexible housing alternatives.	Planning Commission	Short Term	Town Budget, Grants, Volunteers
Learn about site considerations and needs for workforce, affordable, and senior housing development projects.	Planning Commission	Short Term	Volunteers
Review and amend existing zoning bylaws for the Village, Planned Commercial, and Resort Center Districts and the Vacation Zone Overlay to allow for a greater variety of housing types at higher densities.	Planning Commission	Short Term	Town Budget, Grants, Volunteers
Continue to provide for the Transfer of Development Rights Overlay District as an incentive to preserve rural areas and develop more densely in areas suitable to handle development.	Planning Commission/ Conservation Commission	Short Term	Town Budget, Grants, Volunteers
Investigate creating a density bonus in the Planned Unit Development provisions of the zoning bylaws to encourage housing.	Planning Commission	Short Term	Town Budget, Grants, Volunteers

Action	Lead/Partners	Timeline	Resources
Revise zoning bylaws to remove barriers to create accessory dwelling units and two-family dwellings.	Planning Commission	Short Term	Town Budget, Grants, Volunteers
<b>Transportation: Chapter 8</b>			
Review and update the Capital Paving Plan on an annual basis and ensure adequate funds are being raised to meet local road paving needs.	Selectboard/ Road Commissioner	Ongoing	Town Budget, State Grants
Maintain town culvert inventory and complete culvert replacement, bank stabilization, road grading, and drainage ditch maintenance to manage stormwater runoff.	Selectboard/ Road Commissioner	Ongoing	Town Budget, State Grants
Identify and pursue state and federal grants to help offset the cost of completing local road, culvert, and bridge projects.	Selectboard/ Road Commissioner	Ongoing	Town Budget
Develop access management standards to be used during the development review process that limit access points and require share access and interconnected parking where feasible.	Planning Commission	Long Term	Town Budget, Grants
Consider adopting subdivision regulations that include design standards for new public and private roads, sidewalks, and multi-use paths to effectively connect to existing and planned roads. Require developers to analyze on-site and off-site transportation impacts and provide improvements required to address those impacts.	Planning Commission	Long Term	Town Budget, Grants, Volunteers
Retain all existing rights-of-way, including Class 4 roads and Town trails, regardless of whether or not they are currently being maintained by the Town.	Selectboard	Ongoing	Town Budget
Consider Complete Streets design guidance in planning, designing, constructing, and maintaining non-dirt local roads.	Selectboard/ Road Commissioner	Ongoing	Town Budget, State Grants
Evaluate and plan for pedestrian and bicyclist safety improvements on Handle Road.	Selectboard/ Road Commissioner	Short Term	Town Budget, State Grants
Continue to work with the Windham Regional Commission to support local road projects and participate in the Transportation Advisory Committee.	Selectboard/ Road Commissioner	Ongoing	Town Budget
Continue to work with the Windham Road Foreman's Network to bulk purchase culverts, fuel, and other transportation materials and equipment.	Selectboard/ Road Commissioner	Ongoing	Town Budget
Work with the Vermont Agency of Transportation to coordinate and plan for road improvements along Route 100 and avoid negative community impacts along secondary local roads. Particular emphasis should be placed on minimizing curb cuts, improving pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and installing traffic calming measures.	Selectboard	Long Term	Town Budget, State Funds, Grants

<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead/Partners</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Resources</b>
Install electric vehicle charging stations at appropriate municipal buildings and facilities and encourage installation of public charging stations at private businesses.	Selectboard/Private Property Owners	Short Term	Town Budget, Private Funds
Work with the Town of Wilmington, State Police, and VTrans to improve traffic flow at the intersection of Route 100 and Route 9 in downtown Wilmington.	Selectboard	Short Term	Volunteers
Coordinate with the Selectboards for the Towns of Wilmington and Marlboro to investigate ways to discourage the use of local roads to bypass State highways.	Selectboard	Short Term	Volunteers
Evaluate and incorporate where feasible and appropriate Complete Streets design elements for pedestrians and bicyclists for all state and local road projects.	Selectboard/Road Commissioner	Ongoing	Town Budget, State Grants
Incorporate planned pedestrian and bicycle facilities into Town Capital Improvement Plans.	Selectboard/Road Commissioner	Ongoing	Town Budget, State Grants
Work with VTrans to study bicycle and pedestrian facility improvements along the Route 100 corridor.	Selectboard	Long Term	Town Budget, State Funds, Grants
Inventory existing bicycle lanes and pedestrian walkways and ensure these facilities are properly maintained, striped, and signed where appropriate.	Selectboard/Road Commissioner	Short Term	Town Budget
Provide bicycle and pedestrian facilities on Handle Road from the Wilmington town line to the Snow Tree Condo Association property.	Selectboard/Road Commissioner	Short Term	Town Budget
Meet with representatives from Mount Snow to understand internal pedestrian routes at the resort and share the Town's plans for improved pedestrian and bicycle facilities in proximity to the resort.	Selectboard	Short Term	Volunteers
Develop standards for required pedestrian and bicycle facility improvements to be used during the Site Plan Review process for commercial and multi-family residential development projects.	Planning Commission	Long Term	Town Budget, Grants
Explore ways to increase MOOver transit ridership numbers, such as working with SEVT on route expansions, providing information on the Town's website, and promoting services with local businesses and housing providers.	Selectboard	Long Term	Town Budget
Encourage new construction or major reconstruction of roads and highways to include adequate pull offs for bus stops and amenities for transit riders.	Planning Commission/Development Review Board	Long Term	Volunteers
Plan for a network of non-motorized, multi-use paths to connect densely developed residential areas with commercial, civic, recreational facilities, and existing and planned sidewalks.	Selectboard	Long Term	Town Budget, Grants
Pursue funding options such as the VTrans Transportation Alternatives Grant Program to help offset local costs.	Selectboard	Ongoing	Town Budget
Pursue the completion of the Valley Trail.	Selectboard	Long Term	Town Budget, Grants

<b>Energy: Chapter 9</b>			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead/Partners</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Resources</b>
Promote Efficiency Vermont programs and state Weatherization Assistance Program for low-income households on the Town's website and at community events.	Town Staff	Short Term	Town Budget
When appropriate, the Selectboard may appoint a committee to look at specific energy-related issues on behalf of the town.	Selectboard	Long Term	Volunteers
Promote Vermont's residential and commercial building energy standards by providing information on the requirements and benefits on the Town's website.	Town Staff	Short Term	Town Budget
Utilize the resources provided by the Municipal Energy Resilience Program to complete municipal building assessments to understand current energy systems and consumption, and pursue implementation grants.	Selectboard/ Town Staff	Short Term	Town Budget, Grants
Incorporate weatherization and energy efficiency projects for municipal facilities into the town's capital planning program.	Selectboard	Ongoing	Town Budget
The Selectboard is encouraged to monitor state recommendations and/or mandates related to energy efficiency and make an appropriate response.	Selectboard	Ongoing	Town Budget
Review and update zoning bylaws to ensure small-scale renewable energy resources are not unreasonably constrained on residential and commercial properties and ensure appropriate design standards to mitigate potential impacts on neighboring properties.	Planning Commission	Long Term	Town Budget, Grants, Volunteers
Assess and identify municipal buildings and facilities where small-scale renewable energy resources could be developed.	Selectboard/ Town Staff	Short Term	Town Budget
Update zoning bylaws to identify appropriate districts for utility-scale renewable energy facilities and develop development design standards for these facilities to mitigation potential impacts on neighboring properties and natural resources.	Planning Commission	Long Term	Town Budget, Grants, Volunteers
<b>Community Resources: Chapter 10</b>			
Retain Class 4 town roads, legal town trails, and other public rights-of-way for use as recreational trails.	Selectboard	Ongoing	Town Budget
Continue to develop and upgrade trails with an emphasis on improving access, connectivity, signage, and parking.	Selectboard	Long Term	Town Budget, Grants
Support the expansion and completion of the Valley Trail.	Selectboard	Long Term	Town Budget, Grants

<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead/Partners</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Resources</b>
Incorporate new pedestrian and bicycle paths into the planning of any new recreational areas in Dover.	Selectboard/Trails & Rec Committee	Ongoing	Town Budget, Grants
Support placement of sidewalks and crosswalks for safe pedestrian and bicycle access along high-volume roadways.	Selectboard	Long Term	Town Budget, Grants
Support United States Forest Service acquisition of private landholdings within the Green Mountain National Forest proclamation boundaries provided that adequate payment in lieu of taxes are made to Dover.	Selectboard	Ongoing	NA
Develop a plan for creating a Trails and Recreation Department to manage and maintain Town owned recreation facilities.	Selectboard	Short Term	Town Budget
Continue to support the Trails and Recreation Committee charter to evaluate recreational lands and recommend to the Selectboard the purchase or receipt of gifts of lands.	Selectboard	Ongoing	Town Budget
Direct the Economic Development Department to pursue additional venues, grants and public-private partnerships to enhance recreational options/facilities in the Town.	Selectboard/ Town Staff	Ongoing	Town Budget, Grants
Continue to implement the Dover Trails and Recreation Master Plan.	Selectboard/Trails & Rec Committee	Long Term	Town Budget, Grants
Explore opportunities for an indoor recreational facility, including possible partnerships with adjacent municipalities.	Selectboard/Trails & Rec Committee	Long Term	Town Budget
Coordinate with the United States Forest Service on the implementation of the Deerfield Ridge project including the new access trail from Handle Road.	Selectboard/ Conservation Commission	Short Term	Volunteers
Direct the Economic Development Department to work with the Chamber of Commerce and other interested parties to promote public awareness of recreational opportunities in Dover.	Selectboard/ Town Staff	Ongoing	Town Budget
Publish and promote an easily accessible trail guide in multiple formats illustrating the system of trails.	Town Staff	Short Term	Town Budget
Investigate public/private partnerships to create cultural programs in Dover.	Selectboard/Town Staff	Ongoing	Town Budget
Work collaboratively with other Deerfield Valley towns, the Chamber of Commerce, and other groups to use the arts to promote cultural tourism.	Selectboard/Town Staff	Ongoing	Town Budget
Continue to support the use of the Local Option Tax to fund cultural programming.	Selectboard	Ongoing	Town Budget
Explore opportunities to establish a farmers' market in Dover on town-owned or private property.	Selectboard/Town Staff	Short Term	Town Budget, Volunteers

<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead/Partners</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Resources</b>
Support the development and improvement of venues, facilities, and work spaces for creative programs and enterprises.	Selectboard/Town Staff	Ongoing	Town Budget
Encourage listing on the National Register of Historic Places for appropriate local structures.	Dover Historical Society	Ongoing	Volunteers
Support the efforts of the Dover Historical Society to preserve and promote the Town's history.	Selectboard	Ongoing	Volunteers
Create an inventory of historically and/or architecturally significant structures/sites.	Dover Historical Society	Short Term	Volunteers
Strengthen incentives for historic preservation in the zoning bylaw by including provisions for adaptive reuse and considering the creation of a historic district or design review district in West Dover Village.	Planning Commission	Long Term	Town Budget, Grants, Volunteers
The Town and Historical Society should consider the acquisition of available, significant property for conservation and preservation purposes in limited but critical cases.	Selectboard/Historical Society	Ongoing	Grants
Identify and designate scenic vistas within Dover to be protected.	Selectboard	Long Term	Volunteers
Regulate land subdivision in a manner that ensures the pattern of future development does not adversely affect the Town's natural features, rural resources and scenic character.	Planning Commission	Long Term	Town Budget, Grants, Volunteers
Through planned unit development standards, continue to require clustering and siting of new development as necessary to protect natural and cultural resource	Planning Commission	Ongoing	Volunteers
<b>Flood Resilience: Chapter 11</b>			
The Town will regulate any new development in identified flood hazard areas and River Corridors to ensure that development does not exacerbate flooding and fluvial erosion, and extend these provisions to development activities that might increase the amount and/or rate of runoff and soil erosion from upland areas.	Development Review Board/Town Staff	Ongoing	Town Budget, Volunteers
Built development in floodplains is prohibited unless a special permit is granted by the Development Review Board.	Development Review Board/Town Staff	Ongoing	Town Budget, Volunteers
Built development on steep slopes should be avoided if it will increase the amount and/or rate of runoff and soil erosion from upland areas.	Development Review Board/Town Staff	Ongoing	Town Budget, Volunteers
The Town will update its Zoning Bylaws to include regulation of River Corridors, and include provisions for advance notification of and specific limits on new development activities in identified River Corridors, based on regulatory templates developed by the ANR DEC Rivers Program.	Planning Commission	Short Term	Town Budget, Grants, Volunteers

<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead/Partners</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Resources</b>
Provide funding in the town budget for the Floodplain Administrator to complete training to carry out the administration of Town regulations.	Selectboard	Ongoing	Town Budget
Pursue the mitigation projects outlined in the Dover Local Hazard Mitigation Plan.	Selectboard/Town Staff	Short Term	Town Budget, Grants
Update culvert assessment and upgrade culverts identified in Dover's Local Hazard Mitigation Plan.	Selectboard/Town Staff	Short Term	Town Budget, Grants
The town will continue to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) which gives residents access to discount flood insurance.	Selectboard	Ongoing	NA
The Town will be familiar with Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) that delineate the 1% annual chance flood area, as defined by FEMA.	Town Staff	Ongoing	NA
The Town will be familiar with ANR River Corridor maps that delineate the River Corridor, or land area adjacent to streams and rivers (with drainage basins greater than two square miles) required to accommodate a stable channel. The Town will also note that unmapped River Corridors, in drainage basins less than two square miles, are protected in the area 50 feet from top of bank on either side.	Town Staff	Ongoing	NA
Ensure that members of the general public continue to be part of the hazard mitigation and flood resiliency planning process.	Selectboard	Ongoing	Volunteers
Pursue completing projects outlined in the River Corridor Management Plan for the North Branch of the Deerfield River.	Selectboard	Long Term	State Funds, Grants
Pursue completing projects outlined in the Rock River Watershed Stream Geomorphic Assessment.	Selectboard	Long Term	State Funds, Grants
Work with the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources to understand private property owner's and the Town's responsibilities and rights for removing trees and other debris from rivers and streams and provide information for the public on the Town's website.	Selectboard/ Conservation Commission	Short Term	Volunteers
Pursue preservation efforts on public/Town land.	Selectboard/ Conservation Commission	Ongoing	Town Budget, Volunteers
Promote conservation easements on private lands.	Selectboard/ Conservation Commission	Ongoing	Volunteers

# CHAPTER 13

## COMPATIBILITY WITH OTHER PLANS

When Vermont's Growth Management Law (Act 200) was passed in 1988, Vermont set up a system for communities to work in concert with their neighbors, and with agencies of state government, to shape the future. As envisioned, decisions on local growth issues are to be made by the local communities; decisions of regional significance are to be made by the region's communities acting in consort. Town Plans are to be compatible with the regional plan and compatible with approved plans of other municipalities in the region.

### 13.1 Compatibility with Adopted Town Plans

Dover abuts the following towns: Wardsboro, Newfane, Marlboro, Wilmington, Somerset, and Stratton. This plan strives to support the goals and policies of the neighboring towns as well as strengthen the relationships with those towns to work on issues that are a common concern.

**Wardsboro:** (Town Plan adopted July 2019) Wardsboro is situated to the north of Dover. The majority of the shared border area in Dover is classified as Resource Conservation lands. Wardsboro has most of the land on its side of the border classified as Conservation. The Dover Town Forest is located on the border and abuts a large area of land that is owned by the Green Mountain National Forest in Wardsboro. Combined, this creates a large area of unfragmented land. This supports both of the towns' desire to maintain and improve wildlife resources. In particular, both towns acknowledge important bear habitat and wildlife travel corridors in this area.

There is a corridor along East Dover Road in Wardsboro that is classified as Rural Residential. While Dover classified the East Dover Road corridor as Resource Conservation, there are no anticipated conflicts at this time because there is existing low-density residential development along East Dover Road in both towns.

**Newfane:** (Town Plan adopted July 2018) Newfane is located to the east of Dover and is accessed via Dover Hill Road. Newfane has classified the majority of the border with Dover as Resource Lands with the stated goal of restricting development to uses and activities that will not diminish the ecological function, scenic and natural beauty, and natural character of the area. There is a smaller area classified as Rural in the area around Dover Road. This is compatible with Dover's vision for the border area in that the plan for this area is primarily Resource Conservation or Productive Residential. With the exception of East Dover Village, both plans support low-density residential development with a focus on respecting and preserving the important natural resources. Newfane's plan notes concern about traffic speeds on Dover Road between the villages of East Dover and Williamsville, a concern shared by the town of Dover.

**Marlboro:** (Town Plan adopted January 2022) A small area in the southeastern corner of Dover abuts Marlboro. Marlboro has designated their lands on the border as Conservation Priority and Rural Residential along Lower Dover Road. On the Dover side, the Town has classified the land as Productive Residential. These classifications appear to be compatible. Marlboro's Plan expresses concern over increased traffic to the Deerfield Valley using Higley Hill Road and Upper

Dover Road, a concern shared by the town of Dover.

**Wilmington:** (Town Plan adopted October 2018) Wilmington is situated to the south of Dover. In the Wilmington Town Plan, the area around the Hermitage Club is classified as Resort-Commercial/Residential and Conservation. East of Coldbrook Road to Route 100 is classified as Resort-Residential. A large segment of this area appears to be subdivided for residential building lots but remains undeveloped. Dover's Plan classifies this area as Productive Residential and Residential. The former Deerfield Valley Airport is also located in this area and is classified as Resort-Residential in the Wilmington Plan and Airport Redevelopment in the Dover Plan. The towns should continue to work together to address development and associated impacts around the Hermitage Club and former airport site where these properties span the municipal boundaries.

From Route 100 east, the Wilmington Plan classifies the border area as Residential and Rural Residential. The Residential areas allow for 1-acre minimum lot sizes and the Rural Residential District proposes 3 to 5-acre minimum lot sizes. The adjacent area in Dover is classified as Productive Residential, which has a minimum lot size of 5 acres. There is a small Industrial area along the border in the Dover Plan associated with the wastewater treatment facility. Finally, the Wilmington Plan notes on-going concerns about traffic management at the intersection of Route 100 and Route 9 in the Wilmington town center. This is noted in the Dover Plan as well and is an additional area where the two towns can work together.

**Somerset:** Somerset is an unincorporated town located to the west of Dover. The lands located along the shared boundary of the towns are owned and managed by Green Mountain National Forest. The Dover Town Plan classifies this entire area as Resource Conservation.

**Stratton:** (Town Plan adopted December 2020) Stratton is located to the northwest of Dover and the communities share a short boundary. The boundary area in Stratton is primarily classified as Conservation. There is a small area along the Route 100 corridor in Stratton classified as Commercial/Residential and Residential that is associated with existing development. On the Dover side, the boundary area is classified as Resource Conservation and Productive Residential on either side of Route 100. The Wildlife Overlay District covers the Productive Residential District in this area of town.

## **13.2 Compatibility with the Regional Plan**

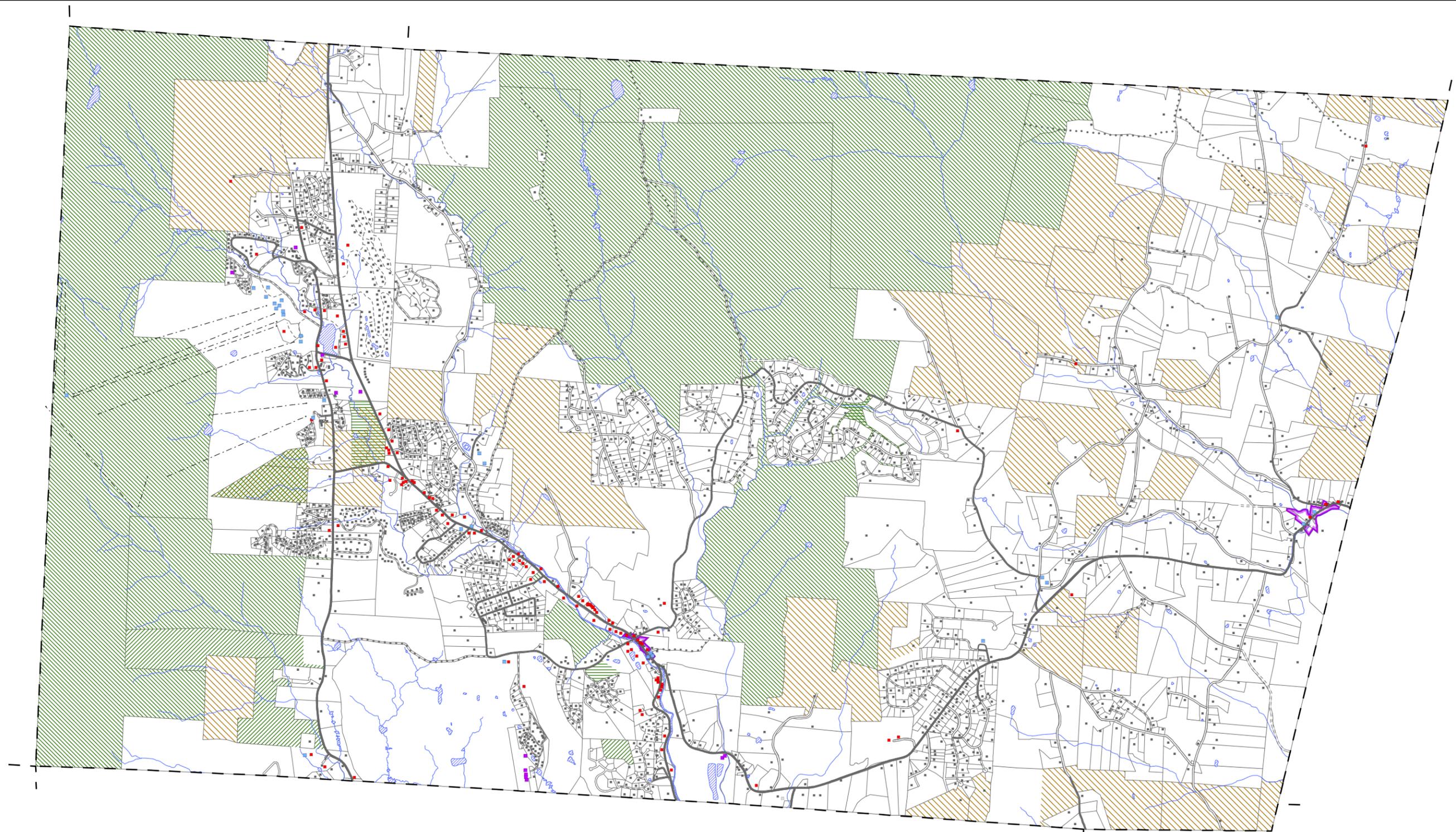
The 2014 Windham Regional Plan was re-adopted in June 2021. The proposed land use designations and policies in the Dover Town Plan are consistent with the Windham Regional Plan. The Windham Regional Plan calls for encouraging growth and development within existing settlement areas, such as the villages of West Dover and East Dover. The Regional Plan also encourages the redevelopment of commercial strip development, like the Route 100 corridor, for more productive mixed commercial and residential uses. The Dover Plan is consistent with these goals for development. Important forestland areas and agricultural lands are protected and maintained in the Dover Plan consistent with the Regional Plan's goals and policies.

# **CHAPTER 14**

## **TOWN PLAN MAPS**

A series of maps have been prepared to assist planners, public officials and citizens to understand Dover and to assist in the planning process and governmental and business decisions. These maps are for planning purposes only. The policies and actions and associated narrative discussions in the body of the Town Plan prevail as the guidelines for the Town's future growth.

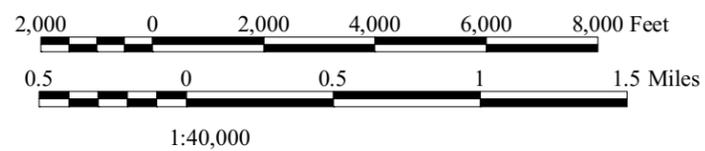
- Map 1. Existing Land Use
- Map 2. Proposed Land Use
- Map 3. Natural Resources
- Map 4. Community Facilities
- Map 5. Transportation System
- Map 6. West Dover Village Center
- Map 7. East Dover Village Center



# Existing Land Use

## Town of Dover, Vermont

2024 Town Plan



### Building Use:

- Commercial
- Industrial
- Public/Institutional
- Residential

- Parcel line
- Village Center designation

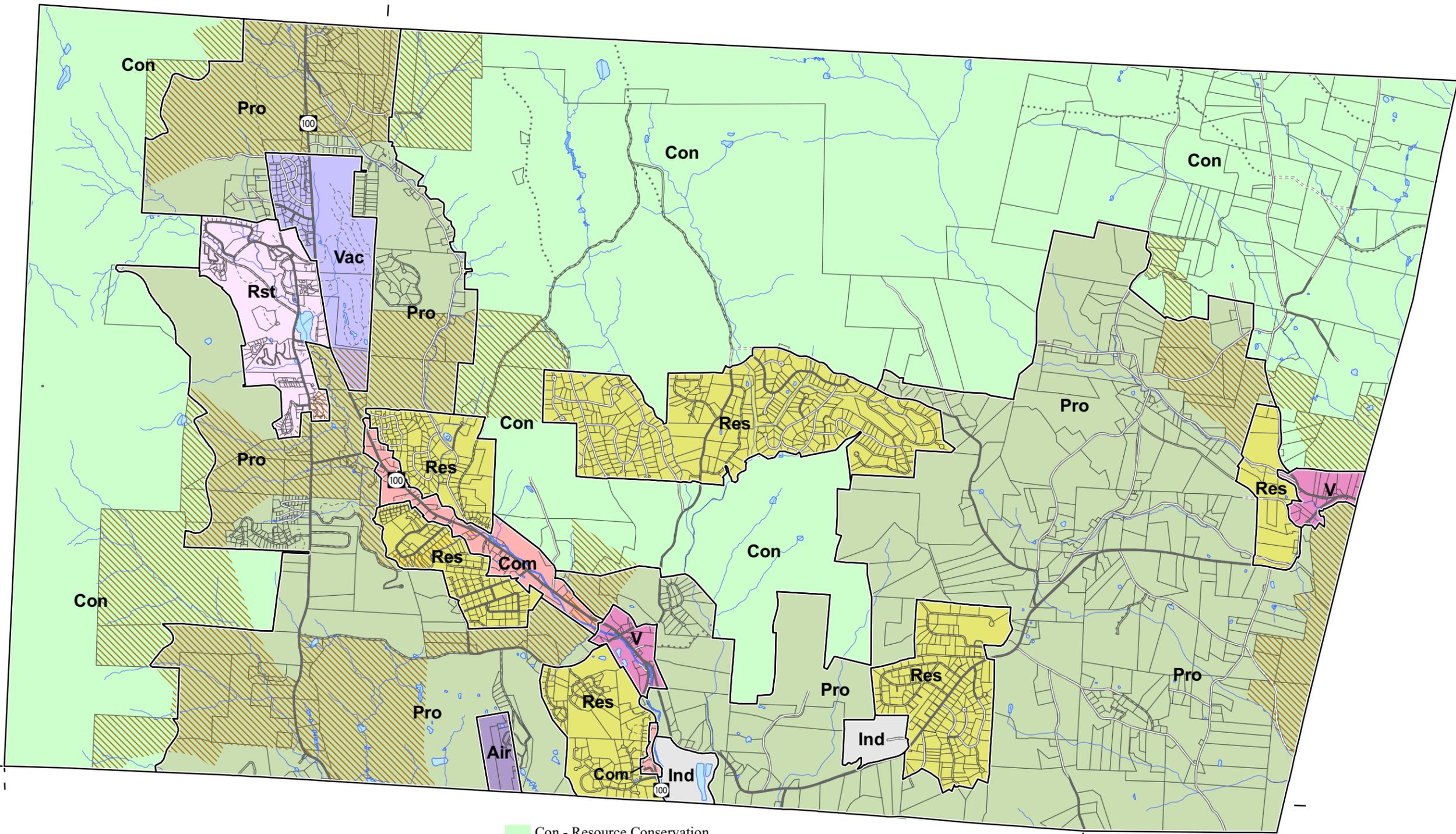
### Parcel status:

- Active agriculture or forestry management plan (parcel enrolled in Use Value Appraisal, 2022)
- Development restriction, private land with conservation easement
- Development restriction, private land with other legal restriction \*\*
- Public land managed for recreation, conservation, and/or open space

\* - not all parcels with other development restrictions mapped

### Data sources:

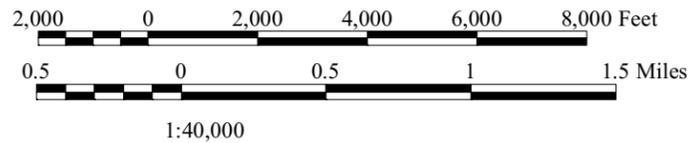
- Structure locations are from Vermont E911 data, current to 2024.
- Parcel data are from Dover's digital parcel data, developed by Cartographic Technologies, Inc., Dummerston, Vt. and are current to 2023.
- Parcels enrolled in Use Value Appraisal extracted from Dover's parcel data using 2022 information from the Vermont Department of Taxest.



# Proposed Land Use

## Town of Dover, Vermont

2024 Town Plan



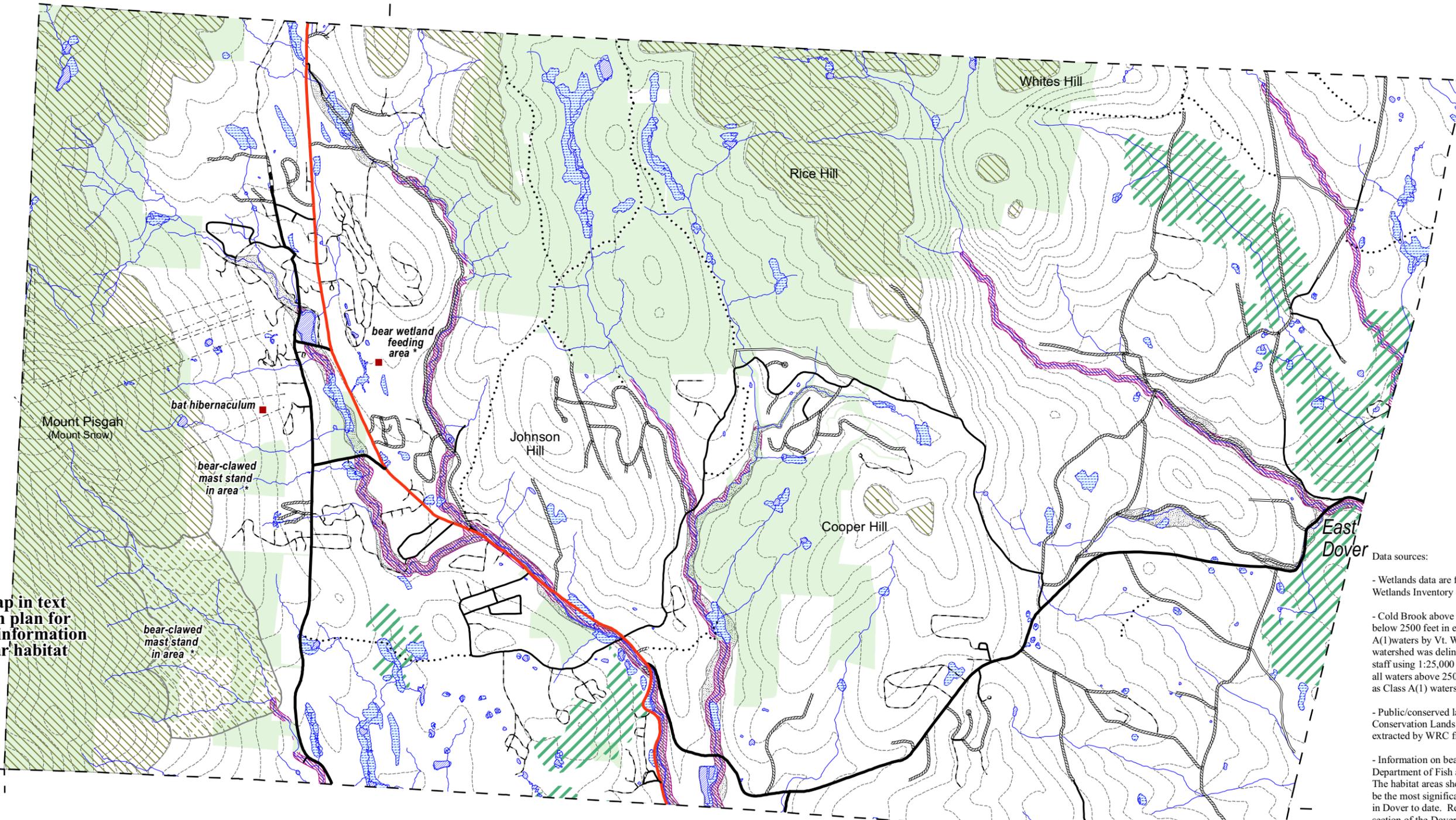
- Con - Resource Conservation
- Pro - Productive Residential
- V - Village
- Res - Residential
- Com - Planned Commercial
- Ind - Light Industrial
- Air - Airport Redevelopment
- Rst - Resort Center
- Vac - Vacation
- Sensitive Wildlife Habitat overlay district

Data sources:

- Proposed Land Use district boundary locations are based on Dover's zoning districts. Data were developed by Windham Regional Commission using GIS parcel data and contour data from Cartographic Technologies, Inc., previous zoning and proposed land use data from Judy Bond of GrassRoots GIS, and VGIS base data of roads and streams.



see map in text of town plan for detailed information on bear habitat



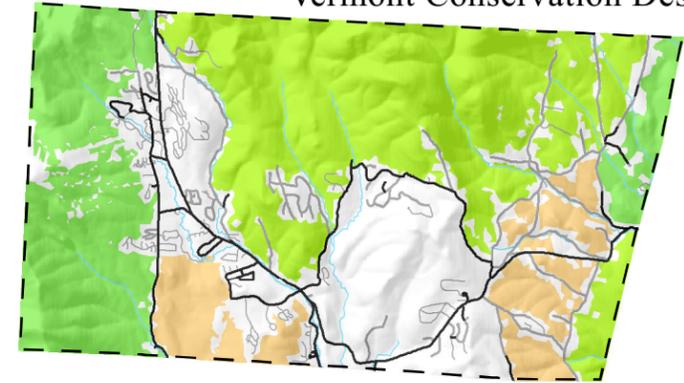
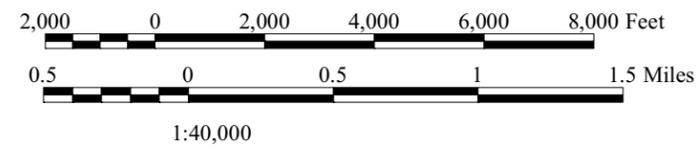
- Data sources:
- Wetlands data are from the Vt. Significant Wetlands Inventory (VGIS data layer VSWI), 2023.
  - Cold Brook above the Wilmington town line and below 2500 feet in elevation is classified as Class A(1) waters by Vt. Water Resources Board. The watershed was delineated and digitized by WRC staff using 1:25,000 USGS topographic maps. Note: all waters above 2500 feet are by default classified as Class A(1) waters.
  - Public/conserved lands data are from the Vt. Conservation Lands Database. Boundaries were extracted by WRC from Dover's digital parcel data.
  - Information on bear habitat is from the Vt. Department of Fish and Wildlife, Springfield office. The habitat areas shown on this map are believed to be the most significant bear habitat areas identified in Dover to date. Refer to the Natural Resources section of the Dover Town Plan for more information.
  - Special Flood Hazard Area data boundaries are from FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) D-FIRM (Digital Flood Insurance Rate Map) data effective September 28, 2007.
  - Mapped River Corridors are from Vt. ANR Rivers Program.
  - Lands over 2500 feet in elevation were digitized by Vt. ANR from 1:24000 USGS topographic maps, edited by WRC to include the summit of Cooper Hill. Note: all waters above 2500 feet are by default classified as Class A(1) waters.
  - Deer wintering areas are taken from the VGIS data layer DEERWN. They were delineated by Vt. Dept. of Fish and Wildlife, updated through 2023.

### Vermont Conservation Design Habitat Blocks

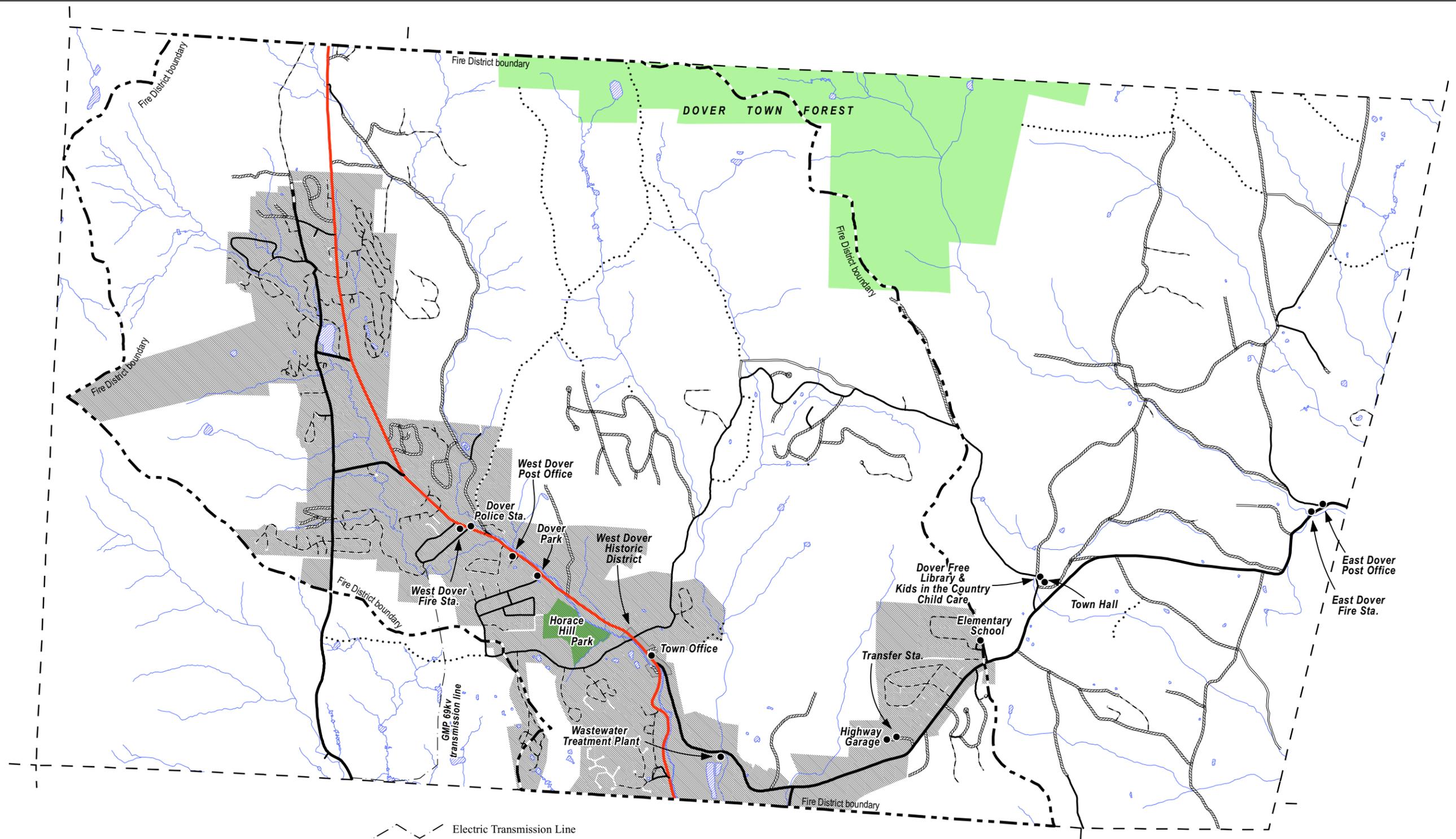
# Natural Resources

## Town of Dover, Vermont

2024 Town Plan



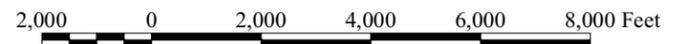
- |   |                       |                           |
|---|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| Highest Priority Interior Forest Blocks | Mapped River Corridor | Class A1 watershed        |
| Highest Priority Connectivity Blocks    | Wetland               | 100-foot contour          |
| Priority Connectivity Blocks            | Deer Wintering Area   | Special Flood Hazard Area |
|   | Lands above 2500 feet | Public or conserved land  |



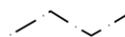
# Community Facilities

## Town of Dover, Vermont

2024 Town Plan



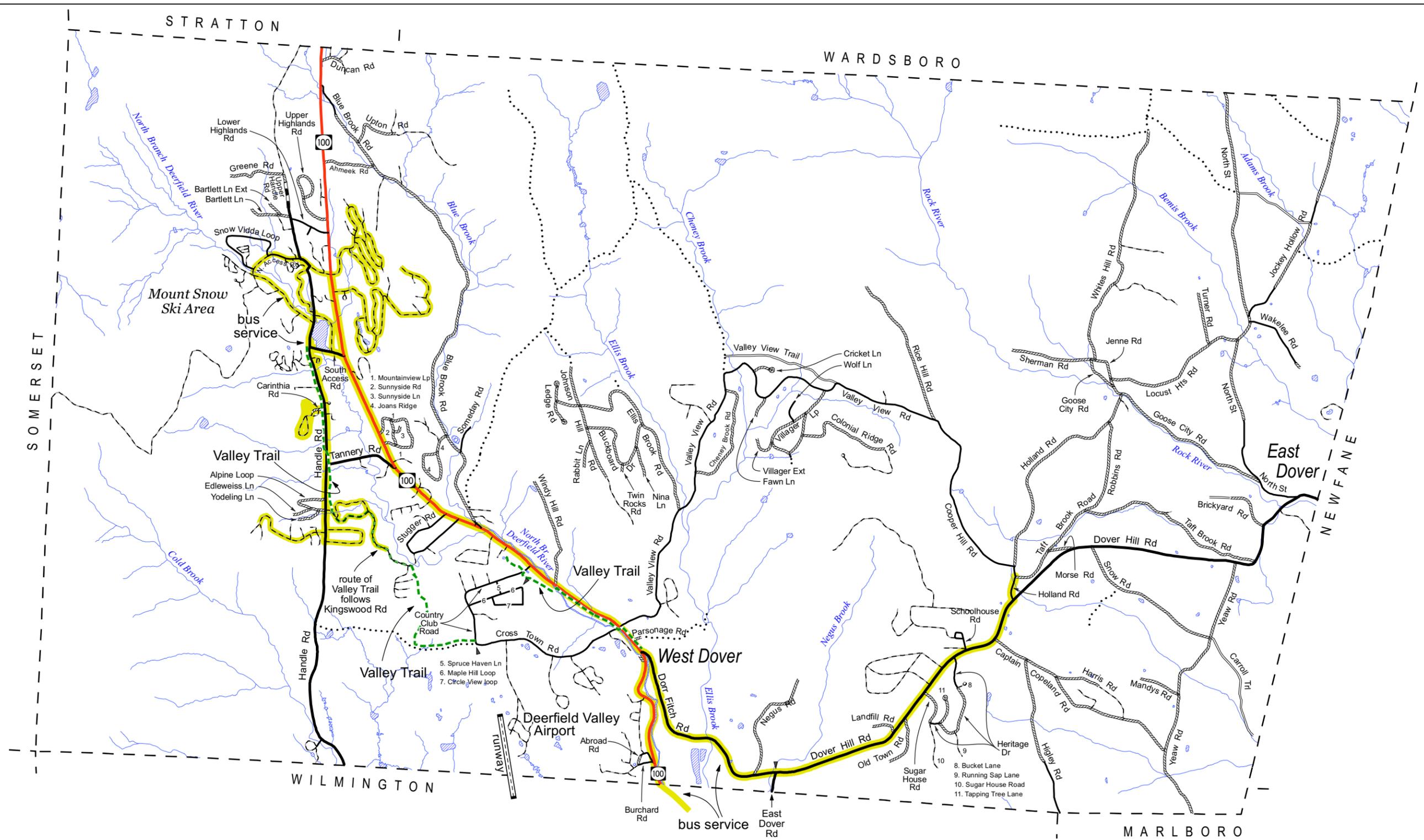
1:40,000

-  Electric Transmission Line
-  Horace Hill Park
-  Dover Town Forest
-  West Dover Historic District
-  North Branch Fire District
-  N. B. F. D. sewer service area

Data sources:

- Community facilities were identified by the Dover Planning Commission and located using buildings data from E-911 and Cartographic Technologies.
- The boundary of the Dover Town Forest and Horace Hill Park are from Dover's 2023 parcel maps.
- The boundary of the North Branch Fire District coincides with the watershed of the North Branch of the Deerfield River in Dover, excluding Cold Brook. Boundary information was developed by WRC using the State of Vermont's watershed data and modifying it using 1:24,000 USGS topographic maps to delineate the Cold Brook watershed.
- The North Branch Fire District sewer service area is represented by parcels that are served by the sewer system. These parcels were identified by Fire District staff and WRC extracted those parcels from Dover's digital parcel data.

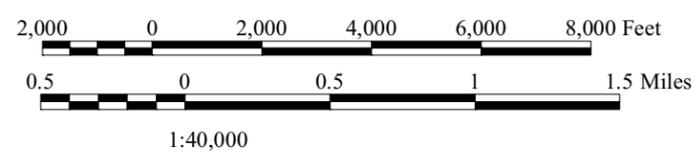




# Transportation System

## Town of Dover, Vermont

2024 Town Plan



- State highway
  - Class 2 town highway, paved
  - Class 2 town highway, unpaved
  - Class 3 town highway, paved
  - Class 3 town highway, unpaved
  - Class 4 town highway (unpaved) \*
  - Legal Town Trail \*
  - Private road/drive
  - Bus service - route of The Moover
  - Valley Trail pathway, existing
- \* - may be impassable to automobiles

note: only those sections of the Valley Trail with an improved surface are shown

Data sources:  
 - Highway data are from Vt. Agency of Transportation with minor edits by WRC.  
 - The location of the Valley Trail was developed by Windham Regional Commission using digital orthophotos.  
 - The Moover bus route is taken from their system maps.



# West Dover Village Center

## Town of Dover, Vermont

### Village Center Designation

approved by the Vt. Downtown Development Board, June 28, 2021



- |   |                             |   |                          |
|---|-----------------------------|---|--------------------------|
|  | Public/Institutional parcel |  | Commercial building      |
|  | Commercial parcel           |  | Public/Cultural building |
|  | Residential parcel          |  | Residential building     |
|  | Vacant/other parcel         |  | Other/accessory          |
|  | Photo location              |  | Parcel boundary          |
|   |                             |  | Zoning district boundary |

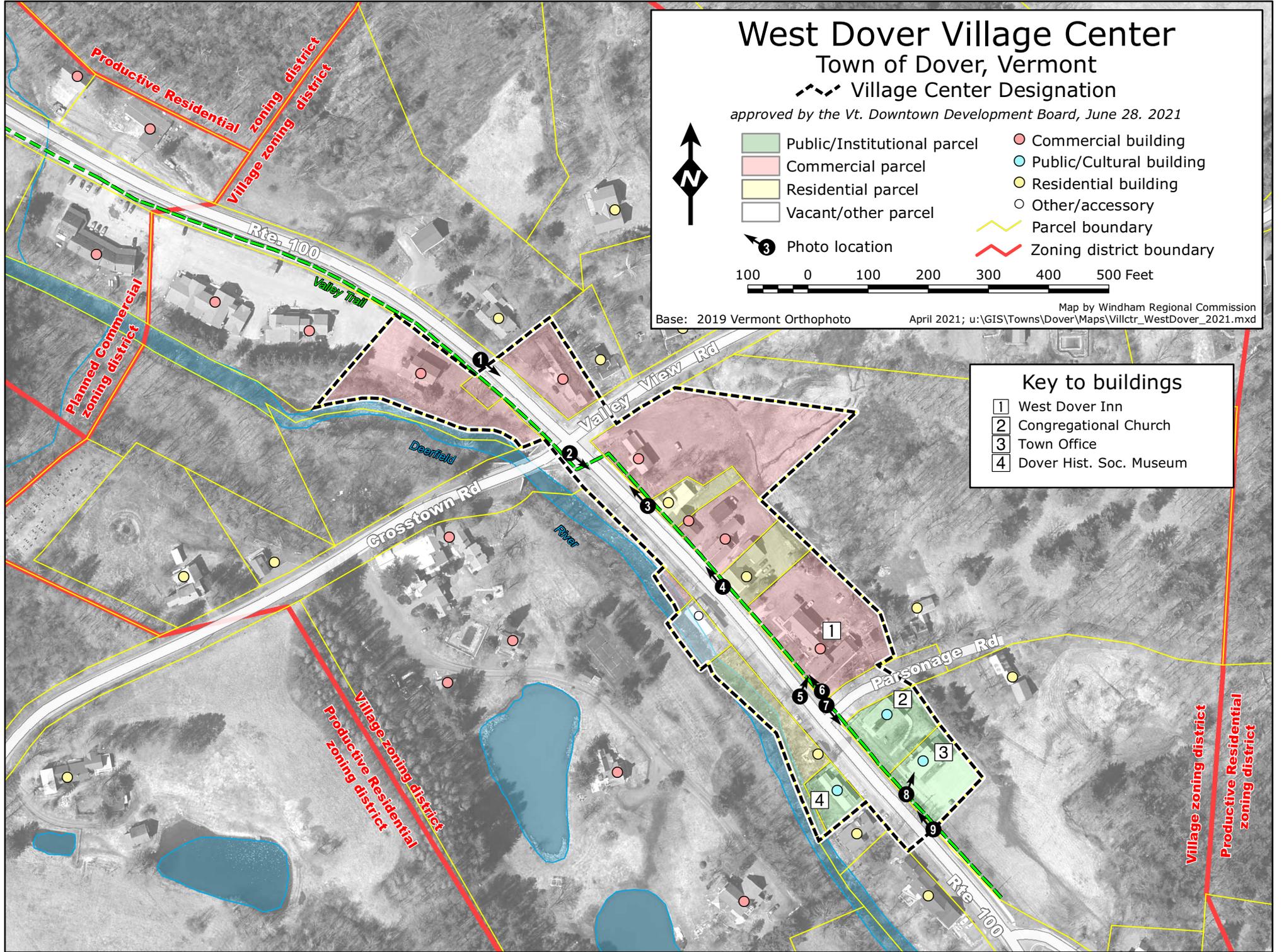
100 0 100 200 300 400 500 Feet



Base: 2019 Vermont Orthophoto  
 Map by Windham Regional Commission  
 April 2021; u:\GIS\Towns\Dover\Maps\Willctr\_WestDover\_2021.mxd

### Key to buildings

- |   |                         |
|---|-------------------------|
|  | West Dover Inn          |
|  | Congregational Church   |
|  | Town Office             |
|  | Dover Hist. Soc. Museum |



# East Dover Village Center

Town of Dover, Vermont

 Village Center Designation

approved by the Vt. Downtown Development Board, June 28, 2021

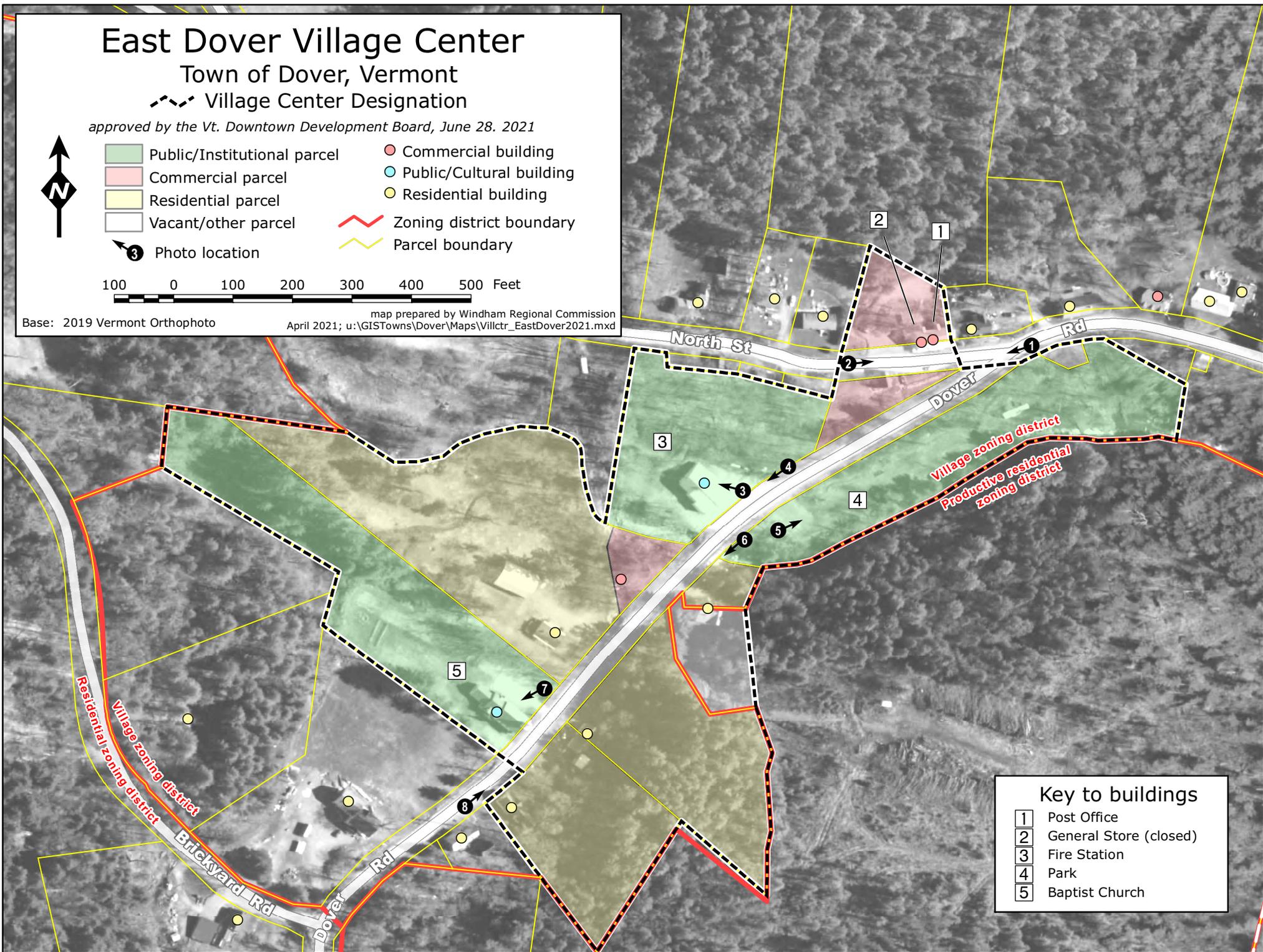


- |   |  |
|---|--|
|  Public/Institutional parcel |  Commercial building      |
|  Commercial parcel           |  Public/Cultural building |
|  Residential parcel          |  Residential building     |
|  Vacant/other parcel         |  Zoning district boundary |
|  Photo location              |  Parcel boundary          |



Base: 2019 Vermont Orthophoto

map prepared by Windham Regional Commission  
April 2021; u:\GIS\Towns\Dover\Maps\Villctr\_EastDover2021.mxd



## Key to buildings

- |   |                        |
|---|------------------------|
|  1 | Post Office            |
|  2 | General Store (closed) |
|  3 | Fire Station           |
|  4 | Park                   |
|  5 | Baptist Church         |