

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Dover Transit Center Neighborhood Plan

The purpose of the Dover Transit Center Neighborhood Plan and Design guidelines is to provide the City of Dover with a design and planning strategy for development around the new transit center. The plan also offers strategies to improve all modes of transport throughout downtown.

The Dover/Kent County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), in cooperation with the Downtown Dover Partnership (DDP), conceived, sponsored and implemented the neighborhood plan.

The effort was a two-part process. The first phase was a five-day design charrette that brought together local and national design teams to study the strengths and opportunities available in the study area. The charrette was an open process where the charrette design group and a variety of public and private stakeholders could discuss issues, identify ideas and craft solutions. The second phase was the creation of visual design guidelines that graphically depicted the design group's findings, recommendations and implementation strategies.

The plan study area is generally defined as an area of influence surrounding the new Dover Transit Center. The area is roughly 16 blocks and is bound by Loockerman Street, State Street, South Street and West Street. It includes The Green, the historic downtown retail corridor, the legislative office area, museum square and medical offices.

The plan addresses the physical characteristics of the transit center in the context of this historic area, and is organized around the following major themes and strategies:

- Improve the gateway entrances to the downtown area with building and improved streetscapes that frame views and provide a sense of arrival
- Centralize parking in locations that encourage redevelopment, maintain streetscapes and provide a coordinated parking strategy for the entire downtown
- Develop Queen, Water and North Streets as improved corridors for vehicle and pedestrian traffic
- Encourage new development that compliments the existing historical architecture of Dover in scale, character and urban context
- Create a network of civic squares, open spaces and public gathering places within the study area that also provide greater connectivity throughout the city
- Use the transit center as an anchor for mixed use redevelopment, a 24-hour activity area and intermodal forms of transportation including passenger rail.

The above strategies summarize the plan's intent and should be used as a basic roadmap to guide future studies. The following steps advance these strategies:

- Create an implementation plan that identifies and prioritizes projects within the overall framework
- Identify economic drivers in the downtown and evaluate where joint public/private development opportunities exist that could facilitate redevelopment and investment in the area
- Simplify, revise and coordinate city zoning codes and regulations to support the plan's vision
- Identify a "champion" of the plan and seek to build public ownership through continued involvement with citizens and businesses.
- Maintain City, County, State and interagency cooperation for plan refinement
- Create a downtown developers forum to get feedback from local developers and property owners