Dover Transit Center Neighborhood Plan and Design Book

Dover/Kent County MPO
Metropolitan Planning Organization

DOWNTOWN DOVER PARTNERSHIP

BECKER MORGAN GROUP
ARCHITECTURE ENGINEERING

RENAISSANCE PLANNING GROUP

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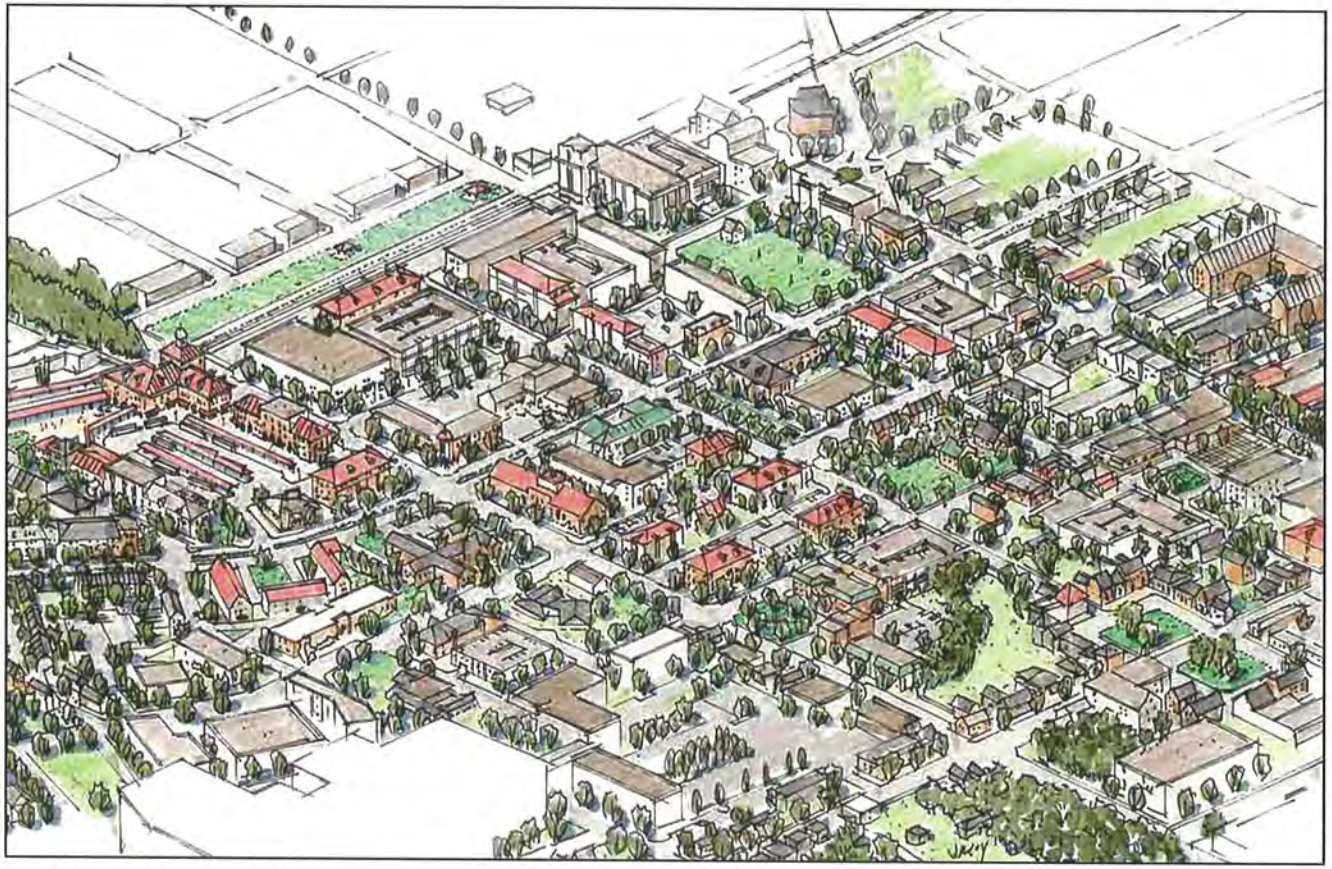

City of Dover Vision - Year 2035

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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 charette 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

Acknowledgements

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City of Dover City Council
City of Dover Parks and Recreation
City of Dover Planning Department
Delaware Office of State
Planning Coordination
Delaware State Housing Authority
Delaware State University
Delaware Transit Corporation
Department of Transportation
Division of Facilities Management
Division of Public Health
Dover Library
Wesley College
State Historic Preservation Office
Schwartz Center for the Arts

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USDA Rural Development has provided funding for DDP marketing and training initiatives which benefit businesses in "Historic Downtown Dover."

Introduction

A.1 - Project Goals

The purpose of the Dover Transit Center Neighborhood Plan is to use the new transit center as an impetus for redevelopment that will transform and energize the surrounding area. The Dover/Kent County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and the Downtown Dover Partnership (DDP) conceived the plan.

The effort offers an opportunity for the community to influence the future of the neighborhood and downtown by exploring simple urban design questions such as appropriate building height, the pedestrian experience, the character of neighborhood roads and streetscapes, and building setbacks. To have the area develop using transit-oriented design, with the new transit center as the focal point, and to drive growth and economic opportunity in the area are additional goals.

The MPO and DDP are committed to working with the City of Dover and the State of Delaware to put the necessary tools in place, such as reviewing and revising existing codes and ordinances to entice redevelopment, encourage public-private investments, partnerships and forums, and utilize key community stakeholders in generating changes that are needed to help fulfill the project's mission.

This master plan, created through a public charrette process, serves as a vehicle to implement the community's vision through the following series of specific strategies:

- Develop a downtown neighborhood plan with community and stakeholder involvement
- Leverage the transit center to encourage downtown revitalization
- Identify context sensitive, adaptive use, and infill development options
- Promote walkability and integrate multimodal transportation solutions
- Improve the gateways and entrance corridors to the downtown area with buildings, coordinated signage, and streetscapes that frame views and provide a sense of arrival
- Strengthen key North-South and East-West road connections to area activity centers, such as Wesley College, the St. Jones River, Eden Hill and the Bayhealth Medical Center campus
- Reinforce the architectural character of downtown Dover through the rehabilitation and redevelopment of key downtown buildings, lots, and intersections
- Create a network of parks, civic squares, and public gathering spaces within the neighborhood plan area that will enhance the downtown and lead to increased public use
- Create an identity for the future that builds on Dover's history
- Develop an orderly framework for growth (including community design guidelines and standards) that enhances economic development
- Identify the codes and policies needed to foster growth and redevelopment that are consistent with the master plan's goals and overall vision

A.2 - Community Vision

Dover, as the capital of Delaware, is growing and evolving to meet the challenges and opportunities that come with serving as the center of the region and the home of the legislature. The city provides a range of regional services, uses, and governmental functions, and must provide access to these services.

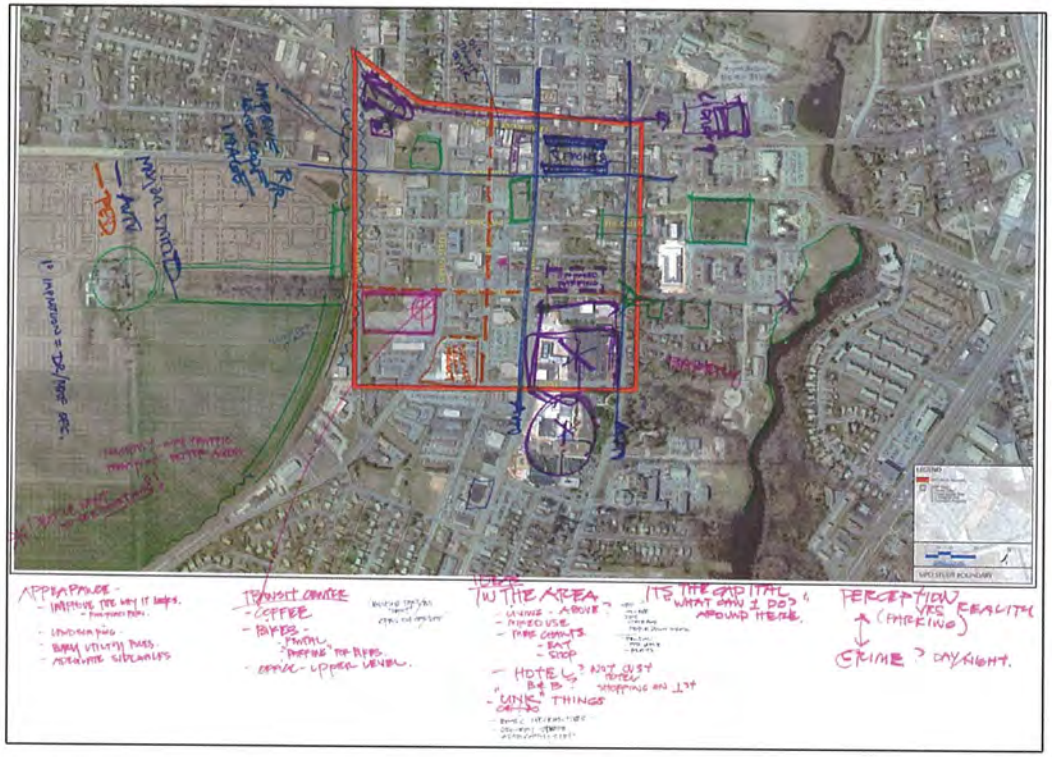
The Dover/Kent County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) sought community input on what the future of the neighborhood should be, with special focus on the activities that were adjacent to the new transit center. The Downtown Dover Partnership, whose mission is to promote development and economic growth within downtown Dover, expressed an interest in the planning process and served as a cosponsor to the MPO's neighborhood plan study.

The MPO promotes alternative modes of transportation as a function of its program. The downtown Dover neighborhood depicted in the plan is the center of transit in Kent County. For several years, Dover's transit hub stood on Water Street between State Street and Governor's Avenue. In 2010, the state relocated the transit hub less than a mile away to a larger site at Queen and Water streets. The new transit center represents a great opportunity to revitalize downtown and reconnect parts of the city that do not function cohesively. The new location also creates a broader opportunity for the transit hub to serve the region.

While no single characteristic represents the community's vision, there were several important themes and goals for Dover that reoccurred during the process that led to the neighborhood plan. The following points represent the most important items to consider:

- The plan needs to look several generations ahead
- City residents and business people are anxious to see new development
- The downtown area does not have a cohesive layout
- Underground pollution and brown field sites need to be addressed
- The population around the transit center is not dense enough
- The transit center should be a destination and not just a transfer station
- New construction should complement the scale and context of downtown Dover's historic buildings
- The area at the edge of the St. Jones River – access, parking, trails and activities should be improved
- Walkability of downtown should be improved through architecture and streetscapes
- Build a train station near the transit center
- Rail right-of-way designs should improve to create more defined and attractive edges
- People agree that parking is a perceived problem, not an actual problem
- Develop shared parking facilities and district-wide parking
- Create consistent streetscapes with crosswalks and lighting, and consider burying utility lines
- "Mixed-use" should include retail on the first floors of buildings and residential on upper floors
- The residential mix needs to include student and workforce housing, such as apartments, townhomes, small, single homes and condominiums.
- North Street needs to have "fronts" of buildings and include office, service, and residential uses
- Create new "rules" for the area and incentives for development
- Integrate new green areas to link pedestrian pathways
- Reconnect Water Street across railroad tracks to Eden Hill Farm

A.3 - Public Planning Process



The Dover/Kent County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) wanted to solicit community input on how the neighborhood adjacent to the new transit facility could look. The MPO, in coordination with the DDP, decided that the best process for the creation of a comprehensive, usable, and viable neighborhood plan would be to hold a design charrette.

A charrette is a collaborative planning process that harnesses the talents and energies of a design team in an intensive, multi-day community planning and design event. A charrette serves as an open public process where issues are discussed, ideas are identified, and solutions are crafted collectively. The design team for the five-day charrette was composed of local and national planning experts (Becker Morgan Group, Inc. and Renaissance Planning Group, respectively) who worked with various public and private stakeholders identified by the MPO and the DDP. The charrette was set in an on-site, temporary studio to provide a short feedback loop and offer the stakeholders maximum accessibility to the design team.

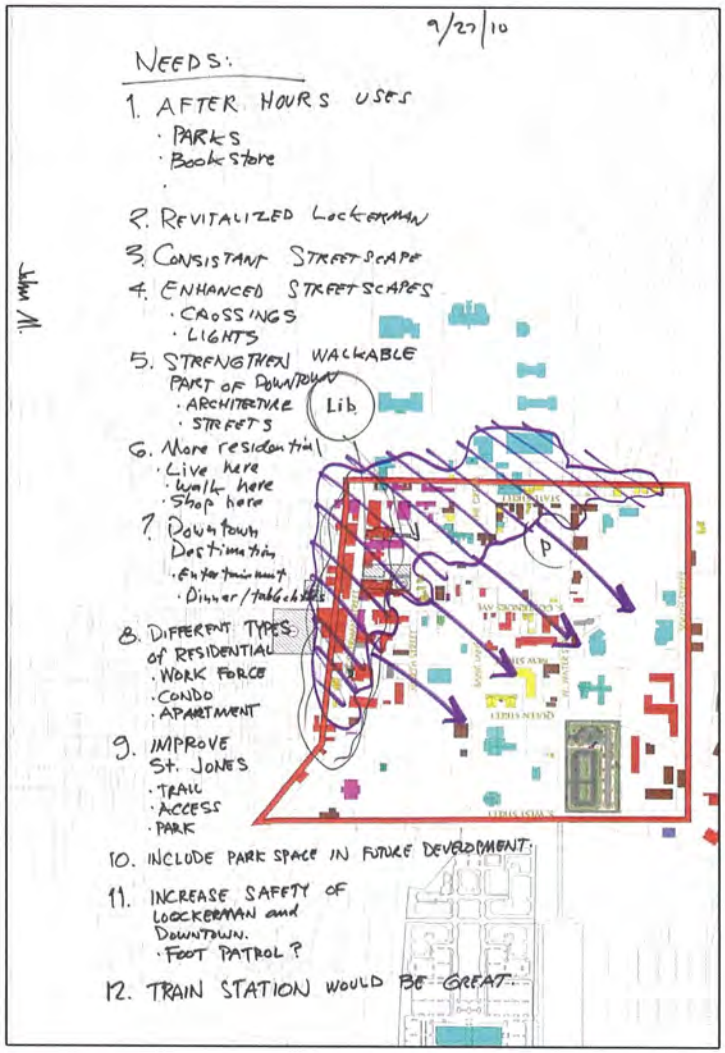
One month before the charrette, the design team accumulated base documents of the neighborhood plan study area that included the following:

- Existing and proposed land use and zoning maps
- Historic district maps
- Existing building inventory maps
- New transit center plans and renderings
- Aerial survey and base maps of the neighborhood plan study area
- Study of existing circulation and parking patterns
- Study of gateway and natural features and restraints

There was also a detailed review of prior studies, reports, governmental regulations, and codes. Existing physical and functional conditions associated with the new transit facility and the adjacent downtown neighborhoods were also analyzed. Most notable were the following:

- Dover Comprehensive Plan 2008
- Downtown Economic Enhancement Strategy 2006 (Hyett Palma Report)
- Design Standards and Guidelines for the City of Dover Historic District Zone

A.3 - Public Planning Process



The charrette took place during the week of September 27, 2010. More than 100 participants attended the various meetings including Dover City Council members, city, county, and state agency staff, Downtown Dover Partnership representatives, community leaders, developers, business owners, and citizens. The design team worked more than 450 hours during the charette. The major events that contributed to the process were as follows:

- An opening presentation was held on September 27, 2010 at the Eden Hill Medical Center conference room. The project's design principles, planning context, overview of the study area's constraints, strengths and challenges were provided in a PowerPoint presentation and numerous, large printed displays. Participants engaged in roundtable discussions, which provided the design team with feedback and direct citizen input.

- Numerous stakeholder and focus group meetings, as well as individual and group discussions, were held at the Becker Morgan Group offices September 27, 2010 through September 29, 2010.

- An open house was held on September 29, 2010, at the Becker Morgan Group office. The design team presented its work from the previous three days, as well as preliminary neighborhood plan and development goals derived from feedback it received during stakeholder and roundtable discussions. The open house was well attended and community members provided additional feedback.

- A closing presentation was held on October 1, 2010 at the Eden Hill Medical Center conference room. The neighborhood vision plan, action plan framework, proposed urban design framework, opportunity plans and sites, demographic study, state capital comparison, and plan implementation recommendations were presented through a PowerPoint presentation and numerous large printed displays. The team held a question and answer session after the presentation to gain further feedback and public input.

The final component of the MPO's planning process will be to create a document that catalogs the work completedprior to and during the charrette in written and visual formats. This document will serve as a road map for downtown development and implementation of the vision plan, as well as a marketing tool to showcase the development potential of downtown Dover for private and public stakeholders.

History, Background & Analysis

B.1 - History of the City of Dover

City of Dover Aerial Rendering - Circa 1885

The first official settlement in the area of Dover was in 1680 when Governor Edmund Andros saw need for a county court that would be safer and easier to travel to than the existing court in what is now the town of Lewes. The governor created St. Jones County (now called Kent County) and the first court and county seat were established in the home of a Justice of the Peace, near the mouth of the St. Jones River. In 1683, William Penn was deeded the land grant to what is now Delaware by the Duke of York and authorized "the surveyor to lay out for the Governor a town to be called Dover," somewhere in the middle of the county. Around 1690, the county seat was moved to a tavern at the head of the river, near where Dover was to be established. The land for the town of Dover was purchased in 1694, and in 1697 the original courthouse for the county was built in the location of the existing courthouse.

In 1717, the original town of Dover was laid out, comprising the area that is presently bounded on the north by North Street, on the south by what is now Water Street, on the east by King Street, which used to run in front of the Old State House, and on the west by what is now Governors Avenue. This remained the extent of the settlement in and around Dover for some time. By 1730, there were said to be no more than 40 families in Dover.

In 1777, the British captured Delaware's colonial capital, New Castle. The State Assembly fled south to Dover to begin meeting in the county courthouse. Soon thereafter, Dover was designated the capital of the state and state officials shared the undersized courthouse until 1792 when the Old State House was completed. It served as both the county seat and state capitol until 1873, when the county courthouse was built.

Still, reflective of its setting in the center of a rural, agricultural region, Dover remained more of a market and government town than a city in which to live. By 1838, there were no more than 600 inhabitants within the city limits.

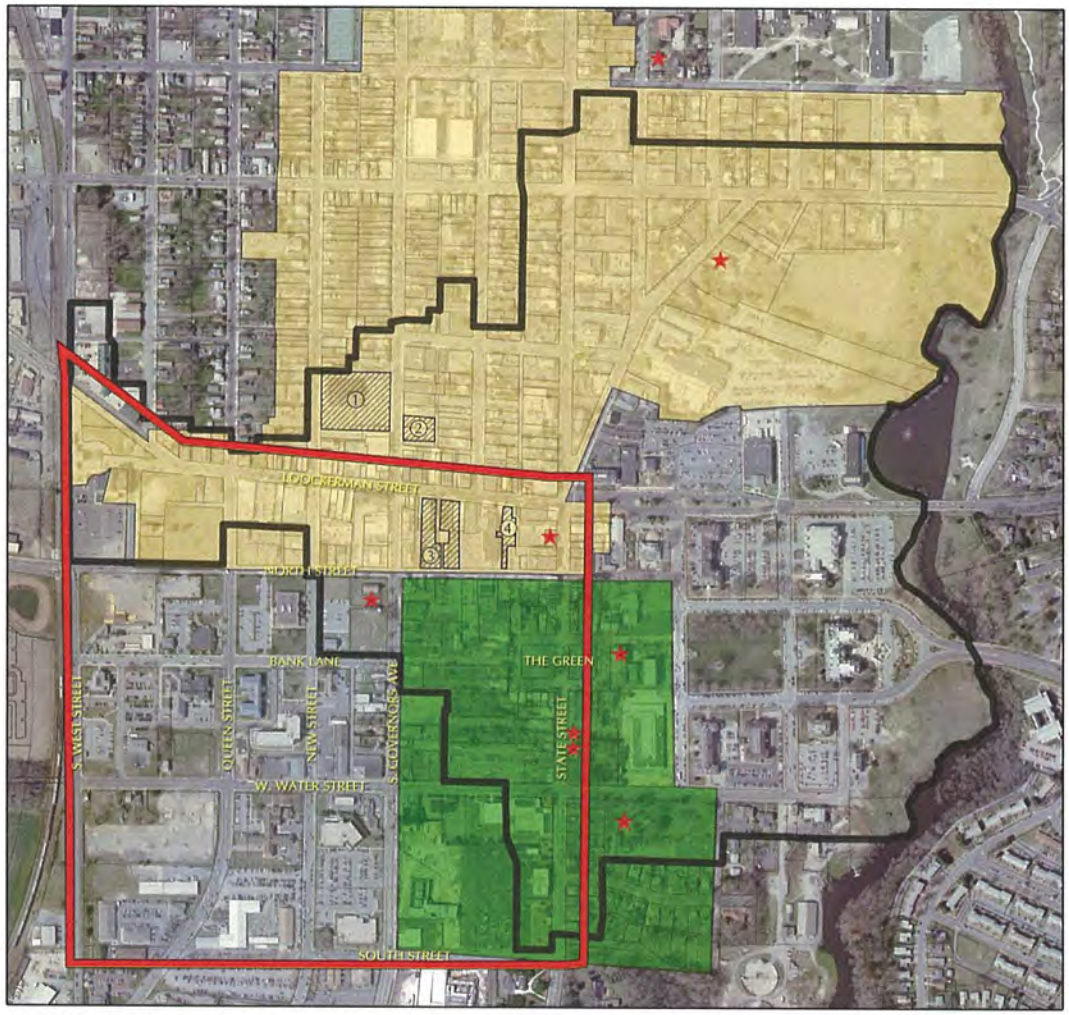
When the railroad extended to Dover in 1855, the city was ideally situated to support industries such as the Richardson and Robbins Cannery which could provide large markets with local agriculture and aqua culture products. Several industries located in Dover around mid-century, requiring a stable labor force and housing, were generating a significant amount of wealth. The Green, which had always been a market square, was gentrified and turned into the park-like setting it is today. Commercial growth began to occur north of The Green along State Street. When the Civil War ended, Dover flourished.

Several local landowners to the north of the oldest section of the city began to sub-divide their lots and extend the city grid with new streets. Commercial development moved west along Loockerman Street and the city itself expanded in 1868 to annex the new sub-divisions. By 1885, the new section of the city was well on its way to being fully developed. It is obvious from the number and quality of the houses that were built at this time that Dover had become a very prosperous place for many inhabitants.

Dover's growth slowed somewhat around the turn of the century. During the Depression, the Works Projects Administration produced the new Capital Square area. Large industries began to locate around Dover, but beyond what is now the historic area. After World War II, suburbs were built and the city continually expanded to annex what had been agricultural land. Earlier developments continued to be infilled with new construction.

Today, there are several strip developments on the outskirts of Dover that have a distinctly 'suburban' character. The historic area of the city is somewhat isolated from this kind of development. While social characteristics have changed, such as where people do most of their shopping and go for entertainment, the appearance and character of the historic sections of the city have been largely unaffected by 'modern' development. The center of Dover remains an attractive and appealing place to live.

B.1 - History of the City of Dover



City of Dover Historic Districts

Dover has three historic districts: The National Register Historic Districts and one local Historic District zone, established by the City of Dover Zoning Ordinance.

The two National Register districts are known as the Dover Green Historic District and the Victorian Dover Historic District. These districts are separate but share a boundary along North Street. The Dover Green Historic District recognizes the significance of the evolution of Dover during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries when its population was less than 600 people and development was concentrated within the original city boundaries. The Victorian Dover Historic District recognizes the significance of Dover's rapid post-Civil War development when the city boundaries expanded northward to provide land for rapid residential development that took place during the late nineteenth century.

The City of Dover Historic District zone is a local historic district that overlaps parts of each of the National Register Districts and includes properties that are outside of the National Register Historic districts.

LEGEND

- MPO Study Boundary
- DDP Sites
  1. Acme Site
  2. Harry Louie Site
  3. Collegian Site
  4. DDP Building
- National Register of Historic Places Victorian Dover Historic District
- National Register of Historic Places Dover Green Historic District
- City of Dover Historic District Zone
- National Register of Historic Places Listing

There are important distinctions between the National Register Historic Districts and the Dover Historic District zone. When a district is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, it is given official and professional recognition that it is significant to the history of its region, and for the historic integrity it has retained. Under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, agencies of the federal government must take into consideration the historical significance of listed buildings, objects, or areas when they are undertaking projects that might affect them. However, listing on the National Register places no restrictions on private owners or on what private owners may do with their properties.

Local Historic District zones, in contrast to National Register Districts, are authorized by state statutes and enacted via local ordinances. Local Historic District zones are created to preserve not only individual historic buildings that are considered significant but also to preserve the historic character of the district as a whole. They frequently involve design controls on private property concerning changes to exterior architectural and landscape features. The design review process, often abetted by design guidelines, are important tools in that process.

The City of Dover Historic District zone was established in 1961. Construction projects within the local historic district have been subject to design review by way of the Architectural Review Certification process since its inception. The Design Guidelines for the City of Dover Historic District zone are intended for use as a general reference by the community and a basic reference for the Historic District Commission and/or the Planning Commission in their deliberations as they review applications for Architectural Review Certificates.

Text excepted from "Design Standards and Guidelines for the City of Dover Historic District Zone," undated. Section 1, Page 2, 4.

B.2 - Transit Center Neighborhood Plan Study Area

Transit Center Neighborhood Plan Study Area

LEGEND

- MPO Study Boundary
- New Transit Center Site
- DDP Sites
  1. Acme Site
  2. Harry Louie Site
  3. Collegian Site
  4. DDP Building

The study area is defined by Loockerman Street, State Street, South Street, and West Street, as highlighted within the red border in the aerial overlay on this page. Both sides of the street were included in the study area so the character of the street and streetscape could be better studied and understood. The study area represents roughly 16 blocks and includes a major North-South thoroughfare (S. Governors Avenue) as well as other important streets such as North Street and Water Street. North Street provides one of the main gateways and access points into the city from west of downtown and was identified prior to the charrette as an important access street that could benefit from improvement. Water Street has significance as the historical connection between downtown Dover commerce, Eden Hill Farm, and the St. Jones River. Water Street is also important as the access to both the new and old transit center sites and as the northern boundary to the Bayhealth Medical Center campus and other medical uses to the south.

The streets within the study area form a traditional urban grid that transitions to a more suburban pattern south of Water Street. It should be noted that the urban fabric, with regard to density, street presence of buildings, and context, is divided along North Street, S. Governors Avenue and Water Street. The character of the streetscapes and buildings east and north of these streets feels very urban and active while the areas to the south and west are less dense and more suburban in character, especially in regard to how parking and pedestrian access is handled. The new transit center site has an advantageous location on the edge of downtown and Eden Hill Farm, which will be the largest new growth area of the city in the next 10-20 years. The rail line, which serves as a divider between downtown and Eden Hill Farm, is adjacent to the transit center and represents an opportunity for better connectivity in the future.

B.3 - Land Use / Zoning

Current Land Use

Current Zoning

The study area consists of 258 parcels on 89 acres, with a variety of existing land use categories. The Loockerman Street corridor represents the primary downtown retail district and its primary land uses are mixed-use and commercial retail. State Street also has a well established urban fabric and features a variety of uses, including institutional, business/office, mixed-use and some residential. The rest of the study area is not as well defined in character as these two areas. Institutional uses make up the majority of the land use in regards to the remaining portion of the study area especially to the south and west of State and Loockerman streets. Large public facilities are prominent, such as the City of Dover police station, Justice of the Peace Court 7, Bayhealth Medical Center campus, and the J. Allen Frear Federal Building. There are also residential, commercial and business uses throughout this area, including senior housing along Queen Street and commercial uses along S. Governors Avenue.

USE LEGEND

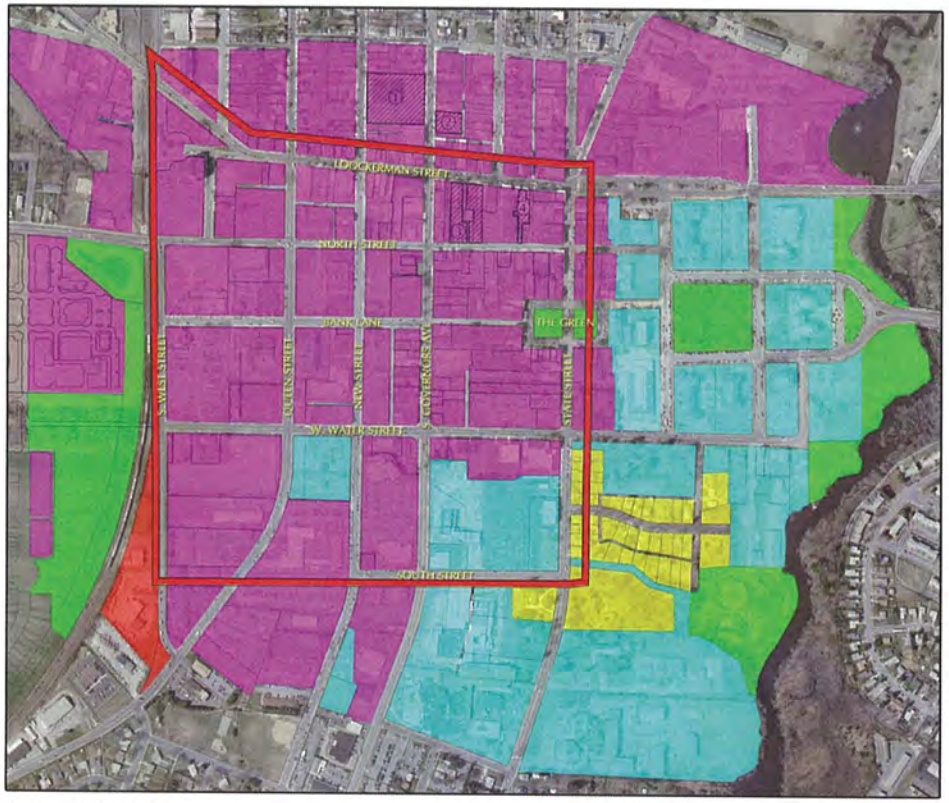
- Mixed Use
- Institutional
- Industrial
- Business / Office
- Commercal / Retail
- Residential
- Open Space
- Vacant

- Study Boundary
- DDP Sites
  1. Acme Site
  2. Harry Louie Site
  3. Collegian Site
  4. DDP Building

ZONING LEGEND

- RGO- General Residence and Office
- IO - Institutional and Office
- C-1A - Limited Commercial
- C-2 - Central Commercial
- C-2A - Limited Central Commercial
- C-3 - Service Commercial
- CPO - Commercial Professional Office
- RG-1 - General Residence
- RG-4 - Multi-Story Apartments
- R-8 - One-Family Residence
- TND - Traditional Neighborhood Design
- ROS - Recreational and Open Space

B.3 - Land Use / Zoning



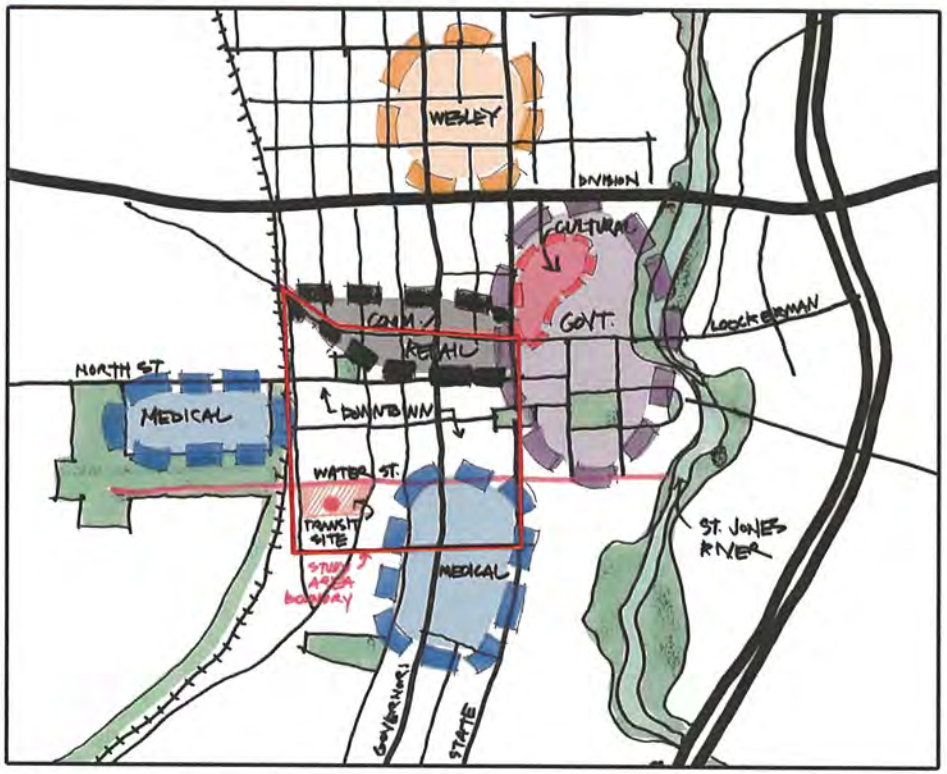
Proposed Land Use

USE LEGEND

- Mixed Use
- Institutional
- Industrial
- Business / Office
- Commercal / Retail
- Residential
- Open Space
- Vacant

Proposed land use for the study area, as shown in the Dover Comprehensive Plan, is intended to support the existing development pattern as well as add flexibility for future development and redevelopment opportunities. Based on this, the majority of the study area is defined as mixed-use with smaller areas reserved for institutional and residential uses. The institutional uses are primarily related to the Bayhealth Medical Center campus and the existing governmental and legislative uses to the east of State Street. Single-family residential uses are primarily located to the southeast of the study area in the Elm Terrace neighborhood and Sherwood 2 to the southwest.

B.4 - Existing Development Patterns



Existing Activity Centers

For the purposes of developing a neighborhood plan based around the transit center site and the adjacent study area, the design team analyzed activity centers. The identified major activities were medical uses to the south and west, a commercial/retail core area along Loockerman Street, governmental and legislative uses to the east of State Street and the Wesley College campus to the north. There are also cultural uses in the northeast area of the study near State Street, and within the study area along North Street including the Biggs Museum of American Art and the Schwartz Center for the Arts.

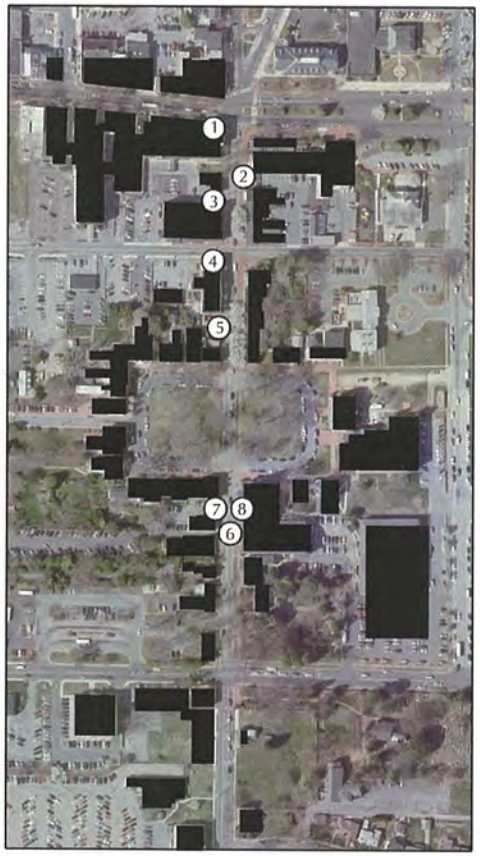
Existing Density and Street Frontages

The center of the study area lacks an identifiable character and activity center. The analysis looked at the existing density and street frontages throughout the study area. As the graphic clearly shows, the buildings along State Street and Loockerman Street are located close to the street edge and create a strong, walkable urban character. The density and street edges diminish outside of these two streets and need improvement to create pedestrian character in this area. There are remnants of street edges along portions of Water Street, North Street and Governors Avenue that infill development could strengthen. Most of the area has a more suburban character with one-to-two-story buildings located in the center of the property and surface parking areas along the edges.

B.4 - Existing Development Patterns

State Street

State Street is home to many of Dover's more historically significant buildings. The tree-lined street features an array of building uses, including government buildings and business offices. Some buildings have been maintained as private residences and are on the National Register of Historic Places.



B.4 - Existing Development Patterns

Water Street

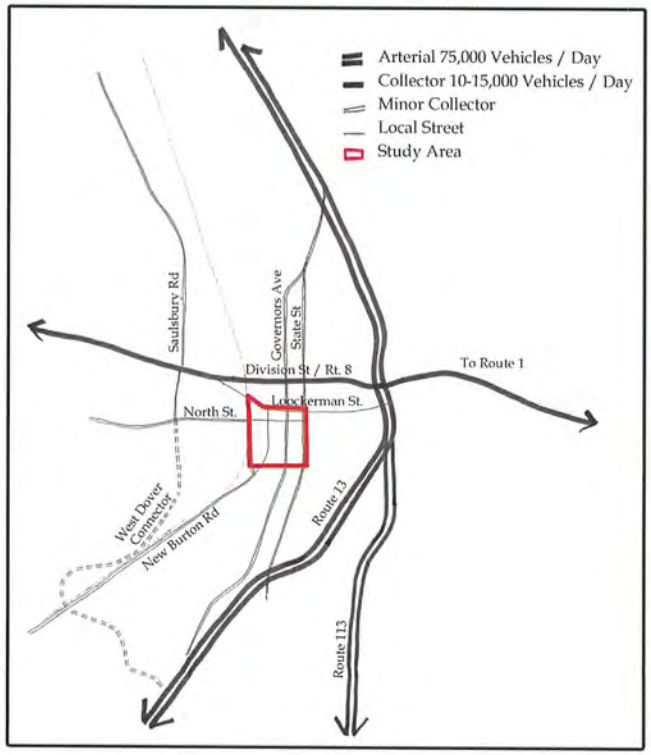
Water Street is a mixture of urban uses. At the time of this study, the DART Transit Hub was located along Water Street and the new facility was under construction two blocks west. There are numerous office buildings, including medical offices that are supported by the Bayhealth Medical Center campus, located one block south of the transit hub. A handful of retail shops, multi-family residential, and institutional buildings line the eclectic corridor.

B.4 - Existing Development Patterns

North Street

North Street is utilized as a service alleyway for the buildings that face Loockerman Street, and as a moderately traveled access street from the capital area to many residential subdivisions, stores and restaurants on the west side of the city.

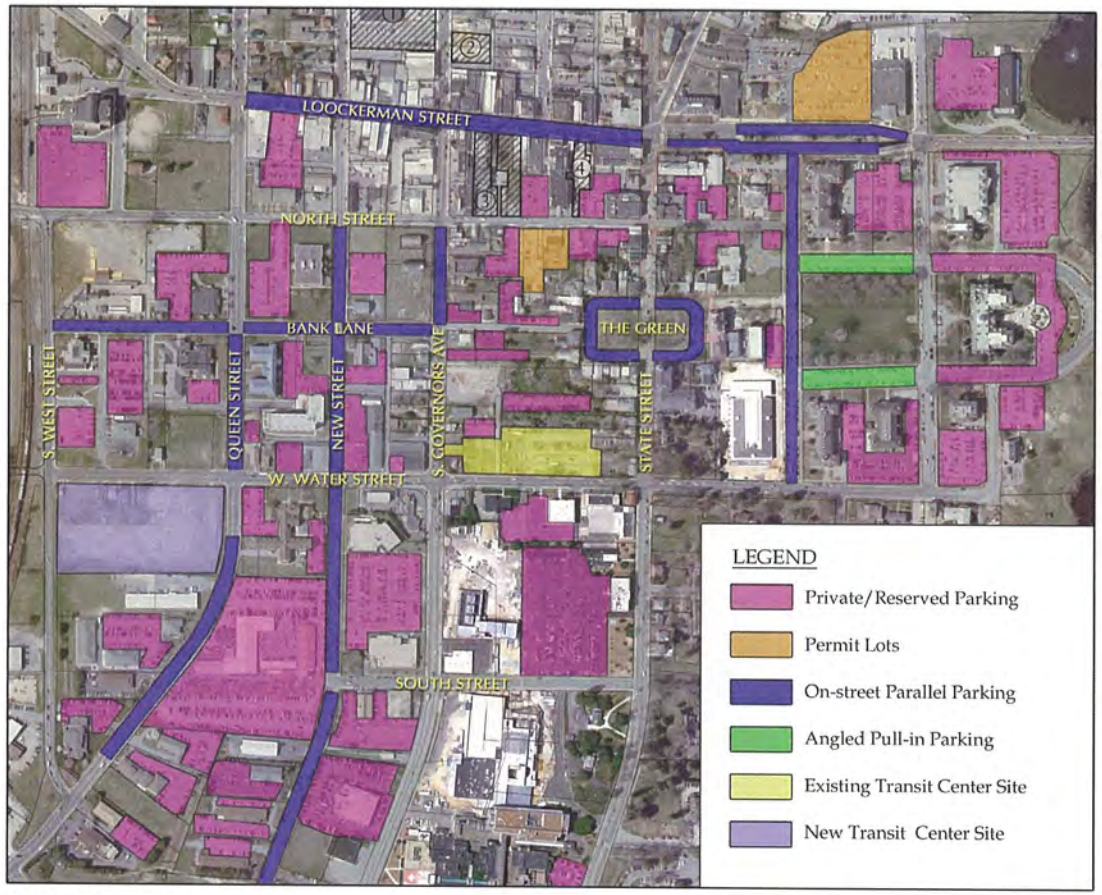
B.5 - Street Network and Parking



Street Hierarchy

The study area, and downtown Dover in general, is located west of the major highways (US Route 13 and DE Route 1) that run north to south. There is also a major bypass (West Dover Connector) planned to the west of the metropolitan area. When constructed, this road will greatly alter traffic patterns on North Street and New Burton Road. North Street is the main gateway into downtown from the west. Division Street, located north of the project area, is the major east-west route running through downtown.

B.5 - Street Network and Parking



Parking Diagram

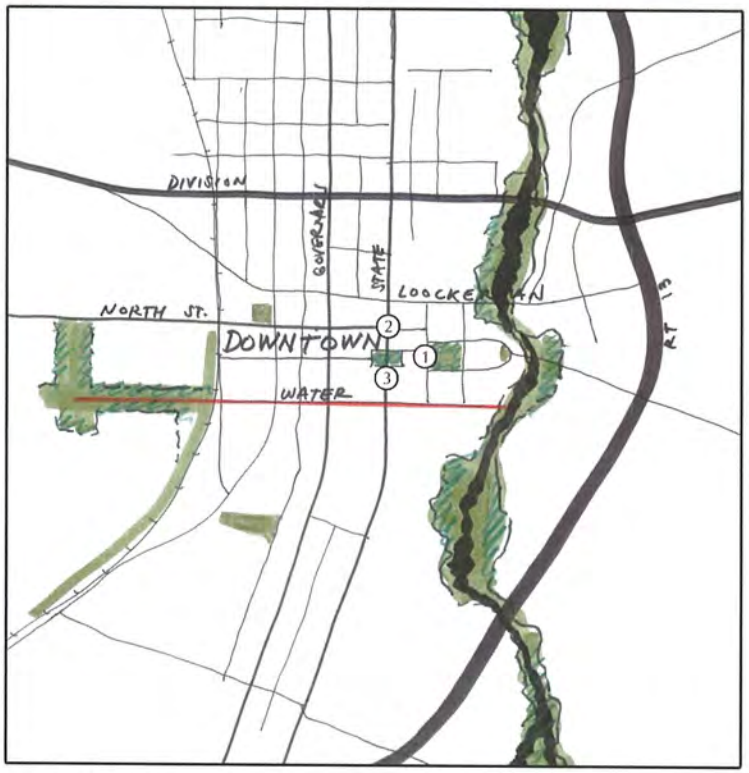
Multiple Surface Lots along North Street

Parallel Parking along Queen Street

Parallel Parking around The Green

Parking patterns in and around the study area consist primarily of grade-level surface parking lots and on-street parking (both parallel and pull-in). At the time of this study, there was a private, structured parking area under construction associated with Bayhealth Medical Center campus, located in the southeast section of the study area. The charrette design team noted in its parking analysis that there is an opportunity to improve parking throughout the downtown area by implementing an area parking strategy. North Street, shown at the top right, has potential for consolidated surface parking, or a multi-level parking structure.

B.6 - Existing Environment / Open Space



Existing Open Spaces

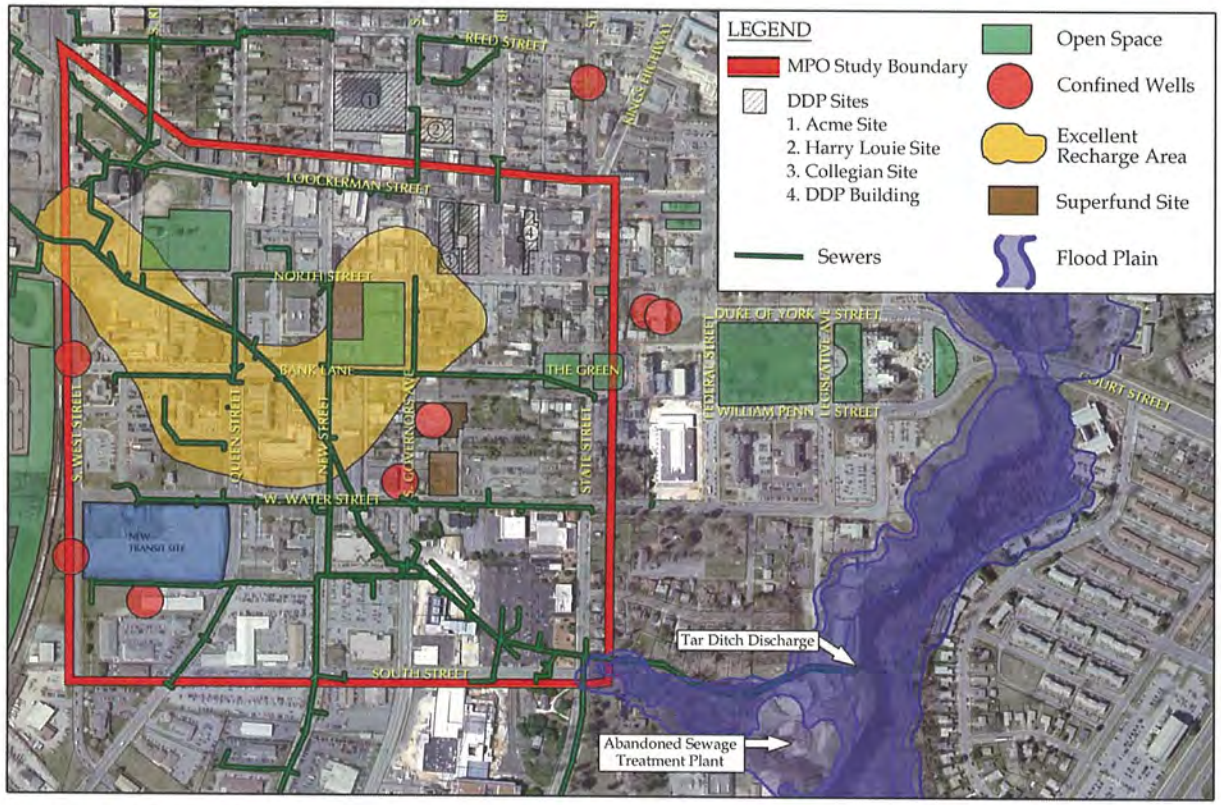
The public open spaces within the study area consist primarily of The Green and a small urban pocket park, named Constitution Park, that is located at the corner of North and State streets. There are also private open spaces within the study area, such as the cemeteries along North Street. The major open spaces outside the project area include the St. Jones River to the east, the perimeter open space at Eden Hill Farm and the central alley that is the western terminus of Water Street, Legislative Mall, the boulevard section of Loockerman Street and Dover Park in the Sherwood 2 neighborhood with a playground and sports fields just two blocks south of the study area boundary.

Legislative Mall

Constitution Park

The Green

B.6 - Existing Environment / Open Space



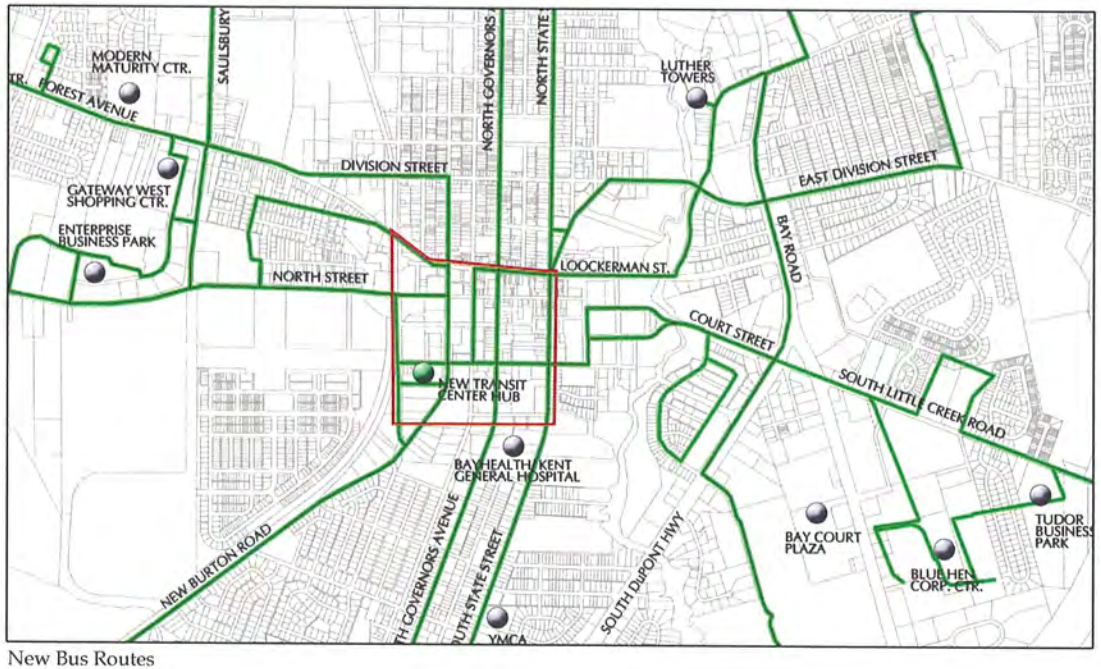
Environmental Constraints

Cemetery

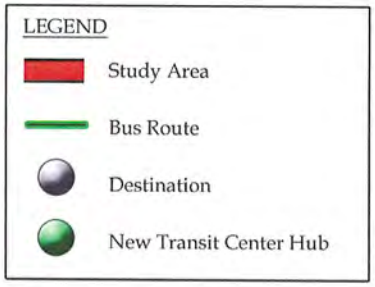
St. Jones River

There are some environmental constraints affecting redevelopment in the study area. These constraints include the edge condition formed by the Norfolk-Southern railroad spur that runs adjacent to West Street, three brownfield sites (Braun Property, former Capitol Cleaners Site and the former Dover Gas Light Company site) and underground contamination from a tar ditch. The tar ditch runs from the northwest corner of the study area and discharges into the St. Jones River south of Water Street. The underground ditch often floods streets due to the deteriorating condition of the outdated infrastructure. Project costs, environmental concerns associated with opening the ditch, and locations of major flooding have prohibited remediation. At the south terminus of Legislative Avenue are an abandoned sewer treatment facility, trash incinerator and other city infrastructure. This area along the edge of the St. Jones River presents an opportunity to repurpose and redevelop into a riverwalk park.

B.7 - Transit



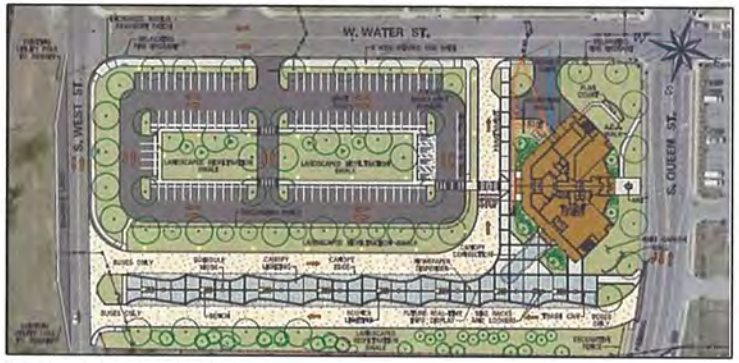
New Bus Routes



The Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT), through a public/private partnership, is building a new facility adjacent to the bus lanes and parking lot to act as the center of transit services in Dover. It shall serve as a central distribution point for the DART system in Dover. It will also house the interstate buses and taxi companies that serve Dover. The facility will include an interior waiting area with vending capacity, restrooms and a retail outlet for bus passes and tickets. There will be tenant space available for other organizations and companies.

The MPO has a responsibility to promote alternative modes of transportation as a function of its program. The neighborhood outlined in this study is the functional center of transit in Kent County. The City of Dover and DelDOT have begun promoting bicycle facilities to serve riders. This neighborhood is walkable with some minor limitations. One preferred outcome from the process is to identify improvements to walkability and to eliminate impediments.

Aerial View of Existing and New Transit Site



Proposed Transit Site Plan

New Transit Bus Terminal

B.8 - State Capital Comparisons / Demographics

Jefferson City, Mo.

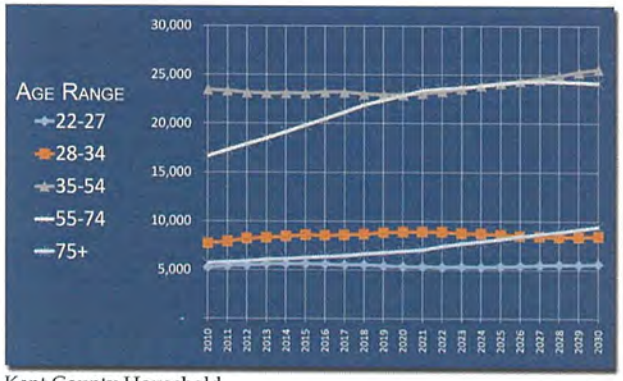
Concord, N.H.

Annapolis, Md.

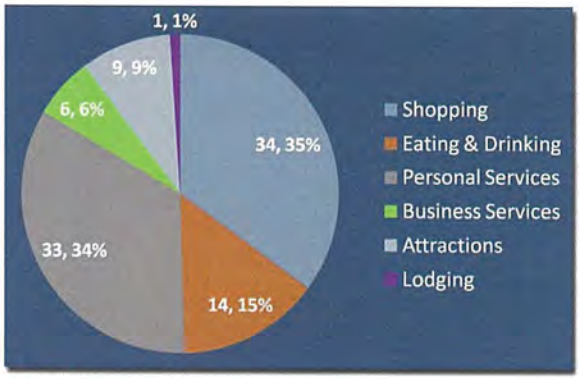
State Capital	Population	Legislature Size	Legislative Staff	Downtown Jobs
Dover, DE	36,560	62	125	9,713
Annapolis, MD	36,879	188	732	5,301
Concord, NH	42,546	424	179	n/a
Frankfort, KY	27,382	138	679	6,330
Helena, MT	29,939	150	237	12,487
Jefferson City, MO	41,297	197	509	12,342
Juneau, AK	30,796	60	460	6,075

Downtown Dover boasts much economic strength, similar to those of other state capitals of comparable size such as Annapolis, Md, Concord, N.H., and Jefferson City, Mo. While greater Dover has seen its share of suburban sprawl, it retains its rich, historic architecture. Within the downtown, and within proximity of the study area, there are major economic anchors, including state, city, and county government, as well as Wesley College and the Bayhealth Medical Center campus. The city also offers amenities to its residents and visitors, including a new public library under construction. Many churches are located throughout the city, as well as numerous museums and galleries. The city is host to a number of organized special events throughout the year including First Night Dover, Dover Days, and the Dover 4th of July celebration. Dover also has a decorative fountain downtown, which is another example of the cultural amenities that the city could build upon to create a desirable destination for locals and visitors.

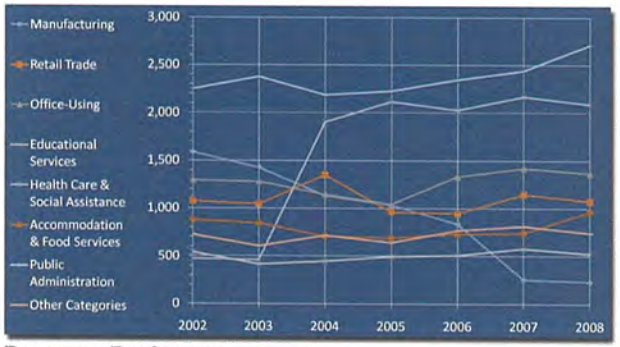
B.9 - Development Marketing & Program Brief



Kent County Household Projections Through 2030



Existing Business Mix



Downtown Employment By Sector

PRIMARY RETAIL NEEDS

Coffee Shops	Florist
Sandwhich Shops	Optical
Ice Cream	Drugstore
Candy	Toys / Hobbies
Urban Grocery	Cigars
Specialty Food	Restaurants - All Types
Furniture and Decor	Boutique Hotels

Potential Funding Sources:

- Funds raised from existing property owners
- Business Improvement District – ad valorem tax
- Special Development District – ad valorem tax or special assessment
- Parking Authority Benefit District - assessment
- Recurring downtown revenues
- Tax Increment Financing (TIF)District – regular property tax
- Broad-based recurring revenues
- Realty transfer tax
- Hotel tax (collected by state)

Financing Source Issues:

- Assessments and new ad valorem taxes burden existing property owners and could discourage investment
- TIF revenue generation is relatively weak due to a low tax rate and assessments, and ability to only capture the city's share of the tax bill
- Realty transfer tax may be committed to the city's general government needs
- Hotel tax would need to be allocated to the city by the state through an agreement

Recurring Revenue Sources:

- Finding a recurring revenue source would be ideal
- Adds stability in funding; could be bonded
- Allow for upfront investment in public improvements
- Realty Transfer Tax
- Twenty years of pledged revenue could potentially support a bond of up to $13 million
- Hotel Tax
- Twenty years of the state's general fund share could potentially support a bond of up to $55 million

Plan

C.1 - Plan Framework

Neighborhood Plan Study Area

Bank Lane View Towards Eden Hill Farm

Streetscape at Courtney Square

The study area for this plan is identified by Loockerman Street, State Street, South Street and West Street. The plan framework is based upon the scale and natural boundaries of existing downtown elements that form separations, destinations, and gateways to downtown. The four perimeter streets have the following characteristics:

Loockerman Street: Traditional retail area and downtown main street that serves as a major east-west thoroughfare in the city. It also separates the residential uses to the north from the institutional, industrial, and commercial uses to the south. Loockerman Street has a good inventory of historic buildings and an active streetscape.

State Street: A major entry into the downtown area from the south. It separates the downtown from the institutional and legislative uses to the east. State Street bisects the major historical open space and The Green, which has a tight urban context with numerous historic buildings framing the street.

South Street: The traditional southern boundary of downtown. The urban block network and scale of downtown drastically changes to a more suburban feel past this point. The area has had a diversity of density and uses, which prior urban renewal projects diminished.

West Street: A major boundary and separation to the western edge of the city due to the nature of the road, adjacent rail line and type of development. It provides little to no connectivity with Eden Hill Farm, which will serve as a major growth area in the next 20 years. Similar to South Street, this area lacks density, diversity of uses and has a suburban feel compared to the rest of the study area.

C.1 - Plan Framework

State Street at Loockerman, Dover

This plan is intended to make the neighborhood plan area a more diverse and attractive area for business, commercial and residential activities. Mixed-use redevelopment opportunities that take advantage of the new transit center, as well as the other local economic drivers such as Bayhealth Medical Center, Eden Hill Medical Center, Wesley College, and the legislative complex, are encouraged. The design principles and planning context of the plan are listed below:

Design Principles

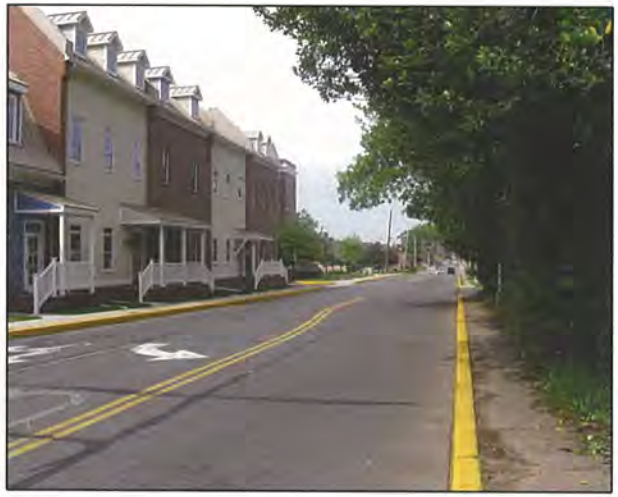
- Create a sense of place through
  - -Diversity and design
  - -Proximity and accessibility
  - -Destination
- Provide an integrated mix of uses
  - -Places to live, shop, work, and interact
- Improve and provide an organizing structure within the study area
  - -Buildings and urban design
  - -Hierarchy of roads
  - -Open space network

Loockerman Street, Dover

- Identify locations for infill development, redevelopment and growth
  - -Analyze parcels and combinations of parcels that have the highest potential for development and redevelopment
  - - Create an opportunities map based on the above analysis
  - -Analyze and propose the best strategy to address perceived parking concerns in the downtown area. Work towards a district-wide parking solution that benefits long term business growth and enhances streetscapes and the pedestrian experience
  - -Identify gateway areas into the downtown area and improve these locations as needed

Planning Context

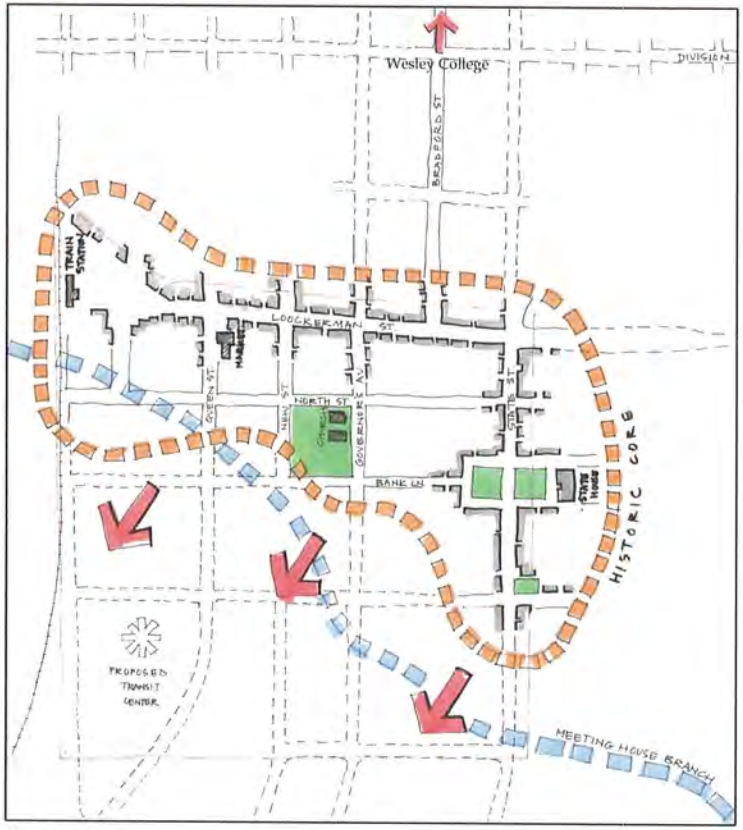
- Land Use and Development Patterns
  - -Analyze existing codes, zoning, and comprehensive plans
  - -Analyze future potential development areas based on stakeholder input
  - -Analyze methods and opportunities for infill of the urban core with buildings previously removed during urban renewal projects
- Market Economics
  - -Compare with other capital cities of similar population
  - -Research economic drivers that effect development (past, present and future)
  - -Identify uses that are underserved



Water Street, Dover

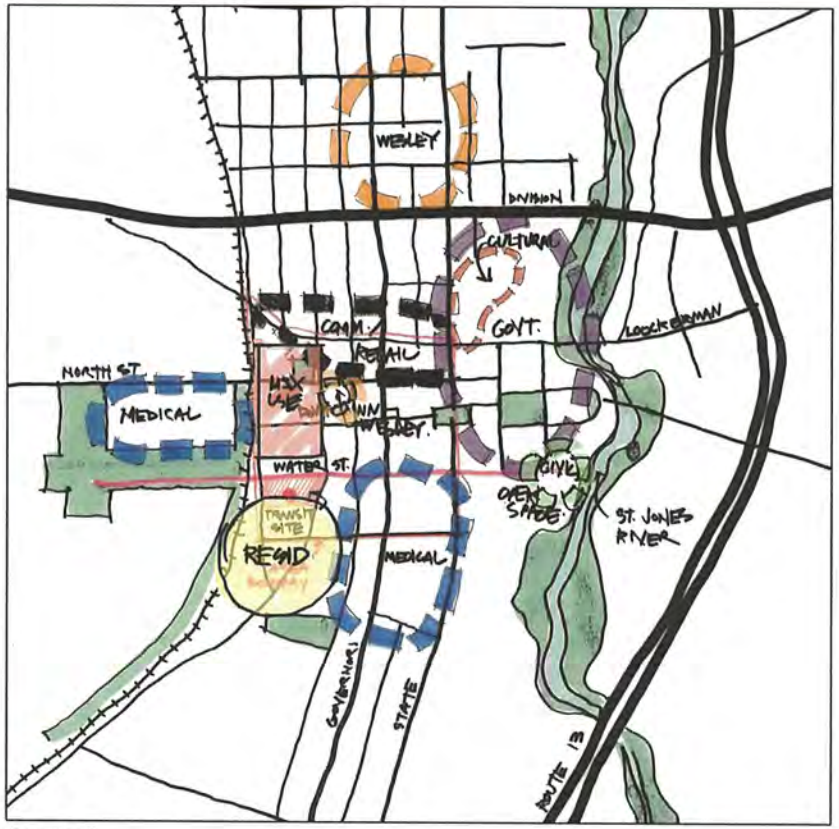
- Transportation Network
  - -Analyze existing and proposed DART bus routes
  - -Access needs and opportunities provided by increased interstate bus and taxi use at the transit center site
  - -Analyze opportunities to provide additional means of transportation utilizing the transit center such as increased bicycle use, and passenger and commuter rail.
  - -Identify where improvements to a city-wide network of pedestrian access can be made, such as opportunities for better connectivity of Wesley College, Bayhealth Medical Center, St. Jones River, and Eden Hill Farm with the downtown core.
- Analyze Downtown Dover Strengths
  - -Historic architecture
  - -Pedestrian-oriented design
  - -Major civic and institutional destinations
  - -Civic amenities, attractions and events
- Analyze Downtown Dover Challenges
  - -Lack of residential population in study area
  - -Perceived safety
  - -Competing with businesses on Route 13
  - -Lack of attractions and services
  - -Lack of funding sources for improvements
  - -Slow pace of improvements and redevelopment

C.2 - Downtown Neighborhood Plan



Concept 1

The overall concept for the neighborhood plan is to create a downtown that is worthy of the First State's capital. The concept was based on the project mission that the new transit center should serve as an impetus and focal point for redevelopment that can transform and energize the surrounding area for the core of downtown Dover. What became clear early on in the design process was that the transit center alone could not completely revitalize the downtown area. Two main ideas came out of this process. First, was the need to extend the density and character of historic Dover that is established on Loockerman and State Street into the rest of the study area, and secondly, to fill in the center of the study area with new activities and uses.



Concept 2

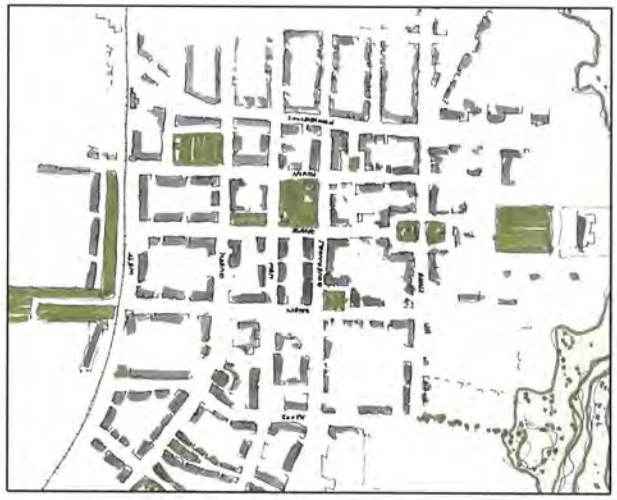
The second concept is shown most clearly in the bubble diagram graphic above which shows additional activities and uses moving into the center of the study area, including residential, university/medical school and mixed- use development. These uses all have the opportunity to be economic drivers in the area in conjunction with the transit center. The lack of activity in the center of the study area is associated with discontinuity between streets and sidewalks, creating poor pedestrian connectivity.

C.2 - Downtown Neighborhood Plan

Dover - Circa 1885

The concept of expanding the density, character, and urban context of the established areas along Loockerman and State streets to the south and west of Dover has some historic context in the way the city originally grew. An aerial rendering of Dover, circa 1885, shows development density in essentially the same areas as it is today. The Meeting House Branch stream was a divider between the urban downtown area and agrarian uses. This branch is now completely below grade, but it still identifies an important divider to two types of development. In this context, the urban core remains where it has always been and more suburban development is on the south side of the branch. The suburban development was largely a result of past urban renewal efforts that removed large swaths of housing built after 1885.

Existing Frontage and Open Space Diagram

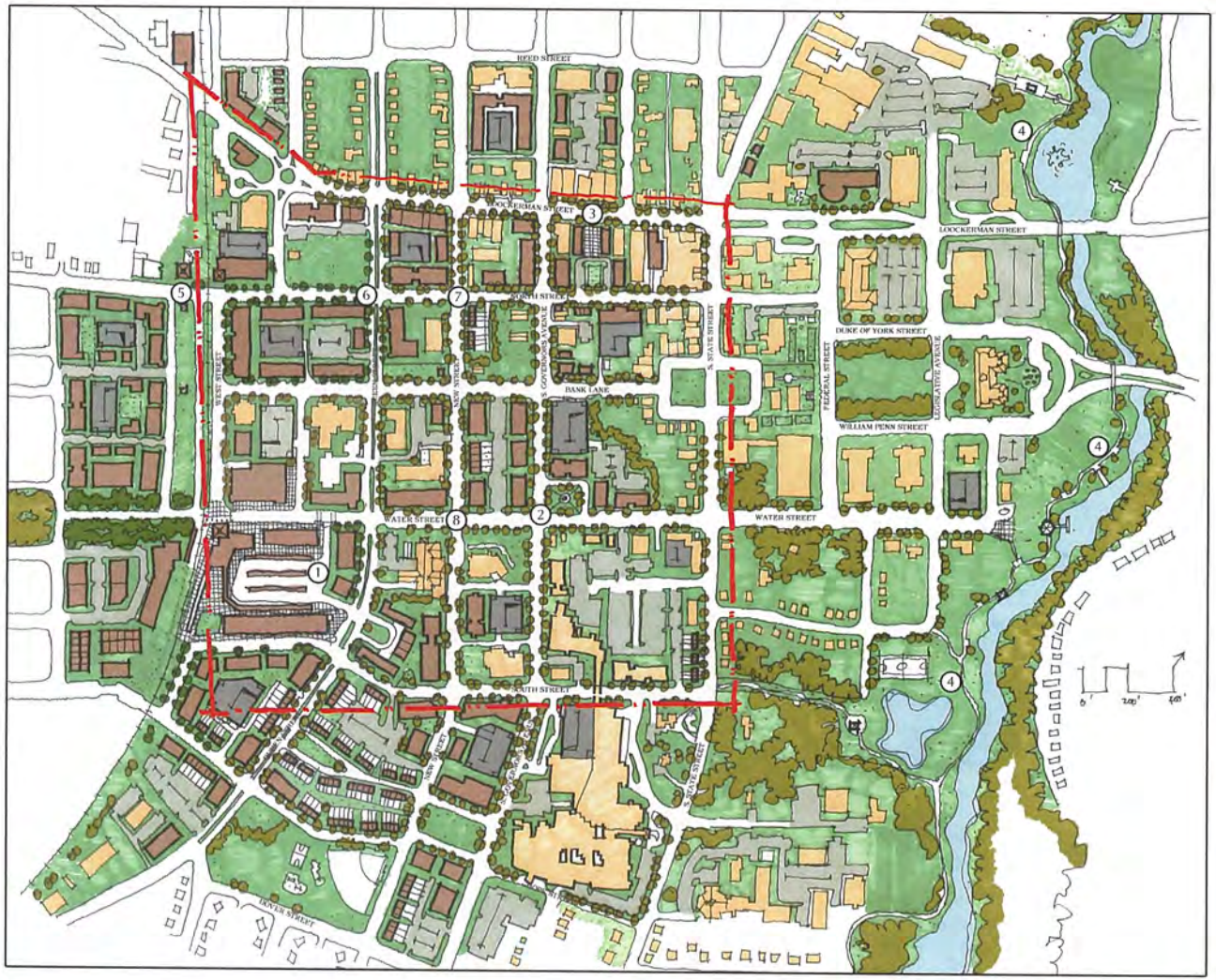


Improved Frontage and Open Space Diagram

The diagrams above show the existing and proposed building facades and their relationship to street edges. The neighborhood plan recommends introducing the density, scale and urban aesthetic found in the historic areas to the south side of the Meeting House Branch. The plan proposes a variety of ways to do this, with basic design principles such as:

- Create buildings that engage the street and provide a clear edge
- Concentrate parking at the center of blocks and away from the street edges
- Build upon the history and character of existing architecture
- Create vibrant and well connected streetscapes
- Create pocket parks and other public open space areas that energize the area

C.2 - Downtown Neighborhood Plan

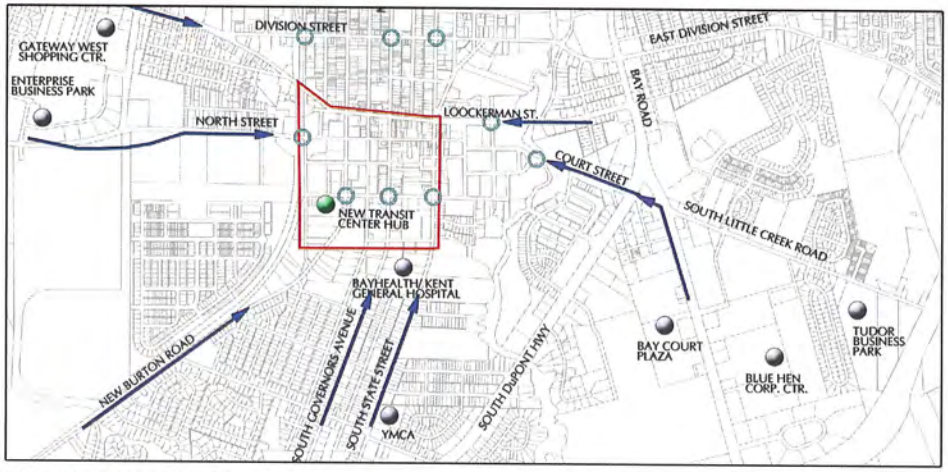


The Downtown Neighborhood Plan illustrates a redevelopment vision based on a twenty-five year build out. The plan includes new construction, infill construction, redevelopment and renovation of existing structures. New development is represented as brown buildings. Existing buildings are shown as tan. Surface parking is represented as light grey areas, and possible locations for structured parking, are denoted in dark grey. Other important redevelopment opportunity areas are represented by the numbered keys; These include Loockerman Commons, Governors Square, the multi-modal transit center and the riverwalk. There are numerous streetscape improvements that are planned throughout the area.

- Existing Buildings
- New Buildings
- Parking Structures
- Surface Parking

1. Multi-Modal Transit Center
2. Governors Square Green
3. Loockerman Commons
4. River walk
5. North Street Gateway
6. Streetscape Improvements North & Queen
7. Streetscape Improvements North & New
8. Streetscape Improvements Water & New

C.3 - Gateways



Major Gateways to Study Area

Gateways are defined as areas or visual cues that help define a sense of arrival into a designated area. These gateways are marked by a variety of urban design cues, such as important intersections, change of use, change in street character, change in density or a recognizable building, public space or landmark.

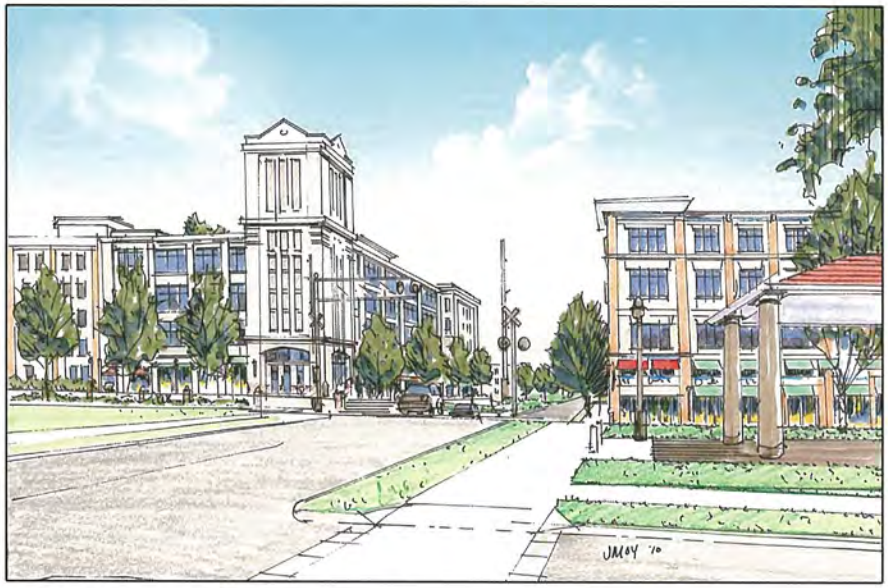
Sign Gateway

Architectural Gateway

Monumental Architectural Gateway

C.3 - Gateways

North Street Gateway (View East)



North Street Gateway (View East) - Proposed

During the analysis phase of the charrette, design team members and community stakeholders identified the major gateway areas into the downtown study area. Group members defined these areas as gateways to downtown Dover:

- The intersection of North Street and West Street
- Loockerman Street as it crosses the St. Jones River Bridge, continuing to State Street
- State Street and South Governors Avenue as they intersect with Water Street

While some of the identified gateways provide a clear sense of arrival and a good first impression of downtown Dover, others could be better defined. The neighborhood plan looks at all three of these gateways and makes the following design recommendations:

Intersection of North Street and West Street:

North Street is a primary corridor into downtown, yet it presents a "back of building" appearance. The intersection of North and West streets is unattractive, marked by traffic congestion and a poor visual identity and a lack of a continuous streetscape. It is recommended that North Street be widened so that a better streetscape can be provided with the addition of on-street parallel parking where possible. The existing storm water area at the southwest corner of the intersection should be converted into a park/open space area. Once the new West Dover Connector is built, West Street should be closed at Water Street at the new transit center site. The closing of West Street at this point will ease the traffic moving north to the intersection. There is an opportunity for infill development both at the intersection and moving east along North Street. New buildings should be constructed as close to the street as possible to help provide a clearly defined edge and a vibrant streetscape. Streetscape improvements would include wider and continuous sidewalks, trees, site furniture, such as benches; and buried utility lines. Buildings taller than the typical two-to-three stories in the rest of downtown may be appropriate in this location. If shorter buildings are planned, consideration should be given to providing higher elements at the corners.

C.3 - Gateways

Lookerman Street Gateway from Route 13

Loockerman Street as it crosses the St. Jones River Bridge continuing to State Street:

This gateway is clearly defined and presents a distinct and attractive entry into the city from the east. The boulevard section of Loockerman Street is well kept with established and diverse streetscaping. There is an opportunity to further accent this gateway through the creation of a riverwalk as shown in the neighborhood plan. Due to the high visibility of the riverwalk from this gateway, activities along the water's edge will be visible to pedestrian, automotive and transit travelers as they arrive downtown via Loockerman Street. The new library is located along Loockerman Street and provides an opportunity to further strengthen the street edge and streetscape.

Governors Square Green

Water Street as it intersects with State Street and S. Governors Avenue:

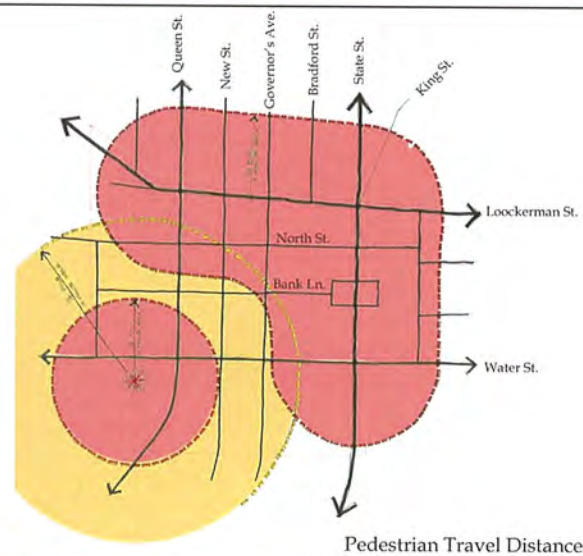
This area represents both a change in density as well as street character as these major north-south connector roads intersect with Water Street. The Bayhealth Medical Center campus defines the street edge to the south at both of these intersections. The intersection of Water and State streets presents a connection opportunity for the well established streetscape along Water Street to the east, continuing through to the transit center. This would help identify Water Street as the major crossroad into the historic core of downtown. This distinction already occurs to some extent, as both the street and sidewalk materials change at this intersection. The intersection of S. Governors Avenue and Water Street is currently defined by commercial buildings on three sides that do not engage the corner, reinforce the historic character of downtown Dover, or enhance the pedestrian experience. The plan envisions all three of these sites as redevelopment opportunities that could provide a clear identity to this area. The neighborhood plan envisions a pocket park, "Governors Square Green," at the northeast corner of this intersection. The open space would provide a point of interest at the intersection and along Water Street.

C.4 - Streets

"We need to recapture in our modern terms the aesthetic qualities of the ancient street-
the quiet, the sense of neighborhood, the fine urban scale." ~ Lawerence Halprin

What makes a good street? There are many design elements that contribute to the making of a good street. The following ideas have been identified as important criteria in strengthening the character of downtown Dover's streets:

- Reinforce street edges with active buildings fronting the street
- Provide a variety and scale of new development that contributes to human scale and the pedestrian environment
- Streets with well designed building fronts create memorable experiences
- Develop streetscape improvements that reflect and enhance the character of downtown Dover's heritage and traditions
- Employ landscape treatments, shade trees, site furnishings, lighting and streetscape materials that provide an aesthetically pleasing environment and interesting pedestrian experience
- Foster a walking environment where there is a comfortable relationship between pedestrians, vehicles, and public and private space.



Pedestrian Travel Distances from Transit Center

The relocation of the transit center introduces a new activity center and an opportunity to create desirable destinations within walking distance of the transit center. By enhancing the streetscapes, pedestrians are encouraged to walk from the transit center to destinations within a quarter-to-half-mile radius. Adding a residential component around the transit center will support downtown businesses and give life to the area after business hours. Residents will enjoy the proximity to the transit center making the commute outside of downtown easily accessible.

Milford Streetscape

Dover Streetscape

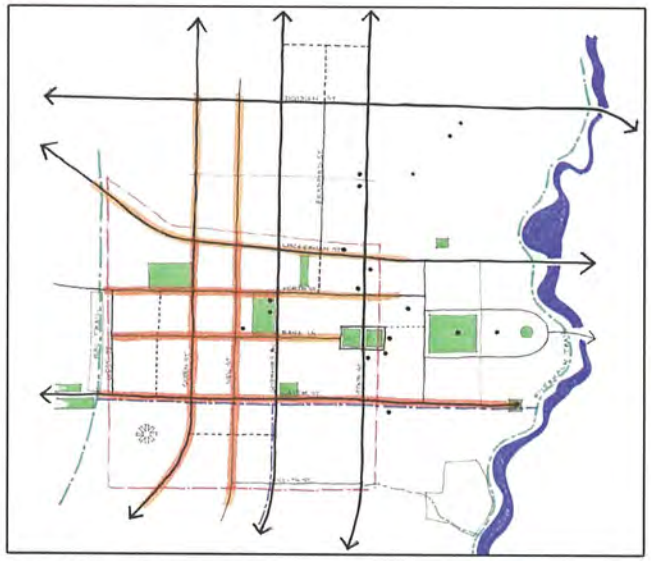
Recommendations for Street Design Standards

- All street improvements associated with existing roads should be designed to reduce vehicle speed, minimize vehicular interaction with pedestrians, and encourage safe bicycle circulation with dedicated lanes
- Trees and landscaping should be provided to enhance the aesthetics of the streetscape while limiting the expanse of pavement within the street right-of-way
- Where possible, sidewalks should be widened, provided on both sides of the street and designed to facilitate better pedestrian circulation and movement. Pedestrian amenities such as trees, landscaping, street furnishings, and way-finding elements should be provided.
- Sidewalk improvements should ensure complete pedestrian accessibility throughout downtown and between major activity centers. Design criteria based on the Americans with Disabilities Act requirements should be incorporated
- Street furnishings should be consistent with other neighborhood design elements, and provide a variety of functional amenities that contribute to the interest, quality and comfort of the pedestrian. Street furnishings should not impede pedestrian traffic
- A uniform sidewalk material or pattern should be used throughout individual downtown neighborhoods and districts to give the area its own character. Material choices should complement existing architecture, design elements and historic features.

C.4 - Streets

Density and Street Fronatges - Proposed

Buildings addressing the sidewalk and street create a walkable pedestrian character. Existing buildings in the study area along Loockerman and State streets illustrate a well defined edge. New buildings should be close to the street edge, allowing easy pedestrian access to the buildings. A variety of building types, styles and scales would create a visually diverse streetscape. Streets and buildings that are designed to work together create memorable experiences in a downtown setting.



Street Network Improvements

LEGEND

'A' Streets
- Division Street
- Loockerman Street
- Water Street
- State Street
- Governors Avenue

'B' Streets
- Bradford Street
- North Street
- Bank Lane
- Queen Street
- New Street

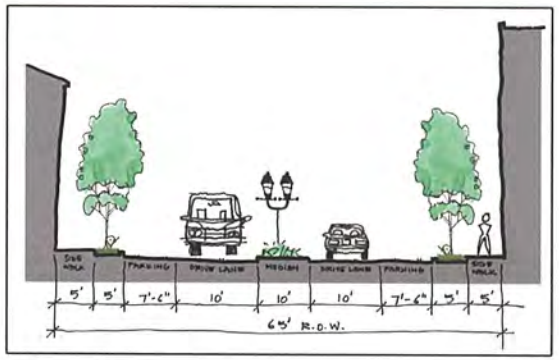
Pedestrian 'B' Streets

Streetscape Treatments
- Lighting
- Street Trees & Furnishings

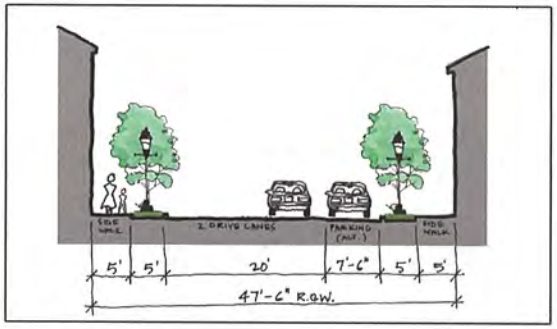
Streetscape Improvements
- 10' Wide Drive Lanes
- On-Street Parking
- Planted Median (Queen St)
- Landscape Buffers

Bike Lane

Multi-Use Trails



'A' Street Section



'B' Street Section

C.4 - Streets

1. North Street Gateway - Provide open space greens along West Street that lead south along the rail line. Provide signage and architectural features that indicate a sense of arrival to downtown. There is an opportunity for new development north of the intersection of North and West streets. This would be a suitable site for a larger scale building, as shown in the gateway renderings that highlight the importance of the location, and complement the scale of the adjacent Duncan Center.

2. North at Queen Street - Provide residential and mixed-use infill development that supports the new Wesley College nursing school that will be located in the renovated Frear Building.

3. North Street at New Street - There is an opportunity to renovate the masonry of a building at the northeast corner of this intersection and provide new mixed-used infill development that fronts the street. The existing area at the southeast corner of the intersection could either be left open and converted to a public park (view in rendering) or converted to townhouses or mixed-use development to support the functions at the Wesley nursing school.

4. Loockerman Plaza - The North Street side of Loockerman Plaza is designed to provide both parking and vehicular access to the plaza. There is also a green open space that could be used for community events. The area could be closed to traffic, combining The Green and the plaza.

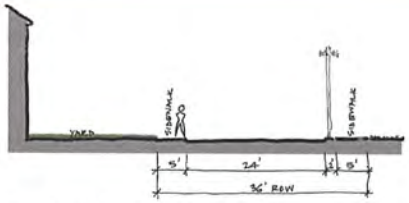
5. North Street Mixed-Use (structured parking) - The neighborhood plan envisions development in this location, with a mixed-use building that fronts and engages the street, with a structured parking component behind the building. Structured parking in this area would help to create a regional approach to parking along North and Loockerman streets. This would free developers to use more of their property for building area and encourage walking from North Street to Loockerman Street.

North Street at New Street (View East) - Existing

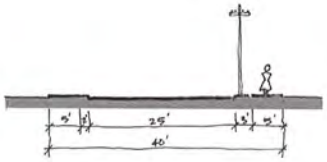
North Street at New Street (View East) - Proposed

North Street Development Concepts/Opportunities:

North Street is important to downtown, but is not perceived well due to its narrow right-of-way, poor aesthetics, and lack of a pedestrian scale (disconnected sidewalks, lack of street furniture, appropriate lighting, and landscaping). North Street appears as an alley and service area that supports the retail and mixed uses along Loockerman Street. However, it also functions as a moderately traveled thoroughfare from the legislative areas to west of the city. The plan envisions a new identity for North Street that is more in line with its location and traffic volume.



Existing Street Section: North Street between New and Queen streets



Existing Street Section: North Street between Governors Avenue and New Street

- Provide new buildings and infill development that front North Street and provide active facades that engage the street
- New buildings should be made from materials that are consistent with downtown Dover design standards
- Enhance the pedestrian experience by improving sidewalks (both sides of street where possible), providing landscape buffering and/or removing existing surface parking lots, and adding pedestrian scale street lights to improve comfort and safety
- Provide trees, benches and other site furniture, and ground level landscaping

C.4 - Streets

Queen Street Development Concepts/Opportunities:

Queen Street is an underutilized street that is more suburban than urban in character. There are several large buildings set back from the street that do not engage the sidewalk. There are also a number of surface parking lots along Queen Street that serve buildings that front New and Water streets. This makes the street feel more like an alley and a "back-door" than an urban street. Due to the large right-of-way, the neighborhood plan envisions a more dynamic and active boulevard which would become an important transportation corridor to the new transit center.

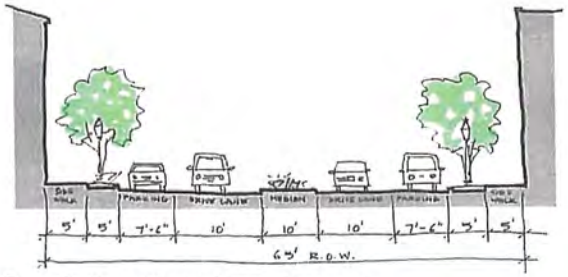
1. Queen Street at Loockerman Street - new infill construction engages the corner and provides mixed-use development that helps extend Loockerman Street's density and pedestrian character westward. Utilizes the model-block concept of providing parking in the middle and interior of the block.

2. Queen Street (East Side) at North Street - Provide residential and mixed-use infill development that supports the new Wesley College nursing school that will be located in the renovated Frear building.

3. Queen Street (West Side) at North Street - Provide residential development that supports the new Wesley College nursing school across the street. Parking is provided at the interior of the block. Future structured parking could serve both uses on-block as well as overflow for Frear building uses.

4. Queen Street at South Street – Provide a block of mixed-use development that engages and supports the activity across the street at the transit center. Spence's Market could be relocated to this site and expanded. A public green that fronts Queen Street serves as an open space for both the market and transit center.

5. Queen Street Residential – Townhomes and mixed-use development establishes a residential edge along Queen Street. The irregularly shaped block allows for structured or surface parking at interior/mid-block and alley-way access to the townhouses.



Street Section at Queen Street - Proposed

Queen Street at North Street (View South) - Existing

Queen Street at North Street (View South) - Proposed

Queen Street Design Principles:

- New buildings and infill development creates a mixed-use corridor that connects Eden Hill Farm and the riverwalk
- New buildings oriented towards the street, and at a scale consistent with downtown Dover design standards
- New buildings to be constructed of materials that are consistent with downtown Dover design standards
- Enhance the pedestrian experience by widening and improving sidewalks (both sides of street), providing landscape buffering to existing surface parking lots, and adding pedestrian scale street lighting to improve comfort and safety. Provide a 10-foot-wide planted median at the center of Queen Street from Reed Street to Dover Street. The median strip would utilize Queen Street's existing, large right-of-way and create a boulevard that becomes an important transportation corridor between the uses to the north and south of the transit center.
- Provide trees, benches and other site furniture and ground level landscaping.

C.4 - Streets

Water Street Development Concepts/Opportunities:

Water Street is the historic connection between agrarian and commerce uses and the St. Jones river. The master plan envisions a stronger connection and the street regaining it's preminence as a major east-west urban connector.

1. Water Street at New Street - new infill construction engages the corner and provides mixed use development that feeds off of the synergy that the transit center creates. Second floor residential use is available for students and medical employees. Retail service opportunities are on the first floor.

2. Governors Square - An urban plaza with surrounding mixed-used development creates a new gateway to the downtown urban core.

3. Transit Center - A 24-hour multi modal transportation hub includes bus, public and charter/Greyhound, taxi and, commuter rail line. Surrounding development as shown in the plan includes an urban grocer, senior housing and market-rate residential units.

4. Eden Hill Farm connection - Water Street extends to Eden Hill Farm. Connects visually as well as physically to the historic farm house, allee of trees and medical uses on the Eden Hill campus. Provides improved connection to downtown from new residential areas in Eden Hill Farm (largest residential growth area in the city).

5. St. Jones River connection - Water Street terminates at the riverwalk with a park and open air gazebo/bandstand that engages the river. Future structured or surface parking lots, as shown in the neighborhood plan accommodate overflow downtown parking for river festivals and other special events.

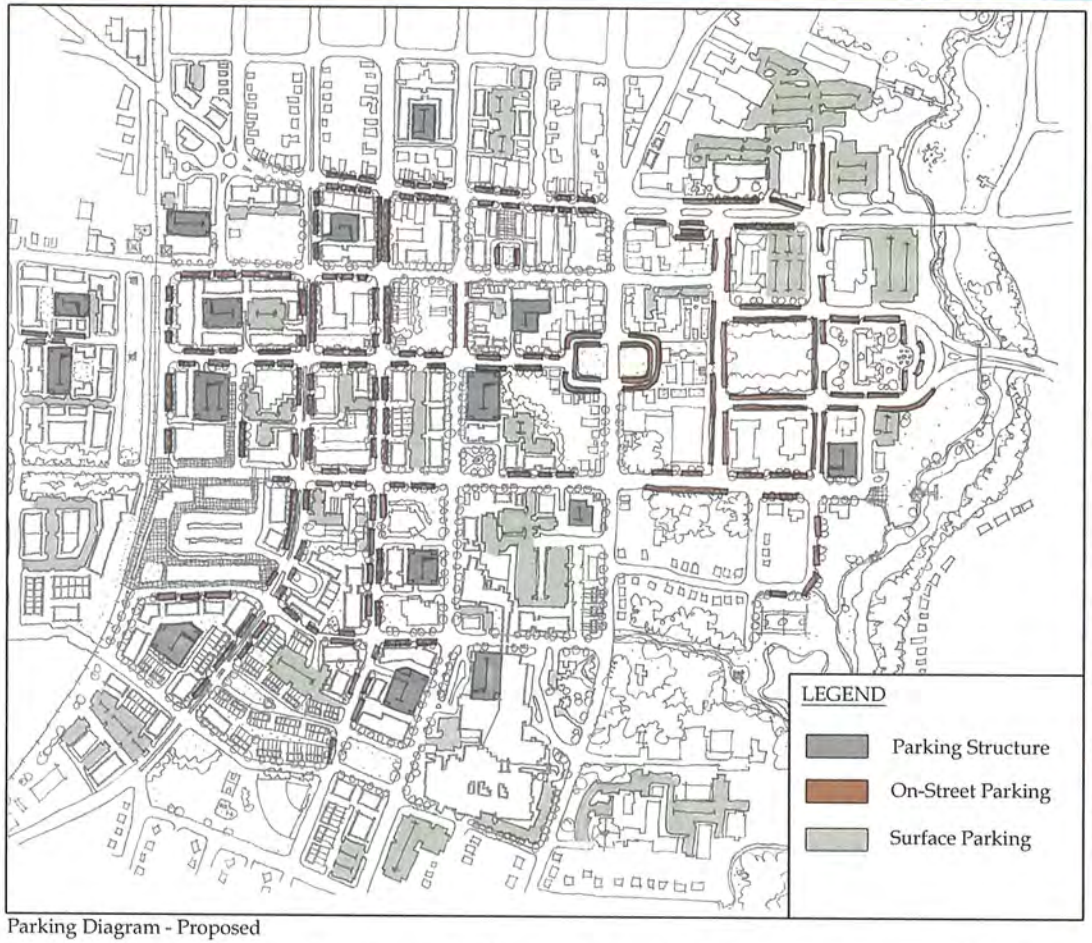
Water Street design principles:

- New buildings and infill development creates a mixed-use corridor that connects Eden Hill Farm and the riverwalk
- New buildings are oriented towards the street at a scale consistent with downtown Dover design standards
- New buildings are made from materials that are consistent with downtown Dover design standards
- Enhancee the pedestrian experience by widening and improving sidewalks (both sides of street), providing landscape buffering to existing surface lots, and adding pedestrian scale street lighting to improve comfort and safety
- Provide trees, benches, and other site furniture, and ground level landscaping.
- Create a dedicated bike lane that connects from the riverwalk to Eden Hill Farm

Water Street at New Street (View West) - Proposed

Water Street at New Street (View West) - Existing

C.5 - Parking



Parking Diagram - Proposed

On Street Parking - Pull In - Loockerman Plaza

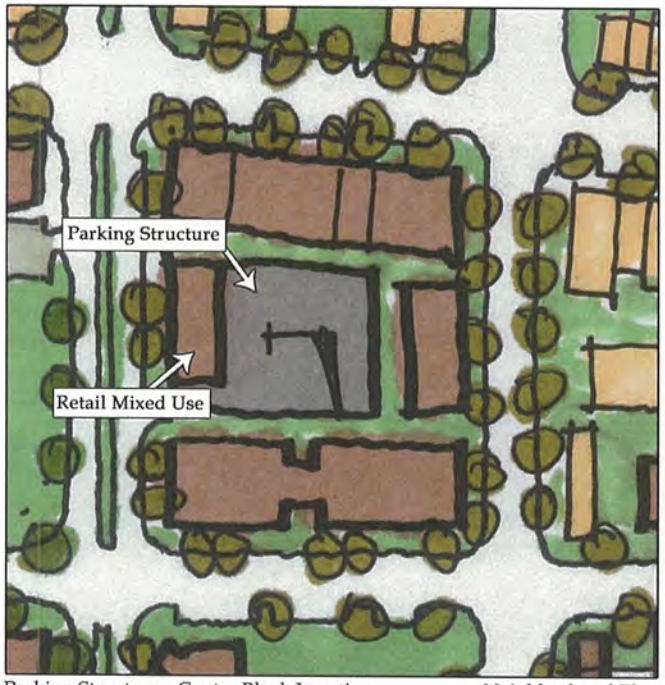
On-Street Parallel Parking - Loockerman Street

On Street Parallel Parking - State Street and Kings Highway

The challenge of locating parking is to provide convenient vehicle storage without compromising or detracting from the pedestrian character of downtown Dover. Although a strong public transit system is in place, adequate parking is essential to maintain economic viability for retail, office and residential uses.

A district-wide approach is recommended with a combination of parking types provided; on street parking (parallel and pull in), surface lots and structured parking. Surface parking and structured parking areas should be designed to blend into the urban fabric of the area.

C.5 - Parking



Parking Structure - Center Block Location Neighborhood Plan

Parking design principles:

- Provide district-wide parking solutions and change the perception of a parking shortage
- Locate parking near activity centers that is flexible to serve combined uses
- Design surface lots with dimensions that prepare themselves for upgrades to structured parking
- Encourage development that builds out to the street edge with parking behind, or on, the street
- Promote parking that improves walkability between activity centers and does not interfere with pedestrian traffic

Surface Lot Screening - Fencing and Landscape - Boston, Mass.

Mixed Use - Parking / Retail - Boulder, Colo.

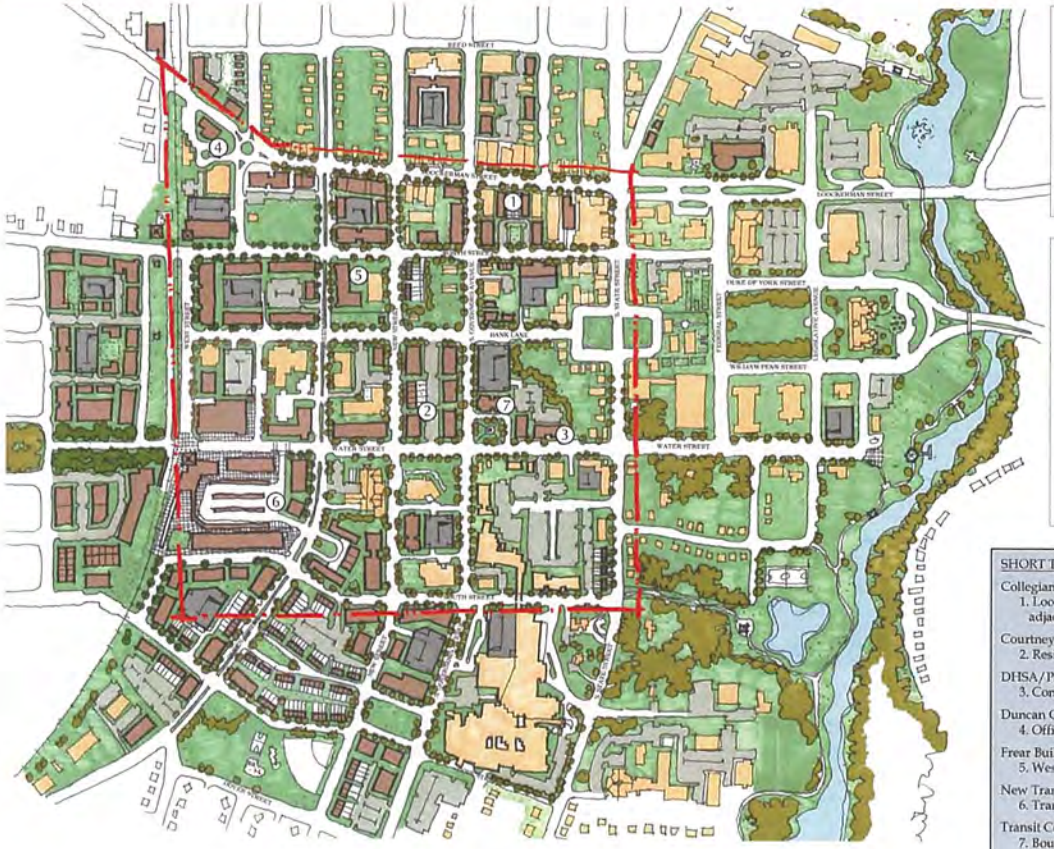
Mixed Use - Parking / Retail - Belmar, Colo.

Recommendations for parking design standards:

- Access to parking lots should be from minor streets and alleyways if possible, and located mid-block.
- Access to parking areas should minimize curb cuts and interruption to sidewalks, streetscapes, and pedestrian movement
- Parking structures should incorporate retail and/or mixed uses along the first floor street frontage.
- Parking structures should be designed with massing, articulation, architectural detailing, and materials that are similar and/or complementary to existing buildings.
- Parking lots and structured parking should provide pedestrian scale features and enhancements as well as clearly defined pathways for pedestrian and vehicular traffic
- Surface parking should be located in the rear of the building or within the building footprint where possible
- Surface parking lots should be screened from the public right-of-way by landscaping, fencing or architectural detailing.
- Lighting for parking should be compatible with the character of downtown. Scale and style of light fixtures should be compatible with university/medical schoolstreet lighting and the architectural character of the neighborhood

Parking Structure - Center Block Location - Neighborhood Plan

C.6 - Building Types



SHORT TERM PROJECT OPPORTUNITIES

Collegian Site
1. Loockerman Commons and mixed-uses adjacent to Museum Square

Courtney Square
2. Residential, retail, mixed-use

DHSA/Parking Area
3. Consolidated parking and mixed-uses

Duncan Center
4. Office, mixed-uses and parking

Frear Building
5. Wesley nursing school, housing, and a park

New Transit Center
6. Transit and mixed-uses

Transit Center/Old Capitol Cleaners
7. Boutique hotel and parking

The City of Dover benefits from a significant amount of eighteenth, nineteenth and early twentieth century buildings that are generally well preserved and provide an excellent aesthetic for new buildings to emulate. Within the neighborhood plan study area, noteworthy buildings are largely concentrated around Loockerman Street, State Street, Water Street and The Green. There is an opportunity for new and infill development to occur throughout the study area that builds upon the strength of Dover's existing traditional architecture. New development should be sensitive to the existing context, scale, massing and materials of existing buildings and seek to create a harmonious mixture between old and new. Building types that help to create vibrant neighborhoods are strongly encouraged as well as uses that contribute to a downtown and expand opportunities for employment, entertainment and housing.

C.6 - Building Types

Water Street at New Street (Courtney Square)

Infill Development between West Street and New Street

Aerial View of Infill Development between West Street and New Street

Existing Building Context State and North Street

Building Design Principles:

New and infill development should be undertaken with the following goals in mind:

- Buildings should be oriented to the street, human scaled, and encourage pedestrian activity.
- Create attractive buildings based on traditional urban architecture. Ensure buildings work together to reinforce the character of downtown as a vital and lively place with an abundant diversity of commercial, retail, and residential uses.
- Enrich the quality of the pedestrian experience at street level of buildings by the use of lighting, signage, and storefront design.
- Buildings should be adaptable to future uses and have an architectural variety.
- Buildings should have a mass that is articulated by varying building volume, roof height, and roof types.
- Size, bulk and scale of new buildings should be generally compatible with adjacent structures and the architectural character of the surrounding neighborhood. Some variety is encouraged as long as it does not overwhelm existing buildings.
- Mixed-use buildings are strongly encouraged.
- Building design character should be consistent over the entire building.
- Encourage adaptive re-use of underutilized historic buildings.

New Infill Devolopment Oriented to Street, State and Water streets

Building Context Loockerman Street Storefronts

C.6 - Building Types

Mixed Use Residential near Transit, Hospital and Parks.
Townhouse Units with Alley Access

Proposed Urban Grocery Adjacent to Transit on Water Street

1. Example of Service Side Screening, Urban Grocery Gaithersburg, Md.

Townhouse Units with Alley Access Gaithersburg, Md.

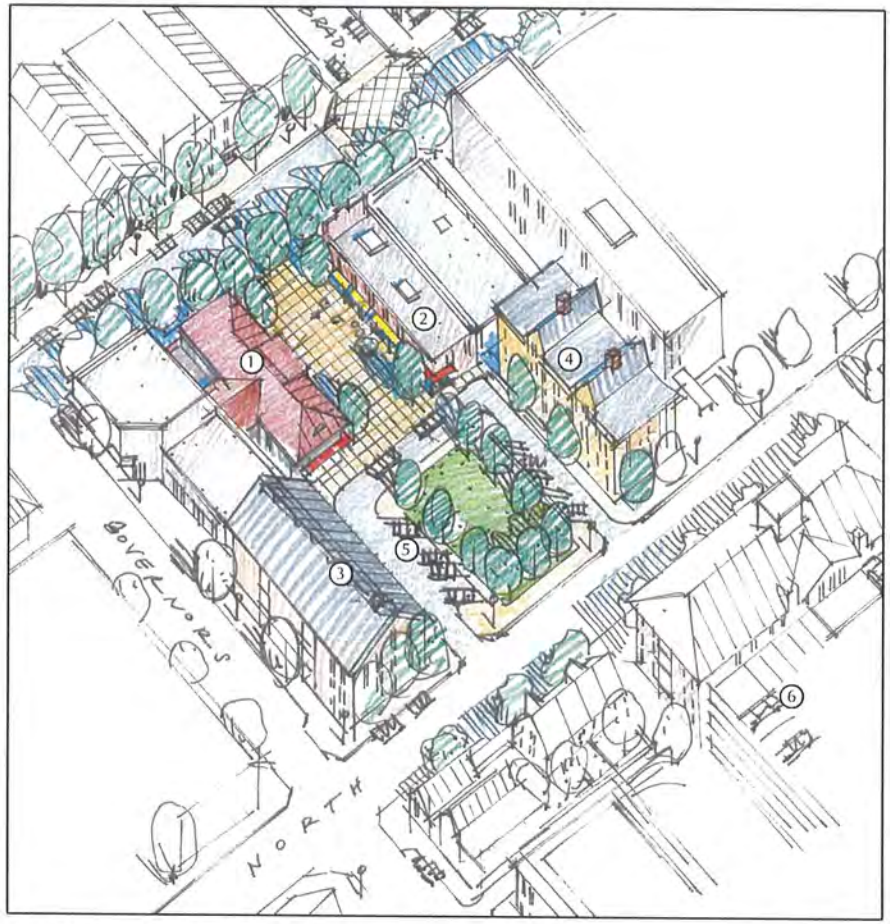
Recommendations for Building Design Standards:

- Corner buildings should be distinctive with consideration given to rounded or angled corners to facilitate pedestrian flow and add visual interest
- Outdoor spaces, such as courtyards, plazas and patios should be encouraged
- Fences and landscape walls should be considered as an attractive way to separate public and private space; fence materials should be consistent with the building's architecture and relate to the streetscape
- Roofs should be simple in mass and form. Infill buildings should respect the alignment of neighboring building cornices, roof lines and other horizontal elements
- Architectural roof enhancements (porches, dormers, gables, decorative trim) should be encouraged
- Roof-mounted mechanical equipment should be screened from view by roof forms that are designed as an integral part of the building's architecture
- Decks and stairs should relate to the mass, scale, placement and detailing of a building and should be consistent with traditional architecture
- Windows and doors are encouraged to be of a generally traditional type and material and should relate to the rhythm of the individual street. Retail and commercial buildings should have open storefronts and unique bays that add interest to the streetscape.
- Service entries should be designed with simple detailing to blend into the surrounding building façade. Trash and storage areas that are located near service entries should be enclosed and screened, via design elements that are consistent with the style of the building
- Materials and textures on infill building facades should be consistent with traditional Dover architecture, and complement the neighborhood's architectural character

Mixed Use - Gaithersburg, Md.

Townhouse Units with Alley Access - Kentlands, Md.

C.7 - Civic Plaza, Open Space and Parks



Civic Plaza at Collegian Site

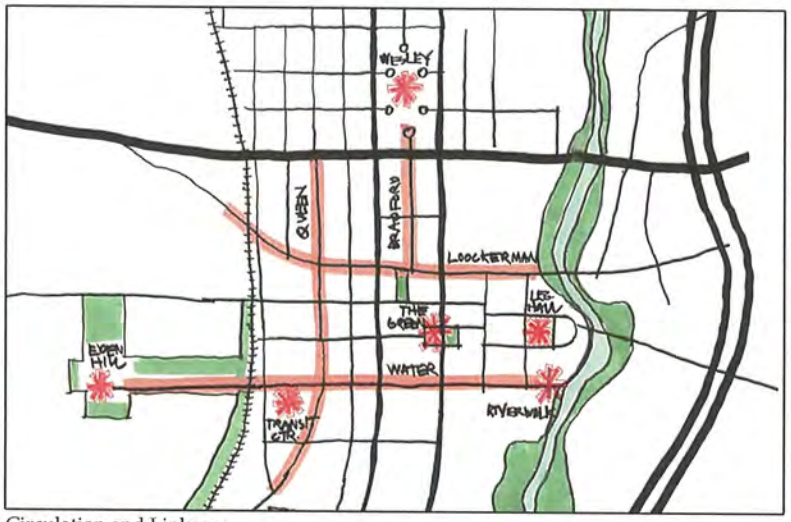
A civic plaza proposed in a vacant lot between Loockerman and North streets can provide the much needed link for pedestrians and motorists. The plaza could serve as a town commons for civic events and festivals. Two new buildings will provide additional retail and mixed use occupancy on the desirable plaza setting.

Parking near the plaza would be accessible from North Street, providing an alternative to parallel parking on Loockerman Street. In addition, a multi-story parking garage could be built to consolidate the multiple parking lots along the south edge of North Street. There is an opportunity for another multi-story, mixed-use building on North Street.

LEGEND

1. Mixed-use infill building
2. Mixed-use infill building
3. Building at the corner of S. Governors Avenue and North Street
4. Building addressing North Street and The Green area
5. Additional parking to serve North Street and Loockerman Street area destinations
6. Multi-level parking garage with a mixed-use building on North Street

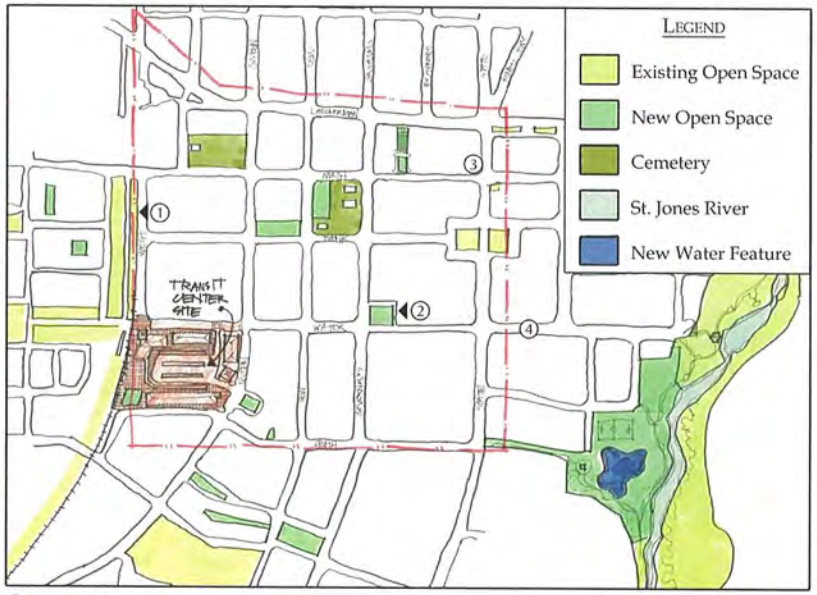
C.7 - Civic Plaza, Open Space and Parks



Circulation and Linkages

3. Pocket Park

4. Water Street



Open Space

The transit center's site presents an opportunity to strengthen the circulation and links between activity centers. The graphic above highlights the following connections:

- Strengthen the pedestrian link to Wesley College using Bradford Street
- Provide a direct connection between Eden Hill Farm/Rail Trail and the St. Jones Riverwalk along Water Street with streetscape and bike paths
- Improve aesthetics and walkability with a planted median along Queen Street
- Extend streetscape and pedestrian lighting along Loockerman Street to West Street

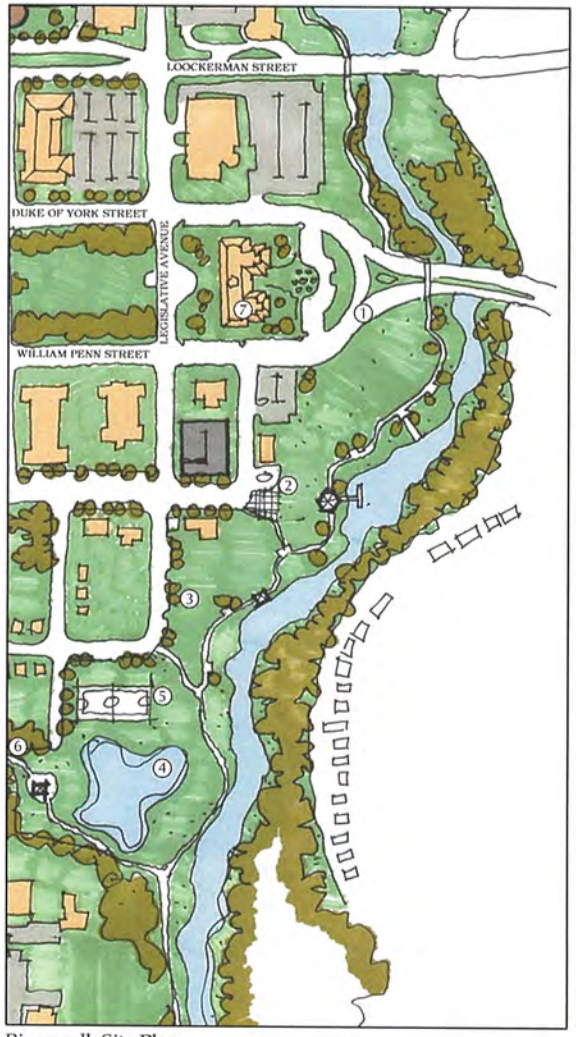
1. Open Space at Eden Hill Farm adjacent to Rail/Trail

2. Governors Square Green

The Neighborhood Plan's overall open space/parks strategy is graphically depicted in the above diagram. The basic design principles are as follows:

- Create urban greens and pocket parks that expand the city's original Penn plan
- Create parks and open space at major civic and cultural buildings
- Create a river walk with active and passive recreation spaces along the St. Jones River
- Utilize the Water Street corridor as a connector between Eden Hill Farm, the transit center and the St. Jones River.
- Utilize green spaces, parks, plazas, improved streetscapes and landscaping to improve pedestrian movement and strengthen connectivity between activity centers in the downtown core.

C.7 - Civic Plaza, Open Space and Parks



Riverwalk Site Plan

Riverwalk - Wilmington, Del.

1. Proposed riverwalk connection point to existing trails along the St. Jones River
2. Water Street Plaza - open space/gathering area at eastern terminus of Water Street. Connection point for bike and pedestrian access that links the Transit Center and Eden Hill Farm to the west.
3. Riverwalk connections to existing residential neighborhoods
4. Regional storm water management pond. Also serves as recreational and aesthetic feature to the riverwalk Park area
5. Proposed location for sports courts, a playground, and activity areas. No such facilities exist in the downtown core
6. Proposed walking trail connection to the Bayhealth Medical Center campus
7. Open air bandstand and riverfront pavilion. Opportunity for canoe/boat launch storage and rental (located at #2 -- Water Street).

Riverwalk - Wilmington, Del.

Riverwalk Bandstand - Sunapee, N.H.

Riverwalk Pavilion - Wilmington, Del.

Boat/Canoe Rental Dock - Columbia, Md.

Implementation (Next Steps)

D.1 - Implementation Strategies Summary

The neighborhood plan contains projects consisting of public, private and joint public/private efforts that may take twenty years or more to complete. The following charts provide recommendations concerning proposed projects within the study area. It is important that the redevelopment program is flexible to take advantage of unforeseen opportunities such as private sector development initiatives or newly created government programs and funding sources which may provide additional benefits for financing.

Improvements in the study area will strengthen the vitality of the overall downtown. Action items are recommended in the chart below with priority project completion timeframes. These priorities may shift and grow through time, however the immediate action items will provide a critical conduit to revitalization.

Establish a business development and retention strategy to promote and enhance overall business and economic vitality in the study area and downtown.		Project Completion	Responsible Agency
Item 1.	Create an expedited permitting process.	**Immediate** Jan. 2011	City of Dover
Item 2.	Pursue public/private development or redevelopment opportunities for large scale projects in the study area to build interest, increase revenues, and create business activity.	**Short Term** 1-5 years	City of Dover DDP
Item 3	Create/update business retention and recruitment strategies with key implementation steps for the Loockerman Street retail corridor identified by location.	**Immediate** Jan. 2011	City of Dover DDP
Item 4.	Maintain a list and map of properties that are available and/or vacant for development and redevelopment.	**Immediate** Jan. 2011	DDP
Item 5.	Create a developer's forum to gain further input into development options on these properties.	**Immediate** Jan. 2011	City of Dover
Item 6.	Prepare and distribute a quarterly "Downtown Redevelopment Report" to provide information about development activities, reinvestment opportunities, financial statistics, and/or legislative changes.	**Immediate** Jan. 2011	MPO
Item 7.	Develop a tourism or visitation strategy to include further evaluation of hospitality demand in the area.	**Short Term** 1-5 years	DDP

Improve the gateways and entrance corridors to the study area with buildings, coordinated signage and streetscapes that frame views and provide a sense of arrival.		Project Completion	Responsible Agency
Item 1.	Coordinate with DelDOT to identify the appropriate landscape/streetscape treatments that are feasible, as defined in the plan, and discuss potential funding.	**Short Term** 1 year	City of Dover
Item 2.	Provide streetscape and signage improvements at key gateway entrances as defined in the plan.	**Short Term** 1-3 years	City of Dover DDP
Item 3.	Develop a "Downtown Beautiful" program with a best practices guide to demonstrate and encourage improved aesthetics, community pride, and plantings (consider a contest for plantings or other improvements).	**Immediate** Mar. 2011	City of Dover DDP

Strengthen key North-South and East-West road connections to area activity centers, such as Wesley College, St. Jones River, Eden Hill Farm and the Bayhealth Medical Center campus.		Project Completion	Responsible Agency
Item 1.	Implement an area-wide traffic study and make recommendations for changes to streets and intersections. Have the Dover City Council adopt and enforce this plan.	**Short Term** 1-5 years	City of Dover DelDOT
Item 2.	Coordinate and focus road improvements on major North-South roads such as Queen Street and Governors Avenue and major East-West roads such as Bank Lane, Water Street, and North Street.	**Short Term** 1-5 years	DelDOT
Item 3.	Work with the City of Dover and DelDOT to improve crossings and to provide pedestrian-activated crosswalks at important intersections in the study area.	**Short Term** 1-3 years	City of Dover DelDOT
Item 4.	Reinforce key intersections with significant new buildings.	**Short Term** 1-5 years	City of Dover DDP
Item 5.	Reconnect Water Street to Eden Hill Farm at West Street	**Long Term**	City of Dover DelDOT
Item 6.	Close West Street at transit center once new West Dover Connector (North-South bypass) is complete.	**Long Term**	City of Dover DDP

Reinforce the architectural character of downtown Dover through rehabilitation and redevelopment of key buildings, lots and intersections.		Project Completion	Responsible Agency
Item 1.	Update/establish a grant program to assist with building exterior facelifts, renovation, and restoration that are consistent with the plan's design guidelines.	**Immediate** Mar. 2011	City of Dover
Item 2.	Prepare design guidelines to define and illustrate the desired architectural style for new development, rehabilitation, and renovation to maintain Dover's historic character.	**Short Term** 1-5 years	City of Dover
Item 3.	Evaluate redevelopment opportunities on the four (4) DDP properties that have been identified in the plan.	**Short Term** 1-3 years	DDP
Item 4.	Evaluate and update programs for facade improvements to historic buildings on State Street, Loockerman Street and Governors Avenue to provide a better street presence.	**Short Term** 1-5 years	City of Dover DDP
Item 5.	Encourage reconstruction and infill construction along Loockerman Street.	**Short Term** 1-5 years	City of Dover
Item 6.	Through the DDP, continue to evaluate the purchase of key parcels for redevelopment and disposition in the downtown.	**Ongoing**	City of Dover DDP

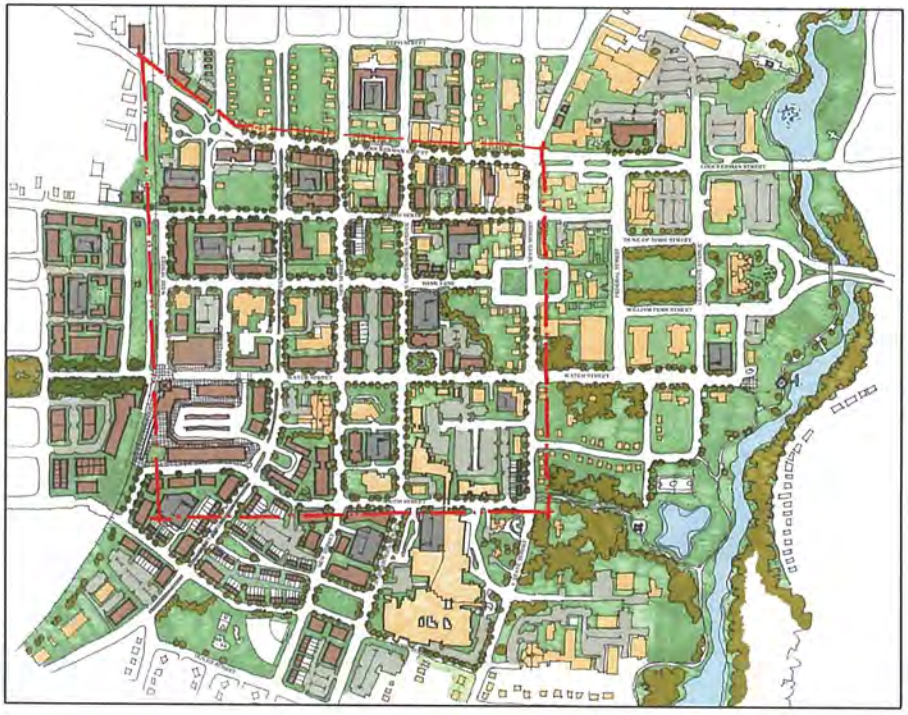
D.1 - Implementation Strategies Summary

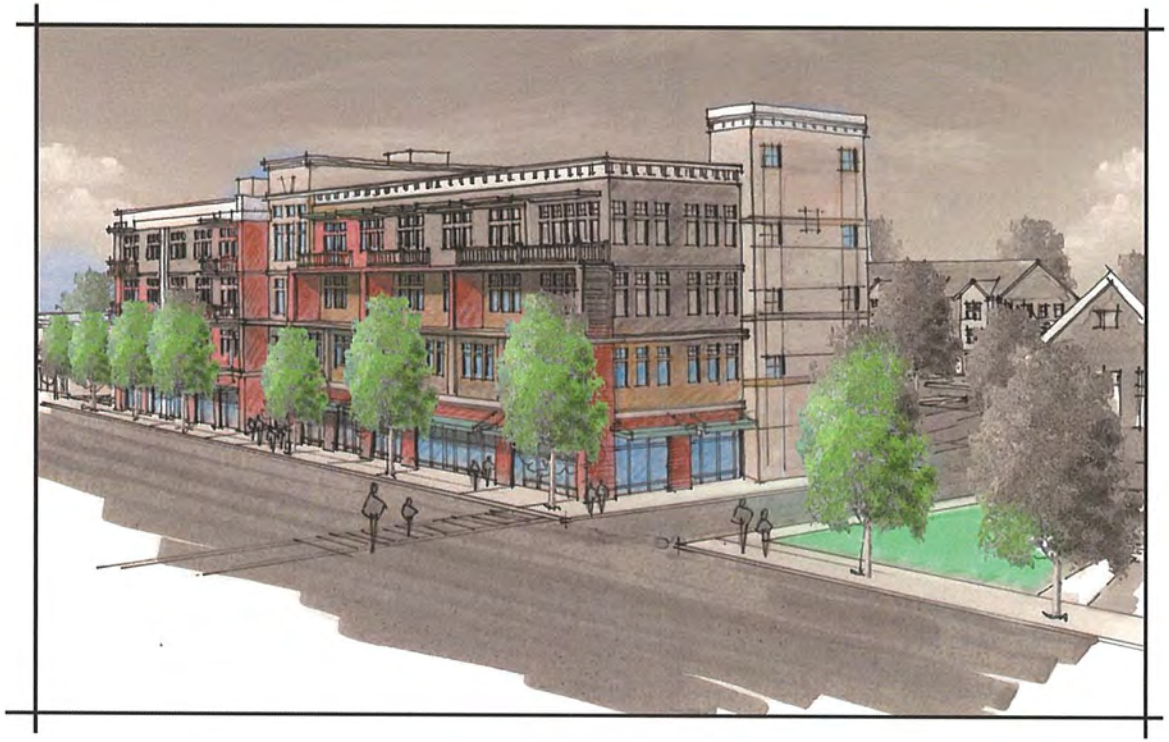
Create a network of parks, civic squares, and public gathering spaces within the neighborhood plan area.		Project Completion	Responsible Agency
Item 1.	Promote the use of the St. Jones River, and improve its accessibility and use with parking, a continuous riverwalk, open space and activity areas.	**Short Term** 1-3 years	City of Dover DNREC
Item 2.	Create a series of greens as outlined in the plan.	**Short Term** 1-5 years	City of Dover DNREC
Item 3.	Develop a fundraising program to promote, renovate, or reconstruct parks and streetscapes in the downtown area, including brick-for-purchase, adopt-a-bench, etc.	**Short Term** 1-3 years	City of Dover DDP
Item 4.	Sponsor, promote, and consider establishment of new activities to attract significant numbers of people on a regular basis.	**Short Term** 1-3 years	City of Dover DDP Tourism Board
Item 5.	Ensure that the Transit Center site has significant public plazas and gathering spaces as depicted in the Plan	**Short Term** 1-3 years	City of Dover DelDOT
Item 6.	Consider the Collegian site (DDP Site #3) as an area for a public plaza that will energize Loockerman Street, as well as connect North Street and south points to Wesley College	**Short Term** 1-5 years	City of Dover DDP

Coordinate streetscape and road improvements to provide a better connection between Wesley College and the southern part of the study area.		Project Completion	Responsible Agency
Item 1.	Establish a program to promote paving, maintaining, and striping parking in downtown alleys for commercial or residential use.	**Short Term** 1-5 years	City of Dover
Item 2.	Designate a bicycle lane on Water Street connecting Eden Hill Farm and the St. Jones River.	**Short Term** 1-5 years	City of Dover DelDOT
Item 3.	Coordinate with State of Delaware on future transit service options including passenger rail that can utilize the new transit center site.	**Long Term**	City of Dover DelDOT
Item 4.	Develop an overall downtown parking strategy.	**Short Term** 1-5 years	City of Dover DDP
Item 5.	Phase structured parking replacement on existing or new surface parking lots to accommodate additional developmental density.	**Long Term**	City of Dover DDP
Item 6.	Identify an area for a North-South bicycle lane that connects Wesley College to the Downtown Retail District, Transit Center, and Bayhealth Campus	**Short Term** 1-5 years	City of Dover

Reinforce the study area land use with additional mixed use, housing, retail and cultural/civic uses.		Project Completion	Responsible Agency
Item 1.	Encourage mixed-use developments that include residential uses, as defined in the Plan. Encourage flexible site design criteria-based on the projects collective merits to downtown area.	**Immediate** Mar. 2011	City of Dover
Item 2.	Petition City Council to adopt a district parking strategy where individual parking requirements are not tied to project size.	**Short Term** 1-3 years	City of Dover DDP
Item 3.	Encourage a diversity of urban housing alternatives, including multifamily, live-work, senior, loft, townhouse, for-sale condominium, and rental to serve a range of needs and family sizes in downtown.	**Short Term** 1-5 years	City of Dover

Establish a coordinated signage and streetscape program to capture and present a consistent image in the Downtown area.		Project Completion	Responsible Agency
Item 1.	Develop and implement a wayfinding plan consistent with adopted design guidelines to create signage that will direct the public to specific City destinations.	**Short Term** 1-5 years	City of Dover
Item 2.	Design and construct streetscape enhancements concurrently with infrastructure repair and replacement within the Plan area with initial emphasis placed on the North Street and Water Street.	**Short Term** 1-5 years	City of Dover DelDOT
Item 3.	Establish a program for purchase of dedicatory and memorial benches, light poles, and other street furniture with pre-selected locations for the furniture.	**Short Term** 1-5 years	
Item 4.	Develop a plan to bury utility lines along important roads and corridors in the study area. Prioritize North and Water Streets.	**Long Term**	





Appendix

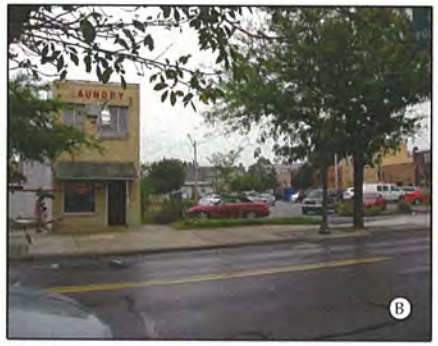
E.1 - DDP Properties

DDP Properties

The Downtown Dover Partnership (DDP) owns a number of properties within proximity to the Dover Transit Center Neighborhood Plan's study area. The final presentation of the charrette findings was presented to the DDP Board of Directors and committees. The DDP held a one-day charrette on October 7, 2010 to solicit input for development opportunities at DDP-owned properties. The properties studied in conjunction with the Dover Transit Center Neighborhood Plan include:

1. The former Acme grocery building and site
2. Harry Louie Dry Cleaners and adjacent parking lot
3. Vacant lots stretching from Loockerman Street to North Street, known as the Collegian Site
4. The DDP Property, which has a one-story vacant building fronting on Loockerman Street, with access from North Street

Former Acme Site



Harry Louie Site and Adjacent Parking

DDP Property - Loockerman Street

The DDP recently completed a parking improvement project at the Harry Louie site and decided not to explore any other redevelopment opportunities for this site at this time. A fifth project opportunity was identified north of the study area. This project would consolodate individual parking lots along the south side of North Street between State Street and S. Governors Avenue. The resulting concepts for each property were presented to each of the DDP committees.

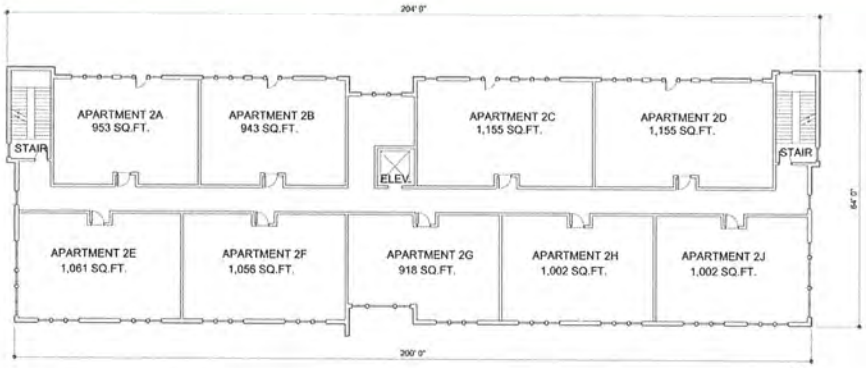
E.2 - Acme Site

Acme Site Plan

Rendering of Mixed-use Retail / Residential Building, Parking and Townhomes

The Dover Transit Center Neighborhood Plan identified a need for mixed-use buildings in the City of Dover, specifically, buildings with retail and services on the first floor and residential above. In keeping with this identified goal, the DDP developed an idea for the Acme site that includes a four-story mixed-use building fronting S. Governors Avenue and single-family residential units (townhomes) that front New Street. Residential and customer parking would be nestled in the center of the block and screened from view. This would reinforce the area's urban character, with buildings of multiple heights facing the streets to create a pedestrian-oriented streetscape.

E.2 - Acme Site



Second Floor Plan - Residential Units
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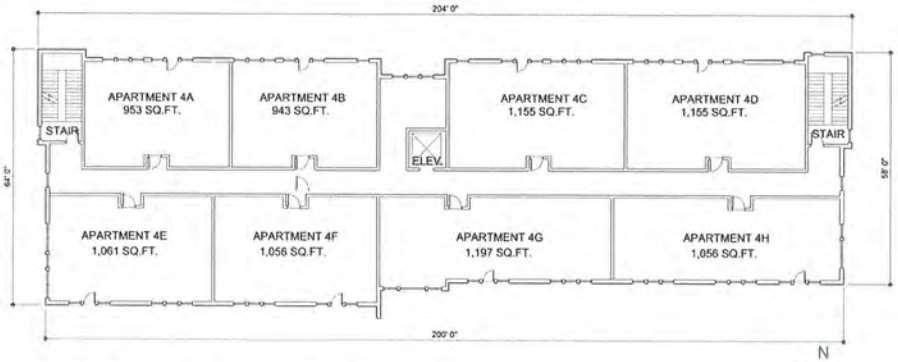
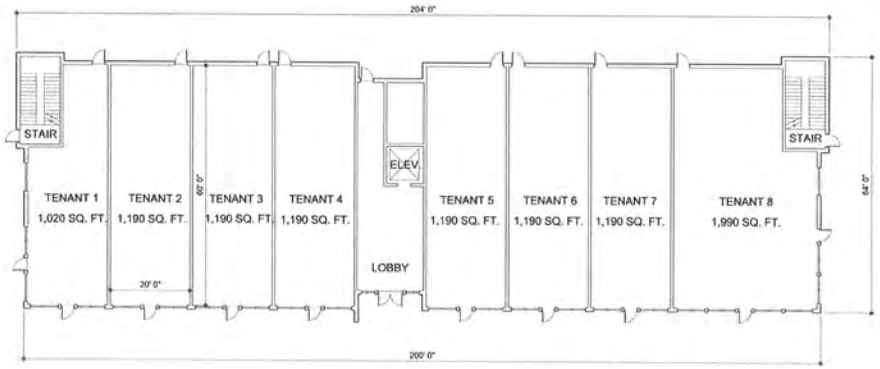
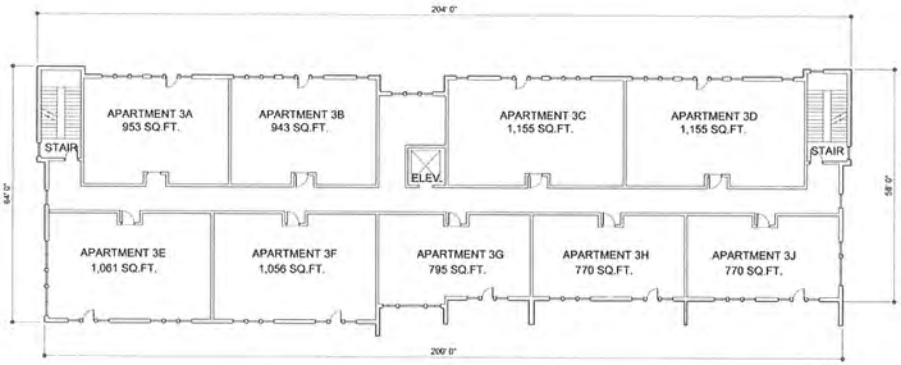


Fourth Floor Plan - Residential Units
N.T.S.

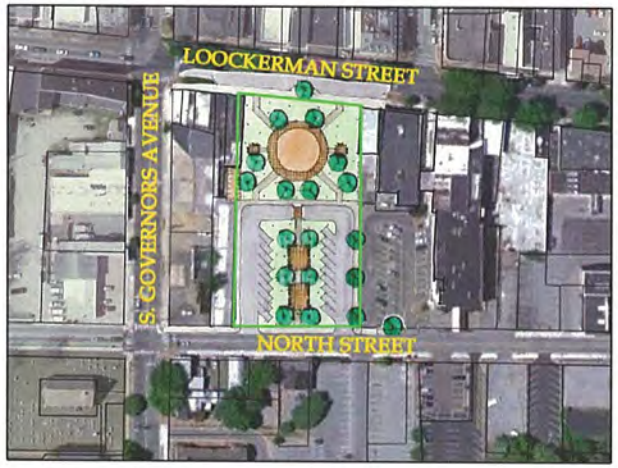


First Floor Plan - Retail Spaces
N.T.S.



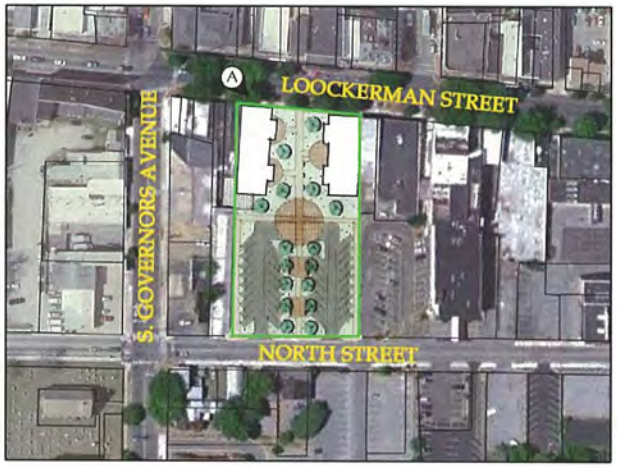
Third Floor Plan - Residential Units
N.T.S.

E.3 - Loockerman Plaza



Loockerman Plaza - Site Plan Concept 1

Loockerman Plaza - Site Plan Concept 2



Loockerman Plaza - Site Plan Concept 3

Rendering of Loockerman Plaza

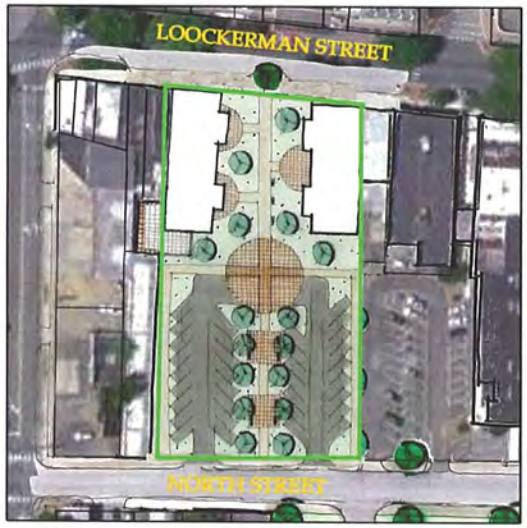
Often referred to as the Collegian site, this vacant lot connects Loockerman Street to North Street in the heart of the historic retail area of Dover. The Collegian site is an ideal means to connect two thoroughfares for pedestrian traffic. The DDP developed three concepts for improvements on this land that creates a landscaped plaza for community events, additional mixed-use buildings, and off-street parking.

Concept 1:
- Eighteen parking spaces added as an alternative to parallel parking on Loockerman Street
- Plaza area features hardscape and plantings for an attractive pedestrian route
- Plaza can be a venue for events

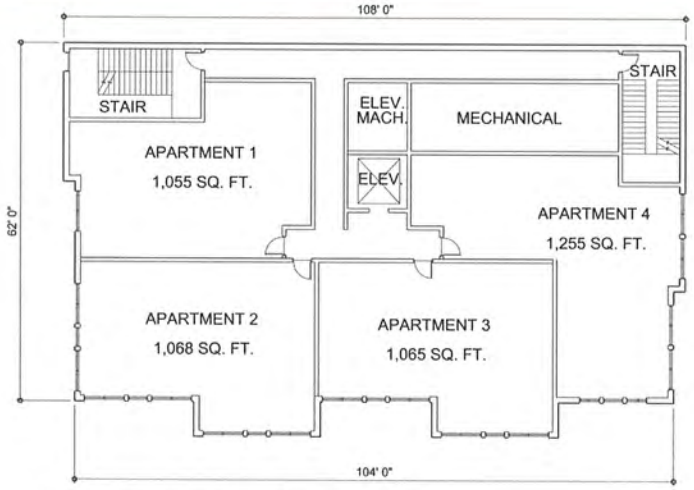
Concept 2:
- Thirty-six parking spaces added as an alternative to parallel parking on Loockerman Street
- Plaza area features hardscape and plantings for an attractive pedestrian route
- Plaza can be a venue for events

Concept 3:
- Thirty-six parking spaces added as an alternative to parallel parking on Loockerman Street
- Plaza area features hardscape and plantings for an attractive pedestrian route
- New mixed-use buildings can be built on either side of the plaza to enhance the pedestrian experience through the plaza and give the plaza a lot of energy around the business that will occupy the buildings.

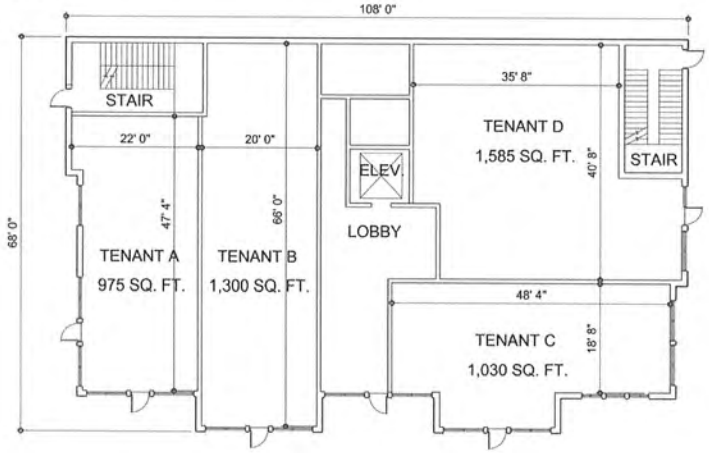
E.3 - Loockerman Plaza



Rendering of Loockerman Plaza with Mixed-Use Buildings



Second Floor Plan - Residential Units
N.T.S.



First Floor Plan - Retail Spaces
N.T.S.

Note: Building footprint and plan may be mirrored on each side of the Plaza

E.4 - DDP Property

Loockerman Street Facade

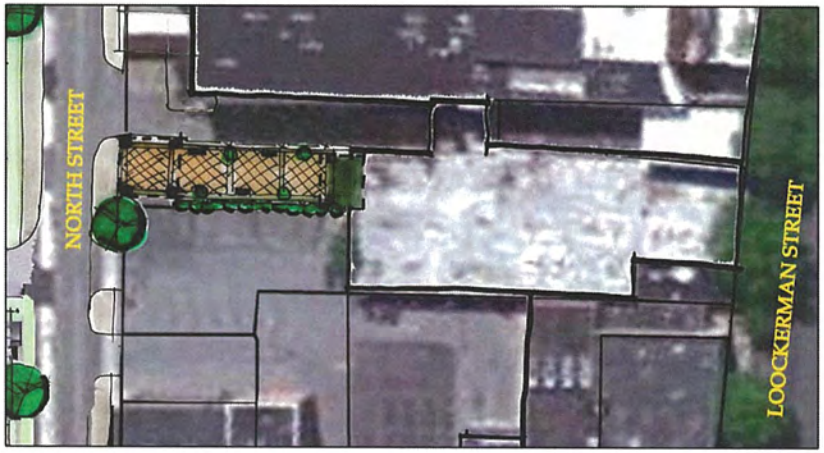
North Street Access/Service Area

The DDP Property is located at 22-24 W. Loockerman Street. Formerly known as C'Moore's restaurant, the building has two entrances on Loockerman Street. The property has rear access off of North Street, , but it is unappealing. The DDP determined that adding a formal North Street entrance and renovating the building's facade would give the building a modern look. Adding a porte cochere from the edge of North Street to the back of the existing building would screen the neighboring property's utilities. ,Adding windows and signs to the North Street building face would not only make the building more attractive, but improve the pedestrian experience along North Street.

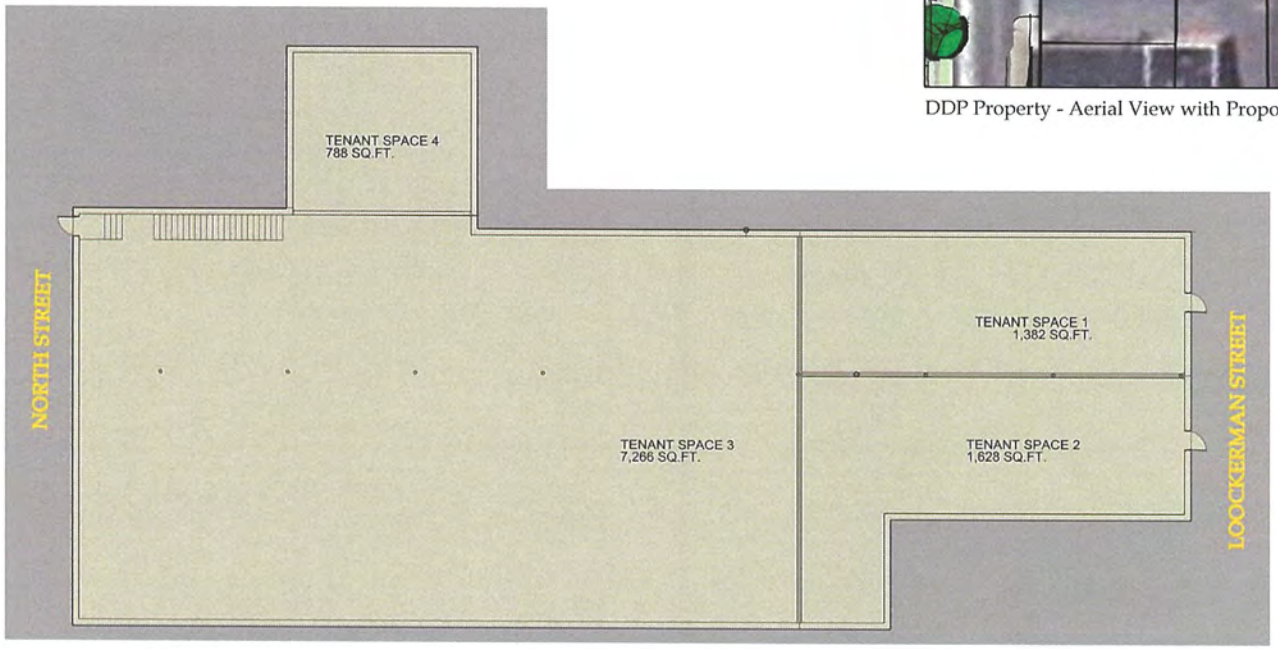
Rendering of Loockerman Street Facade Improvements

Rendering of North Street Facade Improvements

E.4 - DDP Property

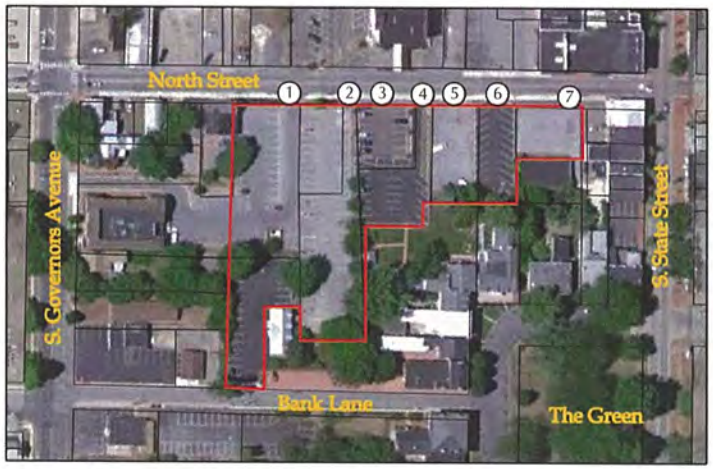


DDP Property - Aerial View with Proposed Porte Cochere



DDP Property - Proposed Tenant Space Plan

E.5 - North Street Parking Lots



Existing Parking Lots on North Street
Existing Parking Provided - 172 Spaces

On North Street, between S. State Street and S. Governors Avenue, there are seven individual parking lot entrances on the south side of the street, not counting private drive ways. This creates congestion on the moderately traveled street as motorists enter and exit the lots. Concepts were developed to consolidate the lots and expunge existing lot lines to minimize the number of entrances off of North Street and create a more efficient parking lot. This site is also an ideal location for a multi-level parking structure to serve visitors and employees traveling to Loockerman Street, government buildings and state agencies at The Green and Legislative Mall. A detailed study of this area was not done.

Conceptual Surface Parking Consolidation
Proposed Parking Provided - 206 Spaces

Conceptual Multi-Level Parking Structure and Mixed-Use Building
Proposed Parking Provided - 55 Surface Spaces & 65+/- Spaces per parking structure level

Dover Transit Center Neighborhood Plan

Dover/Kent County MPO
Metropolitan Planning Organization

JOURNEYS

www.doverkentmpo.org

VOLUME 30, ISSUE 3 THIRD QUARTER 2010

'A Downtown Worthy of the First State Capital'

Consultants shed light on the Dover Transit Center neighborhood

TOP: Representatives from the City of Dover, business owners and community members discuss the needs of downtown neighborhoods . From left: Janelle Cornwell, assistant planner for the City of Dover; Beverly Jackson, Downtown Dover Partnership, and John Moynahan with Renaissance Planning Group.

LEFT: Gregory Moore, left, of the Becker Morgan Group, and Tom Antoniou, owner of City Cab in Dover, examine a map of the neighborhood surrounding the Dover Transit Center.

BELOW: Mary Ellen Gray, assistant director of Kent County Planning Services, left; Sarah Keifer, director of Kent County Planning Services, middle; and Arden Bardol of the Becker Morgan Group discuss the Dover Transit Center neighborhood.

A five-day charrette, held this fall, produced a vision of the neighborhood surrounding the Dover Transit Center, under construction at the intersection of Queen and Water streets.

The Dover/Kent County Metropolitan Planning Organization recognized that local bus service does not run after 6 p.m. in Dover, leaving a potential for the center to become a neighborhood "dead" zone after dark. That's when the MPO seized an opportunity to plan a more vibrant neighborhood by spearheading the charrette, held from September 27 to October 1.

Charrette is a French term for a rigorous session of cooperative work. Participants imagined a more active, more densely populated city center with more homes, more shops, more services and more space set aside for outdoor recreation.

The new transit center, scheduled to open this winter, will be a hub for local and inter -county DART

See CHARRETTE, Pg. 2

The Dover/Kent County MPO is going GREEN

To save paper and postage, the Dover/Kent County Metropolitan Planning Organization would like to deliver its newsletter, Journeys, via the Internet. If you would like to continue to receive Journeys, please contact the MPO at kate.layton@doverkentmpo.org or by telephone at (302) 387-6026 and let us know if you would prefer e-mail, or U.S. Postal Service delivery.

Charrette, continued

and Greyhound bus service, as well as taxis. Bike racks, newspaper kiosks ticket vending machines, more parking, shelters and benches for waiting passengers are some of the amenities of the new hub, which was paid for through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

The MPO enlisted the help of the Downtown Dover Partnership, architectural and engineering firm Becker Morgan Group of Dover, and Renaissance Planning Group, of Tampa, Fla. to create the Dover Transit Center Neighborhood Plan. During the intense week, the charrette team consulted the community to create a plan for transit-oriented development. The team's goal was to create a downtown worthy of the First State capital.

The public was invited to three evening events – an opening kickoff, open house and a final presentation. At the final presentation, charrette leader, Clarence Eng, of Renaissance, revealed a plan to increase building density and population in the city's core.

Eng presented a sketch of central Dover created in 1885 that portrayed a city with more buildings and activity than today. Contemporary models of the area demonstrated how much building density has disappeared over the last 125 years. The neighborhood plan encourages development that connects activity areas, such as Kent General Hospital, downtown retail, Wesley College and Legislative Mall to flesh out the neighborhood.

Multi-story, mixed use buildings are a part of a new vision for the Dover Transit Center neighborhood.

Conceptual drawings boosted the neighborhood's appeal by depicting tree-lined streets, more walking areas and multi-story buildings fit for living and working. The plan also proposed a small grocery store, concentrated downtown parking areas and bike paths.

Downtown Dover Partnership president, Gregory Moore, presented the neighborhood plan at the DDP's October 7 meeting. The charrette team urged the City of Dover to adopt the plan as an official guide for redeveloping downtown, which could involve revamping downtown zoning codes.

The Dover Neighborhood Planning Group's vision for the Dover Transit Center neighborhood would bring more density back to the downtown area with more housing, services, and sidewalk and bike route improvements.

(Map courtesy of Becker Morgan Group)

VOLUME 30, ISSUE 3

DelDOT Secretary Wicks to lead new commission

Wicks

Carolann Wicks, secretary of the Delaware Department of Transportation, will head a new commission created to improve rail service in the Northeast Corridor.

Members of the new Northeast Corridor Infrastructure and Operations Advisory Commission held their first meeting on September 27 .

The Northeast Corridor is a 456- mile passage serving communities between Boston and Washington, D.C.

The commission is comprised of representatives from the U.S. Department of Transportation, Amtrak, the District of Columbia and the eight states that the Northeast Corridor serves: Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island. During its inaugural meeting, the panel elected Secretary Wicks as its leader.

The U.S. Congress established the commission with the Passenger Rail Improvement and Investment Act of 2008 (PRIIA). The panel develops strategies to maintain, improve and expand intercity, commuter and freight rail along the Northeast Corridor. Commissioners will develop a formula to allocate costs and revenues among corridor users and owners, and develop a report on Amtrak's economic development role in corridor service.

Thank you, Bridget Lane

Lane

Best wishes to MPO Public Advisory Committee member, Bridget Lane, who resigned from the PAC in October.

Kent County Levy Court appointed the Camden resident to the PAC in May 2009. During her time on the PAC, Lane attended the MPO's annual TIP Tour and helped out with last June's Dover Trails Fun Ride and Stride.

Anyone interested in joining the PAC may contact Kate Layton at (302) 387-6026 or kate.layton@doverkentmpo.org.

MPO Council, committees elect 2010-2011 leadership

The Dover/Kent County MPO Council and committees recently held elections for leadership posts.

During the Council's September 8 meeting, members re-elected Dover Mayor Carleton E. Carey Sr. to serve as their chairman. They also elected Kent County Levy Court Commissioner Bradley S. Eaby to serve a vice chairman.

On August 11, the MPO's Technical Advisory Committee re-elected Scott Koenig to serve as its chairman and David Edgell as its vice chairman.

Meyer

On August 24, members of the Public Advisory Committee elected Dwight S. Meyer to serve as their chairman. They elected Michael Gumrot to serve as vice chairman.

Gumrot

Welcome, Phyllis Collins

The Dover/Kent County Metropolitan Planning Organization extends a warm welcome to its newest Public Advisory Committee member, Phyllis Brooks Collins.

Collins

Gov. Jack Markell appointed the Wyoming resident to the PAC on August 30. Her term will expire on August 30, 2012. Gov. Markell also re-appointed Horace Cook to the PAC on September 15.

Collins is executive director for Academic Enrichment at Delaware State University. For 17 years she has worked with DSU's enrollment management, with a focus on student success and retention.

Collins holds bachelor's and master's degrees from DSU and is earning a Ph.D. in Organizational Leadership Development from the University of Maryland Eastern Shore in Princess Anne, Md.

Collins is a member of several organizations, such as The Delaware Mentoring Council, and has worked with Kent County Head Start, Dover Air Force Base Family Services and Delaware Food Bank.

DelDOT reveals route choice for West Dover Connector

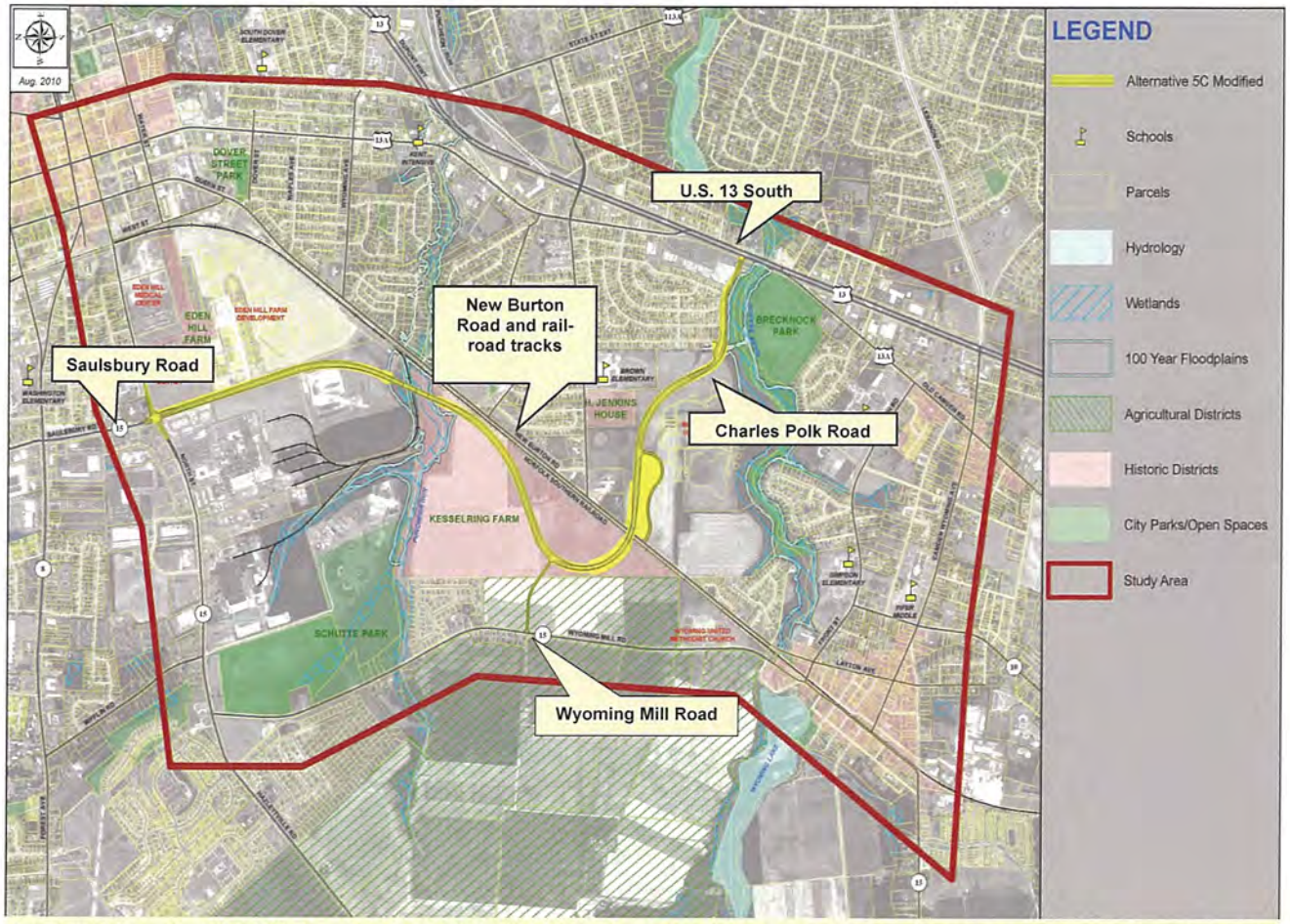
On September 28, the Delaware Department of Transportation announced its preferred route for the West Dover Connector.

DelDOT chose Alternative 5C Modified, which would extend Saulsbury Road over the Puncheon Run and a section of the Norfolk Southern Railroad connecting to U.S. 13 via Charles Polk Road. DelDOT invited the public to a workshop to view and voice opinions about the proposed route and learn why DelDOT prefers the route.

The connector would extend Saulsbury Road southward from its North Street intersection to U.S. 13 near Camden and provide an auxiliary connection to Wyoming Mill and New Burton roads. The connector is intended to reduce traffic on smaller roads in western Dover and create an efficient railroad crossing at New Burton Road, particularly for emergency vehicles en route to Kent General Hospital. Census statistics project that Dover's population will grow 15 percent by the year 2030, mostly in the West Dover Connector study area.

The recommended route would run parallel with New Burton Road along the west side of the railroad track before connecting to U.S. 13, via Charles Polk Road in the Rodney Village neighborhood.

See DELDOT, Pg. 5



A map of Alternative 5C Modified provides an outline of the West Dover Connector study area and the proposed route the connector would follow. The suggested route would extend Saulsbury Road at North Street, run parallel with New Burton Road and cross railroad tracks before connecting with Charles Polk Road. The route would connect to U.S. 13 near Camden. (Map by DelDOT)

DelDOT, continued

DelDOT would maintain local traffic at Charles Polk Road in Rodney Village. Alternative 5C Modified would affect more than a dozen properties on Charles Polk Road.

Plans for the West Dover Connector were developed through public workshops and a working group, consisting of state, county and municipal officials, as well as representatives of civic associations within the study area. Between 2004 and 2005, the group whittled down more than a dozen plans for the road to four options worthy of further study. One option considered not building the road at all.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is reviewing the route.

Chris Fronheiser of AECOM group, who worked with the Delaware Department of Transportation on the proposed West Dover Connector route, explains some information to area residents at September workshop held at the Modern Maturity Center in Dover.

Dover submits transportation priorities to DelDOT

West Dover Connector and Dover Transit Center among top five in list

The West Dover Connector and the proposed Dover Transit Center are high on Dover City Council's list of transportation priorities this year.

Each year, Dover City Council submits a prioritized list of transportation projects to the governor and the secretary of the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT). Council approved its 2010 list on October 11, by recommendation from its Safety Advisory and Transportation Committee.

The West Dover Connector topped Dover's transportation project list, which cites increased traffic along the city's east and west corridors since the completion of Delaware Route 1.

The Garrison Oak Connector Road is second on the list. Dover has identified the 385-acre Garrison Oak Technology Park as an ideal location for large technological/green industry. A road to the property is essential to market the land to potential tenants. Dover SUN Park, a 10 megawatt solar energy plant, will be the first tenant on the land, using 100 acres .

A proposed building at the Dover Transit Center ranks fourth on the list. The building would be adjacent to the new hub at Queen and Water streets. The City of Dover and the Downtown Dover Partnership would like DelDOT to solicit private developers to enter into a public-private partnership for the construction.

A north/south road between Del. 8 and Hazlettville Road was third on the list and Loockerman Street improvements ranked fifth.

Dover additionally posted a policy/program priority list. The list includes weekend bus service, airport studies and improvements to accommodate passenger and aircraft-related industries, Delaware's red light enforcement program, bike path connectivity, continued exploration of options to relocate the storage and marshalling of chemical rail cars, and further studies for commuter passenger rail service between Wilmington and Dover.

Other Dover Transportation Priorities by ranking order:

6) U.S. 13 Service Road Corridor

7) U.S. Route 13 sidewalk construction

8) Kenton Road corridor upgrades

9) College Road corridor upgrades

10) Crawford Carroll Avenue extension.

DMV hosts Senior Driver Day, launches new senior Web site

Delaware seniors ruled the road on October 2, when the Delaware Division of Motor Vehicles held Senior Driver Day at the Delaware Department of Transportation campus in Dover.

To celebrate the day, the DMV opened registration and driver's license booths as well as vehicle inspection lanes for safety and emissions checks. Information was available in the lobby from DMV partner agencies, the Delaware Office of Highway Safety, AAA, DART, RideShare, the Delaware Insurance Commissioner's Office and the Sussex County Consortium. Outside, a team of trained technicians from the AARP CarFit program made sure vehicle components were properly adjusted for drivers' comfort and safety.

TOP: A Delaware Division of Motor Vehicles employee, left, makes sure a guest gets some goodies from the informational tables during the DMV's Senior Driver Day.

BOTTOM: Jennifer Cohan, director of the Delaware Division of Motor Vehicles, left, talks to a woman about the DMV's new Senior Driver Web page and one of the safe driver games featured on the site.

That day, the DMV officially launched its Senior Driver Web page. The site offers the senior drivers numerous resources from driving tips, to reaction time games and health information.

The day was put together by the DMV and a Senior Driver Task Force. The group's overall goal is to keep senior citizens driving safely for as long as possible.

DMV statistics show that 17 percent of Delaware's drivers are age 65 and older and are involved in 14 percent of the state's fatal crashes.

To visit the DMV's Senior Driver Web page, go to: www.seniordriver.dmv.de.gov.

AARP program makes sure people are 'fit' to drive

Are you 'fit' to drive your car? Some people aren't. However, volunteers from the AARP of Delaware helped drivers get 'fit' when they held CarFit inspections on October 2 as part of the Delaware Division of Motor Vehicles' Senior Driving Day in Dover.

"What we're doing is making sure people are familiar with their cars," said James DeVone, a certified CarFit technician who volunteered for the day with the AARP of Delaware.

Technicians helped drivers adjust their car's components for maximum mobility and safety. A driver, for instance, should be 10-12 inches from the steering wheel to prevent injuries in case the air bag deploys during a crash. Steering wheels should be no higher than the driver's shoulders, and drivers should grip the steering wheel at 8 o'clock and 4 o'clock with their upper arms resting against their ribcage. This position also protects drivers from airbags as they deploy.

Technicians helped drivers adjust their mirrors, seats and head rests for visibility and comfort.

"Do you realize how many people don't know their head rest adjusts?" CarFit technician Charles Cantler said.

AARP volunteers checked tire pressure and asked drivers to look over both shoulders to make sure they could see clearly.

Although the CarFit lane was part of Senior Driver Day, AARP driving instructor Robert Williams said any driver could benefit from the inspection.

For more information about CarFit, visit the DMV's Senior Driver Web site at: www.seniordriver.dmv.de.gov.

Tips For A Good Fit:

An AARP volunteer, right, talks a driver through a checklist to make sure his seat, mirrors and other components are properly adjusted.

As you get in and out of a vehicle, notice if you must bend uncomfortably or experience difficulty lifting your legs.

Adjust the rearview mirror so that you can see as much of the rear window as possible.

Look over your shoulder on both sides to confirm that you can see rear and side windows clearly.

Adjust the seat. Assure that you can easily adjust the height and tilt.

Make sure the top of the steering wheel is no higher than the top of your shoulders .

Check that you can steer freely. Grasp the steering wheel at 8 o'clock and 4 o'clock, with your upper arms resting on your ribcage.

Assure that you can comfortably reach the pedals, radio and temperature controls while steering.

Confirm that there is at least 10 to 12 inches between your chest and the front airbag and steering wheel.

Make sure your seat belt fits comfortably. The lap belt should go across your hips, and the shoulder strap should go across your rib cage.

DART FIRST STATE celebrates 21st year with record resort transit ridership

DART Resort Transit celebrates 21 years of service with record ridership.

The service that started in 1990 as Delaware Resort Transit, this year had double digit increases across the board.

During the 2010 season through September 4, DART transported 359,745 passengers — a 27.12-percent increase from last year. The increases are due to the growing popularity of DART's Rehoboth Beach Park & Ride which had a 36.5-percent increase over the same period last year. DART's Wilmington-Rehoboth Beach Connection also saw a noticeably higher ridership this season.

Rehoboth Beach area employees contributed to the increase in the Park & Ride usage this year.

DART's Marketing group helped the service's profile by running radio and newspaper ads, sending Rider E-Mail notices, highlighting information on www.DartFirstState.com, placing restroom display ads in 20 beach area restaurants and working with Rehoboth Beach area businesses and agencies to remind them of the discounted parking fees available to their employees. DTC Marketing spent a week in the beach area distributing 26,100 resort schedules to more than 1,000 businesses. The team additionally placed ads in the major shopping malls at Christiana and Dover along with movie theater ads in Dover and Rehoboth Beach. Year to date, ridership is up from 2009 by nearly 36 percent. As of August, DART has transported 227,459 riders.

"We are pleased to provide families and beach visitors with a low-cost, safe and comfortable way to experience all the beach area has to offer," said Delaware Transit Corporation Director, Stephen Kingsberry. "We also are pleased to welcome more bicyclists on our resort buses."

Delaware Transit Corporation (DTC) is a subsidiary of the Delaware Department of Transportation. DelDOT operates DART First State, whose services include fixed route and intercounty bus, Paratransit, seasonal resort bus, commuter assistance, RideShare Delaware ride matching program, and other transportation services.

DART provides more than 11,185 passenger trips per year, taking up to 7 million vehicle trips from area roads. For information about bus service, call (800) 652-DART, or visit: www.DartFirstState.com. To make a reservation for Paratransit, or for GoLink information, call (800) 553 DART.

New MPO subcommittee examines population growth

A new subcommittee will use population projections to aid the Dover/Kent County Metropolitan Planning Organization with its policies and programs.

The MPO's Data and Demographics Subcommittee held its first meeting November 9 at Camden Town Hall. The panel is a subcommittee of the MPO's Technical Advisory Committee. Membership is comprised of representatives from Kent County and municipalities within central Delaware, supported by MPO staff. Mary Ellen Gray, assistant planner for Kent County, heads the panel.

The subcommittee's goal is to determine how population will spread across Kent County. Members will achieve this goal by reviewing the impact of population on households and places of employment, based upon Kent County and Dover population projections from the Delaware Population Consortium (DPC). Committee members will additionally use the information to inform the MPO about the approval of new neighborhood subdivisions and construction progress for existing subdivisions.to help with the project population distribution.

Layton joins LCD Class of 2011

Kate Layton, public liaison for the Dover/Kent County Metropolitan Planning Organization, recently joined the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce's Leadership Central Delaware (LCD) class.

LCD's mission is to connect emerging leaders through diverse networks while enhancing leadership skills, group dynamics and community knowledge.

Over the next several months, the class will explore various economic drivers in Kent County such as agriculture and tourism, community awareness and business development.

The class began in September at an overnight retreat held at the Atlantic Sands hotel in Rehoboth Beach. In October and November, the class visited businesses related to agriculture, tourism, energy and the environment. Before graduating in June, the class will participate in two charitable projects and take a ride on a C-17 aircraft from Dover Air Force Base.

Layton

Amish Country Bike Tour draws thousands to Kent County

On September 11, more than 1,300 bicyclists pedaled through Kent County for the 24th annual Amish Country Bike Tour.

Cyclists from Delaware and 14 other states attended the event put on by the Kent County Tourism and Convention Bureau. States included Georgia, New Mexico, Indiana, West Virginia and Rhode Island, said Tourism Director, Cindy Small.

The tour started at 8 a.m. from Legislative Mall in Dover. Routes of varying mileage ambled into rural Kent County. The last cyclist returned at 5:15 p.m., Small said. The youngest rider, age 5, completed a 15-mile loop, and a Georgia man rode 100 miles as part of a goal to do so in every state. Delaware was the man's 30th state out of 50.

Kent County Tourism will donate $287 to the Amish Schoolhouse fund. The office also will send donations to three churches that had food stops for the cyclists, Central Delaware YMCA, ABATE motorcycle club and USO Delaware.

In addition to the rides, the event featured six live bands, a "blessing of the bikes" ceremony and a September 11 tribute. Kent County Tourism will hold next year's tour on Saturday, September 10, 2011.

Cyclists head out from the starting gate in Dover for the 24th Amish Country Bike Tour. The tour saw more than 1,300 riders from 15 states.

The preparation of this document was financed in part with funds provided by the Federal Government, including the Federal Transit Administration, through the Joint Funding Simplification Program, and the Federal Highway Administration of the United States Department of Transportation.

The MPO Council:

Carleton E. Carey, Sr., Chairperson
City of Dover

Brad Eaby, Vice-Chairperson
(for President Brooks Banta)
Kent County Levy Court

Ken Fuchs, (For Camden Mayor, Richard Maly)
Kent County Municipalities

Ralph Reeb (for Secretary Wicks)
DE Dept. of Transportation

Elizabeth Olsen (for Governor Markell)
DE Dept. of Safety and Homeland Security

Stephen Kingsberry
Delaware Transit Corporation

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