

TOWN OF HANOVER, NEW HAMPSHIRE

Housing and Community Development Plan

Introduction:

This Housing and Community Development Plan, as adopted, makes the Town of Hanover eligible for Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), which are administered by the New Hampshire Community Development Finance Authority (NH CDFA), and for housing and economic and economic development assistance from other agencies. Also, it is a useful guide to the Town's actions toward economic development and affordable housing.

Since its beginnings in the 1760's, Hanover has been a picturesque and vibrant college town in a rural setting, located in the Upper Valley of the Connecticut River. In recent decades, the town has seen significant growth of advanced technologically based business. Hanover has a stable economic base and a desirable quality of life. Hanover's estimated 2008 population is 11,068, having grown by a modest 2.0% since 2000.

The first Master Plan for Hanover was adopted in 1974 and was updated in 1986 and 2003. A number of studies have found an unusual set of demographic and socio-economic factors which makes it difficult to effectively provide affordable and workforce housing in Hanover. These studies include those by Kennedy and Associates in 1993; by the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission in the 1995 Fair Share Housing Analysis, which found Hanover as having the second highest level of unmet low- and moderate-income housing need in the region; and by Hadfield Associates in 2003, which confirmed this unmet housing need and supported the efforts to develop Gile Hill, a 120-unit mixed housing development with 61 affordable units.

The most significant of these factors are:

- Topographical and environmental constraints seriously reduce the overall amount of developable land.
- Market availability of developable land is low.
- Sites that are suitable and available for commercial expansion or new construction are rare.
- Land costs are significantly higher than in any other community in the region.
- Home prices and rental costs are therefore the highest in the region.
- A nationally attractive residential market creates economic incentives favoring high-cost housing.
- The rate of new speculative residential construction has markedly declined over the past two decades.
- Almost all new residential construction is high priced and custom-built; the only exception has been specifically subsidized or economically assisted housing, such as Gile Hill.
- Strong market demand, against a low rate of housing production, has driven up the prices of ownership and rental of older housing stock.
- Much of what affordable housing does exist is rented by Dartmouth College students who cannot find accommodation on campus because of shortages in college housing for students.
- Hanover residents of modest means are finding it increasingly difficult to retain their housing or to find other local housing they can afford.
- Demand for accessory apartments in existing homes is increasing, both to accommodate relatives and to provide additional income.
- A huge proportion of employees in Hanover businesses and institutions cannot afford to reside in Hanover, giving them little choice but to commute from other towns, often at long distances.

Housing and Community Development Goals and Policies:

This Housing and Community Development Plan identifies the Town of Hanover's policies to address its economic development and housing affordability and diversity needs. Consistent with the 2003 Town of Hanover Master Plan, this plan sets out policies and implementation actions to achieve these needs while guiding and managing community growth and change in a balanced and responsible fashion.

Housing:

Goal:

To promote the provision of more affordable and diversified housing.

Policies/Action Items:

1. Examine and quantify the needs for various types of affordable and diverse housing, particularly for low- and moderate-income, elderly, and disabled households.
2. Integrate affordable and diverse housing into the residential pattern of the town.
3. Avoid involuntary permanent displacement of low- or moderate income citizens; and when this is not possible, work to find suitable replacement housing.
4. Cooperate with Dartmouth College and other employers to provide realistic ways to address low- and moderate-

- income housing needs.
5. Work with the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission and state agencies to ascertain continuing housing needs and future trends.
 6. Implement “smart” residential growth in central locations and village centers served by public transportation and a walkable/bikeable infrastructure, with public water and sewer, and readily accessible to outdoor recreation and open space; this is a fundamental principle of the 2003 Master plan.
 7. Encourage Dartmouth College to provide on-campus housing for all of its undergraduate students and to provide significant additional housing affordable to its graduate students, faculty, and staff.
 8. Plan proactively and create additional incentives, including linkage requirements and development density bonuses, to utilize the power of the private housing market to help provide affordable and diverse housing.
 9. Ensure that regulatory requirements do not needlessly inflate costs to build and maintain affordable housing.

Community Facilities/Services:

Goal:

To continue to provide high quality public services.

Policies/Action Items:

1. Maintain a reasonable level of capital spending so as to provide a consistent and sustainable level of services.
2. Maintain high quality municipal programs such as recreation, senior citizen, library, and social services.
3. Concentrate new development in areas fully served by existing public services and infrastructure.
4. Continue to upgrade the reliability and durability of the public water and sewer systems.
5. Maintain the quality of public safety services.
6. Enhance the viability of the downtown by providing additional public parking as needed and by providing streetscape and other public improvements and amenities.
7. Support the continuance of high-quality public education for Hanover children and adults.
8. Improve and enhance regional and local public transit.
9. Plan and construct a safe and comprehensive network of sidewalks and bicycle paths and bike lanes.
10. Expand the provision of outdoor recreation facilities to support the growing need and demand from all age groups.
11. Implement a comprehensive park and trail development program.
12. Participate in regional efforts to improve transportation, recreation, open space, trails, and pedestrian and bicycling facilities.
13. Continue to implement residential and neighborhood planning efforts.
14. Focus on ensuring the reliability and sustainability of all improvements to public facilities and services.

Economic Development:

Goal:

Provide for reasonable and controlled economic growth.

Policies/Action Items:

1. Streamline regulations for more realism and efficiency in the development review and permitting process.
2. Revise zoning and development regulations to permit and encourage an appropriate extent and variety of needed residential, commercial and institutional uses.
3. Promote stable economic and employment opportunities on a regional basis.
4. Encourage economic growth in a disciplined, reliable, and consistent manner.
5. Implement planning and development of the Centerra North Village Center for mixed business and high-density housing near employment centers and major transportation corridors.
6. Promote sustainable standards for building and site design and construction, compatible with site environs.
7. Prevent development on environmentally valuable lands, and reduce further development in rural and remote areas which are not fully served by public infrastructure.
8. Encourage businesses, institutions, and industries to expand the availability of private services, such as child and senior day care, available for employees and residents.
9. Support efforts of the retail and institutional sectors which would have positive impact on downtown.
10. Continue to implement regulatory allowances and incentives for telecommuting and other technology-based home occupations.
11. Promote the creation of new technologically based businesses and employers as new scientific fields and commercial opportunities emerge.

Amended and re-adopted by the Hanover Board of Selectmen at Public Hearing of April 5, 2010.