

I. THE TOWN WE WANT

VISION OF THE FUTURE DERRY

Our community is a destination point – where people want to live and work and come to visit. Shoppers, visitors, and tourists come to frequent our revitalized Downtown that features theater, opera, concerts, films, restaurants, coffeehouses, and boutiques. We can now get downtown without having to use our cars, either biking through the interlacing Pathways trail system or by taking the bus or jitney shuttle that circulates throughout the community. It's much easier to bike and walk among Downtown stores now that through traffic on Broadway has been both reduced and diverted to other routes.

Derry's economy is booming with all the new businesses and high technology corporations in the industrial park that have created a few thousand new jobs in the town. Since most of these new jobs are held by Derry residents, and now 80% of our working population also lives in Derry, this, too, has cut down the Broadway and Route 28 commuting traffic. Many of these workers bike or take the jitney in to Downtown at lunchtime to enjoy soup and sandwiches with friends and do a little shopping. After work, they often jog on Pathways trails, play a game of tennis or soccer with their kids at one of the several neighborhood recreation areas throughout town.

While our population has grown considerably since the beginning of the new millennium, we have absorbed it well. Much of the new development built to accommodate the population growth, and designed to be in keeping with traditional village character, has occurred at Derry's existing village centers, and in and near the Downtown, leaving open countryside, fields and farmlands in between those villages. Our careful planning and priority given to open space acquisition in the first decade of the new millennium has made sure that our grandchildren too, can enjoy those open fields and farmlands. That good planning, together with the increasing local and regional demand for fresh, chemical-free produce and organically-fed livestock, has made it possible for the several active, working farms that are now in Derry to thrive.

Another wonderful aspect of life in our community is how all ages can live, work, and have things to do to enjoy life right here in Derry. Our teenagers can bike to the skating rink in winter, pool and ponds in summer, and hang out anytime during the year at the activity-packed teen center, teen-oriented coffeehouses, and ice cream shops. When our children graduate from school and start looking for jobs and a home of their own, there are ample opportunities for affordable homes and entry level jobs here in Derry. And we don't have to worry about having to leave town in our golden years, since there are several attractive, comfortable, and affordable senior-oriented housing complexes in the Downtown and nearby, so that we can walk to the post office, food store, and parks.

And all this prosperity, coupled with sound fiscal and capital planning, has reduced our tax rate so it is now among the lowest 10% in the state. Indeed, Derry is the place to be.

BACKGROUND

During the fall of 1999 through the year 2000, Derry citizens and local officials participated in a community-based process to update the Town's Master Plan. A broad spectrum of Derry citizens and businesspeople took part in a series of workshops, designed and facilitated by the consultant team Herr & James Associates, to identify the desired future for Derry, and what steps could be taken to realize that future. Based upon the community-identified goals and priority actions that emerged in the first Community Visions Workshop, citizen topic groups formed to develop in depth proposals for inclusion in the Master Plan. The goals, objectives, and implementing actions contained in each Element of this Plan, largely are based upon the work of those citizen topic groups. The elements of this Plan, which mostly correspond to the priority topics that emerged from the planning process, are:

- Land Use and Growth
- The Downtown
- Economic Development
- Housing
- Open Space and Recreation
- Community Facilities
- Circulation (Transportation)

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Citizens identified the following goals and objectives to guide Derry over the next several years toward its desired future vision. Citizen-recommended actions to implement these goals and objectives are included at the end of each Element.

Land Use and Growth

Derry's goals for land use and growth are to:

- Preserve Derry's overall pattern of land use that concentrates development in the Downtown and west central sections of the Town, with open lands and sparser development in the east section of the community, avoiding the tendency toward suburban sprawl.
- Continue to guide the amount of growth that is sustainable, given Derry's environment, level of service, and to its desired character, as outlined in its growth management ordinance.
- Integrate Town goals for open space, recreation, economic development, downtown revitalization, with land use policies and regulatory tools where appropriate.
- Continue to review zoning regulations to assure consistency with Town objectives and evolving policies on land use.

The Downtown

- Focus on the Downtown as the economic center of the Town, designing Town-wide economic development approaches to support this.
- Continue revitalizing the Downtown, including improvements to, parking, and signs.
- Promote Derry as *New Hampshire's Place to Be*.
- Strive to make the Downtown pedestrian-friendly.
- Strategically plan parking to serve Downtown businesses and services.
- Encourage the private sector to market Derry's businesses, services, and recreational

opportunities.

- Continue to implement the short-and long-term actions identified through the May, 1996 Derry Downtown Profile process.

Economic Development

- Expand the Town's industrial base, attracting businesses to move into existing building space.
- Develop a "techno-park" in Derry.
- Increase recreational opportunities in Derry to provide additional incentives for businesses to locate in the Town.

Housing

- Encourage home ownership of housing. Provide opportunities for new construction and rehabilitation of a variety of affordable housing types.
- Encourage provision of housing for seniors and those with special needs.
- Combine protection of the character and distinctiveness of Derry's residential neighborhoods with provision of housing opportunities to residents.
- Recognize the interrelatedness and importance of other aspects of quality of life in Derry to its housing – open space and nature, economic development, schools, recreation, accessibility – among others. Work to implement improvements in all these areas through implementing the range of Master Plan recommended actions.

Open Space & Recreation

- Give high priority to preserving open space in Derry and target Town resources toward this end.
- Preserve farmland; support local agriculture; and increase local food production.
- Increase planned recreation areas for all ages.
- Create more neighborhood parks.

- Complete and expand pathways in Derry.

Community Facilities & Services

Derry's goals for community facilities are to:

- Assure that there is a continuing link between Derry's provision of municipal services, capital investment, and appropriate level of community growth.
- Continue to maintain a balance between appropriate service provision, community investment, and a moderated tax rate.

Circulation

Derry's goals for circulation are to:

- Achieve location, design, and construction of Exit 4a on I-93 so that it will provide access to Derry's industrial areas and decrease traffic volumes on Routes 102 and 28.
- Reduce congestion and hazard risks through continuing in-town programs of transportation improvements.
- Seek creative solutions to the Downtown traffic/pedestrian interface.
- Strengthen pedestrian and bicycle access through continued support and development of such efforts as the Pathways bike and trail system.

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