



Ad-Hoc Committee to Address Community Housing Needs Summary of Recommendations

Access to safe, affordable, and sustainable housing is essential for the well-being of our residents and the overall vitality of our community. In response to growing concerns about housing availability, affordability, and accessibility, the Committee to Address Community Housing Needs was established to support the City Council in reviewing data, exploring solutions, and identifying long-term strategies for responsible development that support Dover's housing needs through 2035.

Key Findings

Through extensive research, stakeholder engagement, and public outreach, the committee identified critical housing challenges facing Dover:

- **The need for additional Affordable Housing:** A growing gap in housing affordability, with rising rental prices and limited options for middle-income and low-income residents.
- **Regulatory and Zoning Barriers:** Although Dover is often considered as having progressive land-use policies, it continues to explore ways to improve those policies to encourage additional opportunities for diverse housing development.
- **Homelessness and Housing Insecurity:** Increased demand for low-barrier shelters, supportive housing, and services for vulnerable populations, including individuals with disabilities and seniors.
- **Workforce Housing Shortage:** Essential workers, including teachers, healthcare professionals, and first responders can struggle to find housing within city limits.
- **Community Concerns and Misconceptions:** Public feedback highlights the need for education on housing policies, affordability solutions, the economic benefits of diverse housing stock, and lack of public forum to engage in concerns about housing issues impacting Dover.

PRO-HOUSING ZONING REFORMS SINCE 2021

Allowing smaller more affordable homes to be built on lots smaller

Allowing more than one ADU, if the additional ADU is rent restricted to affordable rates

Allowing 2 family conversions if the home looks and operates like a single family home

Allowing new construction of two-family homes single family districts

Populations of Concern

Unsheltered

Disabled

Essential Workers

44% OF DOVER RENTERS ARE COST BURDENED

<3% OF STRAFFORD CO. HOUSING STOCK IS AFFORDABLE

1734 NEW HOUSING UNITS IN DOVER NEEDED BY 2035

26.12% OF LAND IN DOVER IS DEVELOPABLE

Housing Affordability for Strafford County's Workforce

**EMPLOYEES
SURVEYED = 47,720**

	Entry Level	Median	Experienced
Average Yearly Income, All Occupations	\$31,393	\$47,976	\$76,532
Maximum Affordable Monthly Rent	\$785	\$1,199	\$1,913
Maximum Affordable Home Purchase Price	\$92,000	\$140,500	\$224,500

**AVERAGE MONTHLY RENT IN
STRAFFORD CO. = \$1,981**

**AVERAGE PURCHASE PRICE
STRAFFORD CO. = \$430,000**

Source: NHES 2023

Median Sale Price of Homes in Dover

● 2016 ● 2020 ● 2024

2016 EXISTING HOME:
\$250,000

2016 NEW CONSTRUCTION:
\$359,900

2020 EXISTING HOME:
\$336,300

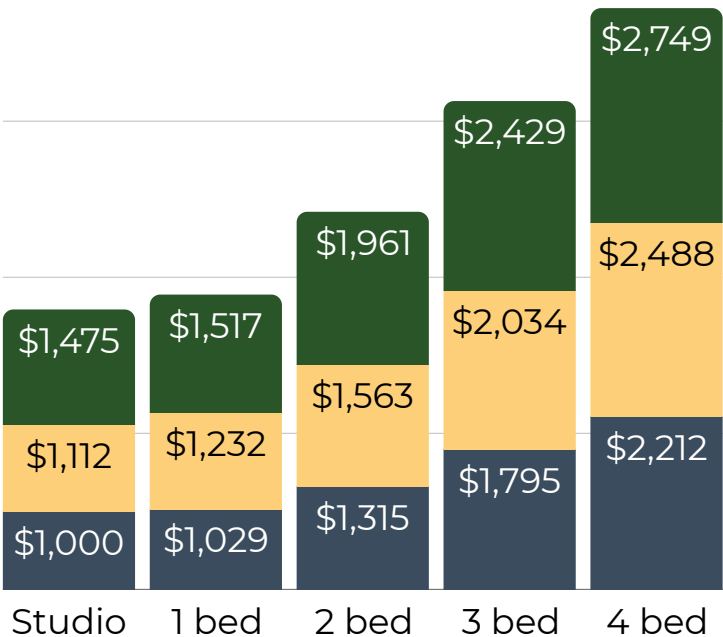
2020 NEW CONSTRUCTION:
\$479,000

2024 EXISTING HOME:
\$540,000

2024 NEW CONSTRUCTION:
\$683,300

Portsmouth-Rochester Fair Market Rents*

● 2020 ● 2023 ● 2025



*FMR is an estimation set by HUD of what rent should cost for a unit in a given market.

Summary of Recommendations

To address these challenges, the committee proposes policy actions, zoning amendments, and financial strategies that align with Dover's 2035 Housing Vision:

1. **Increase Community Engagement and Education:**

- Launch public information campaigns on the benefits of affordable housing and supportive housing programs in the city.
- Involve local schools and community organizations in housing discussions and workshops.

2. **Expand Affordable and Workforce Housing:**

- Require an affordable housing component in all new major developments, an approach known as inclusionary zoning
- Establish consistency measures (standardized policies, criteria, and procedures) for tax incentives and financial assistance programs for homeowners and developers to create affordable units.

3. **Revise Zoning and Land-Use Policies:**

- Reduce minimum lot sizes and frontage requirements to allow for denser, mixed-use development.
- Relax regulations and increase financing options to encourage Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), creating additional lower-cost housing units

4. **Address Homelessness and Housing Insecurity:**

- Expand low-barrier shelter availability and wraparound support services through defining and allowing shelters within the zoning ordinance.
- Establish a land trust to preserve affordable housing and prevent displacement.

5. **Strengthen Public-Private Partnerships:**

- Collaborate with local businesses to develop Employer-Assisted Housing Programs..
- Work with financial institutions to provide low-interest housing loans and affordability programs.

6. **Promote Inclusive and Sustainable Housing Development:**

- Encourage mixed-income neighborhoods through inclusionary zoning policies.
- Support adaptive reuse of vacant properties for residential use.

7. **Create a City Housing Commission:**

- Chartering of official standing housing commission for the city
- Grant oversight powers for many housing-related policies, administrative oversights, programmatic implementations, and financial powers.

Call to Action

Dover is at a critical juncture in addressing its housing challenges. The committee urges the City Council, planning officials, business leaders, and residents to work together in implementing these recommendations. The success of these initiatives depends on a unified, city-wide commitment to:

- Explore the full report from the Ad-Hoc Committee to better understand Dover's housing challenges and the solutions being proposed.
- Adopt progressive housing policies that foster economic growth and social equity. Publicly commit to growing housing for all outlined in the community vision and in the upcoming Land Use Master Plan Chapter.
- Prioritize investments in housing infrastructure and support programs for vulnerable populations.
- Engage residents in housing discussions to ensure broad community support.
- Hold developers and policymakers accountable for delivering results that align with Dover's long-term housing goals.

The committee calls upon city leadership to act with urgency and intention in making these recommendations a reality.

By taking decisive action now, Dover will continue to build on its strengths as a regional leader in innovative, inclusive housing solutions that benefit all residents, businesses, and community stakeholders.

The future of housing in Dover depends on our collective commitment to ensuring affordability, accessibility, and sustainability for generations to come.