

Town of Durham



September, 2000

By the
Durham Planning Board



This project was funded in part by a grant from the Office of State Planning, NH Coastal Program, as authorized by NOAA, grant award number NA870Z240.



TOWN OF DURHAM
15 NEWMARKET ROAD
DURHAM, NH 03824-2898
603/868-8064 • 603/868-8065
FAX 603/868-8033
www.ci.durham.nh.us

Certificate of Adoption

In accordance with New Hampshire RSA 674:4, Master Plan Adoption and Amendment, and New Hampshire RSA 675:6, Method of Adoption, the Durham Planning Board, having held a duly noticed public hearing on September 20, 2000, hereby adopts and certifies the 2000 Master Plan Update on September 20, 2000.

Alex Axt
Chair

Howard Clealif
Member

William Cole
Member

Rose Alvey
Council Representative

David Pearce
Vice Chair

[Signature]
Member

[Signature]
Member

This document was received and recorded by the Town Clerk on October 23, 2000

Signed: Linda Ekdahl
Linda Ekdahl, Town Clerk

Seal:

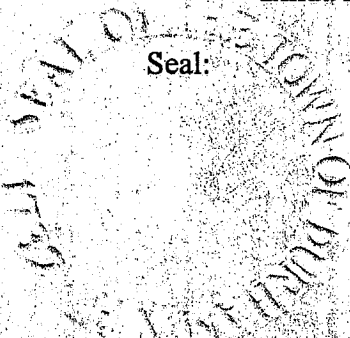




TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section	Page #
Acknowledgments	<i>i</i>
Preface	<i>v</i>
Introduction and Background	<i>ix</i>
This Plan is an Update	<i>ix</i>
Plan Development Process	<i>x</i>
Steering Committee's Guiding Principles and Goals	<i>xiii</i>
Guiding Principles	<i>xiii</i>
Goals of the Master Plan Update	<i>xv</i>
Amending the Master Plan	<i>xvi</i>
Executive Summary	<i>xix</i>
Introduction	<i>xix</i>
Planning Context	<i>xx</i>
Primary Recommendations	<i>xx</i>
Executive Summary of Recommendations	<i>xxi</i>
Conclusion	<i>xxx</i>
Primary Recommendations	<i>xxx</i>
Redevelopment of the Route 108 Sunoco Property	<i>xxx</i>
Implementation of Zoning Changes and the Conservation Development Process	<i>xxxii</i>
Review of the School District Funding Formula	<i>xxxiii</i>
Support of Conservation Easements	<i>xxxiii</i>
Programs to Improve Town and Citizen Communication	<i>xxxiv</i>
Continuation of the Main Street Program	<i>xxxiv</i>
Development of a Joint Town/UNH Office Park	<i>xxxv</i>

Implement a Northwest/Southeast Transportation Linkage Study	xxxv
Complete the Main Street and Downtown Streetscape Improvement Project	xxxvi
Examine Consolidation of Water and Sewer Utilities	xxxvi

Chapter 1

Demographics, Housing, and Growth Management	1.1
Demographics	1.1
Housing	1.15
Single-Family Housing	1.15
Issues, Goals, and Recommendations	1.20
Multi-Unit Housing	1.24
Issues, Goals, and Recommendations	1.24
Senior Housing	1.26
Issues, Goals, and Recommendations	1.29
Affordable Housing	1.29
Issues, Goals, and Recommendations	1.31
Growth Management	1.31
Issues, Goals, and Recommendations	1.34

Chapter 2

Sense of Community and Town Facilities	2.1
Introduction	2.1
Town Center	2.4
Issues, Goals, and Recommendations	2.8
Town Appearance	2.9
Issues, Goals, and Recommendations	2.14
Communications	2.17
Issues, Goals, and Recommendations	2.19
Volunteerism	2.21
Issues, Goals, and Recommendations	2.21
Safety Complex	2.22
Issues, Goals, and Recommendations	2.29
Schools	2.30
Issues, Goals, and Recommendations	2.34
Other Town Facilities	2.36
Issues, Goals, and Recommendations	2.38
The Grange (H.A. Davis Building)	2.38
Issues, Goals, and Recommendations	2.39
Old Town Hall (Courthouse)	2.40
Issues, Goals, and Recommendations	2.42
Craig Supply Property	2.42
Issues, Goals, and Recommendations	2.44

Chapter 3	
Downtown and Commercial Core	3.1
Introduction	3.1
Downtown	3.2
Issues, Goals, and Recommendations	3.5
Professional Multi-Unit Office District (Proposed)	3.20
Issues, Goals, and Recommendations	3.21
Church Hill (Proposed District)	3.23
Issues, Goals, and Recommendations	3.24
Gasoline Alley (Proposed District)	3.28
Issues, Goals, and Recommendations	3.29
Coe's Corner (Proposed District)	3.33
Issues, Goals, and Recommendations	3.34
Route 108 (Proposed District)	3.37
Issues, Goals, and Recommendations	3.37
Chapter 4	
Environmental and Cultural Resources	4.1
Vision	4.1
Surface Water and Estuarine Resources	4.2
Issues, Goals, and Recommendations	4.4
Wetlands	4.8
Issues, Goals, and Recommendations	4.11
Drinking Water and Aquifer Protection	4.11
Issues, Goals, and Recommendations	4.15
Sand and Gravel Deposits	4.20
Issues, Goals, and Recommendations	4.20
Farmland	4.24
Issues, Goals, and Recommendations	4.27
Wildlife Habitat Management	4.28
Issues, Goals, and Recommendations	4.29
Species of Special Concern	4.30
Issues, Goals, and Recommendations	4.33
Greenways/Scenic Areas	4.34
Issues, Goals, and Recommendations	4.35
Urban Service Area Greenways	4.36
Issues, Goals, and Recommendations	4.36
Rural Service Area Greenways	4.39
Issues, Goals, and Recommendations	4.40
Scenic Views	4.40
Issues, Goals, and Recommendations	4.41
Lands Identified for Conservation/Greenways	4.43
Issues, Goals, and Recommendations	4.47
Conservation Funding Options	4.51

Issues, Goals, and Recommendations	4.51
Historic and Archeological Resources	4.55
Issues, Goals, and Recommendations	4.59
Management of Impounded Water Resources	4.60
Mill Pond Issues, Goals, and Recommendations	4.60
Information and Mapping	4.61
Issues, Goals, and Recommendations	4.62
Chapter 5	
Recreation	5.1
Introduction	5.1
Recreation Director	5.2
Issues, Goals, and Recommendations	5.3
Structured Recreation	5.5
Issues, Goals, and Recommendations	5.15
Unstructured Recreational Facilities Needs Assessment	5.18
Issues, Goals, and Recommendations	5.20
Wagon Hill Farm	5.28
Issues, Goals, and Recommendations	5.30
Community Pool	5.38
Issue and Recommendation	5.40
Chapter 6	
Transportation	6.1
Vision	6.1
Background	6.4
Historic Traffic Circulation Recommendations	6.17
Traffic Goals and Objectives	6.27
Recommendations	6.29
Conclusion	6.44
Chapter 7	
Public Utilities and Services	7.1
Fire Department	7.1
Issues, Goals, and Recommendations	7.11
Durham Ambulance Corps	7.17
Issues, Goals, and Recommendations	7.20
Police Department	7.21
Issues, Goals, and Recommendations	7.26
Durham/UNH Communications Center	7.32
Issues, Goals, and Recommendations	7.34
Wastewater	7.35
Issues, Goals, and Recommendations	7.36
Water	7.44

Issues, Goals, and Recommendations	7.48
Solid Waste	7.55
Issues, Goals, and Recommendations	7.59
Chapter 8	
Tax Stabilization	8.1
Introduction	8.1
Commercial Development	8.4
Recommendations	8.9
Zoning Map	8.10
Recommendations	8.11
Zoning Ordinance/Land Use Regulations	8.14
Recommendations	8.15
Development Process	8.18
Recommendations	8.18
Packaging Parcels	8.19
Recommendations	8.19
Infrastructure	8.20
Recommendations	8.20
Durham Business Park	8.21
Recommendation	8.24
University	8.24
Recommendations	8.25
Single-Family Development	8.26
Recommendations	8.29
Public Schools	8.29
Recommendations	8.33
Town Fiscal Management	8.33
Recommendations	8.35
Conclusion	8.37
Chapter 9	
Land Development Regulations	9.1
Vision	9.1
Residential Development and Subdivision Design	9.2
Issues, Goals, and Recommendations	9.16
Preventing Strip Development	9.18
Issues, Goals, and Recommendations	9.19
Commercial Land Availability	9.20
Issues, Goals, and Recommendations	9.21
Multi-Unit Housing	9.23
Issues, Goals and Recommendations	9.24
Transfer of Development Rights, Impact Fees, and Land Use Transfer Tax	9.25

Issues, Goals, and Recommendations	9.26
Sign Ordinance	9.27

Chapter 10

University Relations	10.1
Background	10.1
Historical Context	10.1
Issues, Goals, and Recommendations	10.5
Town of Durham and UNH Inter-Relationships	10.8

Appendix A – Great Bay Organization Resource List

Appendix B - Endangered and Threatened Species in Durham

Appendix C – Traffic Volume Information

Appendix D – New Hampshire Auto Fee Legislation

Appendix E – Trip Report of Transportation Demand Management

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

MASTER PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE

Ray Belles, Chair	Richard Gsottschneider
Nancy Sandberg, Vice Chair	Art Guadano
Alex Auty	Milton (Sandy) Martin
Michael Behrendt	Vi McNeill
Allan Braun	Don Thompson
John (Jack) Farrell	Robbi Woodburn
Frank Graf	

DURHAM PLANNING BOARD

Neil Wylie	Thomas Kelly
Alex Auty	David Pease
Homer Chalifoux	Vi McNeill
Walter Cheney	George Reif
William Cote	Malcolm Sandberg
Peter Smith	Robert Gearheart.
Vincent Morgan	

DURHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Vi McNeill	Scott Hovey
James Walsh	George Rief
Dale "Pete" Chinburg	Malcolm Sandberg
Jerry Dee	William Woodward
Annmarie Harris	Michael D. Pazdon

DURHAM MASTER PLAN SUBCOMMITTEES

Demographics, Housing, and Growth Management

Don Thompson, Chair
Donna Brown
Eric Cook
Thomas Kelley
Joyce Mills
Jane Towle
Dorothy True
Anthony Zizos, UNH Rep.

Downtown and Commercial Core

Art Guadano, Co-Chair
Nancy Sandberg, Co-Chair
Chuck Cressy
Warren Daniel
Joan Graf
Bill Murphy
Cecilia Nauck
Dave Pease
Diane Woods
Gregg Sanborn, UNH Rep.

Environmental and Cultural Resources

Frank Graf, Chair
Dudley Dudley
Sylvia Foster
Sharon Griffin
Peter Lamb
Richard Langan
Stuart Leiderman
Paul Mayewski
Steve McRae
Michael Prentice
Judith Spang
Dale Valena

Land Development Regulations

Jack Farrell, Chair
Dea Brickner Wood
Tom Christie
Nancy Clarke
Steve Harvey
Roger Jaques
William Penhale
David Schwartz
Victor Azzi, UNH Rep.

Public Utilities and Services

Sandy Martin, Chair
Patrick Ahearn
Alan Borner
Art Grant
Mal Sandberg
Bill Skinner
Frank Underwood
Brad Larrabee, UNH Rep.

Recreation

Alex Auty, Chair
Gregg Betts
Malin Ely Clyde
Mike Hoffman
Mark McGuire
Gregg Moore
Tracy Schroeder
Chris Ann Spodoro
Linda Hayden, UNH Rep.

***Sense of Community and
Town Facilities***

Robbi Woodburn, Chair
Marion James
Bob LaMont
Elizabeth Lund
Claire Powell
Sandra Rodeffer
Walter Rous
Ruth Schondelmeier
Betsy Haley, UNH Rep.
John Sanders, UNH Rep.

Transportation

Allan Braun, Chair
John Carroll
Charles Dingle
Richard England
Diane Freedman
Annmarie Harris
Dirk Timmons, UNH Rep.

Tax Stabilization

Michael Behrendt, Chair
Jerry Dee
Jane Faix
Malcolm McNeill
Edward McNitt
Katie Paine
Marjorie Smith
Alma Tirrell

UNH Relations

Dick Gsottschneider, Chair
Jane Crooks
Suzanne Dev
Leslie Schwartz
Craig Seymour
Leila Moore, UNH Rep.

TOWN ADMINISTRATION

Ilene Healy, Town Administrator
Laurence Shaffer, former Town Administrator
Jennie Berry, Administrative Assistant
Sharon Elliott, Minute Taker

PLANNING STAFF

Duane Hyde, Director of Planning and Community Development
Dawn Mitchell, Secretary for the Office of Assessing, Planning, and Code Enforcement
Karen Edwards, Secretary for the Office of Assessing, Planning, and Code Enforcement
Michael Jeffords, Interim Planner
Matthew Nazar, Interim Planner
Steve Slovinski, Interim Planner
John Harwood, Interim Planner

Acknowledgements

This project would not have been possible without the energy and dedication of members of the Steering Committee and the Subcommittees. They are all gratefully thanked for their time and efforts. In addition, all of the people who attended and participated the many meetings and workshops for this plan deserve our thanks for their input and dedication to our community.

A number of other individuals and organizations participated throughout the project by providing guidance, meeting space, workshop materials, and/or assistance. We are especially grateful to the following:

Joseph "Skip" Grady, Director of Public Works
Ronald O'Keefe, Fire Chief
David Kurz, Police Chief
Howard Hedegard, Business Manager
Rick Howes, UNH Intern
Tyler VanWagner, UNH Intern
Laura Scott, UNH Planning Intern
Beth Fischer, Durham Main Street Program
Mary Robertson, workshop facilitator
Theresa Walker, workshop facilitator
Durham Evangelical Church
durham marketplace
Oyster River School District Administrative Offices
Oyster River High School
Oyster River Middle School
Strafford Regional Planning Commission
The Licker Store
UNH Survey Center
UNH Cooperative Extension
University of New Hampshire

In addition, this project would not have been possible without the funding assistance provided by the Office of State Planning's New Hampshire Coastal Program. Diane Hardy of the Coastal Program was particularly helpful throughout this project and deserves special recognition. Funding through the Coastal Program was authorized by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Grant Award Number NA870Z0240.

PREFACE

A PLACE IN TIME

Every document and analysis is a product of the time and the conditions in which it is prepared. This Plan is no exception. The following four current, major factors impact the sense of urgency and specific recommendations contained in this Plan:

- The State tax debate and school funding issue;
- The widening and modernization of Route 108 in the Main Street intersection area;
- The improvements to downtown and the Main Street enhancement project; and
- The UNH Master Plan update.

TAXES AND SCHOOL FUNDING

The State's reliance on local property taxes to support schools has been ruled unconstitutional and the legislature and governor have put in place a plan that is acknowledged to be \$100 million short of authorized spending and may be \$200 million short in its second year. Given the current turmoil and New Hampshire's historic aversion to broad-based taxing, it would not be prudent for the Town to anticipate any meaningful property tax relief from the State.

ROUTE 108/MAIN STREET INTERSECTION

The major work on Route 108 will result in changes to several businesses in Gasoline Alley and create an opportunity for the Town to acquire property or otherwise impact the use and appearance of this important commercial area and gateway to Durham.

MAIN STREET ENHANCEMENT

The Main Street enhancement project was completed as this Plan was being written. It will be several months before the enhancement project's full impact can be assessed, but we anticipate a more vibrant and efficient downtown, which will lead to positive economic and aesthetic results.

UNH MASTER PLAN

UNH is in the process of updating its own master plan. Increased student enrollment, new construction, and changes in traffic patterns are examples of factors that may directly impact the Town's planning. The Town is represented in its deliberations and should continue to participate and work to ensure cooperation and mutually positive results.

OVERRIDING ISSUES

In virtually every past plan and study completed, the Town has overwhelmingly defined the following four elements as being central to the form, spirit, and cultural core of the Town:

- Good schools;
- Small town with rural environment;
- Conservation and preservation of our natural resources; and
- Fiscal constraint brought about by high property taxes.

Our ability to balance the first three essential elements is at odds with the New Hampshire tax structure, which relies primarily on the local property tax to support the schools and infrastructure. Good schools attract young families, creating added tax burden and lessening our ability to pay for other essential services.

The dilemma is further compounded by the fact that we are a university town. UNH significantly defines the Town and provides many residents with employment. Although Durham's largest employer, as a government institution, the University pays no taxes to the Town. However, it has the potential to fuel improvements to the Town's economic base.

The Town's tax burden has the effect of driving the elderly out of Town, threatening the quality of schools, lessening economic diversity, and diminishing our hopes and aspirations for the future. Three principle forms of relief from this cycle that appear acceptable are:

- Manage the growth of single-family homes,
- Protection of land through conservation; and
- Increase revenue by encouraging acceptable commercial and office/research growth.

All of these tactics are used throughout this Plan and force difficult choices which might not be made under other circumstances.

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

A master plan is intended to be the device that influences the making, interpretation, and implementation of laws and procedures that give shape and direction to our community. It is required by law in the State of New Hampshire, but unlike other "master devices," it has no force of law and no way to generate the resources that may be required for implementation.

The Master Plan can be a powerful tool to shape the future by giving direction to elected officials, but it derives its power from the will of the people to ensure the plan adopted truly represents the goals and aspirations of the community, and their willingness to accept the difficult yet inevitable compromises necessary to reach the consensus required for action. Government entities recognize the Master Plan as a representation of the will of the people. In practical terms it is a future-oriented road map for the evolution of the community, one that must remain constant in its overreaching goals, but change in the context of the reality of a changing world.

THIS PLAN IS AN UPDATE

This Plan is an update of the 1989 Master Plan, plus the 1995 Community Development Plan. It is a continuation of the work begun in those two important efforts. In fact, many of the issues that were the focus in 1989 and 1995 remain issues in this Plan. In most cases we have reaffirmed their importance; in others we have refocused or suggested alternatives.

The 1989 Master Plan was professionally prepared by Rist-Frost Associates with deep involvement from the community led by a 12-person Master Plan Update Committee of citizens. The 1995 Community Development Plan was citizen prepared but more narrowly focused with topical groups – Sense of Community, Downtown, Economic

Development, and Route 108/Limited Business District – reporting to a 12-person Community Development Steering Committee.

PLAN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The process for this Master Plan update began in early 1998 with a decision of the Durham Planning Board and the support of the Durham Town Council. Fifty percent of funding for out-of-pocket expenses and Town staff time was provided for by a grant from the NH Coastal Program.

An abbreviated summary of the process is as follows:

July 1998

- First public Master Plan workshop
The purpose of the workshop was for the citizens of Durham to identify what they thought were the major issues facing the Town and to share suggested solutions.
- Steering Committee appointed by the Durham Planning Board
- Chair elected
- Guiding principles adopted
- Subcommittee chairs assigned

August 1998

- Second public Master Plan workshop
- Volunteers sought for Master Plan subcommittees

September – October 1998

- Random telephone survey of 303 Durham residents conducted by the Survey Center of UNH
- Ten subcommittees formed, involving over 75 Durham residents
- Kick-off subcommittee activity

October 1998 – March 1999

- Subcommittees reviewed past plans and studies and reviewed issues identified in July & August workshops
- Begin work on recommendations

March – May 1999

- Subcommittees prepare final reports to present to Steering Committee

June – August 1999

- Steering Committee amends and adopts subcommittee reports

August – November 1999

- Draft Master Plan compiled
- Draft reviewed by the public at workshops
- Final draft submitted to Planning Board

June – September 2000

- Planning Board makes recommendations and changes to draft
- Public hearing held to review final draft
- Planning Board approves Master Plan

Throughout the Master Plan process the Steering Committee met bi-weekly, then weekly, and finally twice a week. Subcommittees usually met weekly during the period September 1998 to June 1999. More than 75 citizens participated on a regular basis.

Conflicts and contradictions were expected and experienced. Within the subcommittees, consensus was generally reached and the differences not resolved were taken to the Steering Committee. Conflicts among the subcommittees were generally resolved at the Steering Committee level and in some cases the Steering Committee changed the recommendations that came from the subcommittees. When there were strong differences to these changes made by the Steering Committee, they are reported as “subcommittee viewpoints” in the draft Master Plan submitted to the Planning Board.

A complete list of the Steering Committee and Subcommittee members is in the Acknowledgement section, and a comprehensive list of resource materials supporting the information in the chapters is in the Appendix.

