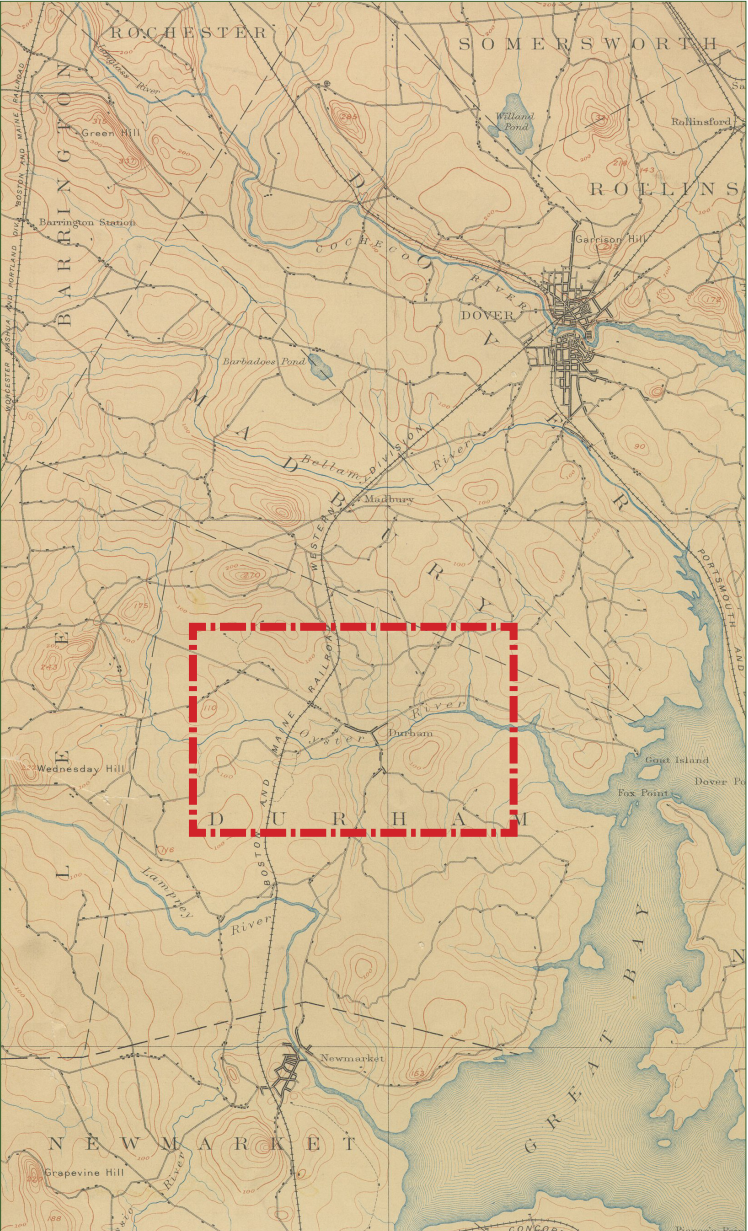


Durham in many ways owes its location and present appearance to the arrival of the University of New Hampshire (then New Hampshire College), which was established in 1893. Prior to this arrival, Durham was a small farming village. The town’s prosperity was tied to Great Bay, Little Bay, and the Oyster River, the highways of the 19th century. Understandably the commercial focus of the community was down on the banks of the Oyster River where ships were built and commerce took place. Shipbuilding, farming, brickmaking, and lumbering were the staple industries of that time and it was the waterways that linked Durham to commercial markets.

With the advent of the railroad, reliance on water transport waned and new commercial centers in the region emerged. In time, Durham might have expanded at the falls of the Oyster River, but the momentum shifted when New Hampshire’s Land Grant College moved from Hanover to Durham.

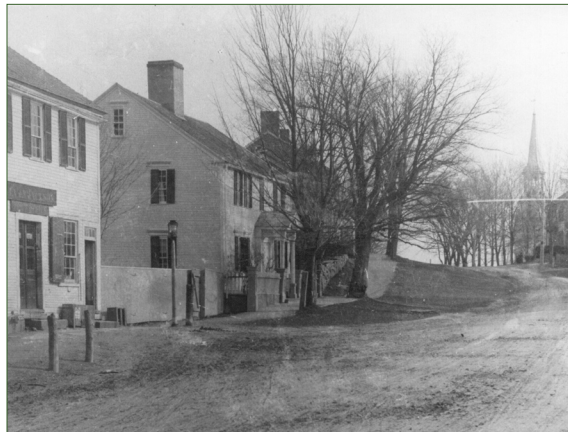
Over time, University buildings inched their way down Main Street to meet the downtown. What exists today is a commercial core area that was initially designed for University students, faculty and staff, but now also strives to fulfill the needs of a growing residential population.



Map from 1893 showing the majority of development along the Oyster River.

DURHAM COMMERCIAL CORE STRATEGIC PLAN

A TOWN RICH IN HISTORY



Looking East on Church Hill, 1890s



Main Street near Mill Road, 1920



Main Street looking West, 1928



Main St & Mill Rd intersection, 1930s



North side of Main Street, 1945



Main Street, 1950s



Newmarket Road & Main Street, 1983



North side of Main Street, 1960s



Mill Road / Main Street triangle, 1980s



Jenkins Court, from Main Street, 1985



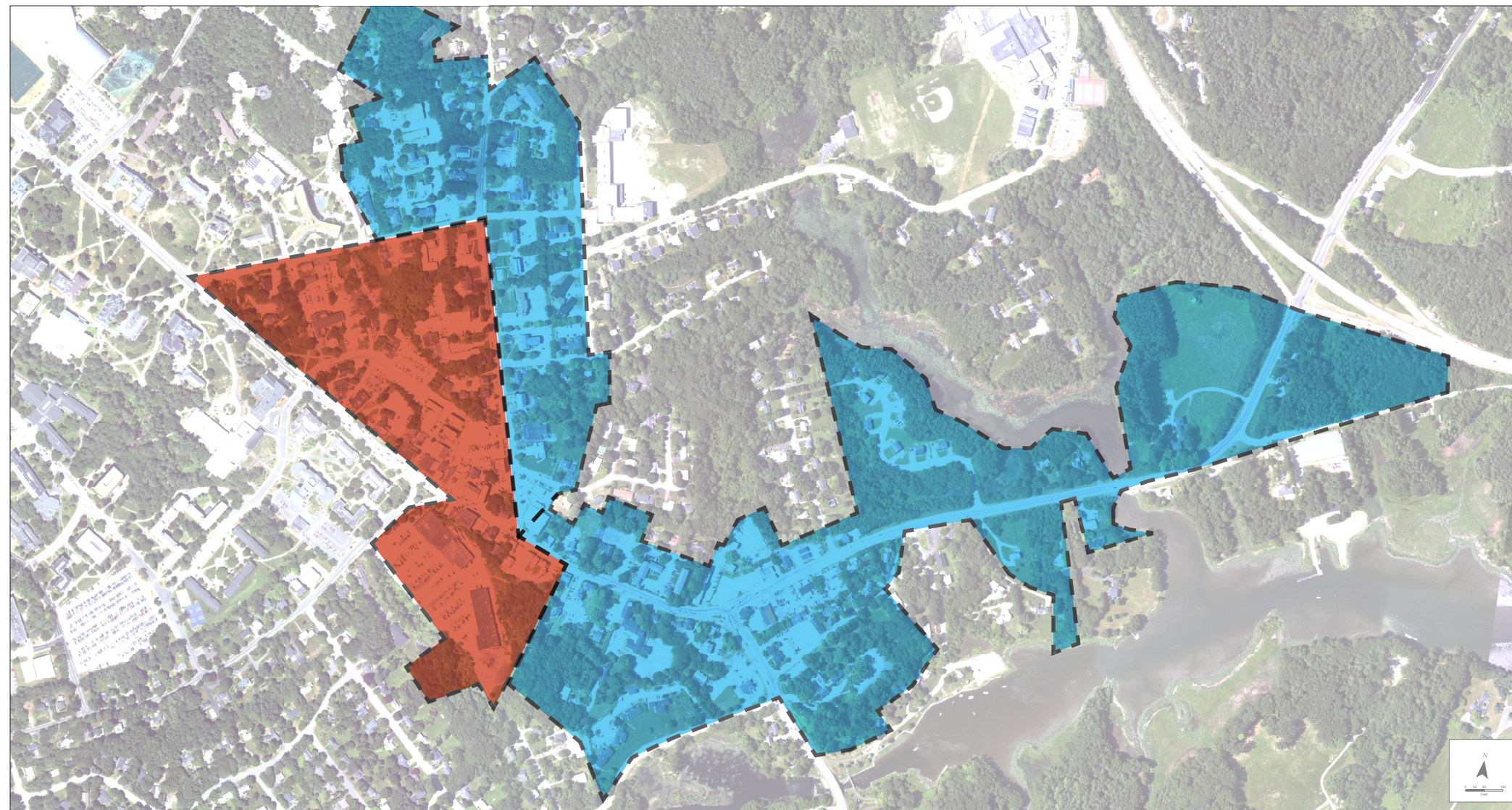
Main Street looking up Church Hill, 1895

Durham contains many fine examples of the Federalist style buildings typical to the region, including the First Savings Bank building, the old Town Hall (circa 1825), the Frost-Sawyer Homestead (circa 1649), and the Parsonage (circa 1840).



The area along Newmarket Road, which is part of the Historic District, has a fine collection of old and new buildings of similar design and scale, most all of which have been adapted to twentieth century uses. The Church Hill area, also part of the historic district, is characterized by residences from the past two centuries, most of which have been converted to student housing.

DURHAM COMMERCIAL CORE STRATEGIC PLAN

DURHAM STUDY AREA

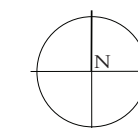


LEGEND

-  Central Business District
-  Commercial Core

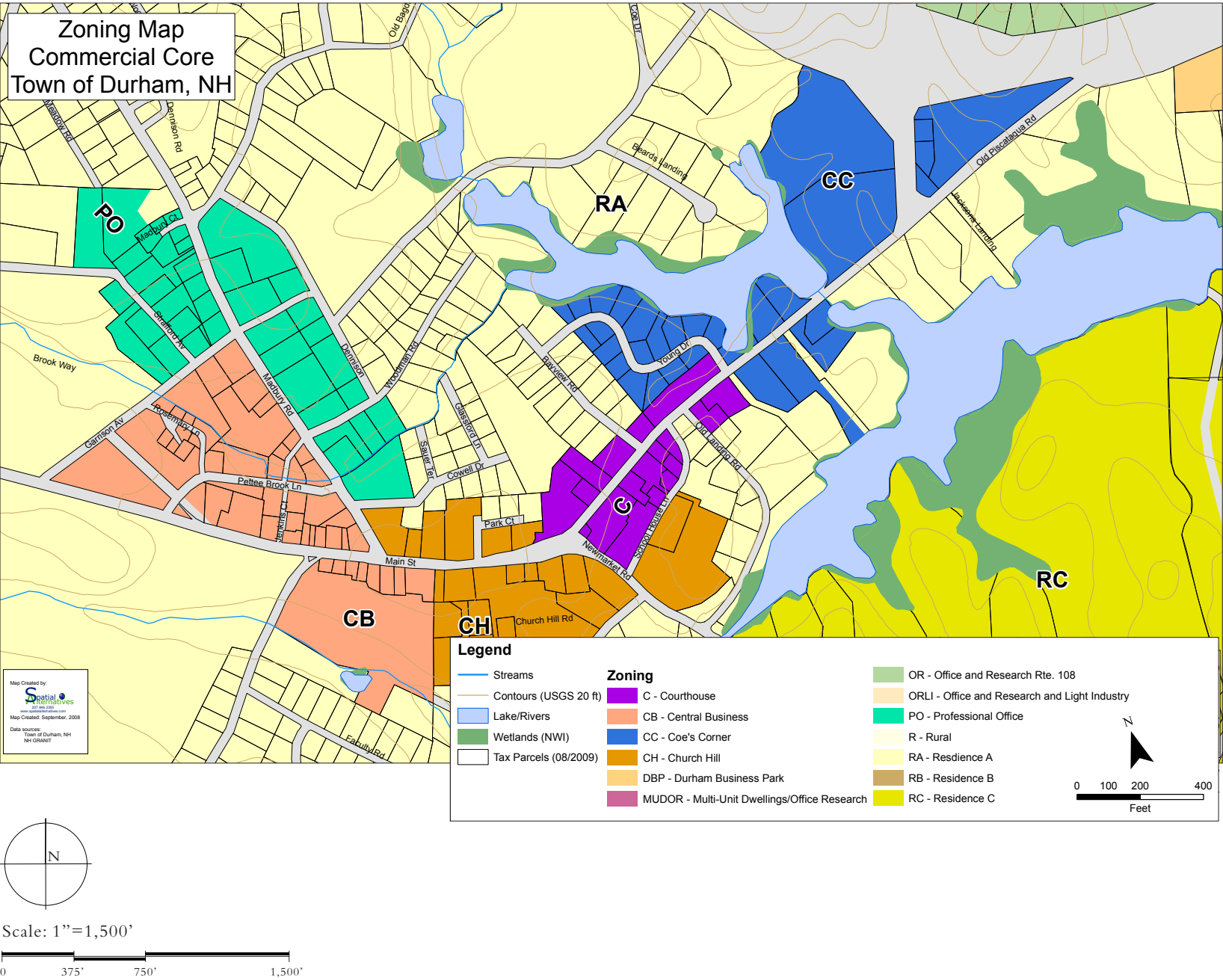
The Durham Strategic Planning effort focused on two primary areas: the Central Business District and the larger Commercial Core. The Commercial Core includes several zoning districts including: Central Business, Professional Office, Church Hill, Courthouse, and Coe's Corner.

The design team also looked at the Town as a whole to understand the context and influences affecting the study area.



Scale: 1"=666'





Zoning

Presently Durham’s business corridor, which runs from Garrison Avenue to the Route 4 bridge, is made up of a number of zones. Generally running from west to east, the zones include the Professional Office (PO), Central Business (CB), Church Hill (CH), Courthouse (C), and Coe’s Corner (CC) districts. The remainder of the corridor is in the Residence A district.

The minimum lot size now required in the CBD, CH, and C district is 5,000 square feet. It is 10,000 square feet in the PO District and 30,000 square feet in the CC District. Permitted uses in these zones include a wide mix of retail and commercial with subtle variations in what is allowed as a permitted and conditional use or not allowed in each zone. Automobile related uses are restricted to the C District. Businesses that tend to generate foot traffic, such as restaurants and retail uses, are not allowed in the PO and CC districts.

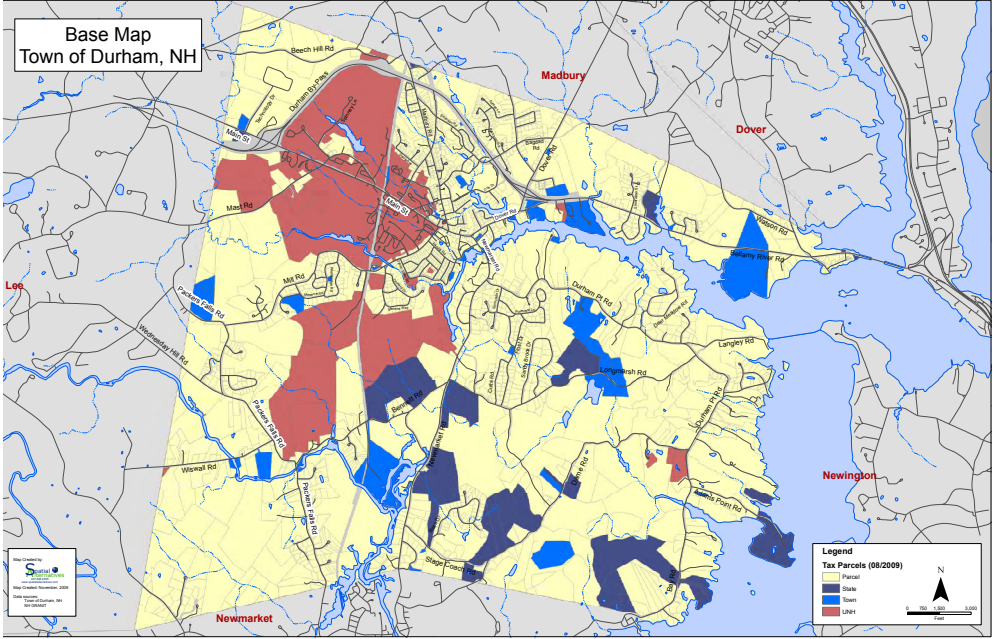
The minimum lot size now required in the Residence A District is 20,000 square feet. Other permitted uses in this district include government facility, elderly housing, daycare centers, bed and breakfasts, and outdoor recreational playing fields. Uses allowed by Conditional Use Permit include: religious uses and facilities and larger elderly housing facilities. It is clear that unless the minimum lot sizes and some of the business uses permitted in the PO, CB, CH, C, and CC districts are modified or eliminated, the goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan will not be met.

Demographics

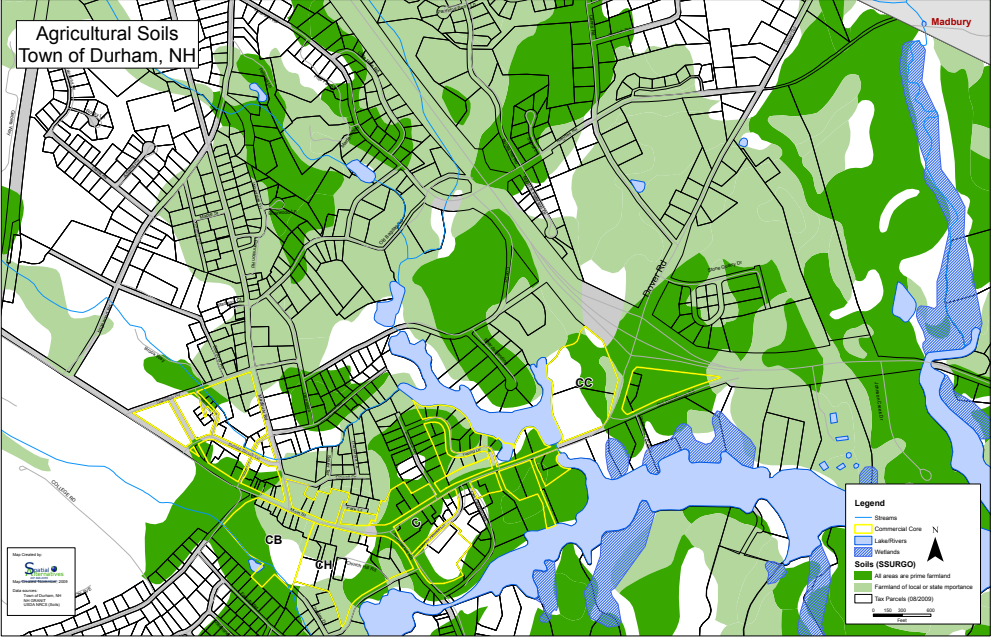
The population of Durham is unique in comparison to other communities in the region. Durham is home to the University of New Hampshire (UNH). Therefore the population consists of both year-round residents and UNH students living on and off campus. Consequently, over half of the population of Durham falls within the ages of 18 to 24, and Durham’s population is influenced by fluctuations in the enrollment of the University.

The Town of Durham has experienced steady growth since 1990. The estimated population for Durham in 2000 was 12,664, up slightly from 12,294 in 1990.

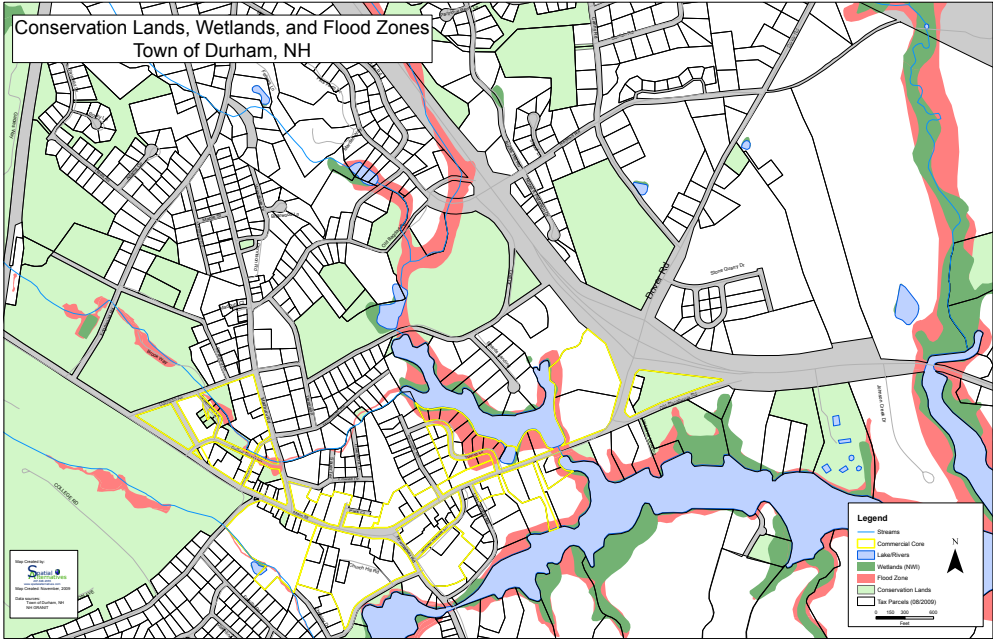
The team looked at the existing conditions within the entire Town of Durham, to understand the broader planning context. Land ownership was studied for greater understanding of land not on the tax role, and Town and University sites where new development might occur. Environmental factors were also studied, including soil types and wetlands. The transportation network and traffic volumes were also carefully considered when proposing improvements to the road network and circulation patterns within downtown Durham.



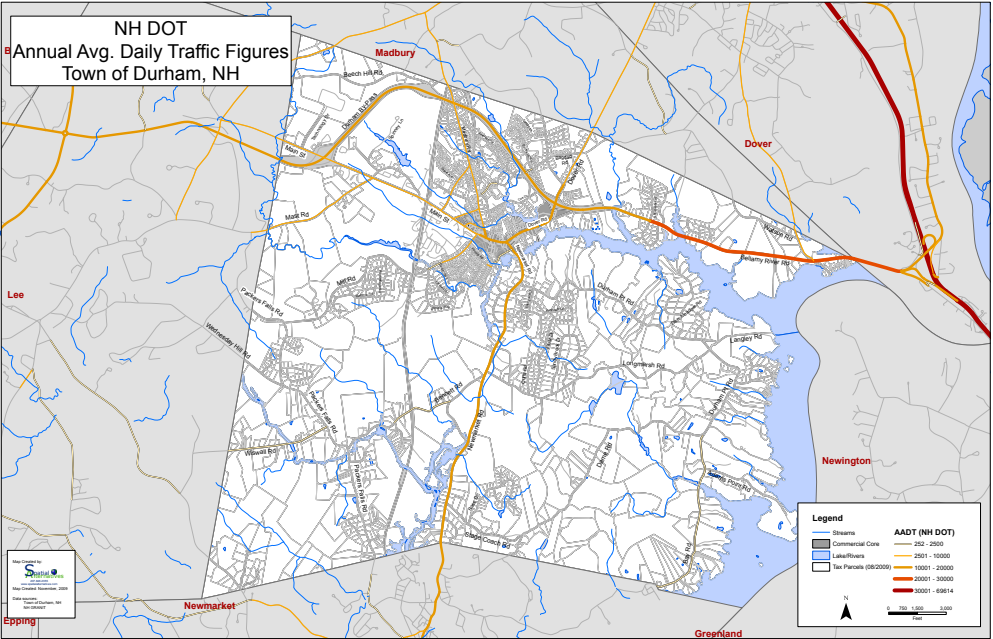
Analysis Map: Non-taxed land owned by state, town, and UNH.



Analysis Map: Soils considered prime and important for farming.



Analysis Map: Conservation lands, wetlands, and flood zones.



Analysis Map: Annual average daily traffic figures.

DURHAM COMMERCIAL CORE STRATEGIC PLAN

SITE PHOTOGRAPHS - CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

Images of the study area are included on this page, and the following page.







LEGEND

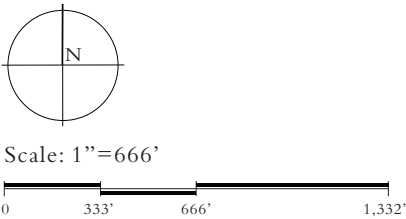


Pedestrian
Sheds

This diagram shows the existing pedestrian sheds in the study area. A pedestrian shed is an area that is centered on a common destination, such as a civic space or commercial area. Its size is related to a five minute walk from the center to the edge. Five minutes is proven to be the distance an average person is willing to walk to a destination.

Historically, neighborhoods were naturally defined by pedestrian sheds. Despite the prevalence of the automobile, this rule of thumb still applies today when trying to promote vibrant, walkable places.

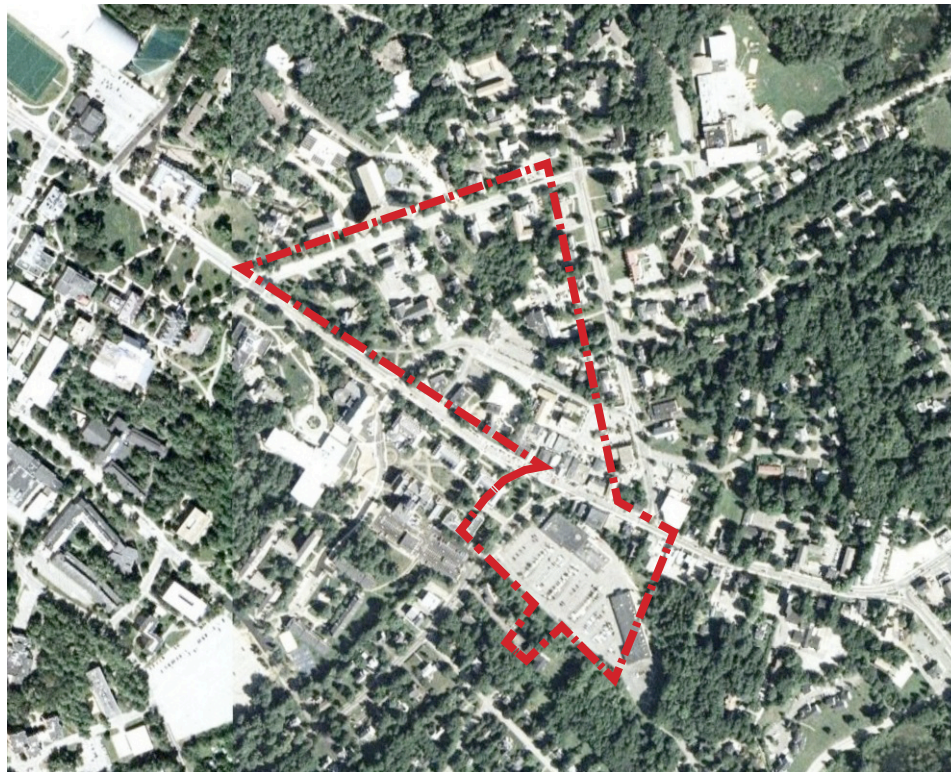
In addition to the destination, a walkable area should have a streetscape environment conducive to pedestrian comfort. The pedestrian sheds on this diagram are located based on these criteria, assuming the goals of the Strategic Plan, including sidewalk improvements, are met.



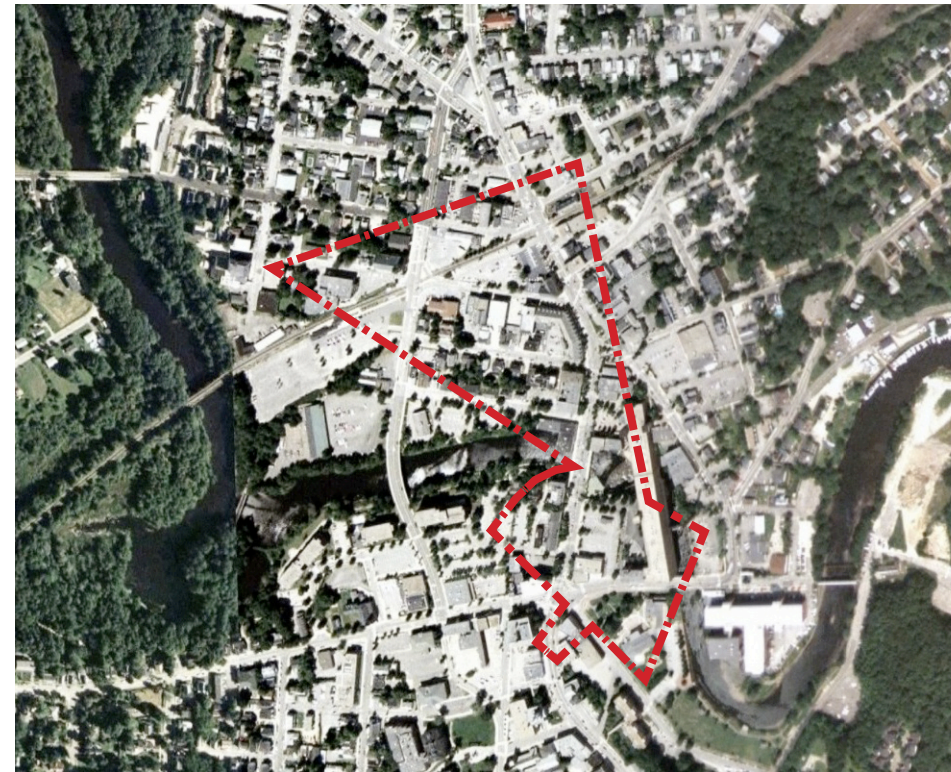
LEGEND

■ ■ ■ Central Business District Boundary

To the left are a series of scale comparisons showing Durham's Central Business District outlined in red, superimposed at the same scale on several well known towns and cities in the region. This exercise is helpful for the design team to get a sense of the relative scale of the area being studied. It is also helpful to local residents who may have never seen their community in the context of a more intensely developed town.



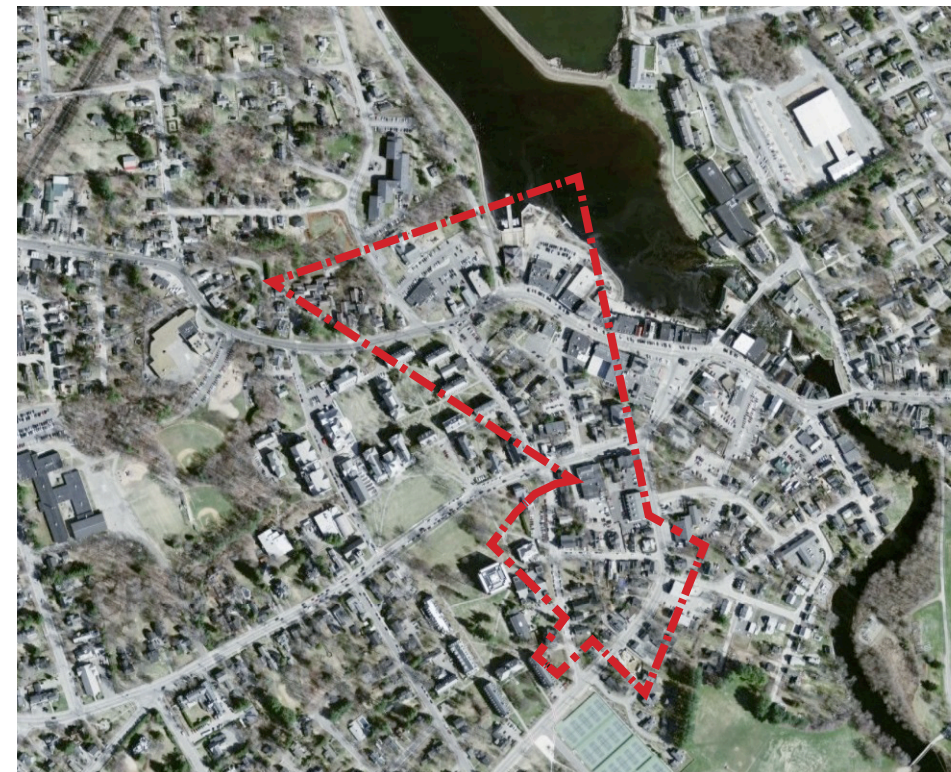
Durham, New Hampshire, Central Business District



Dover, New Hampshire



Portsmouth, New Hampshire



Exeter, New Hampshire