

# ***Plan Endorsement Recommendation Report***

## **Town of Dover**



**New Jersey Department of State,  
Business Action Center, Office of Planning Advocacy  
July 16, 2025**



This document is a recommendation report prepared by the Office of Planning Advocacy (OPA), which serves as staff to the State Planning Commission (Commission/SPC). Its recommendations are based on input from partner agencies, the Town of Dover (Dover), Morris County, and members of the public. OPA will post this report and other materials related to the Town of Dover Plan Endorsement petition on its website. OPA can be contacted by email regarding this and other petitions for Plan Endorsement by providing contact information, including name, organization, address, and e-mail address to [ospmail@sos.nj.gov](mailto:ospmail@sos.nj.gov)

Municipal planning documents submitted by the Town of Dover, such as the Master Plan, Re-Examination Report, Zoning and Land Use Maps, etc., can be found here:

<https://www.nj.gov/state/bac/planning/plan-endorsement/petitions/>

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## INTRODUCTION

The Town had its Regional Center designated by the State Planning Commission on December 2, 1994. The Regional Center was due to expire on December 2, 2004, but was extended via various permit extensions, and then again through Executive Order 103 (Murphy) which declared a Public Health Emergency and State of Emergency due to the COVID-19 pandemic on March 9, 2020. On June 1, 2022, the Commission adopted Resolution No. 2022-05, which declared a center termination date of March 31, 2023 for municipalities such as Dover that were further along in the process of extending the designation of their Centers through the Plan Endorsement process.

The Town's interest in pursuing formal Plan Endorsement was discussed on February 3, 2022 at a prepetition meeting with representatives from the state agencies and the Town. Dover's primary objectives for seeking Plan Endorsement and Regional Center Designation are to continue to align its local planning goals and objectives with the State Development and Redevelopment Plan (State Plan), and to receive wider recognition and State Agency benefits in support of their efforts to strengthen the economic viability and vibrancy of the historic downtown and commercial corridors through several planning initiatives and redevelopment plans and projects that embody the principles of sustainable development and smart growth.

This report contains findings and conclusions concerning consistency of the Town's plans with the current State Plan. The review of the petition is based on information submitted by the petitioner and information otherwise available to OPA.

Adopting a resolution in support of Plan Endorsement of the Town's plans will demonstrate that they are taking appropriate steps to plan for the sustainable future by addressing their infrastructure, economic development, housing, open space, environmental, and resiliency concerns.

## BACKGROUND

The Town of Dover initiated the Plan Endorsement (PE) process with a prepetition meeting with OPA and relevant State Agencies on February 3, 2022 to renew their Regional Center designation. The Town appointed its Plan Endorsement Advisory Committee by Resolution No. 244-2021 on November 9, 2021. The Town then submitted their Municipal Self-Assessment (MSA) to OPA in March 22, 2023. OPA and its State Agency partners responded with an Opportunity and Constraints Assessment (OCA) on 05/03/2022. Following the OCA, the MSA was authorized by the Town via resolution #103-2023 on 03/21/2023.

OPA, Dover, and State Agency partners achieved a consensus in regards to the requirements in the Plan and Implementation Agreement (PIA). The Town's Planning Board adopted the PIA and proposed State Plan Policy Map amendments at their January 28, 2025 Planning Board meeting via resolution #66-2025. The PIA includes items that OPA and other State Agencies believe will achieve consistency with the State Plan, as well as the updated Plan Endorsement Guidelines, which address State priorities for environmental justice and climate resiliency, including amendments to the New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL).

## CHRONOLOGY

Event(s)	Date	Notes
Town Center Designation	12/02/1994	
Dover Community Forestry Management Plan	01/2005	
Master Plan	2007	Reexamined in 2018
Circulation Element	2006	
Land Use Plan Element	2006	
Historic Preservation Element	2006	
Recreation and Open Space Element	2006	
Land Use Plan Element	2006	
Zoning Map	2009	Revised on 06/15/2015 per ordinance #26-2014 and subsequently revised on 01/08/2018 per ordinances #26-2017, #21-2016, and #15-2016.
Adopted Morris County Waste Water Management Plan	2014	
Revised Housing Element & Fair Share Plan	2016	
Morris County Strategic Growth Plan	08/2018	
Land Use Land Cover	2020	
Morris County Hazard Mitigation Action Plan	2020	
Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan Amended	05/19/2021	NJDES #NJG0141852
Water and Sewer Connection Fees Ordinance	06/23/2023	Ord. #s 12-2023
Municipal Self-Assessment	03/22/2023	
Opportunity and Constraints Report	05/03/2023	
Dover Committing to DCA Fourth Round Affordable Housing Present and Prospective Need	01/16/2025	Res No. 53-2025
Plan and Implementation Agreement	01/28/2025	Approval of Resolution #66-2025
<b>PIC Approval (tentative)</b>	07/16/2025	
<b>SPC Adoption (tentative)</b>	08/06/2025	

## PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Town followed Plan Endorsement guidelines and requested a waiver for Step 5 of the Plan Endorsement process, Conducting Visioning Sessions. The Town had sufficiently demonstrated an intent for public participation through a number of public meetings and other relevant activities that have occurred over the past five years:

- Between 2023 and 2025, the Town engaged in extensive public engagement regarding projects of municipal-wide impact. These included the Iron Ore Redevelopment Project, the 337 East Blackwell Street Redevelopment, and the “Bassett Highway” Redevelopment Area.
- The Town has recently authorized studies which incorporated the solicitation of public feedback. These include a blight study of Municipal Lots F and H, and a TOD study in the vicinity of the Dover NJ Transit station.
- The Town has demonstrated a continued effort to inform and involve key stakeholders, such as with the creation of the Business Development Group.

Dover was granted a waiver on June 19, 2025 to waive Step 5 of the Plan Endorsement process, conducting Community Visioning sessions and in accordance with (N.J.A.C. 15:30-7.11) and (N.J.A.C. 15:30 7-6).

## LOCATION & REGIONAL CONTEXT

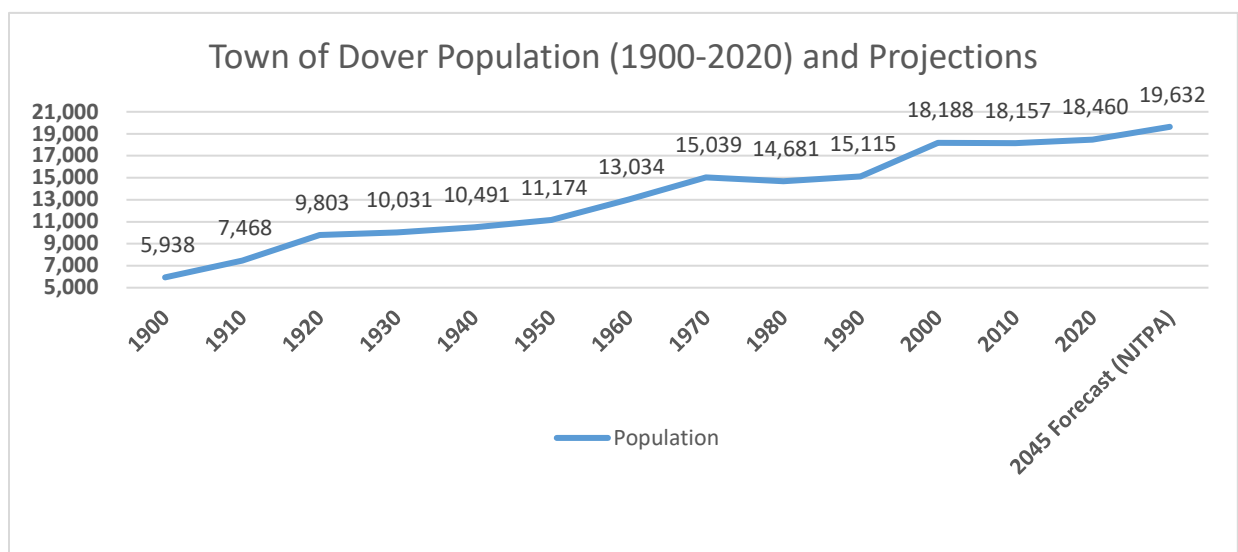
The Town of Dover is located within Morris County, about 38 miles west of New York City. It enjoys excellent access to the regional road network, with major thoroughfares providing direct access to the community via Interstate 80, which passes to the north, and Route 10 in the south. Bisecting Dover are Route 15, which runs north/south into the heart of town, and Route 46, running east/west, and providing excellent access to the major road networks and surrounding region. Dover is roughly 2.7 square miles in size and is a “Regional Center” as defined by the State Development and Redevelopment Plan (State Plan). The adopted State Policy Plan Map shows the entirety of Dover, with its high density, as located entirely within Planning Area 1 (PA1), the Metropolitan Planning Area, of which all 1,746 acres are located within the New Jersey Highlands Planning Area. The entirety of the Town is located within 4 of 6 different types of designated Overburdened Communities under New Jersey’s Environmental Justice Law, which defines overburdened communities based on criteria related to minority status, income, and English proficiency.

Dover consists of a pedestrian scale, centrally developed downtown that is bisected by the Rockaway River and includes the 45-acre Blackwell Street Historic District, now on the National Register of Historic Places. The adjacent and historic Dover Train Station serves as a major stop on the Morris and Essex Rail line, with some trains operating directly into Penn Station New York (“Mid-Town Direct”). Surrounding the downtown area are lower density residential neighborhoods, parks, preserved forested hills, and industrial/commercial uses. The historic Blackwell Street serves as the community’s main street and urban core, and epitomizes the Town’s rich past as a regional destination. With more than 6,000 people per square mile living within the 2.7 square-mile community with such assets and amenities, Dover is a textbook example of how the State Plan defines a Regional Center.

	Town of Dover	Morris County	New Jersey
Land Area (sq. mile)	2.7	481.47	7,419
Population	18,460	510,375	9,267,014
Households	6,455	191,840	3,478,355
Average Household Size	3.04	2.66	2.66
Population Density (persons/sq. mile)	6,837	1,060	1,249
Housing Units	6,621	198,611	3,775,842
Home Ownership Rate	44.1%	73.9%	63.7%
Median Household Income	\$70,519	\$134,929	\$101,050
Per Capita Income	\$31,603	\$69,226	\$53,118
Persons Below Poverty Rate	2,113	25,572	889,287
Sources: 2020 Decennial Census and 2023 American Community Survey 5 –Year Estimates			

## DEMOGRAPHICS AND TOWN OF DOVER FUTURE

As depicted in the chart below, the Town’s population has grown considerably since 1900. The Town’s population roughly tripled between 1900 and 1970, remained relatively stable for 20 years, and then increased again between 1990 and 2020. The population growth in Dover from 1900 to 1920 was more robust than Morris County, while the County population growth has consistently outpaced that of Dover since that time. The one exception is the 1990s, when Dover experienced an increase in population of 3,073 residents between 1990 and 2000, an increase of 20.33% over the 1990 population compared to an 11.6% increase in Morris County. Population projections for 2045 forecast population growth of approximately 1,272 residents for the Town between 2020 and 2045, a 6.89% increase over that 25-year timespan. However, recent Code Enforcement violations that have been reported may indicate that this projected population total may be reached soon, if not already surpassed as of 2022. The current issue of stacking and over-crowding in Town residences, which is not reflected in decennial census data, have led many Dover residents and officials to believe that the unreported population has led the total population to surpass 19,632 persons. The Town is considering a comprehensive study in order to have a more accurate count of people residing in the Town, and to confirm the surpassing of NJTPA’s projection.



Source: US Census (Decennial Census), North Jersey Transportation Authority Demographic and Employment Forecast Model (2017).

Racial and ethnic demographics from the 2020 ACS 5-Year Estimates Data Profiles (table below) indicate that the Town is far more diverse than Morris County and the State overall, with the second largest racial group after White (57.0% of the population) being Some Other Race at 24.1%. The Black or African American population is also estimated to be proportionally larger in Dover compared to Morris County (10.1% of Dover's population compared to 3.4% of the County's population). When compared to Morris County and New Jersey as a whole, Dover had less people of Asian race/origin in 2020, with only 2.3% of residents falling into this category.

Race/Origin	Town of Dover		Morris County		New Jersey	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
White	10,186	57.0%	391,893	79.5%	5,820,147	65.5%
Black or African American	1,803	10.1%	16,515	3.4%	1,189,681	13.4%
American Indian or Alaska Native	28	0.2%	667	0.1%	22,228	0.3%
Asian	409	2.3%	51,874	10.5%	857,873	9.7%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0	0.0%	82	0.0%	3,156	0.0%
Some other race	4,309	24.1%	12,682	2.6%	564,662	6.4%
Two or More Races	1,131	6.3%	19,002	3.9%	427,611	4.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>17,866</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>492,715</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>8,885,418</b>	<b>100%</b>
Source: US Census (2020 ACS 5-Year Estimates Data Profiles)						

## INFRASTRUCTURE

### Water

The entirety of the Town is connected to the municipal water system. According to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's Bureau of Water Systems Engineering (BWSE), the Dover Water and Sewer Utility (PWSID #: NJ1915001) possesses an adequate supply of potable water to accommodate all pending projects that have received BWSE approval.

### Waste Water Treatment

All of Dover is located within the currently adopted sewer service area, which is managed and operated by the Rockaway Valley Regional Sewerage Authority (RVRSA). In the MSA report, Dover, in conjunction with the RVRSA, has calculated the projected future wastewater flows for anticipated/known development projects for the Town to the year 2042. According to the Future Wastewater Flows table



provided in the infrastructure section of the MSA, Dover anticipates 2,172 new dwelling units over the next twenty (20) years, necessitating a projected additional flow of 422,250 GPD for residential uses. The RVRSA reports that its treatment plant is at 79.35% of available capacity (i.e., 9.522 MGD of 12 MGD as permitted by NJDEP). As the RVRSA provides sewer service to all or parts of the ten (10) municipalities in Morris County, it is unclear at this time whether there will be enough capacity to serve all 2,172 units that the Town anticipates over the next twenty (20) years, as additional gallonage is provided on a first-come, first-served basis for applicants meeting certain established criteria, such as first obtaining preliminary site plan and/or subdivision approval. As much of Dover's future growth will occur through redevelopment, to an extent, new demands for sewer will be offset by disconnection of existing uses, including further offsets realized through the replacement of inefficient and consumptive uses with new and more efficient water saving technologies.

Projection Category	Overall Projection
	(Total GPD)
<b>RVRSA Existing Flow</b>	<b>9,522,000</b>
<b>Developments/Redevelopment</b>	
Bassett Highway	18,525
Crossroads	17,100
200 East Blackwell Street	45,000
New Townhouse Developments	19,125
New Apartments	288,000
New Commercial Development	10,000
Single Family Dwellings	18,000
Downtown 2nd Floor Apartment Conversions	16,500
<b>Total— Dover: (Development/Redevelopment)</b>	<b>432,250</b>
<b>Total— RVRSA</b>	<b>9,954,250</b>

Based on the existing flow of 9.522 million gallons per day (MGD) and a New Jersey Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NJPDES) flow of 12.0 MGD, the Town of Dover Wastewater Treatment Plant currently has a remaining capacity of 2,045,750 gallons per day (GPD).

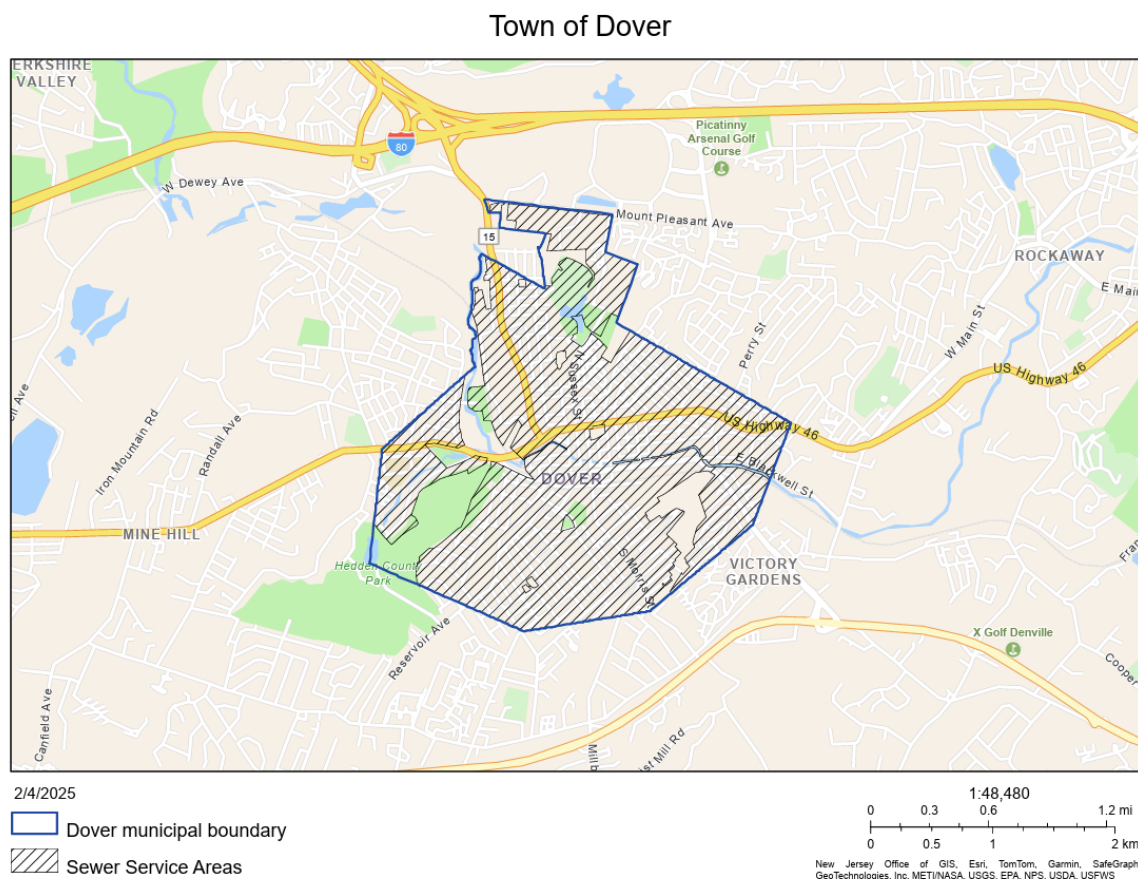
As depicted in the summary table, the build-out analysis has projected a potential additional flow of 432,250 GPD for the Town's sewer service area, resulting in a total flow of 9,954,250 GPD. As previously mentioned, the future flow from "New Apartments" throughout the Center is estimated to contribute approximately 288,000 GPD, or 67% of the total projected future flow. These estimates include the development located within the Town, and do not include future developments of the other municipalities that are served by the RVRSA (Boonton Town, Boonton Township, Denville Township, Rockaway Borough, Rockaway Township, Randolph Township, Victory Gardens Borough, Wharton Borough, and one federal facility: Picatinny Arsenal). As developments in the other municipalities that are under the RVRSA progress, Dover must be cognizant of the wastewater capacity that is available from the RVRSA.

Although the build-out analysis indicates a potential future need for expanded wastewater treatment capacity, the actual realization of the projected development flow may not occur for some time, especially

if the population stays relatively stable. The NJDEP flow criteria utilized in the build-out analysis are somewhat conservative and often overestimate potential future flows.

The Town is actively engaged in the pursuit of monitoring plant flows, continuing the annual sewer collection system inspection and inflow/infiltration correction program, tracking the Town population, and monitoring properties development status. Additionally, the Town is pursuing the tracking of new development proposals or modifications to existing proposals to be prepared for potential future requirements for additional wastewater capacity.

### Sewer Service Area



### Water Quality Management Planning

The Dover Water Company (PWSID#: NJ1409001) annually reports the Water Quality to the NJDEP and USEPA. The Town primarily sources its potable water from the three ground water wells located at 100 Princeton Avenue in Dover. These wells also supply water to Victory Gardens, portions of Wharton, Randolph, Rockaway Township, and Mine Hill.

The Town of Dover is included as part of the overall Morris County Wastewater Management Plan (WMP). The WMP was submitted by Christine Marion, Planning Director, Morris County Planning Board, to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection on December 31, 2009. The plan is subject to

amendments and revisions. The Morris County WMP is an integral component of the Morris County Water Quality Management Plan. The WMP assesses the adequacy of existing wastewater treatment alternatives to meet population growth projections, and proposes solutions where deficits are discovered. The WMP ensures that sewer service is not extended into environmentally sensitive areas. This is done through the adoption of a Sewer Service Area map. The WMP identifies public water supply areas and identifies the water supply needs associated with proposed development.

## TRANSPORTATION

### Circulation

The Town of Dover is served by a dense roadway network that provides local and regional access. Interstate 80 and NJ Route 10 serve as the major east-west routes. Within the town, US Route 46 forms the northern boundary of the downtown, while County Route 513 traverses east-west within the core of the downtown.

According to the Town, as of October 2018, the Town had a total of 45.75 miles of roadways, of which 37.18 miles were maintained by the municipality, 5.14 miles by Morris County, and 3.44 miles by the New Jersey Department of Transportation. According to the 2010 NJDOT Functional Classification Study for Morris County, the following table lists the functional classification of roads in the Town of Dover:

<b>Street Classification</b> <b>2010 NJDOT Functional Classification Morris County</b> <b>April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2017</b> <b>Urban Area Revised: February 29<sup>th</sup>, 2017</b>	
Town of Dover	
<b>Principal Arterials</b>	<b>U.S. Route 46*</b>
<b>Minor Arterials</b>	<b>State Route 15**</b> <b>County Road 513***</b> <b>County Road 643***</b> <b>County Road 656***</b> <b>County Road 661***</b> <b>County Road 665***</b> <b>County Road 670***</b>
<b>Major Collectors</b>	<b>Passaic Street</b> <b>Princeton Avenue</b> <b>Union Street</b> <b>Penn Ave</b> <b>Orchard Street</b> <b>Mount Pleasant Ave</b> <b>Richards Avenue</b> <b>N Bergen Street</b> <b>River Street</b> <b>Mercer Street</b>

\*Indicates United States jurisdiction

\*\*Indicates State of New Jersey jurisdiction

\*\*\*Indicates Morris County jurisdiction

Note: All roads not otherwise indicated on the Functional Classification Map are considered Local Streets.

## Public Transportation

The Town of Dover offers multiple modes of public transportation as outlined in the Circulation and Transportation Element of the Master Plan.

### Trains

The Town has an active NJ Transit commuter railroad station. Dover Station serves as a secondary terminal of two NJ Transit passenger rail lines—the Morristown Line and the Montclair-Boonton Line—both spanning from Penn Station New York in the east to Hackettstown in the west. Dover's transit station is a large hub for New York City and regional commuters. According to NJ Transit, the average number of passengers served at Dover on a weekday was 983 in 2017. Additionally, Dover is set to have Amtrak service along the former Lackawanna Railroad, as provided by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. Plans feature an Amtrak line connecting Scranton to New York City, making stops at Mount Pocono, East Stroudsburg, Blairstown, Dover, Morristown, Montclair, and Newark beginning in 2028.

### Buses

Two NJ Transit bus routes serve Dover. The 875 runs from Morristown and passes through Dover on the way to Roxbury. The 880 runs from Morristown (Morristown Station, Headquarters Plaza), stopping in Dover (Dover Train Station and St Clare's Hospital) and Rockaway (Marketplace at Rockaway, Rockaway Town Square). Bus service is also provided by Morris County Human Services, which provides transportation services for seniors and individuals with disabilities. Furthermore, the Town has a single park-and-ride facility situated at Dover Station, which is administered by Lakeland Bus. This facility provides service via Route U.S. 46/ I-80 to New York City, with stops at Rockaway Center, Denville, Mt. Lakes, Parsippany, Pine Brook, and Fairfield. Bus and Train Services reduce the dependence on personal automobiles.

## PROPOSED MAP AMENDMENTS

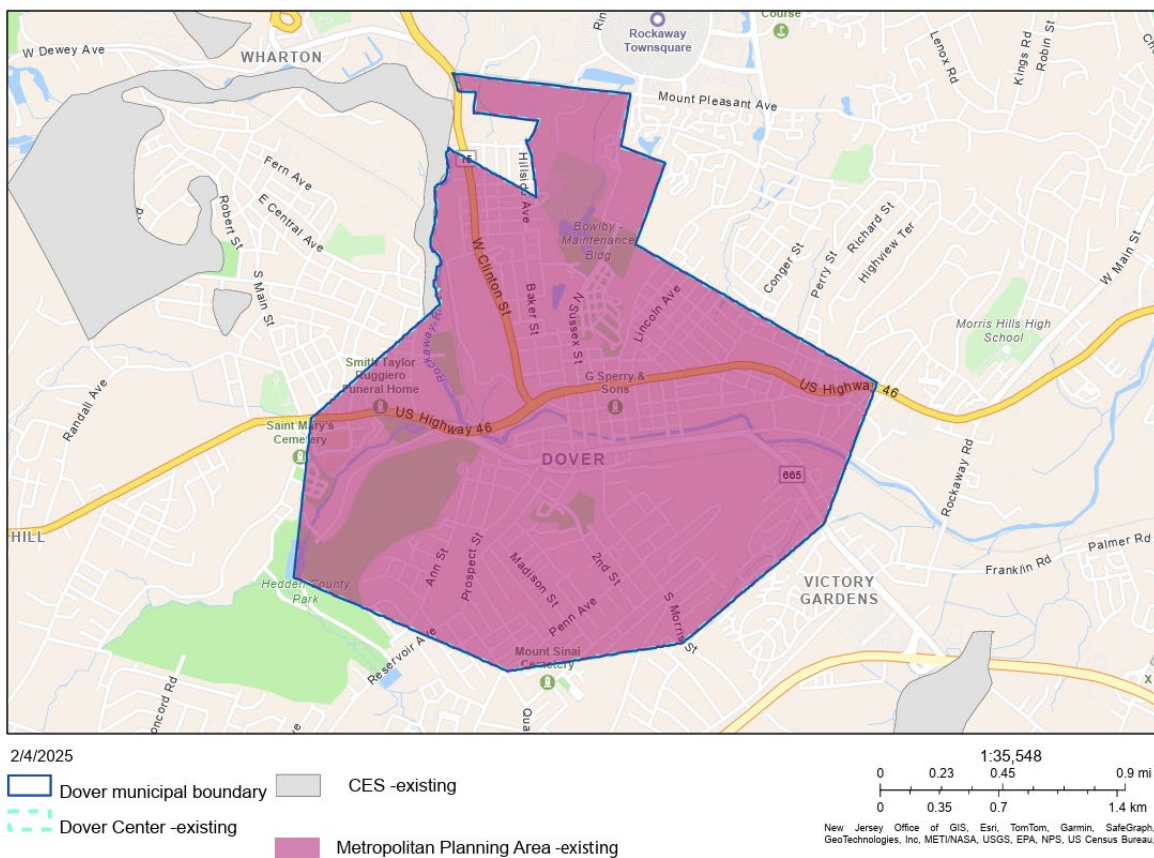
The Town of Dover proposes an amendment to the Dover Regional Center boundary. This revision, informed by a Critical Environmental Site (CES) Overlay, aims to remove environmentally sensitive and hazardous areas while incorporating regions more suitable for growth with essential infrastructure and public services.

This approach aligns with the Town's objectives to focus on redevelopment and development in growth-accommodating zones and connect residents to natural area and preserve environmentally sensitive and hazardous areas. The revised Center Boundary primarily encompasses the Downtown district, areas adjacent to collector roads, and significant neighborhood and public facilities.



## Dover Town Plan Endorsement Existing Mapping

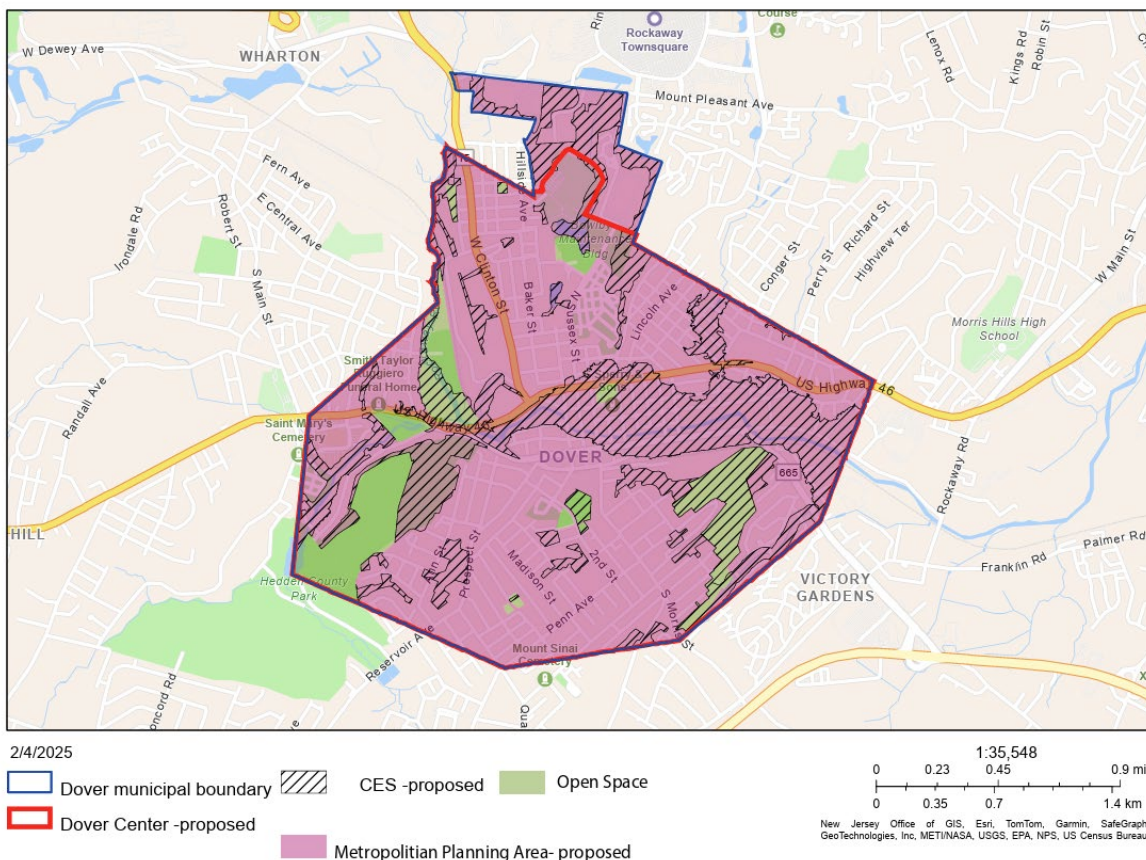
### Town of Dover



The Town of Dover's previous Regional Center encompassed the entirety of the municipal boundary. Furthermore, the Town and its Regional Center were exclusively located within the Metropolitan Planning Area. As evidenced by the previous mapping, there are minimal Critical Environmental Sites within the previous Regional Center Boundary. The proposed mapping incorporates updates to the data in regards to Critical Environmental Sites.

## Dover Town Plan Endorsement Proposed Mapping

### Town of Dover



The Mayor and Town Council of the Town of Dover approved the proposed State Plan Policy Map revisions via resolution No 73-2025. There are no changes to the Planning Areas; the Town and its Regional Center lie entirely within the Metropolitan Planning Area. However, the Center Boundary has been amended. These changes reduce the size of the center to remove large Critical Environmental Sites (CESs). These areas are shown in the hatch marked portions of the above map. The CES designations are used to help organize planning for new development or redevelopment by highlighting elements of natural systems, small areas of habitat, flood-prone areas, and other environmental features that should continue to be expressed in the future landscape through protection and restoration.

### Summary of Proposed Map Amendments

Planning Area	Label	Existing Acreage	Proposed Acreage	Change in Acreage
PA 1	Metropolitan	1745.71	1561.50	-184.19

Center Designation	Past Acreage	Proposed Acreage	Change in Acreage
Regional Center	1745.71	1629	-116.71
Critical Environmental Sites (CES)	.80	601.74	600.95

## STATE PLAN GOALS REVIEW

### Goal #1: Revitalize the State's Cities and Towns

Protect, preserve and develop the valuable human and economic assets in cities, towns, and other urban areas. Plan to improve their livability and sustainability by investing public resources in accordance with current plans which are consistent with the provisions of the State Plan. Leverage private investments in jobs and housing; provide comprehensive public services at lower costs and higher quality; and improve the natural and built environment. Incorporate ecological design through mechanisms such as solar access for heating and power generation. Level the playing field in such areas as financing services, infrastructure and regulation. Reduce the barriers which limit mobility and access of city residents, particularly the poor and minorities, to jobs, housing, services and open space within the region. Build on the assets of cities and towns such as their labor force, available land and buildings, strategic location and diverse populations.

- a) Dover is a “built-out” community where most development opportunities take place in the form of infill, reuse, and redevelopment projects.
- b) The Town is in the process of implementing various plans which seek to increase density and compatible use mixes to include live/work units, retail and commercial establishments with offices and apartments above them, and compatible multi-family residential.
- c) Dover seeks to preserve and expand its historic Central Business District through historic preservation, and through the promotion of infill and redevelopment which is compatible with existing development. In 1980, Dover's commercial downtown was entered into the National Register of Historic Places as a Historic District. The Blackwell Street Historic District Map delineates the registered district. The nomination was prepared under the sponsorship of the Dover Redevelopment Agency. The district contains over eighty (80) principle buildings, most fronting on Blackwell Street, and extending from the Rockaway River and the railroad bridge to the west to Bergen Street in the east.
- d) The Town envisions future growth of this corridor through a mix of redevelopment, property acquisition, and establishment of active open space in the area. These additions to the area would not only work to maintain the current historic character of the Downtown, but would provide complementary uses surrounding the historic areas, creating more of a “sense of place.”

### Goal #2: Conserve the State's Natural Resources and Systems

Conserve the state's natural resources and systems as capital assets of the public by promoting ecologically sound development and redevelopment in the Metropolitan and Suburban Planning Areas, accommodating environmentally designed development and redevelopment in Centers in the Fringe, Rural and Environmentally Sensitive Planning Areas, and by restoring the integrity of natural systems in areas where they have been degraded or damaged. Plan, design, invest in and manage the development and redevelopment of Centers and the use of land, water, soil, plant and animal resources to maintain biodiversity and the viability of ecological systems. Maximize the ability of natural systems to control runoff and flooding, and to improve air and water quality and supply.

- a) Dover is largely developed. However, the Town's open lands consist largely of parklands, which the Town is focused on preserving.
- b) Dover completed a Conservation Element and an Open Space and Recreation Plan in 2006; many of the goals outlined therein are still relevant and applicable today. The Town will continue its

resiliency efforts and dedication to climate change initiatives, outlined in the PIA. The PIA will address an update to the Natural Resource Inventory (NRI), Conservation Element, and several climate change initiatives. Specifically, the NRI provides a foundation for identifying and preserving the existing environmental and cultural resources. The updated data will be used to complete a vulnerability analysis, as well as a Climate Change-Related Hazard Vulnerability Assessment, which is required during the plan endorsement period and the next update of the Town's Land Use Element of the Master Plan. In addition, the goals of the current Conservation Element and the Open Space and Recreation Plan address local vulnerability and resiliency issues.

- c) Collectively, the goals of the Conservation Element and the Open Space and Recreation Plan address local vulnerability and resiliency issues and are consistent with this State Plan goal.

### Goal #3: Promote Beneficial Economic Growth, Development and Renewal for All Residents of New Jersey

Promote socially and ecologically beneficial economic growth, development and renewal and improve both the quality of life and the standard of living of New Jersey residents, particularly the poor and minorities, through partnerships and collaborative planning with the private sector. Capitalize on the state's strengths—its entrepreneurship, skilled labor, cultural diversity, diversified economy and environment, strategic location and logistical excellence—and make the state more competitive through infrastructure and public services cost savings and regulatory streamlining resulting from comprehensive and coordinated planning. Retain and expand businesses, and encourage new, environmentally sustainable businesses in Centers and areas with infrastructure. Encourage economic growth in locations and ways that are both fiscally and environmentally sound. Promote the food and agricultural industry throughout New Jersey through coordinated planning, regulations, investments and incentive programs—both in Centers to retain and encourage new businesses and in the Environs to preserve large contiguous areas of farmland.

- a) Dover has promoted positive economic development within the Town by enhancing and strengthening the Town's position as a Regional Center.
- b) Dover seeks to preserve and expand its historic Central Business District through historic preservation and promotion of infill and redevelopment which is compatible with existing development.
- c) The downtown area of Dover functions as a historic "transit village," and the Town would like to pursue official Transit Village designation. Improvements made in the downtown area of Dover can provide the Town with both a larger tax base and additional socially-equitable development in the downtown. These additions also have the added benefit of being generally aligned with environmental justice principals, which the Town also aims to improve through development.
- d) In 2007, the Town commissioned a plan entitled "The Town of Dover Transit-Oriented Development Plan," which divides the downtown and train station area into eight subareas. The Plan analyzes existing land use, zoning, and development potential, and its coordination and design into the existing business district.

### Goal #4: Protect the Environment, Prevent and Clean Up Pollution

Develop standards of performance and create incentives to prevent and reduce pollution and toxic emissions at the source, in order to conserve resources and protect public health. Promote the development of businesses that provide goods and services that eliminate pollution and toxic emissions or reduce resource depletion. Actively pursue public/private partnerships, the latest technology and strict



enforcement to prevent toxic emissions and clean up polluted air, land and water without shifting pollutants from one medium to another; from one geographic location to another; or from one generation to another. Promote ecologically designed development and redevelopment in the Metropolitan and Suburban Planning Areas and accommodate ecologically designed development in Centers in the Fringe, Rural and Environmentally Sensitive Planning Areas, to reduce automobile usage; land, water and energy consumption; and to minimize impacts on public health and biological systems, water and air quality. Plant and maintain trees and native vegetation. Reduce waste and reuse and recycle materials through de-manufacturing and remanufacturing.

- a) **SAME AS GOAL #2:** Dover completed a Conservation Element and an Open Space and Recreation Plan in 2006; many of the goals outlined therein are still relevant and applicable today. The Town will continue its resiliency efforts and dedication to climate change initiatives, outlined in the PIA. The PIA will address an update to the Natural Resource Inventory (NRI), Conservation Element, and several climate change initiatives. Specifically, the NRI provides a foundation for identifying and preserving the existing environmental and cultural resources. The updated data will be used to complete a vulnerability analysis, as well as a Climate Change-Related Hazard Vulnerability Assessment, which is required during the plan endorsement period and the next update of the Town's Land Use Element of the Master Plan. In addition, the goals of the current Conservation Element and the Open Space and Recreation Plan address local vulnerability and resiliency issues.
- b) The Town's 2018 Master Plan Re-Examination Report focuses on redevelopment of existing underutilized lands to create more compact, livable, and walkable neighborhoods. Dover's Redevelopment Plans lay out strategies that have the potential to redevelop sites into less car-dependent developments, which can reduce vehicle miles traveled per capita throughout the Town, and thereby reduce greenhouse gas emissions from automobile use.
  - The area that once hosted the municipal landfill, north and east of Bowlby Pond, was designated a redevelopment area in 2000. By 2010, construction on the Redevelopment Area had been completed. Since then, redevelopment of the Guenther Mill Redevelopment Area and Parcel P-1 have also taken place.
- c) The following Master Plan Goals are consistent with Goal 4:
  - Encourage infill housing where appropriate that is consistent with the scale and character of existing neighborhoods.
  - Encourage future development to occur at appropriate locations and intensity in accordance with transportation and environmental capacities.
  - Implement a network of pathways for bicycle and pedestrian use through reservation of open space in new planned developments and existing abandoned rail R.O.W. and other property.
    - i. Dover is actively implementing the goals outlined in its Master Plan. In June 2024, Dover unveiled a one-mile stretch of pedestrian greenway that was converted from the Historic Morris Canal, a portion of the larger Morris Canal Greenway, a 111-mile walking and biking trail across six counties in North Jersey. This effort is part of a larger effort to connect communities and residents to walking trails stretching from the Hudson River to the Delaware River.
  - Preserve and enhance areas of open space with emphasis on linkages to create greenways as well as areas surrounding historic sites that preserve and enhance historic character.

## Goal #5: Provide Adequate Public Facilities and Services at a Reasonable Cost

Provide infrastructure and related services more efficiently by supporting investments based on comprehensive planning and by providing financial incentives for jurisdictions that cooperate in supplying public infrastructure and shared services. Encourage the use of infrastructure needs assessments and life-cycle costing. Reduce demands for infrastructure investment by using public and private markets to manage peak demands, applying alternative management and financing approaches, using resource conserving technologies and information systems to provide and manage public facilities and services, and purchasing land and easements to prevent development, protect flood plains and sustain agriculture where appropriate.

- a) **Sewer Service:** The Rockaway Valley Regional Sewerage Authority manages and operates the sewer service area in the Town. The existing wastewater treatment facility (NJPDES Permit No. NJ0022349) is located in Parsippany-Troy Hills. The Town currently has adequate infrastructure capacity for sewer connections, although it is aging and will require upgrades. The sewer capacity will ultimately dictate the amount of development possible in the Town unless critical upgrades are realized.
- b) **Water:** The Dover Water Commission, off of Princeton Avenue at Waterworks Park, provides water for the Town. Growth and the extent of development within the Town and in the region must, as always, be monitored for any impact on the system. Currently, the DWC provides water for Dover and also portions of the surrounding Towns of Wharton, Rockaway, Randolph, Mine Hill, and Victory Gardens. As of 2020, the Commission has a monthly demand of 98.503 Million Gallons Monthly (MGM). Capacity for the Water Supply Limit is 4.320 Million Gallons Daily (MGD) and the Commission has an allocated 112 MGM as a limit for distribution. It is believed that adequate capacity does exist for future growth in Dover beyond what can be accommodated under the current distribution limit.
- c) **Roadway Improvements:** Dover is continually working to improve roadway infrastructure within the Town. The current Master Plan identifies the constraints within Dover's roadway network due to the built-out nature of the Town. Dover prioritizes providing additional capacity on its existing road network, without negatively impacting existing uses.
- d) **Parks and Recreational Facilities:** The Town offers numerous parks and recreational facilities such as Bowlby Park & King Field, Bowlbyville Park, Crescent Field & Second Street Playground, Hooey Park, Hurd Park, JFK Commons, Mountain Park, Overlook Park, Randolph Park, Triangle Park, Waterworks Park, and Hedden Park.
- e) **Public Facilities and Services:** The Town offers numerous public facilities and services, such as firehouses, municipal buildings, a courthouse, a police department, a public works facility, a library, and public schools.
  - a. **Public Schools:** Dover Public Schools has five (5) schools that serve grades pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade. Three (3) of which are elementary schools for grades PK-6: Academy Street Elementary School ("Academy Street"), East Dover Elementary School ("East Dover"), and North Dover Elementary School ("North Dover"). The remaining two (2) schools, are Dover Middle School (grades 7-8) and Dover High School (grades 9-12).
  - b. **Regional Agreements:** In 2010, the New Jersey Commissioner of Education consolidated Dover Public Schools and the Victory Gardens School District. Dover Public Schools also receive students in grades 7-12 from Mine Hill Township ("Mine Hill") through a formal sending/receiving agreement.

## Goal #6: Provide Adequate Housing at a Reasonable Cost

Provide adequate housing at a reasonable cost through public/private partnerships that create and maintain a broad choice of attractive, affordable, ecologically designed housing, particularly for those most in need. Create and maintain housing in the Metropolitan and Suburban Planning Areas and in Centers in the Fringe, Rural and Environmentally Sensitive Planning Areas, at densities which support transit and reduce commuting time and costs, and at locations easily accessible, preferably on foot, to employment, retail, services, and cultural, civic and recreational opportunities. Support regional and community-based housing initiatives and remove unnecessary regulatory and financial barriers to the delivery of housing at appropriate locations.

- a) Dover's housing policies all center on providing a range of housing choice at reasonable costs. Strategies are being formulated through the Town's Housing Plan Element and Fair Share Housing Plan to be consistent with negotiated standards and regulations
- b) In August 2016, Dover approved a settlement agreement with the Fair Share Housing Center regarding its affordable housing obligation. Potential residential developments were identified to address the obligation, one of which is the Dover Veterans Housing Project, a 70-unit affordable housing development featuring one, two, and three bedroom units.
- c) Furthermore, as of 2022, the Town has noted that their affordable housing obligations have been met and they are within the requirements set forth by Fair Share Housing Center in providing very low-, low-, and moderate-income housing units throughout the Town as per the Town's Prior and Third Round Needs for affordable units.
- d) In a declaratory judgment issued by the Superior Court of New Jersey, Law Division, Docket No. MRS-L-001696-15, on August 16, 2016, the Town of Dover was found to be in compliance with its constitutional obligations for affordable housing and to provide realistic opportunities for low- and moderate-income housing. As of January 2024, the Town's Affordable Housing Trust Fund balance was \$102,049.
- e) In January 2025, Dover approved a settlement agreement with the Fair Share Housing Center regarding its affordable housing obligation for the Fourth Round. The Town has accepted DCA's calculations for the Town's fair share obligations and commits to meet its present need obligation of 349 nine units and its prospective need of 113 units.

## Goal #7: Preserve and Enhance Areas with Historic, Cultural, Scenic, Open Space and Recreational Value

Enhance, preserve and use historic, cultural, scenic, open space and recreational assets by collaborative planning, design, investment and management techniques. Locate and design development and redevelopment and supporting infrastructure to improve access to and protect these sites. Support the important role of the arts in contributing to community life and civic beauty.

- a) The Town is looking into creating a Historic Preservation Commission (HPC), under the rules of the NJ Municipal Land Use Law. Such a commission would work with the Town's Planning and Zoning Board, the local Redevelopment Authority, the Historical Society, and other interested parties, but would serve a distinct function in the municipality by seeking opportunities for historic preservation on a continual basis. The HPC's responsibility would be focused on the Blackwell Street Historic District.
- b) Once a Historic Preservation Commission is established, it would be responsible for the review of the existing Blackwell Street Historic District boundaries. The Town recommends that one of the HPC's goals should be to review expanding the district somewhat to the east, and to include a few

buildings north and south of each intersection with Blackwell Street, thereby incorporating the largest number of “downtown” buildings in the district.

- c) Encourage more use of existing opportunities to leverage rehabilitation of historic commercial structures through Rehabilitation Tax Credits. This could improve the physical condition of the buildings within the Blackwell Street Historic District.

## Goal #8: Ensure Sound and Integrated Planning and Implementation Statewide

Use the State Plan and the Plan Endorsement process as a guide to achieve comprehensive, coordinated, long-term planning based on capacity analysis and citizen participation; and to integrate planning with investment, program and regulatory land-use decisions at all levels of government and the private sector, in an efficient, effective and equitable manner. Ensure that all development, redevelopment, revitalization or conservation efforts support State Planning Goals and are consistent with the Statewide Policies and State Plan Policy Map of the State Plan.

- a) Dover significantly advances the goals outlined in the SDRP in its efforts to ensure sound and integrated planning in the eight (8) Rehabilitation and Redevelopment Studies and Plans prepared by the Town:
  - **(Rehabilitation Area) – (4)** Bassett Highway Redevelopment Plan, Redevelopment Parcel P-1 Redevelopment Plan, Scattered Site Redevelopment Plan, Redevelopment Parcel P-3 and P-7
  - **(Redevelopment Area) – (4)** Guenther Mill Redevelopment Plan, East Blackwell Street, Dover South Station, and The Route 46 Corridor
- b) These Redevelopment and Rehabilitation Studies and Plans aim to balance economic development, sustainability, and smart growth, while establishing a stable flourishing neighborhood.

## STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Based on the work the Town of Dover has supplied, actions taken and committed to complete, it is the recommendation of the Office of Planning Advocacy that the Plan Implementation Committee recommend the State Planning Commission to adopt the Resolution for Plan Endorsement.

## PLANNING & IMPLEMENTATION AGREEMENT

See attached PIA