



PLANNING, LICENSES AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
Council Chambers A, Keene City Hall
September 10, 2025
6:00 PM

A. AGENDA ITEMS

1. Kiwanis Club of Keene - Request to Use City Property - Tree Lighting Ceremony
2. Relating to Endorsement of the City of Keene 2025 Comprehensive Master Plan
Resolution R-2025-32
3. Authorization to Enter Mutual Aid Agreement with the Town of Marlborough for Building Inspection and Code Enforcement Services - Community Development Director
4. Councilor Williams - Request for Consideration of an Ordinance Amendment to Regulate the Muzzling of Dogs
5. Relating to Amendments to the Land Development Code to Encourage Housing Development in Keene
Ordinance O-2025-15-A
6. Relating to Amendments to Definitions of the Land Development Code to Encourage Housing Development in Keene and the Definitions Relating to Charitable Gaming Facilities
Ordinance O-2025-17
7. Relating to Setbacks and Build-to Dimensions
Ordinance O-2025-20-A
8. Relating to Definitions for Accessory Structure, Setbacks and Build-to Dimensions
Ordinance O-2025-21
9. Relating to Land Development Code Fee Updates
Ordinance O-2025-25
10. Relating to Land Development Code Application Procedures
Ordinance O-2025-26

B. MORE TIME ITEMS

1. Relating to Amendments to the Zoning Map – Low Density to Commerce – Intersection of Pearl Street and Winchester Street
Ordinance O-2025-28
2. Relating to Pavement Setbacks and Cross Site Access
Ordinance O-2025-29

NON PUBLIC SESSION

ADJOURNMENT



Kiwaniis®

KEENE KIWANIS FOUNDATION

63 Emerald Street
PMB 451
Keene, NH 03431
keenekiwanis.org

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PAST PRESIDENTS:

Art Walker 2023-2024

Eli Rivera 2022-2023

January 21, 2025

Mayor Kahn and the Keene City Council
3 Washington Street
Keene, NH 03431

Re: 11/28/2025 Kiwanis Club of Keene Tree Lighting Celebration, Central Square, Keene, NH

Dear Mayor Kahn and the Keene City Council:

The Kiwanis Club of Keene and the Keene Kiwanis Foundation request a license to produce the 2025 Kiwanis Tree Lighting Celebration. The proposed date and time of the event is November 28, 2025, 5 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. This event continues to compliment the Kiwanis' mission of supporting our local youth.

Keeping with tradition, we would once again like to decorate the Bandstand on Central Square with lights, wreaths, garlands, and bows; decorate the city tree on Central Square with lights. We plan to do the decorating of Central Square on a Saturday in the month of November 2025 and take the decorations down by the second week of February 2026. If possible, we would keep the lights on through the Ice and Snow Festival, weather and City permitting. We plan to continue to string bars of soap on the trees to deter the squirrel population from damaging the light strings. No lights have been damaged so far in 2024.

The 2024 event was enjoyed by a very large group. The decorations are very much appreciated by our community. The children enjoyed the entertainment of the Keene Cheshiremen Chorus including a Sing Along and our MC reading "Twas the Night Before Christmas". Mayor Kahn read a Proclamation at the event. Santa's grand entrance on the ladder truck with assistance from Keene Fire Department was especially spectacular! Each year Kiwanis youth groups participate and provide cookies and we provide cocoa for hot chocolate. Kiwanis distributed 700 Christmas bells for the children to ring as Santa rounded the Common. We greatly appreciate the support of the City of Keene departments who work together with Kiwanis to make the community event special each year!

Feel free to contact me should there be any questions. I can be reached at 603-762-7276 or at keenekiwanisinfo@gmail.com.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Peg Bruce
Kiwanis Club of Keene/Keene Kiwanis Foundation
63 Emerald Street, PMB 451
Keene, NH 03431
603-762-7276



CITY OF KEENE NEW HAMPSHIRE

ITEM #A.2.

Meeting Date: September 10, 2025

To: Mayor and Keene City Council

From: Mari Brunner, Senior Planner
on behalf of the Planning Board

Through: Paul Andrus, Community Development Director

Subject: **Relating to Endorsement of the City of Keene 2025 Comprehensive Master Plan
Resolution R-2025-32**

Council Action:
In City Council September 4, 2025.
Referred to the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee.

Recommendation:
That Resolution R-2025-32 be referred to the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee for review and a recommendation for the City Council's endorsement of the 2025 Keene Comprehensive Master Plan.

Attachments:

1. R-2025-32_Endorsement of 2025 Master Plan_referral
2. Keene-CMP-Strategic-Pillars

Background:
The Master Plan Steering Committee, which was formed by vote of the Planning Board in December 2023 to guide and assist with updating the City of Keene 2010 Comprehensive Master Plan, began meeting in February of 2024 to provide input and guidance throughout the planning and visioning process. The 16 members of the Committee attended monthly meetings, tabled at events, participated in visioning sessions and other community events, filled out detailed prioritization surveys, and provided valuable feedback to staff and the consultant team. For example, following an intensive period of public engagement in the summer of 2024, the Master Plan Steering Committee held two workshops to identify and frame the key pillars of the plan, which were then refined during the October 2024 "Future Summit" where the community vision was first presented to the public. The Committee also played a lead role in building out the desired future land uses for the Future Land Use Map and assisted with refining and prioritizing action steps for implementation of the plan. The input from this committee was invaluable to this project.

On August 12, the Committee voted to send the draft plan to the Planning Board to begin the formal

adoption process. At their meeting on August 25, the Keene Planning Board voted unanimously to refer the draft 2025 Comprehensive Master Plan to the City Council for endorsement. This was done in accordance with past City practice and the Planning Board's adopted Rules of Procedure, Section 8.2.2, which states "In order to assure that the City Council fully understands and supports the Master Plan, the Planning Board shall seek Council review and adoption of the Master Plan prior to Board adoption. Prior to adoption of revisions or new sections of the Master Plan, the Board shall hold a public hearing, in accordance with the requirements of State law."

Overview of the 2025 Comprehensive Master Plan:

The Master Plan document is divided into six major sections. Each of these sections is directly related to a step in the planning process, as articulated in Section 1.1. "How to Read this Plan" on page 10 of the document.

Section One gives an overview of the planning process, the community vision, and the structure of the plan, which is built around six strategic pillars: Livable Housing, Thriving Economy, Connected Mobility, Vibrant Neighborhoods, Adaptable Workforce, and Flourishing Environment.

Section Two provides a snapshot of the Keene community using data to describe the City's current demographics, economic indicators, and livability. This section also includes an overview of population projections.

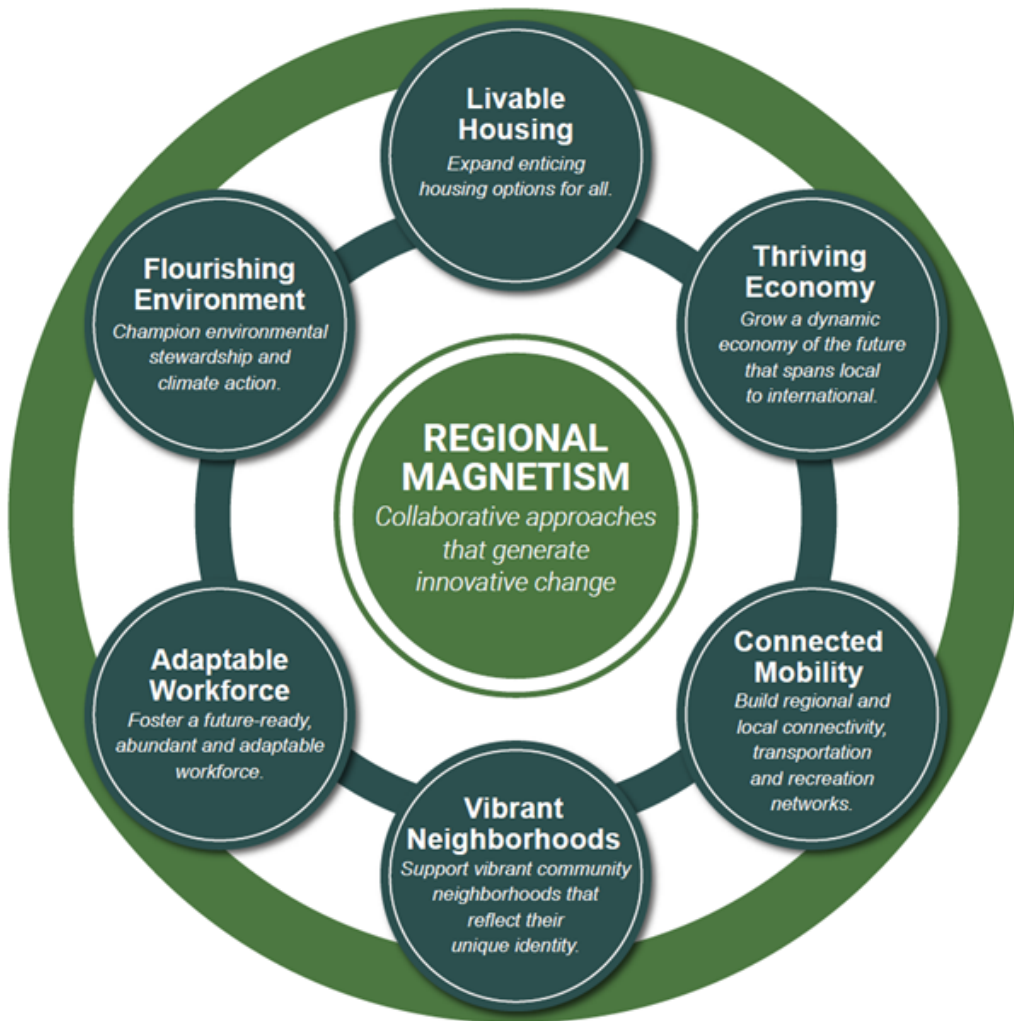
Section Three describes seven major themes that were identified throughout the planning process that weave throughout the plan and provide important connections between the strategic pillars: Sustainability, Education, Accessibility, Public Health, Collaboration, Region, and Leadership. These themes reflect the core values and culture of the community articulated by the Keene community throughout the planning process.

Section Four provides a deep dive into each of the six strategic pillars that provide the organizing framework for the plan (see figure below). They are core elements that underpin the community vision and are used to group goals and actions.

Section Five is the Future Land Use section of the plan that illustrates the desired future land use patterns that emerged from the community vision (Figure 4). These general land use categories focus more on the experience of a particular land use area based on the land use pattern, area identity, means of transportation, and scale.

Section Six provides a framework for implementation of the plan using a matrix that lists all the identified actions steps, organized by Pillar and Goal, and assigns each of them a priority level (low, medium, or high) and indicates the City's role (lead, participate, or support). Supporting information, including the prioritization survey results and a matrix of action steps with implementation timeframes, is included in the Appendices.

The full text of the Draft 2025 Comprehensive Master Plan is available online at www.KeeneNH.gov/Master-Plan and on the project portal, www.KeeneMasterPlan.com. The project portal also includes further information about the project, including survey responses, an online story map, and interim project reports.



Included below is an excerpt from the draft August 25, 2025 Planning Board minutes where this item was discussed.

"Master Plan Steering Committee Referral: 2025 Comprehensive Master Plan – The Master Plan Steering Committee voted to recommend that the Planning Board set a public hearing date for the adoption of the 2025 Comprehensive Master Plan, and refer the plan to City Council to endorse.

Chair Farrington addressed this item. He stated that the Steering Committee has completed its ad-hoc efforts and has referred the 2025 Comprehensive Master Plan to the Planning Board to do two things. The first is to set a public hearing and at that meeting, a vote will be taken to approve or not approve the master plan; and, refer the master plan to City Council for endorsement.

A motion was made by Councilor Remy that the Planning Board refer the 2025 Comprehensive Master Plan to City Council for endorsement.

The motion was seconded by Mayor Kahn and was unanimously approved.

A motion was made by Councilor Remy that the Planning Board set a public hearing for the adoption of the 2025 Comprehensive Master Plan for Monday September 29, 2025 at 6:30 PM.

The motion was seconded by Mayor Kahn and was unanimously approved."



CITY OF KEENE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand and Twenty Five

A RESOLUTION Endorsing the 2025 Keene Comprehensive Master Plan

Resolved by the City Council of the City of Keene, as follows:

WHEREAS, the City of Keene undertook a comprehensive visioning and planning process, "Vision Keene: 20 Forward," to update the City's 2010 Comprehensive Master Plan, in accordance with New Hampshire state statutes and to guide future decision-making; and

WHEREAS, the planning process involved extensive community-wide outreach, data collection, and stakeholder engagement to develop an updated Community Vision, Future Land Use Map, and 2025 Comprehensive Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, the 2025 Comprehensive Master Plan builds on the City's established goals, including supporting economic and social vitality, protecting green spaces and natural corridors, and concentrating development within the downtown core to create a walkable community; and

WHEREAS, a strong consensus emerged from the planning process for proactive solutions to provide a range of livable housing options that suit the various age groups and needs of current and future residents; and

WHEREAS, the final draft of the 2025 Comprehensive Master Plan was presented at a public event on June 3, 2025, allowing for final public input and review; and

WHEREAS, the Keene City Council believes that the 2025 Comprehensive Master Plan accurately reflects the community's priorities and provides a solid foundation for the City's long-term economic, social, and developmental goals.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF KEENE AS FOLLOWS:

1. The City Council hereby officially endorses the 2025 Comprehensive Master Plan, recognizing it as the guiding document for the City's future development and policymaking for the next ten to fifteen years.
2. The City Council acknowledges that the 2025 Comprehensive Master Plan will provide the basis for future zoning and other land use regulations and will serve as a framework for the implementation of the City's Capital Improvement Program and other planning initiatives.
3. The City Council resolves to partner with community and regional organizations to work towards realizing the vision and goals contained within the 2025 Comprehensive Master Plan.

4. The City Council further resolves to work with the Planning Board and City staff to monitor the implementation of the goals and strategies outlined in the endorsed plan and to use it as a yardstick for evaluating the consistency of future choices and actions with the community's aspirations.

Jay V. Kahn, Mayor

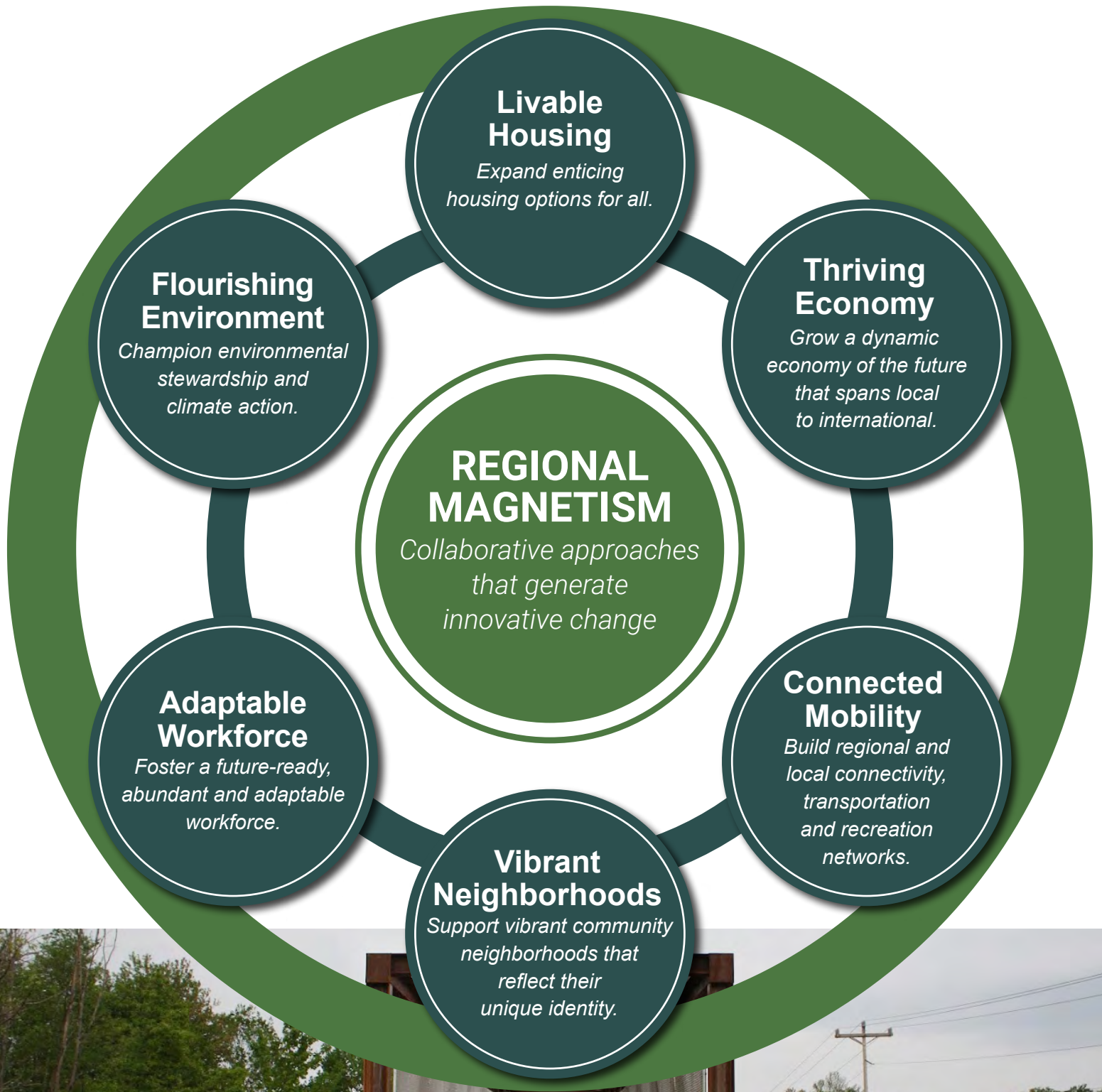
In City Council September 4, 2025.
Referred to the Planning, Licenses and
Development Committee.



City Clerk



STRATEGIC PILLARS





OBJECTIVE: EXPAND ENTICING HOUSING OPTIONS FOR ALL.

4.1.1 | IMPORTANCE OF LIVABLE HOUSING

The current lack of suitable and attainable housing is seen as a significant constraint on the growth of the Keene talent pool and population. Throughout the planning process, the existing housing shortages in Keene have been highlighted as a major impediment to growth and resident attraction. The issue is a combination of the lack of available residential units and a mismatch between the type of units people want and the units available. Housing availability and affordability are national issues, driven by growing populations in urban and regional centers, and the increasing number of smaller households. There is persistent market failure in providing new housing options that suit the various age groups and personal needs. Cities across the United States are now mobilizing new resources and innovative approaches to solve this challenge. Keene has an opportunity to leverage successful models elsewhere and use its collaborative approach to take some bold actions to address the current and future housing needs.

While Keene has anchor institutions and attractive features that will draw in potential residents, affordable housing options remain a major deterrent in attracting and retaining new residents. Housing is a key area of focus, and the city is strategizing to improve the market and housing opportunities. In 2023, the City of Keene completed its Housing Needs Assessment and Strategy. The assessment highlighted key housing issues across Keene and articulated recommended action steps to address the issues. The city is underway in implementing recommendations.

Affordable housing is vital for Keene's growth and inclusivity. It attracts new residents, supports local businesses, and enhances the quality of life, making the city more vibrant and resilient.

KEY FINDINGS FROM HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND STRATEGY (2023)

- Home sales prices surged over the past decade.
- Low availability and declining time on market indicate a very strong housing market.
- Keene has experienced a tight rental market for years.
- Rents, traditionally stable, have accelerated upward.
- Keene earns statewide recognition for tackling housing challenges. In December 2024, Keene was named a "Housing Champion" by the State of New Hampshire Department of Business and Economic Affairs (BEA), acknowledging the city's leadership in expanding housing opportunities for residents at all income levels.

Data Insights

- Keene's overall residential population of 23,000 remains relatively unchanged over the past 30 years. The city's population has stagnated while the overall state population increased by 5% during this same period.
- Although Keene still has a high share of residents between 18 and 24, the overall population is aging. The median age of residents increased from 32 to 36 between 2010 and 2022. This is likely attributable to the decline in enrollment at Keene State College; the college student population dropped from 5,738 to 2,863 students over this time period. At the same time, the number of residents between 65 and 74 and over 85 doubled. Similarly, nowadays, fewer children are living in Keene.
- Over the coming 20 to 30 years, Keene's projected population is expected to grow ever so slightly and then decline to its current levels. However, New Hampshire's population is expected to grow, with projected growth in the state's southeast region signaling opportunities to capture growth in Keene.
- Most Keene residents own their homes, but Keene has a higher share of renters than the county and state. 43% of Keene's housing units are occupied by renters, higher than the 25% share in Cheshire County and 24% across New Hampshire.



4.1.2 | COMMUNITY ASPIRATIONS

Livable Housing

For the Livable Housing Pillar, the following five goals reflect community aspirations that emerged throughout the planning process and are designed to accelerate solutions to the housing challenges and build the character of the community.

GOAL 1: BOOST INFILL DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT.

Aspirations

- Smart and sustainable land use planning and design principles reduce the financial impact of new housing on the tax base.
- Community nodes of walkable mixed-use development are found throughout the city, which contribute to a high quality of life for new and existing residents as well as visitors.
- The housing development process is transparent and easy to navigate.



GOAL 2: REMOVE BARRIERS TO HOUSING DEVELOPMENT.

Aspirations

- City-backed financial mechanisms and incentives are creatively leveraged to boost the housing supply.
- The development approval process is continually improved to be predictable, effective, and streamlined.

“I love the idea of addressing all elements of the housing crisis through intelligent, infill development. We have an opportunity to create a ‘right-sized’ Keene in a way that also creates a cozier, more walkable, and more community-driven city for all of us.”
- Livable Housing Discussion Board Participant

GOAL 3: PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE AND HEALTHY HOUSING STANDARDS THAT ALIGN WITH THE COMMUNITY’S CHARACTER.

Aspirations

- New housing construction is sustainable, climate-resilient, efficient, and of good quality.
- The city acquires funding to expand the capacity of code enforcement, specifically for housing inspectors, to hold landlords and property managers accountable for providing high-quality housing options and facilitate a rental registration program.
- Existing city committees, such as the Energy and Climate Committee, continue to advocate and educate community members and local businesses on green energy and weatherization initiatives.
- The existing housing stock is reinvested and modernized to preserve existing units.

GOAL 4: INCREASE THE DIVERSITY OF HOUSING OPTIONS AND PRICE POINTS.

Aspirations

- The existing housing stock is reinvested and modernized to preserve existing units.
- The city collaborates with local businesses, major employers, and higher education institutions on strategies and initiatives for employee housing and the transition from student to professional.
- The housing supply offers options for all ages, incomes, and physical abilities, and the city collaborates with underserved populations to better understand their housing needs.

GOAL 5: ADDRESS THE HOUSING NEEDS OF ALL RESIDENTS, CURRENT AND FUTURE.

Aspirations

- Keene addresses housing based on a regional approach.
- Housing is accessible and well-connected to nearby amenities. Housing development supports connections between residents to build a resilient community.
- Those who are particularly affected by housing insecurity, such as unhoused residents or those who experience poverty, have a voice in housing policy and initiatives.
- Resources are leveraged to facilitate aging-in-place organizations or repairs for senior residents.



COMMUNITY ASPIRATIONS (CONT.)

KEY FINDINGS FROM THE 2023 COMMUNITY SURVEY

- Under the **Economic and Built Environment** topics in the Community Survey, 76% of respondents identified both expanding the supply of affordable housing and offering different types of housing as important to shaping the future of Keene.
- The rise in multi-use developments in communities nationwide is becoming an increasingly popular economic development tool in providing more affordable housing options. 64% of survey respondents identified exploring multi-use developments as important to shaping the future of Keene.
- Under **Community and Social Fabric** topics in the Community Survey, 69% of respondents identified accommodating aging-in-place as important to shaping the future of Keene.
- Building new livable housing is important to addressing the housing shortage in Keene. Under the **Environmental and Landscape** topics in the Community Survey, 70% of survey respondents identified focusing on environmental sustainability, and 56% identified adopting green building standards as important to shaping the future of Keene.

“A lack of housing cascades to impact everything else. We should be doing everything we can to develop housing, especially in the core where people can walk and bike to what they need without driving.”
- Community Needs Survey Respondent

Planning Insights

- There is a mismatch between incomes and housing costs, and the issue is exacerbated by extremely low inventory.
- The city is a key partner in solving housing challenges and needs to continue investing, communicating, and advocating for housing.
- There is minimal room for new “greenfield” development in Keene, but opportunities exist for renovation of older housing stock and repurposing of space.
- Lack of housing is negatively impacting employers and worker recruitment and retention.
- It is becoming increasingly difficult for housing projects to pencil out for developers in Keene, especially at price points that are affordable to most residents.

Expanding housing availability will help Keene build its talented workforce and attract new residents.

Working on expanding the available types of housing stock will also help existing residents by providing more choice and helping people to have the right kind of housing for their life stage.

Housing is not just about quantity; it is also about quality. This means livable housing that offers the amenities and functionality people are seeking. It also means housing that is environmentally sustainable and able to offer energy efficiency and adaptability in a changing climatic world. Keene has an opportunity to bring together key partners in a collaborative approach to seek and implement bold solutions. This will require a willingness to explore new areas for housing development, increase density in some areas, and build a regional approach with surrounding communities.

Prefabricated home modules and tiny homes are growing in popularity across the United States and Canada. Many are being used as accessory dwelling units (ADUs), but their affordability is attractive to many younger prospective home buyers for whom larger homes are out of reach.

Many communities are wrestling with housing availability and affordability, and are seeking innovative solutions to balance density, open space, and housing types. Of particular importance to many communities is what is termed the 'missing middle' housing, which provides housing on smaller, more affordable lots. Another example is the concept of 'gentle density,' where higher-density developments are designed to create some sense of space. Another example is the concept of urban growth boundaries, which is applied in Portland, Oregon.



4.1.4 | PLANNING GOALS AND ACTION AREAS

Not Starting from Zero

The City of Keene has already implemented various initiatives to strategically prepare for the future including:

- Allowed accessory dwelling units by-right in all zoning districts
- Conducted a Neighborhood Parking Study and reduced residential parking requirements
- Adopted a the Cottage Court Overlay to encourage 'missing middle' housing types
- Leveraged federal funding sources to create permanently affordable housing
- Earned statewide recognition as a "Housing Champion" for leadership in expanding housing opportunities for residents at all income levels
- Increased building heights allowed in various areas of the city
- Removed residential density factors from zoning
- Allocated funding for the Downtown Infrastructure Project to serve existing and future housing in the downtown





**Livable
Housing**

Planning Goals and Actions to Achieve Our Aspirations

GOAL 1: BOOST INFILL DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT.

Actions

- 1.1. Utilize GIS to create a map that communicates existing development regulations, incentive opportunities, and environmental constraints.
- 1.2. In collaboration with the Thriving Economy Pillar, advertise Keene, its quality of life, and recent housing initiatives to increase local developers/builders' interest in developing in Keene. Assist private owners with development opportunities who express interest in locating projects in Keene.
- 1.3. Identify potential neighborhood nodes of mixed-use activity and rezone parcels to encourage desired development.
- 1.4. Explore place-based opportunities to improve walkability throughout Keene, with priority given to areas around schools, public parks, and neighborhood nodes.

GOAL 2: REMOVE BARRIERS TO HOUSING DEVELOPMENT.

Actions

- 2.1. Identify and assess revenue sources to boost residential construction, including new ADUs.
- 2.2. Evaluate the effectiveness of recently passed code amendments and assess opportunities for further amendments to promote housing such as the Cottage Court Overlay.
- 2.3. Collaborate with stakeholders, such as project managers, financial analysts, community leaders, and investors, to pinpoint opportunities where financial resources can be transformed into a user-friendly and impactful development fund.
- 2.4. Support and advocate at the state level for smart housing initiatives and/or financial mechanisms that fall outside of local jurisdiction, such as inclusionary zoning.
- 2.5. Explore opportunities with state and local representatives to incentivize the development of empty lots or vacant buildings.
- 2.6. Identify areas suitable for increased housing density and update the zoning map and/or code to encourage desired development.
- 2.7. Continually review and assess the city's permitting and approval process to ensure it is predictable, fair, and efficient.





GOAL 3: PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE AND HEALTHY HOUSING STANDARDS THAT ALIGN WITH THE COMMUNITY'S CHARACTER.

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| Actions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1. Conduct a community-driven process to identify and define Keene's unique visual, physical, and environmental qualities. 3.2. Review zoning code and development regulations to ensure clear language that is easy to understand. 3.3. Identify organizations looking to divest of facilities/land and create an action plan to repurpose for use as new housing. 3.4. Conduct a study on the feasibility of adopting a form-based or hybrid zoning code in residential or mixed-use areas outside the downtown and implement recommendations from the study. 3.5. Create development plans for potential development or redevelopment sites to showcase possibilities to developers when they have expressed interest in developing in Keene. 3.6. Create a catalogue of pre-approved, high-efficiency housing units with approved floorplans and architecture to streamline new housing construction and boost investments of small/local developers. Opportunity to engage higher education institutions in Keene, New Hampshire, or other nearby communities to connect with students interested in collaborating on these pre-approved plans. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.7. Support initiatives to preserve the historic character and features of the Downtown Keene Historic District and areas/structures outside the district that contribute positively to Keene's sense of place and unique architectural identity by prioritizing and incentivizing the adaptive reuse of historic buildings. 3.8. Host workshops or develop informational materials to inform homeowners about the risks of lead-based paint and mold, the importance of remediation, and other resources to provide guidance. Host similar informational sessions or produce fact sheets that give renters the knowledge of their rights and resources available to address poor housing conditions and/or unresponsive landlords. 3.9. Pursue grants and/or funding partnerships to provide financial assistance to low-income residents, childcare facilities, and other vulnerable populations dealing with lead-based paint and/or mold remediation. 3.10. Collaborate with higher education systems and local landlords in Keene to create a rental registration program, benefiting off-campus students and other renters. |
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GOAL 4: INCREASE THE DIVERSITY OF HOUSING OPTIONS AND PRICE POINTS.

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| Actions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1. Actively participate in or create a multi-community group to spearhead housing efforts. 4.2. Create a catalogue of pre-approved ADUs to increase the predictability of housing options and increase the efficiency of the approval process. Opportunity to collaborate with ongoing initiatives at the regional level through the SWRPC. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.3. Explore opportunities for partnerships and updates to regulatory requirements to support the removal of barriers to group living arrangements. 4.4. Promote and support home upgrade programs like the Southwestern Community Service's 21 in 21 Home Upgrade program to help residents improve the quality and longevity of existing housing stock. |
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GOAL 5: ADDRESS THE HOUSING NEEDS OF ALL RESIDENTS, CURRENT AND FUTURE.

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| Actions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5.1. Centralize resources for housing upgrades or grants for improvements (solar, insulation, Energy Star) into a more user-friendly approach. The city takes an active role in providing educational resources that make it easier for everyday residents to understand and take part in the programs. 5.2. Invest in, or partner with, an aging-in-place initiative to assist home retrofits for seniors and disabled residents. 5.3. Encourage and support the formation of resident-led neighborhood groups or associations in neighborhoods where they do not already exist. 5.4. Collaborate with higher education agencies to assess and respond to student housing needs and provide partnerships to close the gap. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5.5. Facilitate or support collaborations between existing organizations, such as Keene Housing and city committees/community groups. 5.6. Encourage the expansion and maintenance of affordable housing in Keene by utilizing the city's zoning tools and code enforcement mechanisms. 5.7. Ensure that zoning and development regulations allow for a diversity of housing options, from small ADUs to high-end housing. 5.8. Employ a "development concierge" or "development navigator" as a city employee to serve as the direct liaison between city departments and developers, improving coordination and expediting the approval process. |
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OBJECTIVE: GROW A DYNAMIC ECONOMY OF THE FUTURE THAT SPANS LOCAL TO INTERNATIONAL.

4.2.1 | IMPORTANCE OF A THRIVING ECONOMY

Today, Keene’s economy is a story of success from many lenses. The storefront-lined downtown is filled with restaurants, boutiques, services, and cultural amenities, like the Colonial Theater, that Keene’s residents and visitors cherish. Significant institutions, such as Keene State College and Cheshire Medical Center, anchor the city’s economy and have historically offered stability to Keene and its region. Keene’s industrial base, including advanced manufacturing with the legacy and continued leadership of precision optics, showcases cutting-edge technology uncommon in many rural communities. Yet, while Keene has experienced favorable economic conditions, rapidly changing industries and shifting macroeconomic forces require Keene to intentionally invest and prioritize continuing to build a Thriving Economy.

A Thriving Economy in Keene means more than simply traditional industry growth; it comprehensively protects and supports the elements of Keene’s economy that have led to success today while proactively planning for future economic needs. A Thriving Economy ensures that Keene remains a place for small businesses and entrepreneurs to grow their businesses, while also recognizing that large employers and key industries provide an important backbone and stability to the local economy. Community residents and visitors will also have expanded opportunities to shop, dine, and enjoy local businesses, and legacy industries will continue their success in Keene while gaining the support they need to ensure they are future-ready. A Thriving Economy also ensures that residents have access to jobs with meaningful employment opportunities that support Keene’s high quality of life. Taking an inclusive approach to economic development can encourage Keene to embrace principles such as economic stewardship and an inclusive economy that prioritizes community wellbeing, bridging economic development with community development.

Maintaining a Thriving Economy in Keene is contingent upon an Adaptable Workforce where a strong employment base is readily available for businesses to grow and expand. In turn, ensuring Livable Housing will support this workforce and thus help support a growing economy. Connected Mobility is vital to the transportation of goods, services, and workforce, and Vibrant Neighborhoods are not only important to residents but paint the charm of Keene that will capture the attention of prospective businesses and employees. Protecting Keene’s Flourishing Environment while leaning into the community’s sustainability priorities and aspirations will continue to be critical as the city’s commercial and industrial infrastructure and development expand to meet an evolving economy.



Data Insights

- In 2025, over 1,420 businesses call Keene home, and over 19,900 employees work in the city. Keene sits as the densest employment cluster in Cheshire County, accounting for more than half of the jobs in the county overall.

These five goals position Keene’s economy to thrive in the coming years. These goals, derived from the community’s aspirations, prioritize not only traditional business, industry, and economic growth, but also prioritize celebrating what makes Keene’s economy distinct – such as the vibrant arts and cultural scene, adventurous and active outdoor recreation opportunities, and legacy businesses, industries, and institutions that have built Keene into the economic center it is today.

GOAL 1: ENCOURAGE, RECRUIT, AND RETAIN BUSINESSES IN TARGETED INDUSTRIES.

Aspirations

- Industries central to Keene’s economy – such as manufacturing, precision optics, healthcare, and education – continue to grow and remain a core part of Keene’s economy.
- Keene’s industry mix evolves and expands over time to meet economic shifts and growing sector clusters.
- Industry growth provides higher wage employment opportunities for Keene’s residents.
- Foster a nexus of specialized firms to promote and attract large-scale employers to the region.

GOAL 2: PRIORITIZE ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCY.

Aspirations

- Keene’s reputation and efforts around sustainability advance through economic development initiatives.
- Economic stewardship is central to Keene.
- Local businesses and workers navigate unforeseen economic challenges and events, building the resiliency of the city’s economy.
- New business and partnership opportunities around agriculture and food systems expand food access for Keene’s residents.
- Local and regional supply chains are strengthened with targeted efforts to promote economic self-sufficiency.

“There are too many rules regarding starting a small business and not enough flexibility in the permitting process.”
- Community Needs Survey Respondent

GOAL 3: ATTRACT AND GROW KEENE’S BUSINESSES OF ALL SCALES, FROM ENTREPRENEURS TO BUSINESSES THAT SPAN INTERNATIONALLY.

Aspirations

- Keene remains a place where entrepreneurs, small, medium, and large businesses can succeed.
- Downtown storefronts continue to be filled with vibrant businesses, and the success of downtown expands into more parts of Keene.
- Growing businesses continue to call Keene home.
- Residents have expanded access to commercial amenities and employment opportunities.





Thriving Economy

COMMUNITY ASPIRATIONS (CONT.)

GOAL 4: STRENGTHEN KEENE'S POSITION AS AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT LEADER.

Aspirations

- The city expands its role in economic development, demonstrating commitment and proactively meeting industry and business needs and opportunities.
- Economic development partners foster quality relationships and partnership efforts.
- Keene is recognized nationally for its initiatives for rural economic development.

"The uniqueness of Keene's downtown sets it apart from other towns and cities and making this a more liveable/walkable area should continue to be a high priority as it attracts people like myself to visit and move."

- Community Survey Respondent

GOAL 5: FOSTER AN INCLUSIVE ECONOMY.

Aspirations

- Arts and culture remain a core part of Keene's identity. Cultural businesses and establishments are equipped to continue their success.
- Outdoor recreation in Keene and the surrounding region drives economic growth and remains a key aspect.
- Keene embraces a holistic economy, measuring economic success through an inclusive and comprehensive approach to account for social infrastructure and community wellbeing in addition to traditional economic indicators.



Planning Insights

- 84% of Keene residents identified encouraging and attracting desirable businesses as important to shaping the future of Keene. Similarly, 4 out of 5 residents want to see more local employment opportunities.
- While the community wants business and employment growth, balancing growth with environmental and landscape considerations is critical to the community. 82% of residents feel it is important to preserve land in Keene for habitat and recreation, and 79% of residents believe creating and protecting open and green space is critical for Keene's future. This environmental priority weaves into Keene's opportunities to expand its industry mix towards businesses that share similar priorities and values, emphasizing green practices, bioscience, and a sustainability focus.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Between recent transitions and new regional initiatives, momentum is building for new economic development leadership in Keene. Reinjecting energy into economic development will help Keene leverage the opportunity to take bold steps in proactively curating economic prospects while also embracing the competitive advantages that Keene offers today. Already recognized for its rural economic development efforts, Keene can continue to serve as a national leader and model for similarly positioned communities and showcase innovative approaches to supporting business and industry growth in the rural setting. Strategic alignment with broader partnerships and statewide economic development initiatives offers an opportunity for strong implementation and capacity support for years to come

TRADE-OFFS TO CONSIDER

Balancing business attraction versus retention efforts will be critical when planning for Keene’s economic future. Intentionally focusing capacity and resources to help foster growth for current businesses in Keene will help ensure the longevity and economic opportunity of the business community that’s historically served as the backbone to the city’s economy. Yet, opportunities exist to bring new businesses to Keene, aligned with regional and state priorities, and to continue investment in Keene. This intentional balance will continue in future decision-making to invest in Keene’s historic industries while also preparing for emerging and future industries.



As businesses and industries evolve in their operations, their evolution will also manifest in the physical environment. Companies that may leave or cease operations may leave behind vacant buildings and underutilized properties. New businesses may want to transform parcels, build new buildings, or reinvigorate aging commercial buildings. Growing companies may need to expand their buildings or relocate to accommodate larger footprints or more advanced operations. As Keene evaluates commercial and industrial development and redevelopment opportunities, the city must also evaluate the highest and best use of properties not just for today but for years or decades to come. Fostering intentionality in land use decision-making and encouraging development regulation decisions with foresight to tomorrow’s business needs will help steer the city towards continued economic success.



Future Insights: Connecting the Past to the Future

- **Transition Keene Advocates** launched in 2010 as a collective of Keene citizens to respond to threats to the community’s quality of life and work together through participatory and community-led initiatives to improve ecological, social, and economic conditions. Today, the Transition Movement—a national and international network for communities reimagining the ways in which community-level efforts can lead to significant changes—is gaining new momentum in Keene through work at the Hannah Grimes Center for Entrepreneurship and other key partners in Keene.



Not Starting from Zero

The City of Keene has already implemented various initiatives to strategically prepare for the future including:

- Development Incentives: Tax Increment Financing Districts, Community Revitalization Tax Relief Incentive Program (79-E District), Economic Revitalization Zones, and a federal Opportunity Zone
- Keene Economic Development Plan
- Airport Development Study and Resources
- Code + Keene Development Regulation Assessment (Land Development Code)
- U.S. DOE SolSmart Gold Designation (open for solar business)
- Hannah Grimes Center for Entrepreneurship
- Radically Rural Conference
- Monadnock Area Manufacturing Consortium
- Monadnock Economic Development Corporation
- Greater Monadnock Collaborative (Chamber of Commerce)
- Southwest Region Planning Commission - Economic Development Planning

GOAL 1: ENCOURAGE, RECRUIT, AND RETAIN BUSINESSES IN TARGETED INDUSTRIES.

- | | | |
|---------|--|--|
| Actions | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1. Increase participation in local, regional, and statewide industry groups to market Keene to prospective businesses in targeted industries and increase insights into industry needs. 1.2. Align Keene’s industry attraction efforts with New Hampshire BEA’s targeted industries, initiatives, and growth sectors. 1.3. Monitor the needs of Keene’s current industries to help target expansion efforts and support. 1.4. Foster a nexus of specialized firms to promote and attract large-scale employers to the region. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.5. Implement new online permitting system in support of a “one-city” customer service approach and make navigation of the city’s permitting processes more logical and streamlined for all users. 1.6. Develop easy to use guides that provide relevant planning, building permitting and zoning information targeted toward specific types of development projects (e.g. cottage court) and business sector needs (e.g. starting a small business in Keene). |
|---------|--|--|

GOAL 2: PRIORITIZE ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCY.

- | | | |
|---------|---|---|
| Actions | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1. Monitor and partner for the continued success of Keene’s major anchors, including Cheshire Medical Center, Keene State College, large employers, and Downtown Keene, recognizing these anchors as assets and competitive advantages of Keene’s economy. 2.2. Support efforts to make Keene a regional hub for repair, reuse, and remanufacturing, reducing waste, creating local jobs, and revitalizing essential trades. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.3. Map existing essential products and service businesses within a regional footprint to determine gaps and identify ways to support businesses and other endeavors to meet these needs. Conduct an audit and map existing local economic assets and gaps to identify key leverage points for investment and support. |
|---------|---|---|





GOAL 3: ATTRACT AND GROW KEENE’S BUSINESSES OF ALL SCALES, FROM ENTREPRENEURS TO BUSINESSES THAT SPAN INTERNATIONALLY.

Actions

- 3.1. Increase allocation of the city’s budget for economic development staff to actively connect with current and prospective businesses, developers, and economic development partners across the city, region, and state.
- 3.2. Review the city’s regulatory processes to identify potential challenges or constraints prospective businesses and/or developers may face.
- 3.3. Invest in proactive marketing to businesses and the development community, including unifying communication through the City’s website and expanding online content around the city’s economic development initiatives for current and prospective businesses, partners, and developers.
- 3.4. Continue to formalize the City’s Economic Development Team and associated roles and responsibilities so that expertise and resources can be introduced to potential developers or investors in a proactive, coordinated and targeted fashion.
- 3.5. Regularly conduct a business survey to monitor and understand evolving business needs across a range of factors, including industry, geographic location, size, tenure, and ownership. Incorporate best practices in survey development and administration to ensure representation of entrepreneurs, early-stage businesses, and underrepresented business owners, such as women and minority-owned businesses.
- 3.6. Expand partnerships with local and regional Chambers of Commerce to support business attraction, technical assistance, tourism development, and marketing efforts.
- 3.7. Review and revise home-based business regulations to support entrepreneurs and small businesses.

GOAL 4: STRENGTHEN KEENE’S POSITION AS AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT LEADER.

Actions

- 4.1. Launch an annual “State of Keene” event with regional and industry leaders focusing on economic and workforce development.
- 4.2. Strengthen partnerships with local and regional economic development players, such as the Monadnock Economic Development Corporation and the Greater Monadnock Collaborative.
- 4.3. Facilitate regular roundtable meetings with key partners such as the Chamber, Hannah Grimes Center for Entrepreneurship, Keene Manufacturers Consortium, representatives from nearby communities, major employers, known developers, city leadership, and more.
- 4.4. Support the Hannah Grimes Center for Entrepreneurship and city efforts to become a model for rural economic resilience and innovation. Communicate these successes through proactive marketing.
- 4.5. Facilitate community-wide conversations, in collaboration with Radically Rural and otherwise, to deepen public understanding of the Transition Movement and co-create local strategies.

GOAL 5: FOSTER AN INCLUSIVE ECONOMY.

Actions

- 5.1. Support the city’s cultural events, ensuring funding and promotion by the city continue.
- 5.2. Create an Arts and Culture Master Plan or Study with an economic and fiscal impact assessment of the role arts and culture play in Keene’s economy to identify strategies to better support arts and cultural industries and increase the economic contribution of the arts sector.
- 5.3. Work with regional entities and connect with statewide programs and initiatives for arts, culture, and outdoor recreation.
- 5.4. Conduct a feasibility assessment for increasing shared-use infrastructure for small-scale producers and creators.
- 5.5. Promote multi-day outdoor recreation experiences, leveraging places like Granite Gorge and Drummer Hill as regional destinations in marketing efforts.
- 5.6. Identify new ways to capture economic benefits from visitors attending KSC ice hockey events and other events at Keene Ice.
- 5.7. Expand economic development KPIs and metrics to assess a broader range of inclusive community development and livability considerations alongside economic indicators, such as well-being, resilience, ecological health, and sufficiency.





Connected
Mobility

4.3 | PILLAR 3: CONNECTED MOBILITY

OBJECTIVE: BUILD REGIONAL AND LOCAL CONNECTIVITY, TRANSPORTATION, AND RECREATION NETWORKS.

4.3.1 | IMPORTANCE OF CONNECTED MOBILITY

Keene is the logical hub for mobility connections and an established regional center for the Monadnock Region. As the region grows, especially the surrounding areas, building this connectivity becomes essential to help the easy flow of the workforce and residents to Keene. While the Comprehensive Master Planning work is focused on Keene, topics like transportation require a regional approach and one that encourages public-private partnerships. This is further amplified by the expressed desire from residents to have highly walkable and potentially ‘car-free’ living options. This has implications for planning, as it requires the seamless linking of recreation, trail, bus, and trolley networks and coordinating with land uses to build multi-modal options that allow significant choice in how people ‘get around’ the community and the local region. This connected mobility is seen as one of the intriguing and appealing features of the preferred future that has been envisaged by residents in the planning work to date.

Keene’s Connected Mobility Pillar aims to build seamless regional and local transportation networks, promoting car-free living and enhancing accessibility for all. 62% of Keene residents commute under 15 minutes, highlighting the potential for car-free living options.

“When I hear ‘connected mobility,’ I imagine a community where I could bike across town and walk around. I could bike to work using the trail network then turnoff after crossing the highway on a bridge....”

- Connected Mobility Discussion Board Participant

Data Insights

- Keene residents’ jobs are close to home. 62% of Keene residents commute in under 15 minutes to work. This commute time is lower than the national average of 27 minutes. This leads to more potential opportunities for ‘car-free’ living options.
- The majority (79%) of Keene workers commute via motor vehicle, less than the 85% of Cheshire County workers and 83% of New Hampshire workers. The rate of Keene workers who walk or bike to work (4.6%) is just over two percentage points higher than both the state and county rates. (US Census ACS 2022)
- The average household in Keene travels 17,359 vehicle miles annually, about 2,500 miles less than the average Cheshire County and New Hampshire household. (Center for Neighborhood Technology, 2020)
- The average household in Keene takes 7 trips via public transit annually, compared to 4 trips for Cheshire County households, 8 trips for New Hampshire households and 96 trips for the average U.S. household. (Center for Neighborhood Technology, 2020)

For the Connected Mobility Pillar, four overarching goals have been developed over the course of the CMP planning process. The goals have been developed by community aspirations that have emerged throughout the planning process and are designed to accelerate solutions to the mobility challenges and provide accessibility and inclusion for people of all ages.

GOAL 1: CREATE A CONNECTED AND ACCESSIBLE NETWORK OF MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE.

Aspirations

- Accessibility features are working and operational.
- Residents have the option to live a car-free lifestyle.
- Transportation infrastructure and systems work for Keene today and in the future.
- Alternative ways to fund transit opportunities, like circulators or other micro transit, are available.
- The culture of safety is an on-going, broad effort that is sustained over time.
- Roadway safety is addressed in the various elements of the Comprehensive Plan, small area plans, and within zoning codes.
- The city’s attention focuses on implementing the Roadway Safety Action Plan, measuring effectiveness, and adjusting strategies as needed to attain zero traffic-related deaths.

GOAL 2: PRIORITIZE VULNERABLE ROAD USERS IN INFRASTRUCTURE DESIGN, OPERATIONS, AND MAINTENANCE.

Aspirations

- A responsive and effective on-demand mobility service and a reliable circulator system are means for residents and visitors to move about the city.
- The city is a stakeholder in state government legislation advocacy for mobility goals.
- Mobility options are connected throughout the area, increasing access to a wider segment of the population.

“One positive of improving multi-modal transportation options and making it easier to get around outside of a personal vehicle is that many groups benefit from the changes, including people with disabilities.”

- Connected Mobility Discussion Board Participant





**Connected
Mobility**

COMMUNITY ASPIRATIONS (CONT.)

GOAL 3: EXPAND AND PROMOTE ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY OPTIONS THAT ARE CONVENIENT AND ATTRACTIVE

Aspirations

- Residents and visitors experience multimodal options daily, such as buses and micro transit.
- The transportation network functions for all users and needs.
- Nodes of walkability are integrated into Keene’s transportation and land use framework.

“I wish public transportation could be expanded past 4:30 pm.”

- Community Needs Survey Respondent

GOAL 4: EXPAND KEENE’S CONNECTIVITY TO SUPPORT ECONOMIC GROWTH.

Aspirations

- Keene’s transportation network attracts businesses and stimulates its economic growth.
- Technology is integrated and utilized to facilitate regional connectivity.
- A regional approach to mobility is undertaken with intercity buses, regional trails, and the airport.



KEY FINDINGS FROM THE 2023 COMMUNITY SURVEY

- Under the **Community and Social Fabric** topics in the Community Survey, 53% of survey respondents identified assuming a greater leadership role in the Monadnock region and 50% identified connecting Keene to the greater regional identity as important in shaping the future of Keene.
- Connectivity is an important feature of highly desirable communities. Under the **Economic and Built Environment** topics of the Community Survey, 67% of survey respondents identified building a network of pedestrian-friendly sidewalks as important to shaping the future of Keene.
- Under the **Environmental and Landscape** topics of the Community Survey, 46% of survey respondents identified creating corridor connections between neighborhood areas, and 54% of respondents identified adopting zero-waste and net-zero carbon goals as important to shaping the future of Keene.



Planning Insights

- As societal values shift, driven by increased environmental sensitivity, it is expected that people will be seeking a greater range of mobility options that are climate-neutral.
- It is also important that planning considers the transport of goods and services to and from the community
- Keene’s network of trails offers the potential to create a unique layer to the connectivity and mobility equation.

4.3.3 | EMERGING TRENDS, CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES, TRADE-OFFS

Keene’s network of trails offers the potential to create a unique layer to the connectivity and mobility equation.

There is a desire expressed by some residents to create a system, similar to some European cities, where these trails are a major part of the mobility system and serve a purpose beyond just recreation.

The last decade has seen explosive growth in new mobility technologies and trends, including the development of autonomous vehicles, e-bikes, e-scooters, on-demand transit, paratransit, micro transit, e-commerce, rideshares, and mass adoption of electric vehicles. The rise of Vision Zero and Complete Streets has also increased the emphasis on pedestrian and bicycle safety on public roads.

Keene has been proactive in its adoption of complete streets and building out its bike network. However, with the rise in new mobility options, the city may need to revisit its Complete Street Guidelines adopted a decade ago to see how these new modes affect the design principles outlined in the plan. For example, as the city continues to build out its network of bike lanes, new e-bikes, e-scooters, and pedal-assist bicycles use these lanes. The city may have to update the guidelines and local ordinances to ensure these new mobility options are used in the way the city prefers.





Not Starting from Zero

The City of Keene has already implemented the following initiatives to strategically prepare for the future.

- Complete Streets Policy & Design Guidelines
- Neighborhood Parking Project & Report
- Strengthening Connections: Downtowns & Trails
- Bicycle/Pedestrian Path Master Plan
- Bicycle/Pedestrian Path Advisory Committee
- SWRPC Micro-Transit Study
- Roadway Safety Action Plan
- Downtown Infrastructure Project

GOAL 1: CREATE A CONNECTED AND ACCESSIBLE NETWORK OF MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE.

Actions	1.1. Undertake a walk audit to identify areas where safety improvements are needed.	1.6. Implement strategies described in the Roadway Safety Action Plan.
	1.2. Implement a snowplow tracker digital application.	1.7. Establish a crash analysis team, such as the Roadway Safety Plan Committee comprised of senior staff from the Police Department, Fire Department and Engineering Division, to examine recent accidents, determine contributing factors, and gather data on near misses. Evaluate methods to gather this data by the potential use of optical sensors or other devices.
	1.3. Evaluate and update the comprehensive sidewalk and crosswalk maintenance plan to include a snow removal strategy for priority sidewalks and walkways to ensure accessibility during inclement weather and a striping and crosswalk maintenance plan to enhance multimodal mobility safety and accessibility, involving the community in the planning process to address local needs and encourage collaboration.	1.8. Enhance enforcement of traffic infractions like parking in bike lanes and speeding by implementing strategies like increased patrols, fixed and mobile speed cameras, and community reporting systems.
	1.4. Develop a program such as “adopt-a-sidewalk” to encourage resident/business participation in shared maintenance of sidewalks during weather-related events.	1.9. Conduct an ongoing study to determine the most effective messaging for different driver and traveler types, such as young drivers and those operating larger, heavier vehicles.
	1.5. Continue to offer and promote an online tool that offers a one-stop service for constituents, residents, and visitors to report service requests like sidewalk repairs, potholes, or traffic signal issues.	

GOAL 2: PRIORITIZE VULNERABLE ROAD USERS IN INFRASTRUCTURE DESIGN, OPERATIONS, AND MAINTENANCE.

Actions	2.1. Explore the feasibility of instituting a circulator or trolley along high-use areas and neighborhood nodes that is in coordination with the pillars of Thriving Economy and Vibrant Neighborhoods.	2.5. Partner with local organizations to reach underserved populations.
	2.2. Advocate for the creation of a user-friendly, one-stop-shop location for all mobility information with real-time updates.	2.6. Track carbon emission reductions from increased public transit and non-motorized travel and assess the public health impacts.
	2.3. Utilize a circulator during festivals to introduce people to alternative modes of transit, test out ideas, and gain feedback.	2.7. Leverage grant and grassroots funding opportunities to advance trail planning and construction efforts.
	2.4. Work with/partner with transit providers to engage the community in planning and decision-making to meet local needs and preferences by organizing surveys and public meetings to collect feedback on the desired frequency and operating hours of transit services	

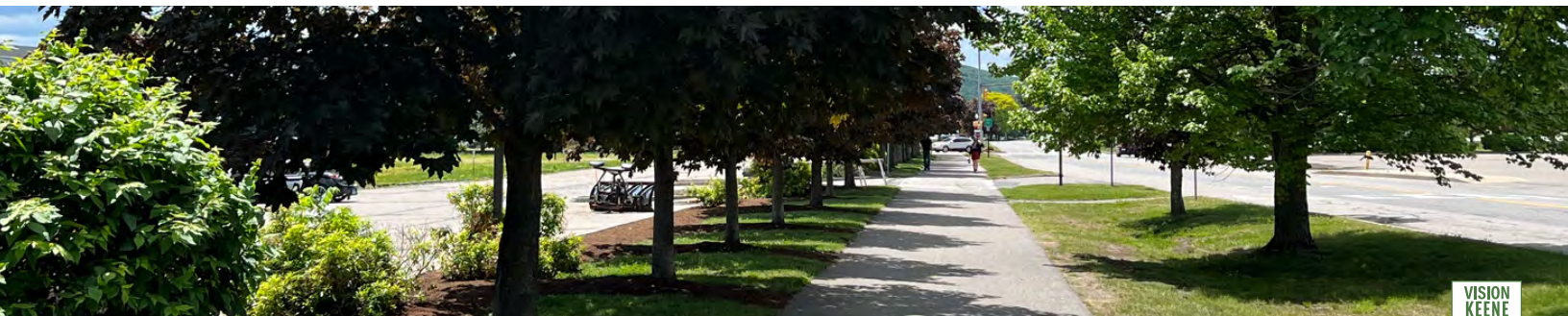


GOAL 3: EXPAND AND PROMOTE ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY OPTIONS THAT ARE CONVENIENT AND ATTRACTIVE.

- | | | |
|----------------|---|---|
| Actions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1. Document the processes, successes, and challenges of the Marlboro Street Complete Streets demonstration project to create a comprehensive guide for future projects. 3.2. Identify priority areas for pilot programs and conduct a transportation network study to find suitable roads for multimodal projects. 3.3. Launch Awareness Campaigns to educate the public about the benefits of EVs and the availability of charging stations through social media, local events, and partnerships with community organizations. 3.4. Building off the EV Charging Infrastructure Plan, expand the electric vehicle charging network by performing a needs assessment and pinpointing ideal locations for new chargers. Utilize data on traffic patterns, population density, and existing infrastructure to choose strategic sites, including downtown areas, neighborhood hubs, and entry points into Keene. 3.5. Identify incentive mechanisms or development standards for development projects to be part of the city's overall enhancement of its electric vehicle charging network. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.6. Re-evaluate regulations to encourage citizen-led urbanism projects and promote community-driven solutions to multimodal improvements. 3.7. Undertake quick-build projects to enhance street designs for multimodal travel, leveraging affordable, temporary materials such as paint, planters, and modular barriers to quickly implement changes. 3.8. Support land use decisions that increase the effectiveness of Keene's transportation network in coordination with the pillars of Vibrant Neighborhoods and Thriving Economy. 3.9. Launch targeted marketing campaigns to highlight the benefits of public transit, such as cost savings, environmental impact, and convenience. Use social media, local events, and partnerships with community organizations to reach a wider audience. |
|----------------|---|---|

GOAL 4: EXPAND KEENE'S CONNECTIVITY TO SUPPORT ECONOMIC GROWTH.

- | | | |
|----------------|--|--|
| Actions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1. Assess the needs and feasibility of incorporating new technologies into the airport, like electric plane charging infrastructure and biofuels. 4.2. Utilize the city's enhanced accessibility and mobility connections to boost the local economy by collaborating with the Magnify Monadnock Regional Promotional Organization for promotion. 4.3. Assess the feasibility of an intercity bus service by exploring options or creative solutions with other entities. 4.4. Assess how intercity transit could be leveraged to expand the labor pool and bring in workers from nearby communities. 4.5. Integrate goods and services into the mobility network to streamline logistics and support local businesses. 4.6. Collaborate with neighboring jurisdictions and regional authorities to coordinate transportation planning and infrastructure projects. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.7. Monitor changes in the number of new businesses and economic activity in areas with enhanced connectivity and track shifts in property values in areas impacted by transportation improvements. The following metrics may be used: number of new business registrations, changes in tax revenues, public transit ridership, average travel times, and traffic volumes. 4.8. Implement smart traffic management systems to optimize traffic flow and reduce congestion. 4.9. Enhance infrastructure at identified neighborhood nodes to support various modes of transportation, including walking, cycling, and public transit. |
|----------------|--|--|



OBJECTIVE: SUPPORT VIBRANT COMMUNITY NEIGHBORHOODS THAT REFLECT THEIR UNIQUE IDENTITY.

4.4.1 | IMPORTANCE OF VIBRANT NEIGHBORHOODS

In the context of the Comprehensive Master Plan work, place-making is an approach that helps emphasize community neighborhoods and builds on their unique culture and identity.

Keene is a community that has retained some very important aspects of its culture and heritage. The downtown and main street areas are a highly visible example of a vibrant ‘neighborhood’ that has a unique identity, and this will be enhanced by the upcoming infrastructure improvements. However, Keene has other important neighborhoods and places. The city should work with the community to identify these places and help build more place-based experiences in the community. In today’s world, these place-based approaches help build community connection points. This approach helps enhance the community fabric, people’s sense of belonging, and being included in a community.

“For a small town, Keene has an impressive amount of cultural offerings, with lots of scenic parks and hiking spots, also an attractive downtown and a commitment to history and preservation. It is also welcoming to people of various cultures and beliefs.”
- Community Survey Respondent

19% of Keene’s population is identified as socially vulnerable, highlighting the importance of strong community bonds. As one community member shared, “Our neighborhoods are the heart of Keene, where culture and heritage come alive, making our city a truly special place to live.”

“The city amenities (international cultural events, college events, theaters, music, enough shopping options, openness to diversity) with the small-town vibe (feels safe, welcoming, people know each other, charming). Also, I love all of the natural beauty and places to enjoy it.”
- Community Survey Respondent



Data Insights

- 19% of the population in Keene is identified as socially vulnerable according to the US Census Bureau, more than the rate of 16% in Cheshire County, and slightly less than the national rate of 21%. Community resilience is the capacity of individuals and households to absorb, endure, and recover from the health, social, and economic impacts. (**About Community Resilience Estimates**)
- According to the **US Census Bureau Household Pulse Survey from August 2024**, 88% of adults in New Hampshire reported getting the social and emotional support they need sometimes, usually, or always. This is compared to 79% of adults nationwide. The same survey shows that 38% of adults in New Hampshire reported feeling lonely sometimes, usually, or always, compared to 40% nationwide.

Vibrant Neighborhoods

For the Vibrant Neighborhoods Pillar, five overarching goals have been developed over the course of the CMP planning process. The goals have been developed by community aspirations that have emerged throughout the planning process and are designed to accelerate solutions to retain important aspects of its culture and heritage. They reflect a comprehensive approach to enhancing the vibrancy of Keene's neighborhoods by focusing on community engagement, infrastructure, historic preservation, safety, economic vibrancy, public spaces, and effective communication.



GOAL 1: SUPPORT A BUILT ENVIRONMENT THAT ENCOURAGES SOCIAL CONNECTIONS AND INTERACTIONS.

Aspirations

- Keene's walkable, mixed-use communities are places that encourage social gathering for all residents.
- Communal focal points ("third spaces") such as schools, youth centers, and parks are at the center of building community bonds.

"I'd love to see space where neighbors can naturally connect and develop community within neighborhoods. Cared for spaces make a neighborhood feel like home and inspire others to care about that neighborhood..."
 - Vibrant Neighborhoods Discussion Board Participant

GOAL 2: FOSTER COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIP-BUILDING AND COLLABORATION.

Aspirations

- The city fosters intentional relationships with the public by being available and approachable to its residents.
- Partnerships and seamless communication between the city and residents build a sense of belonging.

GOAL 3: ENSURE SAFE AND EFFICIENT MOVEMENT AROUND TOWN.

Aspirations

- The 2025 Roadway Safety Action Plan is fully implemented.
- The city has a comprehensive multimodal transportation system that allows people to get out, meet people, and socialize.



GOAL 4: FOSTER A HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE FOR ALL RESIDENTS.

Aspirations

- All residents have equitable access to passive and active recreation opportunities, including parks, facilities, open space, and programs that focus on active living, wise stewardship of natural resources, and healthy eating.
- Keene’s residents have the resources to access high-quality food, housing, transportation, education, and employment.

GOAL 5: CREATE OPPORTUNITIES TO ENCOURAGE THE CREATION OF NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESSES.

Aspirations

- Regulations provide flexibility to accommodate a diversity of businesses within neighborhood character areas.
- Keene offers students professional growth opportunities that align with the area’s educational training and expertise.



KEY FINDINGS FROM THE 2023 COMMUNITY SURVEY

- Under the **Community and Social Fabric** topics of the Community Survey, 75% of survey respondents identified fostering a sense of belonging to a community and 79% of respondents identified residents being part of key decision-making as important to shaping the future of Keene.
- Under the **Economic and Built Environment** topics of the Community Survey, 70% of survey respondents identified continuing to preserve and protect Keene’s historic district and 63% of respondents identified developing the Downtown core area as important to shaping the future of Keene.
- Under the **Environmental and Landscape** topics of the Community Survey, 66% of survey respondents identified preserving Keene’s existing look and feel and 78% identified fostering accessibility for all ages as important to shaping the future of Keene.

Planning Insights

- Communities that are the size and scale of Keene often include smaller, unique locations, places, and neighborhoods.
- Place-making is becoming more important in urban and city planning. It focuses on more than just physical elements and includes approaches to ‘activate’ these places to create unique experiences and purposes.



Downtown is usually the first neighborhood people think of when locals think of a vibrant neighborhood.

This is because of its walkability, historic character, and strong sense of place. The ground floor retail activates the street while the historic architecture is pedestrian-oriented. It is a social gathering place for all residents of Keene.

Traditional Euclidean zoning focuses on the separation of uses. This is counterintuitive to the creation of vibrant neighborhoods that have a mix of uses. The zoning code needs to be reviewed to ensure that targeted neighborhoods have land development regulations that allow for this type of development. Sacramento, California, approached this by proposing to decouple density from land use and instead use Floor Area Ratio (FAR) to regulate building size. This strategy ensures new housing is compatible with existing while allowing for the development of a diversity of housing options. They also legalized small neighborhood commercial developments within residential neighborhoods, promoting vibrancy and walkability.



Creating a sense of place is an important characteristic of a vibrant neighborhood.

Placemaking has become a more and more popular tool in the last decade to revitalize neighborhoods and promote social interaction. Placemaking has been initiated by several cities across the nation to boost the transformation of underutilized public spaces into vibrant places for people. Typically, many placemaking projects can include public participation, helping to bring the community together to improve their neighborhood. Charlotte, North Carolina, and Clearwater, Florida, are two examples of city-driven placemaking programs.

Another aspect of vibrant communities is their connection with nature and recreation opportunities. Interacting with nature is proven to help improve people’s mental health. Incorporating nature into the built environment and everyday life can happen in many ways, such as using community gardens for strengthening food security, building pocket parks, improving connections to nearby parks, or improving the urban tree canopy. Increased greenery also improves the urban heat island effect, keeping communities cool during heat waves and protecting vulnerable populations like seniors.

Keene has participated in the Tree City USA program for over 40 years (since 1979). The city also has a great history around trees – it is known as the ‘Elm City’ – and the city’s current downtown has trees because of a citizen-led and funded effort to donate trees. More recently, the city partnered with its utility and the Arbor Day Foundation to give away a few hundred trees to residents. For additional history, read more at [the Daily Nutmeg](#).





Vibrant
Neighborhoods

4.4.4 | PLANNING GOALS AND ACTION AREAS

Not Starting from Zero

The City of Keene has already implemented or supported the following initiatives to strategically prepare for the future.

- 2010 Comprehensive Plan recommended “Neighborhood Village Activity Centers”
- Marlboro Street Rezoning Initiative
- Keene Sustainable Energy Plan and adopted 100% renewable energy goals (keeneenergyplan.com)
- Keene Public Library Strategic Plan
- Heritage Commission
- Neighborhood Parking Report
- WOW! Community Nights
- Formal and informal neighborhood associations
- Monadnock View Cemetery Community Gardens
- Active and Passive Recreation Plan



GOAL 1: SUPPORT A BUILT ENVIRONMENT THAT ENCOURAGES SOCIAL CONNECTIONS AND INTERACTIONS.

- | | | |
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| Actions | 1.1. Identify ideal locations for community nodes in collaboration with residents. | 1.3. Undertake multimodal improvements to West Street to improve access to downtown. |
| | 1.2. Conduct a public process to evaluate the permitted uses for neighborhood business nodes, encouraging the creation of neighborhood-scale businesses. | 1.4. Enhance communication and outreach efforts to increase community awareness of and involvement in city programs, events, services, and facilities. |

GOAL 2: FOSTER COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIP-BUILDING AND COLLABORATION.

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| Actions | 2.1. Create a contact list of community leaders and groups the city can partner with on community events. | 2.4. Host community events to build social cohesion and community bonds. |
| | 2.2. Support and invest in organically developed, community-led events and organizations. | 2.5. Identify special events/community events to break the digital isolation that has increased since the pandemic. |
| | 2.3. Establish a task force to work with business leaders to identify quality of life characteristics to improve in employee attraction/retention efforts. | 2.6. Support the development of existing and new citizen-led neighborhood groups. |





GOAL 3: ENSURE SAFE AND EFFICIENT MOVEMENT AROUND TOWN.

Actions	3.1. Undertake mobility improvements between residential communities and job centers in coordination with the Connected Mobility pillar.	3.5. Identify funding opportunities to assist with the planning, design, and construction work of mobility improvements.
	3.2. Undertake a walk audit with community stakeholders, such as seniors, disabled persons, college students, families with young children, and other regular users, to identify mobility barriers.	3.6. Coordinate accessibility needs and protocols with city services during inclement weather events.
	3.3. Collaborate with any organization exploring and identifying locations that support components of a city-wide bicycle share program.	3.7. Continue efforts to encourage active transportation alternatives for school children such as Safe Routes to Schools or Safe Routes to Parks to Schools and expand initiatives for Safe Routes to Parks.
	3.4. Test mobility options by employing quick-build or temporary installations.	

GOAL 4: FOSTER A HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE FOR ALL RESIDENTS.

Actions	4.1. Collaborate with healthcare and educational institutions to support community health initiatives and improve communication.	4.5. Review current revenue streams and their sustainability by determining and defining direct and indirect costs and developing a cost recovery plan.
	4.2. Conduct a review of program and service offerings to streamline service offerings and enhance resource efficiency.	4.6. Support the pillars of Livable Housing, Connected Mobility, Thriving Economy, and Adaptable Workforce to provide a range of housing, transportation, educational, and employment options.
	4.3. Promote community gardens and expand active senior and young adult programs.	
	4.4. Periodically evaluate community needs, desires, and satisfaction with programs and services.	

GOAL 5: CREATE OPPORTUNITIES TO ENCOURAGE THE CREATION OF NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESSES.

Actions	5.1. Assess appropriate locations to allow for small-scale commercial uses in neighborhood nodes and update regulations accordingly.	5.4. In coordination with the Thriving Economy pillar, evaluate the effectiveness of marketing efforts in reaching and engaging target markets for neighborhood-type businesses.
	5.2. Support business growth incubation by providing opportunities and resources for a start-up or home-based business to grow into a neighborhood-oriented brick-and-mortar location.	5.5. Promote the city's quality of life characteristics to attract potential employees as identified in the Adaptable Workforce pillar.
	5.3. Undertake a code audit to identify barriers to artisanal workshops, live/work facilities, breweries, coworking spaces, and other types of industries compatible with Keene's neighborhood areas.	



4.5 | PILLAR 5: ADAPTABLE WORKFORCE

OBJECTIVE: FOSTER A FUTURE-READY, ABUNDANT, AND ADAPTABLE WORKFORCE.

4.5.1 | IMPORTANCE OF AN ADAPTABLE WORKFORCE

Keene’s future competitive success will depend on its ability to develop and retain a skilled and future-ready workforce. Talent attraction is a key issue for many cities, especially in more rural regions, and a strong workforce is essential for a strong local economy. Keene’s educational institutions (Keene State College, River Valley, and Antioch) attract young talent to the area, but Keene must work to retain these students upon graduation. The city is also experiencing an aging population, presenting opportunities for Keene to lean into the broad spectrum of workers to prepare for tomorrow’s economy. With the foundation of Keene’s education focus, a cherished arts scene, and cultural amenities and experiences that help market Keene as a desirable to community to live, work, and play in, Keene has the potential to be a creative center that helps spur innovation and flexible thinking, qualities already embedded in the community culture.



Data Insights

- Over 19,900 people work in Keene, with nearly 11,750 people coming to Keene for employment, demonstrating Keene’s regional importance and economic concentration.
- Keene State College enrollment has declined over the past 15 years. In 2010, 5,738 students were enrolled in the fall semester at KSC. This trended downward year-to-year; in 2023, student enrollment was down to 2,863. Despite enrollment decline, Keene State College continues to be a significant anchor and asset to Keene’s employment base and workforce pipeline.
- Although Keene still has a high share of residents between the ages of 18 and 24, the overall population is aging. The median age of residents increased from 32 to 36 between 2010 and 2022. At the same time, the number of residents between 65 and 74 and over 85 doubled.
- Keene residents are becoming increasingly educated over the past decade, with more residents having bachelor’s, master’s, or advanced degrees than in 2010. Approximately 44% of Keene’s population over the age of 25 has a bachelor’s or advanced degree, a rate higher than Cheshire County (34%) and the State of New Hampshire overall (39%).
- Median household incomes in Keene remain below the county and state. The median household income in Keene is \$69,831 compared to the county’s median at \$76,551 and the state’s median household income of \$90,845.

An Adaptable Workforce requires three fundamental facets:

- Adaptable workers with access to evolving skill development and credential pathways throughout all stages of life.
- Adaptable institutions that offer flexibility and innovation in planning for future needs and responding to tomorrow’s economy and workforce needs.
- An adaptable community that focuses on livability, where residents can live in Keene, commute to their workplace, remain involved in the community, and contribute to the high-quality community Keene is today.



Balancing these facets will position Keene with a future-ready, evolving, and abundant workforce for the years to come.



CONNECTION TO VISION KEENE PILLARS

An Adaptable Workforce is not a siloed pillar of Vision Keene. It is part of the foundation for a Thriving Economy. If Keene’s workforce isn’t substantial enough or attuned to its businesses and industry needs, economic opportunity will be halted or diminished in Keene. As Keene’s economy evolves, the workforce must evolve to meet future needs. This evolution and growth of the workforce are contingent upon Livable Housing in Keene, where employees can live and work in the community. Growing the workforce will require having an adequate housing supply and desirable living options that meet today’s and tomorrow’s demographic needs. Connected Mobility in Keene can improve physical access to employment opportunities while recognizing the regional labor draw of workers coming into Keene daily.

The Keene community recognizes that an Adaptable Workforce blends opportunities across all age cohorts from youth populations to its aging workforce and that tomorrow's economy will necessitate improved access to skill and career development opportunities so that Keene's labor pool continues to meet changing industry needs. Importantly, Keene aspires to work alongside its partners, recognizing that supporting industry, education, and regional partners will help Keene's workers achieve greater opportunities while breaking barriers in growing the labor pool. Through these aspirations, the community developed five Adaptable Workforce goals to concentrate efforts through 2040.

"I would not stay in Keene because there are not the job opportunities that I am looking for."

- Keene Student

GOAL 1: ATTRACT TALENT TO GROW KEENE'S WORKFORCE

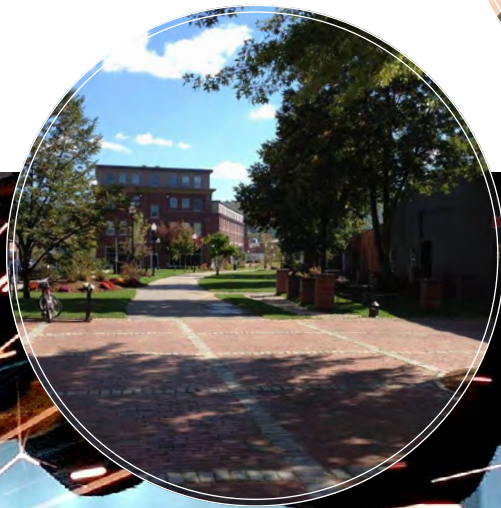
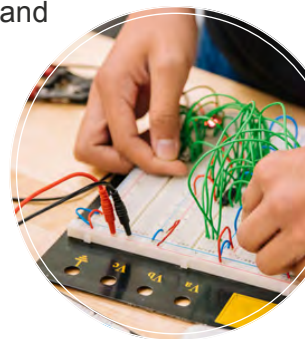
Aspirations

- Keene's economy grows and expands because of an adequate supply of workers and employees.
- New businesses want to locate in Keene because of the reputation of its talent pool across occupation levels.
- Youth find employment opportunities in Keene, and students stay in Keene after graduation, leading to the next generation of Keene residents.

GOAL 2: EXPAND CREDENTIAL PATHWAYS AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Aspirations

- Keene residents and workforce have access to a wide range of skill and career development pathways throughout all stages of life and across all available resources.
- Keene State College and other nearby educational institutions evolve their curriculum and credentials to meet the needs of area industries and employers.
- Keene's aging population continues to participate in the workforce, gaining new skills and marketability in today's job market.
- Keene Public Library continues to meet the community's evolving needs, offering new education and learning opportunities.



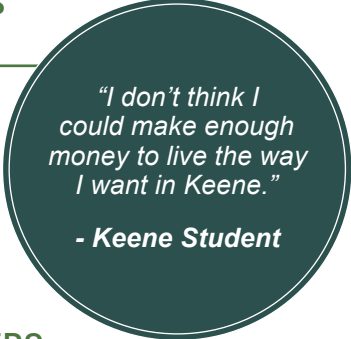
COMMUNITY ASPIRATIONS (CONT.)



GOAL 3: PLAY A PROACTIVE ROLE IN DE-SILOING EFFORTS, BROADENING PARTNERSHIPS, AND INCREASING COLLABORATION BETWEEN PARTNERS THAT SERVE AND SUPPORT KEENE'S WORKFORCE

Aspirations

- The “walls” between educational institutions and the community are broken down, and the broader community engages with educational offerings through various social learning opportunities.
- An increased awareness of how various partners and players support workforce development initiatives leads to strategically filling gaps.



GOAL 4: MEET QUALITY OF LIFE NEEDS AND REDUCE WORKFORCE BARRIERS, SUCH AS HOUSING AVAILABILITY, CHILDCARE, AND TRANSPORTATION.

Aspirations

- Keene employees have access to housing, childcare, and transportation, allowing employees to achieve a high quality of life in Keene.
- Keene trailblazes regional efforts to increase the housing supply and address housing challenges.



GOAL 5: PRIORITIZE WORKFORCE AND COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Aspirations

- Workforce development extends beyond skill and career development and finds solutions to tackle broader community health and wellness objectives.
- Keene businesses and workers are highly engaged in the community.
- The city’s prioritization to improve walkability and multimodal infrastructure translates into a more active workforce, improving health conditions and activity levels in workers. Employers recognize the value of a healthy workforce and contribute to and participate in broader community health initiatives.
- The city expands its economic indicator tracking to encompass a more comprehensive set of metrics that help measure community wellness, social and community connection, and other important socioeconomic factors.



Planning Insights

- Access to quality jobs and incomes that yield livable wages and opportunities is intrinsically intertwined in Keene’s community and social fabric. Two-thirds of Keene’s residents believe lifelong learning opportunities are fundamental to the city’s continued success, and nearly 60% of residents emphasize the importance of equity and inclusivity principles.
- Approximately 81% of Keene residents identified developing more local employment opportunities as critical to shaping the city’s future. Similarly, 84% want to encourage and attract desirable businesses to the city. As more companies grow and locate in Keene, so does the importance of an abundant and quality workforce.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The accelerating rate of change within jobs and skills and technological advances with AI create a level of unpredictability for future workforce needs, underscoring the importance of an adaptable and flexible workforce for the coming years. Learning and growing are embedded in Keene’s culture – characteristics that offer significant opportunities and the ability to support an adaptable workforce. Keene’s commitment to education, from preschool-aged children to adults at Keene State College and nearby universities, offers partners and key assets to equip Keene to continue to meet evolving workforce educational needs.

Value of arts and culture in workforce development: “Combining the arts with workforce development programs helps create well-rounded workers who not only have ‘hard,’ technical skills in their field, but also have creative thinking skills that foster innovation and drive our global economy.” – Americans for the Arts (Arts Impact Explorer Fact Sheet)

Workforce approaches must address workers across all age groups, from students to those nearing retirement. Youth retention remains a challenge in Keene. High school and college students vocalize a perception that there isn’t enough job diversity and employment opportunity in Keene, with students moving to different regions and job markets post-graduation. Increasing awareness of the diversity of industry and quality of employers in Keene, while also inviting students and youth more into Keene’s community to build stronger connections, can showcase the abundance of Keene’s offerings. On the other end of the spectrum, the growing aging cohort of Keene offers opportunities to continue lifelong learning and skill development to help workers nearing retirement choose to remain in the workforce. The emerging trend of “retire, rehire,” where employees formally retire from their full-time positions and seek new employment opportunities in part-time or alternative jobs, can continue to provide a wealth of knowledge, experience, and expertise within Keene’s businesses.

TRADE-OFFS TO CONSIDER

Skills development and credential pathways can dramatically vary based on workers’ available resources, time, and financial commitment. Balancing formal education and training opportunities with a comprehensive network of social learning and inclusive environments for different learning pathways and skill exposure will be essential to meet the needs of Keene’s workers today and tomorrow.



The pace of change and magnitude of adaptability can vary across partners. Prioritizing longer-term interventions with institutional partners and the nimbleness and quick responsiveness of nonprofit organizations and cohorts within these larger institutions will help Keene’s workforce advance careers, pivot into new industries, and expand employment opportunities.

Future Insights

- With the rising costs of higher education, more young adults are looking for alternative pathways for job readiness. Skill and vocational trades are becoming more popular for Gen Z, with this cohort earning the label “the Toolbox Generation”.
- The emergence of artificial intelligence and new technologies, rapid economic disruptions due to the COVID-19 pandemic, cybersecurity, sustainability, and broader macroeconomic factors have led to a rapid rate of skill changes necessary for the workforce. Between 2021 and 2024, the average job experienced one-third of its skills changing. (Lightcast, 2025)

Not Starting from Zero

The City of Keene has already implemented or supported the following initiatives to strategically prepare for the future.

- Keene Economic Development Plan
- Cheshire Career Center
- Magnify Monadnock
- Keene State College
- Antioch University New England
- River Valley Community College
- Keene Community Education
- Keene Arts Core Project



GOAL 1: ATTRACT TALENT TO GROW KEENE’S WORKFORCE.

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|---------|---|--|
| Actions | 1.1. Continue regional partnerships to help market Keene to prospective workers and the labor force. | 1.3. Explore ways to partner with and expand the Chamber’s promotional efforts geared toward visitors, businesses, and students. |
| | 1.2. Increase experiential learning opportunities in Keene, connecting students across all levels with businesses and available internships within the city. Expand summer youth employment opportunities to build pipelines for permanent positions. | 1.4. Advocate for NH’s state university system to improve affordability. |
| | | 1.5. Facilitate partnerships between Keene State College programs and area employers like the Cheshire Medical Center. |

GOAL 2: EXPAND CREDENTIAL PATHWAYS AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES.

- | | | |
|---------|---|--|
| Actions | 2.1. Support the efforts of Keene State College and River Valley Community College to develop a 2-year accredited degree program. | 2.4. Participate in efforts that support the Cheshire Career Center so that it has the necessary resources for students and continues to meet changing industry needs. |
| | 2.2. Convene city leadership, area chambers, industry leadership, and education institution representatives to form a working group that regularly meets to identify needed industry skills, credentials, and other workforce challenges. | 2.5. Bolster support for and the expansion of educational services within Keene Public Library, such as its makerspace. |
| | 2.3. Strategize with relevant partners to identify opportunities to enhance lifelong learning with Keene’s senior population. | |



GOAL 3: PLAY A PROACTIVE ROLE IN DE-SILOING EFFORTS, BROADENING PARTNERSHIPS, AND INCREASING COLLABORATION BETWEEN PARTNERS THAT SERVE AND SUPPORT KEENE'S WORKFORCE.

Actions

- 3.1. Launch and routinely facilitate a “State of Keene’s Workforce” event to bring industry partners, education institutions, regional and state players, and other key workforce development leaders to discuss workforce needs and challenges and cross-collaborate to identify solutions.
- 3.2. Invest in partnerships with the National Rural Network to develop peer relationships with communities addressing similar workforce development challenges and contribute to successful models.
- 3.3. Conduct a workforce development audit to identify resources and gaps in workforce development efforts. Develop and regularly update a centralized repository of relevant programming and resources.
- 3.4. Encourage the development of a community-based public lecture series with Keene State College, Antioch University, and other nearby education institutions following models such as Profs and Pints.



GOAL 4: MEET QUALITY OF LIFE NEEDS AND REDUCE WORKFORCE BARRIERS, SUCH AS HOUSING AVAILABILITY, CHILDCARE, AND TRANSPORTATION.

Actions

- 4.1. Engage regional partners to conduct a regional housing workshop to address housing challenges. Advocate for additional housing supply in Cheshire County.
- 4.2. Conduct a childcare study to understand challenges, needs, and solutions to increase childcare opportunities and security.
- 4.3. Support regional transportation initiatives to mitigate geographic and logistical barriers to job opportunities.
- 4.4. Partner with the Hannah Grimes Center for Entrepreneurship and other key workforce partners to provide neurodivergent worker training(s) for employers.
- 4.5. Support continued high quality-of-life in Keene to encourage youth return and labor retention.

GOAL 5: PRIORITIZE WORKFORCE AND COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELLNESS.

Actions

- 5.1. Strengthen the city’s relationship with the Healthy Monadnock Alliance.
- 5.2. Take an active role in Community Health Improvement Plans, providing insights into initiatives and opportunities related to workforce and economic health.
- 5.3. Increase support beyond emergency-level resources for addiction and mental health services to help individuals reach self-sufficiency.





Flourishing Environment

4.6 | PILLAR 6: FLOURISHING ENVIRONMENT

OBJECTIVE: CHAMPION ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP AND CLIMATE ACTION.

4.6.1 | IMPORTANCE OF A FLOURISHING ENVIRONMENT

Keene has a long history of being a leader in environmental stewardship and climate adaptation. This planning process aims to build on this solid foundation.

There is an established and strong environmental stewardship ethos in Keene. This is reflected in the priority this topic has been given in previous planning efforts. Throughout the current planning work, people have pushed on topics of climate adaptation, climate action, renewable energy sources, ecological protection, and sustainable development. This reflects a deep underlying value and desire to see Keene be a responsible community. As the climate changes, adaptation will be essential. Urban environments will need to be designed to handle a hotter world and more intense climate events. There will be a need to provide infrastructure to help transition to carbon-neutral transport and energy systems. Keene has an opportunity to build on the existing solid work and move the community to a more resilient and sustainable future.

Keene's Flourishing Environment Pillar promotes sustainability, food security, and climate action, addressing high climate vulnerability. Benefits include improved health and economic growth, but challenges like high costs and regulatory complexities exist.



Ashuelot River is an Abenaki word meaning "collection of many waters" or "between two places."



Data Insights

- According to the U.S. Climate Vulnerability Index produced by the Environmental Defense Fund, Keene is in the 12th percentile nationally in overall climate vulnerability, with the top drivers being storms, precipitation, infectious diseases, and wildfires. Cheshire County as whole is in the 6th percentile nationally in overall climate vulnerability. New Hampshire ranks 49th out of 51 States and districts in the U.S. at a 4th national vulnerability percentile.
- Residents in Keene emit, on average, 7.1 tons of greenhouse gas per household annually. This is about 1.4 tons less than the average Cheshire County and New Hampshire household. (Center for Neighborhood Technology, 2020)

For the Flourishing Environment Pillar, five overarching goals have been developed over the course of the CMP planning process. The goals have been developed by community aspirations that have emerged throughout the planning process and are designed to accelerate solutions for a strong community interest in sustainable development, green spaces, renewable energy, and climate resilience.

GOAL 1: PROMOTE SMART LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT

Aspirations

- Keene is walkable and bikeable city-wide and continues to support infrastructure for multiple modes of transportation.
- Smart growth, compact, walkable development, and infill are promoted to preserve green space and farms.
- Adaptive reuse of existing buildings is the common building strategy over greenfield development.

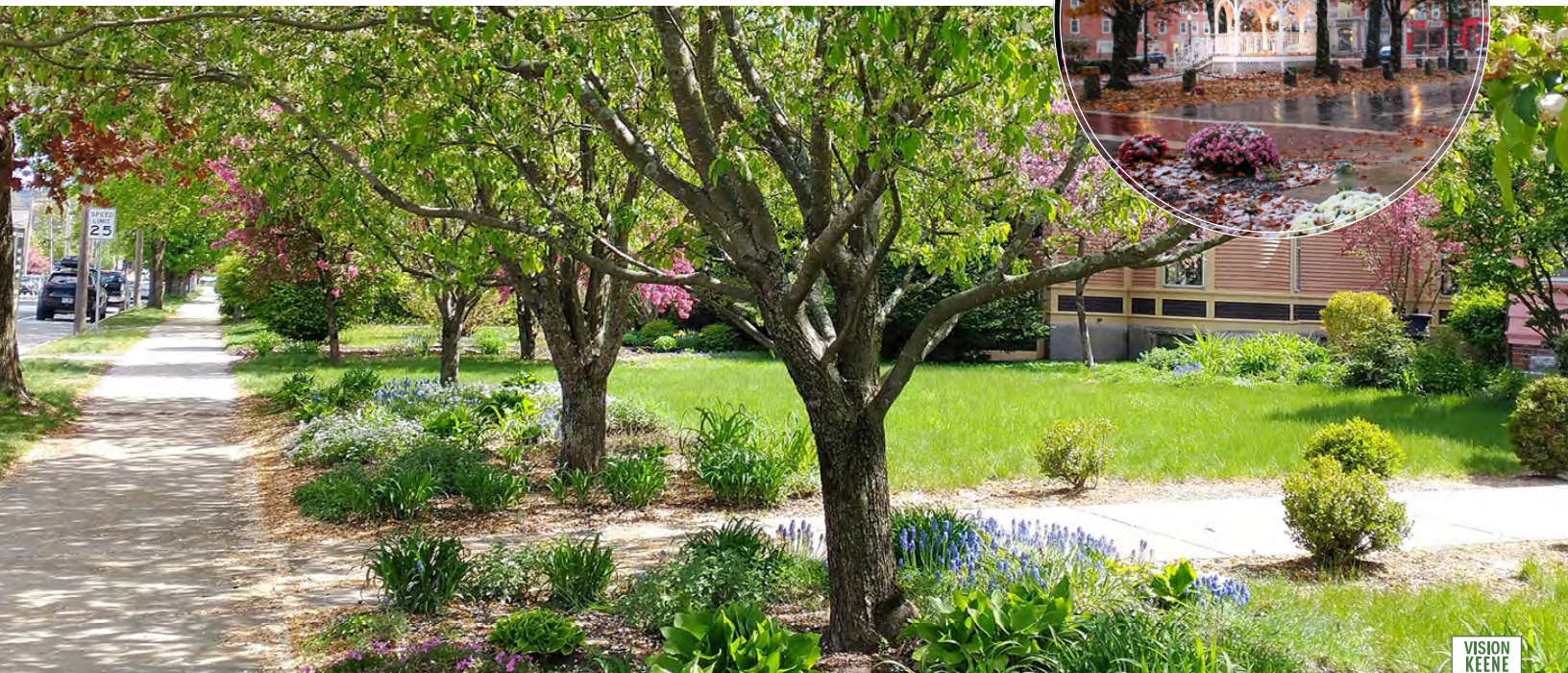
"I like that Keene wants to build on its strengths of maintaining great parks and protected areas, a really special network of bike paths and trails, and centering its conservation on the Ashuelot River area."

- Flourishing Environment Discussion Board Participant

GOAL 2: PRIORITIZE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND SUSTAINABILITY

Aspirations

- Wildlife habitats and corridors are protected from fragmentation.
- Agribusinesses are growing and supported by economic and land use initiatives.
- Economic growth includes the attraction and expansion of green industries, such as solar, clean manufacturing, food production, greenhouses, and vertical farms.
- Green or environmental projects are viewed as a long-term investment having a positive return on investment.
- Native plantings and pollinator plantings are found throughout Keene's developed areas
- Flood hazards and other vulnerabilities are mitigated.





GOAL 3: INTEGRATE GREEN TECHNOLOGIES AND BEST PRACTICES IN KEENE'S BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Aspirations

- Battery storage is integrated into the electrical grid to facilitate local renewable power generation.
- Sustainability elements are integrated at the onset of the development process.
- Elements of the “living buildings” concept are incorporated into local codes and standards.
- New technologies and best practices are incorporated to improve wastewater treatment and release.

GOAL 4: EXPAND COMMUNITY AND INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

Aspirations

- The city’s GHG reduction and energy pledges are fully implemented.
- Electric vehicle infrastructure is provided and accessible.
- The importance of Keene’s natural history and connection to the river is known regionally.

GOAL 5: STRENGTHEN KEENE’S LOCAL LEADERSHIP AND COLLABORATION TO BUILD RESILIENCE AT THE REGIONAL, STATE, AND WIDER LEVELS.

Aspirations

- Keene’s younger generations are leaders in environmental issues and activities.
- The city is the local and regional liaison for partnerships and collaboration centered around sustainability initiatives.

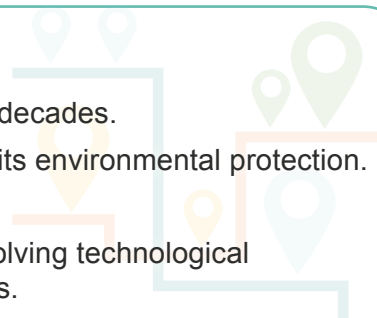


KEY FINDINGS FROM THE 2023 COMMUNITY SURVEY

- Under the **Environmental and Landscape** topics in the Community Survey, 82% of survey respondents identified preserving lands for habitat and recreation, and 79% identified creating and protecting open and green space as important to shaping the future of Keene. 78% of survey respondents identified fostering accessibility for all ages as important.
- Recognizing the importance of recreation and Keene’s trails to the community, under the **Economic and Built Environment** topics in the Community Survey, 63% of survey respondents identified developing recreation trail networks as important to shaping the future of Keene.
- Under the **Community and Social Fabric** topics in the Community Survey, 53% of survey respondents identified assuming a greater leadership role in the Monadnock region and 66% identified creating.

Planning Insights

- Climate adaptation will become a defining issue in the coming decades.
- Environmental stewardship will allow Keene to be proactive in its environmental protection.
- The natural environment is a strength of Keene.
- Addressing food security requires a multifaceted approach involving technological innovation, sustainable practices, and robust policy frameworks.



4.6.3 | EMERGING TRENDS, CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES, TRADE-OFFS

Flourishing Environment

The environmental stewardship focus offers a way to take a proactive and positive approach and think creatively about ways to improve Keene's community amenities while enhancing the environment.

The exciting challenge is to create urban landscapes that are highly livable and appealing to people, while also enhancing and improving the environment.

Keene is fortunate to have fantastic landscapes, ecosystems, and natural resources. These are a key part of the community value proposition and appeal and are prioritized and nurtured through this Comprehensive Master Plan.

As cities across the world grapple with the effects of climate change paired with the challenges of transitioning to green energy, opportunities are arising for municipalities looking to become more resilient and sustainable. Due to its history of environmental stewardship, Keene is well-positioned to take advantage of these new opportunities.

Reduction in GHG emissions from the energy sector happens in two ways: shifting to renewable energy production and the reduction of energy use. Due to Keene's older housing stock, weatherization and energy efficiency improvements have the potential to greatly reduce emissions. The 2015 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory identified that even though the number of households increased by 4% between 1995-2015, residential energy consumption increased by 20%. On the other hand, completing the transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy is a priority for the community. However, the public is concerned about expanding green energy production in ways that do not consume open space and productive agricultural lands. Therefore, regulating and incentivizing ways to concentrate energy production, like solar, onto rooftops and parking lots will be essential in boosting energy production while conserving undeveloped land. Maryland created its **Solar Canopy and Dual Use Technology Grant Program** for this reason.

The city has the opportunity to incorporate green infrastructure into future projects to help meet its environmental goals. This is especially true for stormwater management. Further utilizing rain gardens, bio-swales, and other rainwater capture methods can help preserve the water quality of local streams while increasing capacity to deal with climate change-induced heavy rainfall events, as identified in the 2007 Adapting to Climate Change Plan.

A major challenge with environmental sustainability is the decarbonization of the transportation sector. This can be done through the electrification of vehicles and the incentivization of non-vehicular transportation like walking, biking, e-bikes, e-scooters, and other options. The city can support the electrification of the transportation sector by encouraging the development of the infrastructure improvements needed to support EVs, especially charging stations. Several municipalities have decided to revamp their building and development regulations to assist in this transition. Denver, Colorado, updated its **building code** to require new homes with garages to have a 40-amp conduit installed to allow for easy installation of home charging systems. Boulder, Colorado, has EV requirements in its **parking regulations** that demand a certain number of spots include EV chargers and additional spots be EV capable, meaning the infrastructure and wiring are installed at the construction of the lot so a charging unit can be easily installed. The other way to decarbonize the transportation sector is to encourage non-vehicular modes of transportation. The city can encourage this shift through investing in dedicated bike lanes, high-visibility crosswalks, and other retrofits to existing roadways to make non-vehicular travel easier and safer.



Not Starting from Zero

The City of Keene has already implemented the following initiatives to strategically prepare for the future.

- Keene Sustainable Energy Plan and adopted 100% renewable energy goals (keeneenergyplan.com)
- Adapting to Climate Change: Planning a Resilient Community
- City of Keene Energy and Climate Committee
- City of Keene 2015 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory
- Hillside Protection and Surface Water Protection Overlay Districts
- Participation in the FEMA Community Rating System program
- Installation of solar projects
- Participation in the U.S. DOE – SolSmart Program (Gold designee)
- Keene Community Power Program
- EV Infrastructure Plan and pursuit of grant funding for EV infrastructure

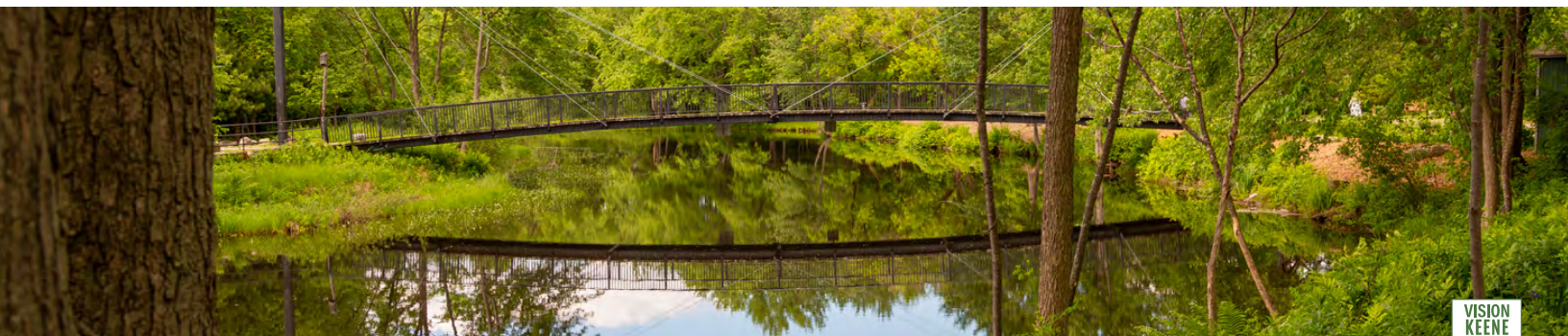


GOAL 1: PROMOTE SMART LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT.

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| Actions | 1.1. Identify priority infill or redevelopment sites through a spatial analysis showing which parcels have minimal environmental constraints and are serviced by existing utilities. | 1.2. Incentivize the adaptive reuse of existing buildings in coordination with the pillars of Livable Housing, Thriving Economy, and Vibrant Communities. |
| | | 1.3. Create a list of prime agricultural lands and priority areas for environmental protection and conservation. |

GOAL 2: PRIORITIZE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND SUSTAINABILITY.

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| Actions | 2.1. Expand and enhance buffer areas along natural features by conducting a specified environmental and land use assessment. | 2.3. Add a pollinator element to the city’s conservation plan. |
| | 2.2. Promote the Keene Community Power (CP) program to increase awareness of competitive electricity options that help move the community to 100% renewable energy. | 2.4. Work with partners to support and expand incentive programs for existing buildings to upfit for weatherization, energy efficiency, and renewable energy generation. |
| | | 2.5. Establish a green business incubator in coordination with the pillars of a Thriving Economy, Adaptable Workforce, and Vibrant Communities. |





GOAL 3: INTEGRATE GREEN TECHNOLOGIES AND BEST PRACTICES IN KEENE'S BUILT ENVIRONMENT.

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| Actions | 3.1. Invest in battery storage and incorporate the storage capacity into the local electrical grid. | 3.4. Develop a community-facing environmental dashboard that tracks Keene's progress on climate and environmental goals. |
| | 3.2. Train staff and local contractors on new/innovative building methods and materials such as 3D printing, modular construction, and hempcrete. | 3.5. Conduct scenario planning and predictive maintenance models to understand potential flood implications and other vulnerabilities. Develop a resiliency and mitigation plan. |
| | 3.3. Identify and incorporate the latest technologies and best practices to improve wastewater treatment. | 3.6. Develop a city-wide vulnerability and resiliency plan. |

GOAL 4: EXPAND COMMUNITY AND INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT.

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|----------------|---|---|
| Actions | 4.1. Support the Connected Mobility Pillar of enhancing Keene's active transportation options by closing gaps in walking and biking networks. | 4.4. Pursue grant funding to provide electric vehicle infrastructure to support the transition from traditional vehicle infrastructure. |
| | 4.2. Conduct a walk audit in coordination with the pillars of Connected Mobility and Vibrant Neighborhoods to evaluate pedestrian needs city-wide. | 4.5. Select and implement a dam removal or rehabilitation option for the West Street Dam. |
| | 4.3. Solicit public feedback on appropriate locations for solar panels, green rooftops, and electric charging stations, and community gardens or other local food production sites. | 4.6. Install infrastructure and amenities like kayaking launches to improve access to the Ashuelot River. |
| | | 4.7. Fully implement the recommendations in the Sustainable Energy Plan. |

GOAL 5: STRENGTHEN KEENE'S LOCAL LEADERSHIP AND COLLABORATION TO BUILD RESILIENCE AT THE REGIONAL, STATE, AND WIDER LEVELS.

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|----------------|--|--|
| Actions | 5.1. Hire a Sustainability Coordinator to accelerate the city's progress on its environmental goals. | 5.5. Collaborate with local schools and businesses to develop pilot sustainability projects, environmental stewardship, and volunteering initiatives. |
| | 5.2. Actively promote trails and natural areas through local and regional channels. | 5.6. Identify initiatives or projects that can be undertaken as a community event to bring in residents and children to get people excited about sustainability. |
| | 5.3. Partner with local businesses to identify funding and ways to incentivize renewable energy solutions, such as solar over parking lots and agrivoltaics. | |
| | 5.4. Proactively develop and nurture a strong relationship between the city and local land trusts. | |





CITY OF KEENE NEW HAMPSHIRE

ITEM #A.3.

Meeting Date: September 10, 2025

To: Planning, Licenses and Development Committee

From: Paul Andrus, Community Development Director
Michael Hagan, Flood Plain Administrator

Through: Elizabeth Ferland, City Manager

Subject: **Authorization to Enter Mutual Aid Agreement with the Town of Marlborough for Building Inspection and Code Enforcement Services - Community Development Director**

Recommendation:

Move that the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee recommend that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to enter into the Mutual Aid Agreement with the Town of Marlborough.

Attachments:

1. Town of Marlborough Letter
2. Updated City of Keene and the Town of Marlborough with RSA

Background:

The City of Keene and the Town of Marlborough have negotiated a Mutual Aid and Assistance Agreement to allow for the shared use of personnel and resources in the areas of code enforcement and building inspection. This collaboration is authorized under RSA 53-A:3 and is intended to enhance the continuity and efficiency of municipal services, particularly during periods of staffing shortages or increased inspection demand. By enabling cross-jurisdictional support, the agreement ensures both municipalities can maintain consistent enforcement of building codes and uphold public safety standards without the need to hire additional full-time staff.

This agreement creates no new legal entity, involves no shared property, and does not alter employee oversight structures. It provides clear provisions for reimbursement, termination, and indemnification, ensuring both parties' interests are protected. As required by law, the agreement will be submitted to the New Hampshire Attorney General for review. Staff recommends that the City Council authorize the City Manager to execute this agreement on behalf of the City to formalize the partnership and strengthen regional service delivery.



TOWN OF MARLBOROUGH
Post Office Box 487
Marlborough, New Hampshire 03455-0487
Telephone (603) 876-3751
e-mail: selectmen@marlboroughnh.org
website www.marlboroughnh.org

Rick Wood
Building Official/Fire Marshall
City of Keene, NH
3 Washington St
Keene, NH 03431

June 3, 2025

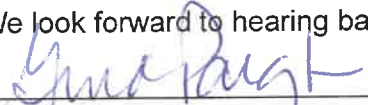
RE: 138 Main Street Marlborough, NH 03455
Inspections

Dear Mr. Wood,

The Marlborough Board of Selectmen respectfully requests that the City of Keene review plans, permit applications and conduct all inspections on the renovations to 138 Main Street. We are requesting this due to past interactions our Town Officials have had with the contractor, Jeremy Shepard of Stark Level Solutions. Mr. Shepard submitted an incomplete building permit application several weeks ago. Around the same time, the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services determined the property is not in compliance with asbestos regulations.

Mr. Shepard and the property owner have been notified that until the property is compliant, no permits will be issued. It is our understanding that Mr. Shepard does not believe the property is not in compliance and may bring legal action against the Town and/or our Building Inspector.

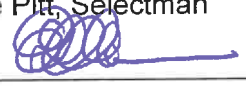
We look forward to hearing back from you,



Gina Paight, Chairman



Jane Pitt, Selectman



Earl Nelson, Selectman

Building Department Mutual Aid and Assistance Agreement

AGREEMENT FOR SHARED CODE ENFORCEMENT AND BUILDING INSPECTION SERVICES between the City of Keene and the Town of Marlborough, New Hampshire

This Agreement is entered into by and between the **City of Keene** and the **Town of Marlborough**, hereinafter referred to as the “parties,” to set forth the understandings, commitments, terms, and conditions regarding mutual aid and assistance in the area of code enforcement and building inspection services pursuant to **N.H. Rev. Stat. § 53-A:3**.

RECITALS

WHEREAS, **N.H. Rev. Stat. § 53-A:3** authorizes any power, privilege, or authority capable of exercise by a public agency of this state to be exercised jointly with any other public agency through appropriate agreements, including the sharing of personnel and administrative services; and

WHEREAS, the parties are each public agencies under New Hampshire law and desire to make the most efficient use of their powers by enabling mutual assistance in municipal code enforcement and building inspections; and

WHEREAS, the parties recognize that pursuant to **RSA 53-A:3, I**, such cooperation must be memorialized by agreement and authorized by appropriate action by their respective governing bodies; and

WHEREAS, the parties agree that no separate legal entity is created by this Agreement, and administration of the cooperative effort shall be performed through designated administrators in accordance with **RSA 53-A:3, III(a)**.

NOW, THEREFORE, pursuant to **RSA 53-A:3**, the parties enter into this Agreement as follows:

SECTION I: Purpose

This Agreement establishes a collaborative arrangement under **RSA 53-A:3, II(c)** to share resources and personnel between the City of Keene and the Town of Marlborough for the provision of code enforcement and building inspection services. The purpose is to enhance service delivery, ensure continuity during staffing shortages, and promote intermunicipal efficiency.

SECTION II: Duration of Agreement [RSA 53-A:3, II(a)]

This Agreement shall become effective upon execution by both parties and shall remain in force for a period of **two (2) years**, unless terminated earlier in accordance with Section IV. The Agreement may be renewed by mutual written agreement of the governing bodies of both municipalities.

SECTION III: Organizational Structure, Governance and Administration [RSA 53-A:3, III(a)]

The cooperative undertaking established by this Agreement shall be administered by the **City Manager of Keene** and the **Town Administrator of Marlborough**, or their designees. These officials shall coordinate the scheduling, personnel assignments, and administrative matters arising under this Agreement.

No separate legal entity is created by this Agreement.

SECTION IV: Termination and Disposal of Property [RSA 53-A:3, II(e)]

Either party may terminate this Agreement by providing **thirty (30) days' written notice**. Ongoing work shall be completed under the terms of this Agreement unless otherwise agreed in writing.

As no joint property is acquired under this Agreement, no property disposition is required upon termination. Each party retains ownership of its respective real and personal property used in connection with this Agreement, in accordance with **RSA 53-A:3, III(b)**.

SECTION V: Financing and Budget [RSA 53-A:3, II(d)]

Each party shall continue to fund its own operations. Reimbursement for services provided under this Agreement shall be as follows:

1. **Building Projects and Permit Fees:** When Keene oversees building projects in Marlborough, all permit applications will follow Keene's standard administrative building permit process. Keene will collect the permit fees based on its own fee schedule.

SECTION VI: Employee Oversight and Immunity [RSA 53-A:3, IV]

While providing services under this Agreement, employees shall:

- Be supervised according to the policies of their home municipality.
 - Retain all governmental **immunities, protections, and powers** as if operating within their own jurisdiction, pursuant to **RSA 53-A:3, IV**.
 - Be covered under their home municipality's **workers' compensation and liability insurance**.
-

SECTION VII: Indemnification

Each party agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the other from any claim, loss, or liability arising from its own negligent acts or omissions, including those of its employees acting within the scope of this Agreement.

SECTION VIII: No Joint Ownership or Legal Entity [RSA 53-A:3, II(b), III]

This Agreement does not create a separate legal or administrative entity, nor does it contemplate the joint acquisition of real or personal property. Each party shall retain and use its own assets and personnel.

SECTION IX: Attorney General Review [RSA 53-A:3, V]

Pursuant to **RSA 53-A:3, V**, this Agreement shall be submitted to the **New Hampshire Attorney General** for review and approval prior to taking effect.

SECTION X: Execution

This Agreement is executed by the authorized representatives of the governing bodies of each participating public agency and shall take effect upon such execution and Attorney General approval.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned have caused this Agreement to be executed this ___ day of _____, 2025.

City of Keene

By: _____

City Manager

By: _____

City Attorney

Witness: _____

Town of Marlborough

By its Select Board:

By: _____

Chair

By: _____

Town Administrator

Witness: _____

August 19, 2025

City of Keene Clerk's Office
3 Washington Street
Keene, New Hampshire 03431

To the Honorable Mayor and City Council,

By now you know the story of Suzette, a cute little dog who was mauled by another dog while walking in Keene. Suzette's owner brought the issue to the City Council, but at the time we were unable to act on her request to pass an ordinance to require that dogs with a record of attacking other dogs be muzzled while out in public.

Rather, we were advised of a quirk in the New Hampshire legal code that prevented municipalities from considering muzzle requirements for vicious dogs. This is because muzzles were regulated elsewhere in the code, but only in the context of managing rabies outbreaks.

However, all that changed earlier this month, when HB 250 was signed into law by the Governor. Entitled *AN ACT enabling local governing bodies to regulate the muzzling of dogs and increasing the fee to license certain dogs*, this change to RSA:466:39 now enables local governing bodies, such as ours, to make "bylaws and regulations concerning the... muzzling of vicious dogs as defined in RSA 466:31, II(g)."

My thanks to State Representative Jodi Newell for sponsoring HB 250, and also to its co-sponsors, Representatives Phil Jones, Nicholas Germana, Samantha Jacobs, and Terri O'Rorke. My thanks also to the Council, the Mayor, and our City Attorney for advocating its passage.

Now that New Hampshire law has been changed to allow for Suzette's owner's original request, I ask that we bring the issue back before the Council. Drawing on the advice of experts from our community and beyond, let us consider whether and how a muzzle requirement should be used to protect the public from the danger posed by vicious dogs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Bobby Williams". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Bobby Williams

City Councilor, Ward 2

HB250

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty Five

AN ACT enabling local governing bodies to regulate the **muzzling** of dogs.

Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:

272:1 City or Town Bylaws; Restraint of Dogs. Amend RSA 466:39 to read as follows:

466:39 City or Town Bylaws. The local governing body may make such additional bylaws and regulations concerning the licensing, ***muzzling of vicious dogs as defined in RSA 466:31, II(g)***, and restraining of dogs as it deems reasonable, and may affix penalties not exceeding \$50 for a breach thereof. Such bylaws and regulations shall relate only to dogs owned or kept in such city or town, and the annual fee required for a license shall in no case be more than \$1 in addition to the sum hereby required. ***The following dogs shall be exempt from this section: dogs being used for hunting, supervised competition, exhibition or training for such activities if accompanied by the owner or custodian, or a dog which is guarding, working, or herding livestock, as defined in RSA 21:34-a, II(a)(4) if the owner or custodian is able to see or hear the dog or have reasonable knowledge of where the dog is located, even if such dog is out of the line of the owner or custodian's sight.***

272:2 Effective Date. This act shall take effect 60 days after its passage.

Approved: August 01, 2025

Effective Date: September 30, 2025



CITY OF KEENE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand and Twenty Five

AN ORDINANCE Relating to Amendments to the Land Development Code to Encourage Housing Development in Keene

Be it ordained by the City Council of the City of Keene, as follows:

That Chapter 100 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Keene, New Hampshire, as amended, is hereby further amended by deleting the stricken text and adding the bolded and underlined text, as follows.

1. Amend Section 5.3.1, titled Purpose, as follows:

The Neighborhood Business (NB) District is intended to serve as an additional downtown zoning district that promotes smaller sized business, ~~and~~ professional uses, **and residential uses** which support adjacent neighborhoods and workplaces, with an orientation toward pedestrian and bicycle access. Some uses are restricted in size to limit adverse impacts on nearby residences and to maintain a pedestrian scale of development. All uses in this district shall have city water and sewer service.

2. Amend Section 5.3.2, titled Dimensions & Siting, as follows:

Min Lot Area	8,000 sf <u>5,000 sf</u>
Min Road Frontage	50 ft
Front Setback <u>Build-to Zone</u>	5 <u>0-10 ft Build-to Zone</u>
Min Rear Setback	20 <u>10</u> ft
Corner Side Setback <u>Build-to Zone</u>	5-10 ft Build-to Zone
Min Interior Side Setback	40 <u>5</u> ft

3. Amend Section 8.3.1(C), titled Dwelling, Multi-family, as follows:

1. Defined. A structure containing 3 or more dwelling units located on a single lot, with dwelling units either stacked or attached horizontally, which is designed, occupied, or intended for occupancy by 3 or more separate families.

2. Use Standards.

- a. In the Medium Density District, no more than ~~3~~ **6** dwelling units are allowed per lot.

b. In the Downtown Core District, ~~Downtown Growth District~~, and Commerce District, dwelling units shall be located above the ground floor.

c. In the Downtown Growth District, dwelling units may be permitted on the ground floor if located behind tenantable commercial space or behind the Build-to Zone.

4. Add a new section to the end of Article 1, Section 1.3 “Rules of Measurement & Exceptions,” as follows:

1.3.9 Lots Split by Zoning District Boundaries (Split-zoned lots).

Where an existing lot of record falls into more than one zoning district, the provisions of each district shall be applied separately to each portion of the lot, with the following exception:

a. For lots or portions thereof which are not large enough to be subdivided, the property owner may choose to apply the provisions of the district which comprises the largest share of the lot to the portion(s) of the lot that cannot be subdivided.

For the purposes of this subsection only, when determining if a lot or portion thereof is large enough to be subdivided, the following shall be considered:

i. Each portion of the lot in each distinct zoning district shall be evaluated separately to determine whether new legal lots could be created that are not split-zoned.

ii. Any portion of a lot that could be subdivided legally based on the underlying zoning district shall comply with the requirements of the underlying zoning district.

Jay V. Kahn, Mayor



CITY OF KEENE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty Five

AN Relating to Amendments to Definitions of the Land Development Code to
ORDINANCE Encourage Housing Development in Keene and the Definitions Relating to
Charitable Gaming Facilities

Be it ordained by the City Council of the City of Keene, as follows:

That Chapter 100 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Keene, New Hampshire, as amended, is hereby further amended by deleting the stricken text and adding the bolded and underlined text, as follows.

1. That Article 29 “Defined Terms” be amended to modify the definition of “Build-To Zone (BTZ),” as follows:

Build-To Zone (BTZ) - A build-to zone (BTZ) is the area on a lot, measured perpendicularly from the lot line, within which a structure must locate. A BTZ sets a minimum and maximum dimension within which the building façade line must be located (e.g. 0-5-ft). Façade articulation (e.g. window or wall recesses and projections) are not counted as the building façade line, which begins at the applicable façade wall. **Additional buildings or structures shall be permitted to be located outside the required build-to zone if at least one structure on the lot is located within the build-to zone.**

2. That Article 29 “Defined Terms” be amended to modify the definition of “Build-To Zone (BTZ),” as follows:

Front Setback. The required minimum or maximum distance that a building or structure must be located from the front lot line. **The Front Setback shall only apply to the first conforming building or structure on a lot.**

3. That Article 29 “Defined Terms” be amended to include a definition for “Charitable Gaming Facility,” as follows:

Charitable Gaming Facility – A facility licensed in accordance with the requirements of RSA 287-D, and operated by a Licensed Game Operator as defined by RSA 287-D:1, VII; or any facility operated by a person or entity licensed by the lottery commission under RSA 287- D:7 to operate games of

chance on 5 or more dates per calendar year. Charitable Gaming Facilities may offer Lucky 7, as defined in RSA 287-E, as long as their use complies with all licensure and operation requirements under RSA 287-E and rules published by the New Hampshire Lottery Commission. This use includes facilities licensed to operate Bingo or bingo style games as Commercial Halls (287-E:1, V-a) or as Host Halls (RSA 287-E:1, X).

4. That Article 29 “Defined Terms” be amended to include a definition for “Gaming Position,” as follows:

Gaming Position – One seat at an electronic gaming machine or a gaming table.

Jay V. Kahn, Mayor

In City Council May 1, 2025.
Referred to the Planning,
Licenses and Development
Committee.

Geni M. Wood

City Clerk



CITY OF KEENE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand and Twenty Five

AN ORDINANCE Relating to Setbacks and Build-to Dimensions

Be it ordained by the City Council of the City of Keene, as follows:

That Chapter 100 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Keene, New Hampshire, as amended, is hereby further amended by deleting the stricken text and adding the bolded and underlined text, as follows:

- I. That Section 1.3.3 “Setbacks & Build-To Dimensions” of Article 1 be amended to modify the definitions of Building Setback, Build-to Line, and Build-to Zone, as follows:
 - A. Building Setback. The required minimum distance all buildings or structures must be located from a lot line, which is unoccupied and unobstructed by any portion of a building or structure, unless expressly permitted by this LDC.
 - 1. Front Setback. The required minimum distance that all buildings or structures must be located from the front lot line, **unless expressly permitted by this LDC.**
 - 2. Rear Setback. The required minimum distance that all buildings or structures must be located from the rear lot line, **unless expressly permitted by this LDC.**
 - 3. Side Setback. The required minimum distance that all buildings or structures must be located from the side lot line, **unless expressly permitted by this LDC.** A side setback may be measured perpendicular to the interior side setback or to the corner side lot line.
 - C. Build-To Line (BTL). A build-to line (BTL) is a set line on a lot, measured perpendicularly from the applicable lot line, where all principal buildings or principal structures must be located. The building façade line of all principal buildings or principal structures must be located on the build-to line. Façade articulation (e.g. window or wall recesses and projections) are not counted as the building façade line, which begins at the applicable façade wall.
 - E. Build-To Zone (BTZ). A build-to zone (BTZ) is the area on a lot, measured perpendicularly from the lot line, within which all principal buildings or principal structures must locate-, **unless they cannot be located within the BTZ due to the presence of existing or proposed principal buildings or principal structures.** A BTZ sets a minimum and maximum dimension within which the building façade line must be located (e.g. 0-5-ft). Façade articulation (e.g. window or wall recesses and projections) are not counted as the building façade line, which begins at the applicable façade wall.

II. That Section 8.4.1.C of Article 8 be amended as follows:

C. Accessory uses and structures shall comply with the dimensional requirements (e.g. setbacks, lot coverage, height) of the zoning district in which they are located, unless an exception is expressly granted below or elsewhere in this LDC.

1. No accessory use or structure may occupy any part of a front setback **or build-to zone** unless the front setback extends beyond the front of a legally nonconforming building; in such case, the portion beyond the front of the building may be used.

III. **That Section 4.2.1 of Article 4, “Dimensions and Siting” for the Downtown Core District be amended to change the label for the Type A and Type B Street Setbacks to “Type A Street Build-to Line” and “Type B Street Build-to Zone,” respectively.**

IV. **That Section 4.3.1 of Article 4, “Dimensions and Siting” for the Downtown Growth District be amended to change the label for the Type A and Type B Street Setbacks to “Type A Street Build-to Zone” and “Type B Street Build-to Zone,” respectively.**

V. **That Sections 4.4.1 and 4.5.1 of Article 4 and Sections 5.3.2 and 5.4.2 of Article 5, “Dimensions and Siting” for the Downtown Edge District, Downtown Limited District, Neighborhood Business District, and Business Growth & Reuse District be amended to change the label for the “Front Setback” and “Corner Side Setback” to “Front Build-to Zone” and “Corner Side Build-to Zone,” respectively.**

Jay V. Kahn, Mayor



CITY OF KEENE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand and Twenty Five

AN ORDINANCE Relating to Definitions of Accessory Structure, Setbacks and Build-to Dimensions

Be it ordained by the City Council of the City of Keene, as follows:

That Chapter 100 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Keene, New Hampshire, as amended, is hereby further amended by deleting the stricken text and adding the bolded and underlined text, as follows:

- I. That Article 29 “Definitions” be amended to modify the definitions of Building Setback, Build-to Line, and Build-to Zone, as follows:

Accessory Structure – **Any** structure that is subordinate and customarily incidental to a principal structure that is located on the same lot.

Building Setback - The required minimum or maximum distance **any** building or structure must be located from a lot line, which is unoccupied and unobstructed by any portion of a building or structure, unless expressly permitted by this LDC.

Build-To Line (BTL). A build-to line (BTL) is a set line on a lot, measured perpendicularly from the applicable lot line, where **any principal building or** structure must be located. The building façade line of **any** structure must be located on the build-to line. Façade articulation (e.g. window or wall recesses and projections) are not counted as the building façade line, which begins at the applicable façade wall.

Build-To Zone (BTZ). A build-to zone (BTZ) is the area on a lot, measured perpendicularly from the lot line, within which **all principal buildings or structures** must locate, **whenever possible. Principal buildings or structures may locate outside the BTZ only if they cannot be located within the BTZ due to the presence of other principal buildings or structures.** A BTZ sets a minimum and maximum dimension within which the building façade line must be located (e.g. 0-5-ft). Façade articulation (e.g. window or wall recesses and projections) are not counted as the building façade line, which begins at the applicable façade wall.

Setback, Front - The required minimum or maximum distance that **any** building or structure must be located from the front lot line, **unless expressly permitted by this LDC.**

Setback, Rear - The required minimum or maximum distance that **any** building or structure must be located from the rear lot line, **unless expressly permitted by this LDC.**

Side Setback - The required minimum or maximum distance that **any** building or structure must be located from the side lot line, **unless expressly permitted by this LDC.** A side

setback may be measured perpendicular to the interior side setback or to the corner side lot line.

Jay V. Kahn, Mayor

In City Council May 15, 2025.
Referred to the Planning, Licenses and
Development Committee.



City Clerk



CITY OF KEENE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand and Twenty Five

AN ORDINANCE Relating to Definitions of Accessory Structure, Setbacks and Build-to Dimensions

Be it ordained by the City Council of the City of Keene, as follows:

That Chapter 100 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Keene, New Hampshire, as amended, is hereby further amended by deleting the stricken text and adding the bolded and underlined text, as follows:

- I. That Article 29 “Definitions” be amended to modify the definitions of Building Setback, Build-to Line, and Build-to Zone, as follows:

Accessory Structure – **Any** structure that is subordinate and customarily incidental to a principal structure that is located on the same lot.

Building Setback - The required minimum ~~or maximum~~ distance **allny buildings** or structures **s** must be located from a lot line, which is unoccupied and unobstructed by any portion of a building or structure, unless expressly permitted by this LDC.

Build-To Line (BTL). A build-to line (BTL) is a set line on a lot, measured perpendicularly from the applicable lot line, where **allny principal buildings or principal** structures **s** must be located. The building façade line of **allny principal buildings or principal** structures must be located on the build-to line. Façade articulation (e.g. window or wall recesses and projections) are not counted as the building façade line, which begins at the applicable façade wall.

Build-To Zone (BTZ). A build-to zone (BTZ) is the area on a lot, measured perpendicularly from the lot line, within which **all principal buildings or principal** structures **s** must locate, ~~unless Principal buildings or structures may locate outside the BTZ only if they cannot be located within the BTZ due to the presence of existing or proposed other principal buildings or principal structures.~~ A BTZ sets a minimum and maximum dimension within which the building façade line must be located (e.g. 0-5-ft). Façade articulation (e.g. window or wall recesses and projections) are not counted as the building façade line, which begins at the applicable façade wall.

Setback, Front - The required minimum ~~or maximum~~ distance that **allny buildings** or structures **s** must be located from the front lot line, **unless expressly permitted by this LDC.**

Setback, Rear - The required minimum ~~or maximum~~ distance that all ~~lly~~ buildings or structures ~~s~~ must be located from the rear lot line, unless expressly permitted by this LDC.

Side Setback - The required minimum ~~or maximum~~ distance that all ~~lly~~ buildings or structures ~~s~~ must be located from the side lot line, unless expressly permitted by this LDC. A side setback may be measured perpendicular to the interior side setback or to the corner side lot line.

Jay V. Kahn, Mayor

DRAFT



CITY OF KEENE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand and Twenty Five

AN ORDINANCE Relating to Land Development Code Fee Updates

Be it ordained by the City Council of the City of Keene, as follows:

That the Land Development Code fees in Appendix B of the City of Keene Code of Ordinances be removed in their entirety and replaced with the following:

Chapter 100. Land Development Code (LDC) Fee Schedule

Service Connection Permit Fees

Connection Type	Fee	Basis
Water, ≤ 2”	\$100	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15 minutes of review/approval by the City Engineer • 2 one-hour visits by an Engineering Technician to inspect the tap and service line/curb stop prior to backfill
Water, > 2”	\$200	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 minutes of review/approval by the City Engineer • 2 one-hour visits by an Engineering Technician to inspect the tap and service line/curb stop or gate valve prior to backfill • 2 visits to observe disinfection testing procedure and review lab results
Sewer, design flow ≤ 5,000 GPD	\$100	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15 minutes of review/approval by the City Engineer • 2 one-hour visits by an Engineering Technician to inspect the connection to the main and the service pipe prior to backfill
Sewer, design flow > 5,000 GPD	\$200	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 hour of review/approval by the City Engineer • 2 one-hour visits by an Engineering Technician to inspect the connection to the main and the service pipe prior to backfill
Storm drain, ≤ 6”	\$100	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15 minutes of review/approval by the City Engineer • 2 one-hour visits by an Engineering Technician to inspect the tap and service

		line/curb stop prior to backfill
Storm drain, > 6"	As determined by the Public Works Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Storm drain connections to the city's system over 6" in diameter will require hydraulic analysis and a review of the available system capacity. Fee for connection will be determined based on the specific circumstances.
Engineering inspection fees, per hour	\$55	

Application Fees

Application Type		Application Fee	Notice Required	
Zoning	Amendments to Zoning Text (Articles 1-19)	\$250	Mailed & Published	
	Amendments to Zoning Map	\$250	Mailed & Published	
	Variance / Floodplain Variance	\$250	Mailed & Published	
	Special Exception	\$250	Mailed & Published	
	Equitable Waiver	\$250	Mailed & Published	
	Enlarge or Expand Nonconforming Use	\$250	Mailed & Published	
	Zoning Written Interpretation	\$125	None	
	Appeal of Zoning Written Interpretation	None	Mailed & Published	
Planning Board	Subdivision	Subdivision	\$200 + \$100 per lot	Mailed & Published
		Conservation Residential Development Subdivision	\$200 + \$100 per lot	Mailed & Published
		Boundary Line Adjustment	\$100 + \$20 per lot	Mailed
		Voluntary Merger	\$100 + \$20 per lot	None
	Site Plan	Administrative Planning Review	\$125	None
		Minor Project	\$250 + \$0.05 per sf gross floor area of new construction	Mailed & Published
		Major Project	\$250 + \$0.05 per sf gross floor area of new construction	Mailed & Published
	Conditional Use Permit (CUP)	Telecommunications	\$300	Mailed & Published
		All Other Conditional Use Permits	\$200	Mailed & Published
	Earth Excavation	Permit	\$50	None
		Application / Major Amendment	\$250	Mailed & Published
Minor Amendment		\$125	None	

		Permit Renewal	\$250	Mailed & Published*
	All Planning Board application types	Advice & Comment	\$25	None
		Request to extend expiration of conditionally approved application	\$25 for first request, \$50 for each request thereafter	None
Historic District Certificate of Appropriateness (COA)		Advice & Comment	None	None
		Minor Project	\$25	None
		Major Project	\$50	Mailed & Published
		Request to modify an approved Major Project	\$50	Mailed & Published
Sign		Applications with a total project cost of \$5,000+	\$100 + \$10 per \$1,000 of total project value	None
		Applications with a total project value less than \$5,000	\$100	None
Street Access		Street Access Permit Application	\$50	None
		Street Access Exception Request	\$50	Mailed & Published
		Appeal of Decisions on Street Access Permits	\$50	Mailed & Published
Other		Change of Governmental Land Use	\$0	Mailed & Published
		Sustainable Energy Efficient Development Overlay District Incentive (SEED)	\$100	None
		Floodplain Development Permit	\$50 + \$100 per acre (or portion thereof) of special flood hazard area proposed to be altered	None

*Published Notice is only required if Planning Board is the reviewing body.

Notice & Recording Fees

Type of Notice		Fee
Mailed	Postage for certified mail	Current USPS certified mail rate
	Postage for certificate of mailing	Current USPS certificate of mailing rate
	Postage for first class mail	Current USPS first class mail rate
Published	All applications, unless otherwise noted	\$62
	Amendments to zoning text / zoning map	Current advertisement display rate in a paper of general circulation within the City of Keene.

Recording Fees	Current Cheshire County Registry of Deeds fee, including LCHIP fee
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Jay V. Kahn, Mayor

In City Council August 21, 2025.
Referred to the Planning, Licenses and
Development Committee.


City Clerk

CITY OF KEENE
NEW HAMPSHIRE

O-2025-25 Relating to Appendix B Land Development Code Fee Updates

This Ordinance proposes reorganizing and amending the fee schedule for Chapter 100, Land Development Code (LDC) in Appendix B of the City of Keene Code of Ordinances as follows:

- List all application types in a table organized by category (e.g., zoning, planning, HDC, etc.), with the application fee and the notice required for each application type. The intent of this proposed change is to make it easy and clear for applicants to find information regarding the fees required for each application type.
- Change the published public notice fee for zoning text amendment, zoning map amendment, and LDC amendments from \$90 to the current advertisement display rate in a paper of general circulation within the City of Keene.
- Increase the fees for zoning applications from \$100 to \$250 to better reflect the staff time and effort that goes into processing and reviewing these applications.
- Change the “Building/health official written interpretation” to a “Zoning Written Interpretation” to reflect the appropriate review authority.
- Establish fees for applications and mailed notice fees not currently included in the fee schedule:
 - Appeal of Zoning Written Interpretation - \$0, mailed and published notice required
 - Earth Excavation Permit Application - \$250, mailed and published notice required
 - Earth Excavation Permit Major Amendment - \$250, mailed and published notice required
 - Earth Excavation Permit Minor Amendment - \$125, no notice required
 - Earth Excavation Permit Renewal - \$250, mailed notice required, published notice required if reviewed by the Planning Board
 - Street Access Exception Request - \$50, mailed notice required, published notice required if reviewed by the Planning Board
 - Appeal of Decisions on Street Access Permits - \$50, mailed and published notice required
 - Change of Governmental Land Use - \$0, mailed and published notice required
 - Floodplain Variance - \$250, mailed and published notice required
 - Postage for certificate of mailing – current USPS certificate of mailing rate
- Change all Conditional Use Permit (CUP) applications to a flat fee of \$200 apart from Telecommunications CUPs, which will maintain their current application fee of \$300.

The intent of the proposed application fee increases is to help cover the costs associated with staff time spent processing and reviewing applications, which varies based on the application type and the complexity of the review required. The proposed change from certified mailing to certificate of mailing is intended to

improve convenience and timeliness of notification to abutters by removing the need to sign for the notice. This proposed change will also reduce mailed notice costs for applicants.

The attached materials include the full text of Ordinance, O-2025-25, and excerpted sections of the City of Keene Land Development Code that are proposed to be amended with Ordinance, O-2025-25. Text that is highlighted in yellow and bolded is proposed to be added, and text that is stricken through is proposed to be deleted.



CITY OF KEENE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand and Twenty-Five

AN ORDINANCE Relating to Land Development Code Application Procedures

Be it ordained by the City Council of the City of Keene, as follows:

That Chapter 100 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Keene, New Hampshire, as amended, is hereby further amended by deleting the stricken text and adding the bolded and underlined text, as follows.

1. Amend Table 26-1 to include additional application types; consolidate the list of Conditional Use Permit applications; and correct Article references.

Table 26-1: Development Applications Decision Authority

Application Type		Zoning Board of Adjustment	Planning Board	Minor Project Review Committee	City Council	Historic District Commission	Joint Committee	Conservation Commission	Zoning Administrator	Community Development Dir.	City Engineer	Floodplain Administrator
Amendments to the LDC	Articles 1- 19 8 & 22-28 <u>(Zoning Regulations)</u>				D / PH		PW					
	Articles 49 & 20, 21, 25, <u>26.10-26.14 & 26.19</u> <u>(Planning Board regulations)</u>		D / PH		D							
	Article 22 1 & 26 .15 <u>(HDC regulations)</u>				D	D / PH						
	<u>Articles 23-29</u>				<u>D</u>							
Zoning	Amendments to Zoning Text /Zoning Map				D / PH		PW					
	Variance / <u>Floodplain Variance</u>	D / PH										
	Special Exception	D/ PH										
	Equitable Waiver	D/ PH										
	Expand or Enlarge Non-conforming Use	D/ PH										
	Zoning Administrator Decision <u>Written Interpretation</u>								D			

	<u>Appeal of Zoning Written Interpretation</u>	<u>D/PH</u>										
Subdivision Review	Subdivision		D/ PH	PS								
	Conservation Residential Development Subdivision		D/ PH	PS								
	Boundary Line Adjustment		D									
	Voluntary Merger							D				
Site Plan Review	Administrative Planning Review								D			
	Minor Project			D / PH								
	Major Project		D/ PH	PS								
Conditional Use Permit (CUP)	Hillside Protection		D/ PH	PS							R	
	Surface Water Protection		D/ PH	PS			R					
	Telecommunications		D / PH	PS								
	Congregate Living & Social Services		D / PH	PS								
	Solar Energy System		D / PH	PS								
	<u>All Other Conditional Use Permits</u>		<u>D / PH</u>	<u>PS</u>								
Historic District	Minor Project								D			
	Major Project			PS		D / PH						
<u>Earth Excavation</u>	<u>Permit Application / Major Amendment</u>		<u>D / PH</u>	<u>PS</u>				<u>R</u>				
	<u>Minor Amendment</u>								<u>D</u>			
	<u>Permit Renewal</u>		<u>D / PH</u>						<u>D</u>			
<u>Street Access</u>	<u>Street Access</u>		<u>D</u>								<u>D</u>	
	<u>Street Access Exception Request</u>		<u>D / PH</u>								<u>D</u>	
	<u>Appeal of Decisions on Street Access Permits</u>		<u>D / PH</u>									
Other Permits	Floodplain Development											D
	Sign							D				
	<u>Change of Governmental Land Use</u>		<u>R</u>									
	Street Access		D								D	
	Earth Excavation		D / PH					R				

"R" = Recommendation "D" = Final Decision "PW" = Public Workshop "PH" = Public Hearing "PS" = Pre-submission Meeting Required

- Amend Table 26-2 to include notice requirements for additional application types and consolidate the list of Conditional Use Permit applications.

Table 26-2: Public Notice Requirements

Application Type	Notice Type			# Days ¹
	Mailed	Published	On-Site	

Amendments to Articles 1-22, 25, 26.10-26.14, and 26.19 of this LDC		•	•		10
Zoning	Amendments to Zoning Text or Zoning Map	•	•		10
	Variance / <u>Floodplain Variance</u>	•	•		5
	Special Exception	•	•		5
	Equitable Waiver	•	•		5
	Expand or Enlarge Non-Conforming Use	•	•		5
	<u>Appeal of Zoning Written Interpretation</u>	•	•		<u>5</u>
Subdivision Review	Subdivision	•	•		10
	Conservation Residential Development	•	•		10
	Boundary Line Adjustment	•			10
Site Plan Review	Minor Project	•	•		10
	Major Project	•	•		10
Conditional Use Permits	Hillside Protection	•	•	•	10
	Surface Water Protection	•	•	•	10
	Telecommunications	•	•	•	10
	Congregate Living & Social Services	•	•	•	10
	Solar Energy System	•	•	•	10
	<u>All Other Conditional Use Permits</u>	•	•	•	<u>10</u>
Historic District	Major Project	•	•	°	5
<u>Street Access</u>	<u>Street Access Exception Request*</u>	•	•		10
	<u>Appeal of Decisions on Street Access Permits</u>	•	•		10
Other	<u>Change of Governmental Land Use</u>	•	•		<u>10</u>
	Earth Excavation Permit	•	•		10
<u>Earth Excavation</u>	<u>Application / Major Amendment</u>	•	•		<u>10</u>
	<u>Permit Renewal*</u>	•	•		<u>10</u>

° = *The requirements of on-site posting of notice for a public hearing for major project applications for a certificate of appropriateness shall be limited to proposals related to demolition of a structure in the Historic District.*

* *Published notice for this application type shall only be required when the Planning Board is the reviewing body.*

¹*The number of days before a public hearing or public body meeting that notice is to be issued, not including the day of posting/postmark or day of public hearing/meeting.*

3. Amend Section 26.2.4.A.1 of Article 26 to change the certified mailing rate for noticing land use applications to a Certificate of Mailing rate, as follows:

When a mailed notice is required, the applicant shall submit 2 sets of mailing labels for each abutter or person entitled to such notice in accordance with state law or the City Code of Ordinances, and a mailing fee equal to the cost of the current United States Postal Service ~~Certified Mail~~ **Certificate of Mailing** rate, at the time of application submission, unless otherwise specified in this LDC.

4. Amend Section 26.4.3.B to include the Planning Board’s Earth Excavation Regulations and application procedures outlined under Article 25 & Article 26.19 of the LDC.

Articles 20, 21, and **25** and Sections 26.10-25.14 and **26.19** of Article 26 – “Subdivision Regulations,” “Site Development Standards,” **and “Earth Excavation Regulations”** and Planning Board Application Procedures. For amendments proposed to Articles 20, 21, **25**, and Sections 26.10 through 26.14 **and 26.19** of Article 26 of this LDC, the following procedures shall apply.

5. Amend Sections 26.5.4.E, 26.6.4.E, 26.7.4.E, 26.8.5.E, 26.10.5.B.7, 26.12.5.I, and 26.15.5.K, and 26.16.9.A.c of Article 26 to remove the certified mailing requirement for development applications, as follows:

Application fee as set forth in the LDC Schedule of Fees in Appendix B of the City Code of Ordinances, including the costs for published and mailed notice, ~~which shall be Certified Mail.~~

6. Add a new section after Section 26.19.4.E of Article 26 to require the submittal of application and notice fees for Earth Excavation Permit applications, as follows:

F. Application fee as set forth in the LDC Schedule of Fees in Appendix B of the City Code of Ordinances, including the costs for published and mailed notice.

7. Add a new section after Section 26.20 of Article 26 titled “Change of Governmental Land Use,” as follows:

26.21 Change of Governmental Land Use

26.21.1 Description

In accordance with New Hampshire RSA 674:54, any substantial change in use or a substantial new use on land owned or occupied or proposed to be owned or occupied by the state, university system, the community college system of New Hampshire, or

by a county, town, city, school district, or village district, or any of their agents, for any public purpose which is statutorily or traditionally governmental in nature shall be considered a change of governmental land use.

26.21.2 Initiation

The applicant for a change of governmental land use shall either own the fee simple interest in the property(s) that is the subject of the review or have written permission of the fee simple owner.

26.21.3 Authority

The Planning Board shall have the authority to provide nonbinding recommendations relative to the conformity or nonconformity of the proposal with normally applicable land use regulations.

26.21.4 Submittal Requirements

An applicant shall submit written notification and supporting materials to the Community Development Department, which shall include the following.

- A. A written notification providing an explanation of proposed changes.
- B. Plans and specifications showing the proposed changes.
- C. A statement of the governmental nature of the use as set forth in NH RSA 674:54.
- D. A proposed construction schedule.
- E. A list of abutters and others requiring notification. This list shall include the name, mailing address, street address, and tax map parcel number for all owners of property that directly abuts and/or is directly across the street or stream from the subject parcel. This list shall also include the name and mailing address of the property owner and applicant.
- F. Two (2) sets of mailing labels for each abutter and others requiring notice, including the owner of the subject property and the applicant.
- G. Application fee as set forth in the LDC Schedule of Fees in Appendix B of the City Code of Ordinances, including the costs for published and mailed notice.

26.21.5 Procedure

The following procedures shall apply to all notifications for a change of governmental land use.

- A. Determination of Public Hearing. Upon receipt of a notification of a change in governmental land use, the Planning Board Chair shall determine whether the proposed change in use or new use warrants a public hearing. This notification must be provided at least 60 days prior to the start of construction and 10 business days prior to the Planning Board meeting at which the public hearing will be held.
- B. Notice of Public Hearing. If the Chair determines a public hearing is warranted, the Community Development Director, or their designee, shall forward the notification for a change of governmental land use to the Planning Board for a public hearing and shall provide published and mailed notice of this public hearing pursuant to NH RSA 676:4(I)(d).
- C. Public Hearing. A public hearing shall be held within 30 days after the receipt of the notice of governmental land use. A representative of the governmental entity which provided notice shall be available to present the materials and provide explanations to the Board.

- D. Recommendations. The Planning Board may issue nonbinding written comments relative to the conformity or nonconformity of the proposal with the normally applicable land use regulations to the applicant within 30 days after the hearing.**

Jay V. Kahn, Mayor

In City Council August 21, 2025.
Referred to the Planning, Licenses and
Development Committee.

Cheri Dhad

City Clerk

Table 26-1: Development Applications Decision Authority

Application Type		Zoning Board of Adjustment	Planning Board	Minor Project Review Committee	City Council	Historic District Commission	Joint Committee	Conservation Commission	Zoning Administrator	Community Development Dir.	City Engineer	Floodplain Administrator
Amend-ments to the LDC	Articles 1-19 & 22-28 (Zoning Regulations)				D / PH		PW					
	Articles 19 & 20, 21, 25, 26.10-26.13 & 26.19 (Planning Board Regulations)		D / PH		D							
	Article 22 & 26.15 (HDC Regulations)				D	D / PH						
	Articles 23-29				D							
Zoning	Amendments to Zoning Text / Zoning Map				D / PH		PW					
	Variance / Floodplain Variance	D / PH										
	Special Exception	D / PH										
	Equitable Waiver	D / PH										
	Enlarge or Expand Nonconforming Use	D / PH										
	Zoning Administrator Decision Written Interpretation								D			
	Appeal of Zoning Written Interpretation	D/PH										
Sub-division Review	Subdivision		D / PH	PS								
	Conservation Residential Development Sub.		D / PH	PS								
	Boundary Line Adjustment		D									
	Voluntary Merger								D			
	Administrative Planning Review									D		
Site Plan Review	Minor Project			D / PH								
	Major Project		D / PH	PS								
	Hillside Protection		D / PH	PS								R
Conditional Use Permit (CUP)	Surface Water Protection		D / PH	PS				R				
	All Other Conditional Use Permits		D / PH	PS								
	Minor Project	January 2025										
Historic District	Major Project			PS		D / PH						

Earth Excavation	Permit Application / Major Amendment	D / PH	PS				R		
	Minor Amendment							D	
	Permit Renewal	D / PH						D	
Street Access	Street Access	D							D
	Street Access Exception Request	D / PH							D
		D / PH							
Other Permits	Floodplain Development								D
	Sign						D		
	Change of Governmental Land Use	R							
	Street Access	D							D
	Earth Excavation	D / PH					R		

"R" = Recommendation "D" = Final Decision "PW" = Public Workshop "PH" = Public Hearing
 "PS" = Presubmission Meeting Required

26.2 COMMON APPLICATION & REVIEW PROCEDURES

26.2.1 Applicability

The following requirements are common to many of the application review procedures in this LDC. Additional or slightly varying application and/or review requirements and procedures may be specified elsewhere in this Article or LDC.

26.2.2 Application Requirements

A. Pre-Submission Meeting

Prior to formal submittal of an application, the applicant may request a pre-submission meeting with City staff.

1. The purpose of this meeting is to review the proposed project when it is still at a conceptual stage, to identify any potential concerns with project design, and to ensure that the applicant is aware of all information that must be submitted with the application.
2. This meeting does not require a formal application or fees.

3. Some applications require attendance at a pre-submission meeting prior to application submission. Such requirement shall be specified in this LDC.

B. Submittal Requirements

1. All applications pursuant to this LDC shall be submitted in accordance with the requirements of this Article, and the established submittal requirements of the appropriate review or decision-making authority.
2. Applications pursuant to this LDC shall be filed with the appropriate review or decision-making authority, or their designee, on forms provided by the Community Development Department, or the Public Works Department for street access or service connection permits.

F. Withdrawal of Application

Unless otherwise specified in this LDC, an application may be withdrawn at any time prior to the final decision on the application. Requests for withdrawal shall be made in writing by the applicant to the appropriate review or decision-making authority. Applications to amend this LDC, including the Zoning Regulations or Zoning Map, may be withdrawn by the applicant in accordance with this Section.

G. Burden of Proof

It shall be the sole responsibility of the applicant to demonstrate that their application satisfies all applicable standards of review.

26.2.3 Staff Review

- A. Prior to consideration of an application pursuant to this LDC by a City board or commission, City staff may prepare a staff report for the application, which contains a brief summary of the proposal and a summary analysis of how the proposal relates to the applicable standards in this LDC.
 - a. Sample motions, including any suggested findings and/or conditions, may also be provided in this report.
 - b. Such staff report shall be shared with the board or commission in advance of the meeting, and shall be made available to the public.
- B. Some applications pursuant to this LDC may require review and comment from other City departments prior to a public hearing or action on the application. Comments received from City staff in other departments following their review of an application shall be forwarded to the appropriate review or decision-making authority and shall be shared in writing with the applicant as soon as they are all received.

26.2.4 Public Notice

The general public notice requirements for applications and procedures subject to this LDC, including, but not limited to, notice of public body meetings and public hearings, are included in this Section. Table 26-2 indicates the type of public notice required for applications that require public notice in accordance with state law or the City Code of Ordinances.

A. Mailed Notice

1. When a mailed notice is required, the applicant shall submit 2 sets of mailing labels for each abutter or person entitled to such notice in accordance with state law or the City Code of Ordinances, and a mailing fee equal to the cost of the current United States Postal Service **Certified Mail Certificate of Mailing** rate, at the time of application submission, unless otherwise specified in this LDC.
2. The appropriate review authority, or their designee, shall be responsible for issuing the mailed notice.
3. The mailed notice shall include, at a minimum, the date, time, place, and purpose of such public hearing; the names of the applicant and property owner; and the address of the subject property. Such information shall be current to within 10-days of application submittal.
4. The mailed notice shall be sent to the address used for mailing local property tax bills, which may be obtained from the City of Keene Assessing Department.
5. The required timeframe for issuing mailed notice is specified in Table 26-2. This timeframe shall not include the day such notice is postmarked or the day of the public hearing or public meeting at which the application is first considered.

Table 26-2: Public Notice Requirements

Application Type	Notice Type			# Days ¹	
	Mailed	Published	On-Site		
Zoning	Amendments to this LDC	●	●	10	
	Amendments to Zoning Text or Zoning Map	●	●	10	
	Variance / Floodplain Variance	●	●	5	
	Special Exception	●	●	5	
	Equitable Waiver	●	●	5	
	Expand or Enlarge Non-conforming Use	●	●	5	
	Appeal of Zoning Written Interpretation	●	●	5	
Sub-division Review	Subdivision	●	●	10	
	Conservation Residential Development	●	●	10	
	Boundary Line Adjustment	●		10	
Site Plan Review	Minor Project	●	●	10	
	Major Project	●	●	10	
Condi-tional Use Permit	Hillside Protection	●	●	●	10
	Surface Water Protection	●	●	●	10
	All Other Conditional Use Permits	●	●	●	10
	Tele-communications	●	●	●	10
	Congregate-Living & Social Services	●	●	●	10
	Solar Energy System	●	●	●	10
Historic District	Major Project	●	●	○	5
	Street Access Exception Request*	●	●		10
	Appeal of Decisions on Street Access Permits	●	●		10

Earth Excavation	Application / Major Amendment	○	○	10
	Permit Renewal*	○	○	10
Other	Earth Excavation Permit	●	●	10
	Change of Governmental Land Use	○	○	10

○ = The requirements of on-site posting of notice for a public hearing for major project applications for a certificate of appropriateness shall be limited to proposals related to demolition of a structure in the Historic District.

*** Published notice for this application type shall only be required when the Planning Board is the reviewing body.**

¹The number of days before a public hearing or public body meeting that notice is to be issued, not including the day of posting/postmark or day of public hearing/meeting.

B. Published Notice

1. When published notice is required, the appropriate review authority, or their designee, shall publish notice in a newspaper of general circulation within the City, and in at least 2 public places.
2. The required timeframe for issuing published notice is specified in Table 26-2. This timeframe shall not include the day notice is posted or the day of the public hearing or public meeting at which the application is first considered.
3. At the time of application submission, the applicant shall submit a fee to cover the cost of the published notice in accordance with the LDC Fee Schedule in Appendix B of City Code of Ordinances.
4. The published notice shall include, at a minimum, the date, time, place, and purpose of such public hearing; the names of the property owner and applicant; and the address of the subject property.

25.2.5 Site Visits

- A. Submittal of an application in accordance with this Article shall be deemed as granting permission to City staff, the appropriate review or decision-making authority, or their designees, to enter onto the subject property for purposes of review.
 1. Permission to visit the property extends from the date an application is submitted until the project is formally denied or construction of an approved project is complete, a certificate of occupancy has been issued, or final security has been returned to the applicant, whichever occurs later.
 2. If an applicant wishes to place limitations upon access to the property subject to review, then the limitations shall be requested in writing at the time of application. Any such request shall include the reasons for the limitations, and the appropriate review authority shall use reasonable judgment in determining the extent to which the request may be granted.
- B. City boards and commissions may elect to conduct a formal site visit of a project site prior to the meeting at which an application will be

26.4 LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE AMENDMENTS

26.4.1 Description

The standards and requirements set forth in the City of Keene Land Development Code (also referred to as "this LDC") may be amended from time to time. The process for amending this LDC varies depending upon which article or articles are proposed to change. The process for amending the Zoning Regulations, which are contained in Articles 2 through 19 of this LDC, shall be as described in Section 26.3.

25.4.2 Authority

The City Council, after receiving a recommendation from the Planning Licenses and Development Committee, and from the Planning Board with respect to Articles 20, 21 and Sections 26.10 through 26.14 of Article 26, and from the Historic District Commission with respect to amendments to Article 22 and Section 26.15 of Article 26, shall take action on proposed amendments to this LDC.

26.4.3 Procedure

In addition to the common application and review procedures of this Article, the following procedures shall apply with respect to proposed amendments to this LDC.

- A. **Articles 1 through 19.** For amendments proposed to Articles 1 through 19 of this LDC, the same application and review procedures shall be followed as those described in Section 26.3 of this LDC, with respect to amendments to the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Map.
- B. **Articles 20, 21, 25 and Sections 26.10-25.14 and 26.19 of Article 26 - "Subdivision Regulations," "Site Development Standards," and "Earth Excavation Regulations"** and Planning Board Application Procedures. For amendments proposed to Articles 20, 21, 25, and Sections 26.10 through 26.14 and 26.19 of Article 26 of this LDC, the following procedures shall apply.

1. **Planning Board Public Hearing.** In

26.5 ZONING VARIANCE

26.5.1 Description

Zoning variances are intended to address unnecessary hardships or practical difficulties resulting from the strict application of the Zoning Regulations. The purpose of the variance process is to provide a narrowly limited means by which relief may be granted from the unforeseen applications of the Zoning Regulations.

26.5.2 Initiation

The applicant for a variance shall either own the fee simple interest in the property(s) that is the subject of the review or have written permission of the fee simple owner.

26.5.3 Authority

The Zoning Board of Adjustment has the authority to authorize variances from the provisions of the Zoning Regulations of this LDC, subject to the requirements of this Article, the Zoning Regulations, and NH RSA 674:33.

26.5.4 Submittal Requirements

An applicant for a zoning variance shall submit a completed variance application to the Community Development Department, which shall include the following.

- A.** A written narrative that describes the property location, owner of the subject property, and explains the purpose and effect of, and justification for, the proposed variance, including a response to each of the variance criteria.
- B.** A scaled plot plan clearly displaying the location and dimensions of all structures and open spaces on the lot in question and on the adjacent lots, as well as any proposed changes to the site, such as, but not limited to, additions to existing structures or the construction of new structures.
- C.** A list of abutters and others requiring notification. This list shall include the name, mailing address, street address, and tax map

parcel number for: all owners of property that directly abuts and/or is directly across the street or stream from the subject parcel; all owners of property located within 200-ft of the subject parcel; and, any holders of conservation, preservation or agricultural preservation restrictions. The list shall also include the name and mailing address of the applicant.

- D.** 2 sets of mailing labels for each abutter and others requiring notice, including the owner of the subject property and their authorized agent.
- E.** Application fee as set forth in the LDC Schedule of Fees in Appendix B of the City Code of Ordinances, including the costs for published and mailed notice, ~~which shall be Certified Mail.~~

26.5.5 Procedure

In addition to the common application and review procedures of this Article, the following review and approval procedures shall apply to applications for a zoning variance.

- A.** Once an application is determined to be complete, the Zoning Administrator, or their designee, shall forward it to the Zoning Board of Adjustment for a public hearing.
- B.** The Zoning Administrator, or their designee, shall provide published and mailed notice of this public hearing pursuant to NH RSA 676:7.
- C.** Prior to deciding on the application, the Zoning Board of Adjustment shall render, as appropriate, findings of fact by majority vote.
- D.** The Zoning Board of Adjustment shall give reasons for all decisions on variance applications and shall make reference to the appropriate sections of the Zoning Regulations, where applicable.

26.5.6 Approval Standards

The Zoning Board of Adjustment may authorize a variance from specific requirements of the Zoning Regulations only when the Board finds that all of the following conditions apply.

26.6 ZONING SPECIAL EXCEPTION

26.6.1 Description

A special exception seeks permission to do something that the Zoning Regulations permit only under certain special circumstances. All special exceptions shall be made in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations and shall be in accordance with the rules contained therein.

26.6.2 Initiation

The applicant for a special exception shall either own the fee simple interest in the property(s) that is the subject of the review or have written permission of the fee simple owner.

26.6.3 Authority

The Zoning Board of Adjustment shall have the authority to hear and decide special exceptions from the provisions of the Zoning Regulations of this LDC, subject to the requirements of this Section and NH RSA 674:33.

26.6.4 Submittal Requirements

An applicant for a special exception shall submit a completed special exception application to the Community Development Department, which shall include the following.

- A.** A written narrative that describes the property location, owner of the subject property, and explains the purpose and effect of, and justification for, the proposed special exception, including a response to each of the special exception criteria.
- B.** A scaled plot plan clearly displaying the location and dimensions of all structures and open spaces on the lot in question and on the adjacent lots, as well as any proposed changes to the site, such as, but not limited to, additions to existing structures or the construction of new structures.
- C.** A list of abutters and others requiring notification. This list shall include the name, mailing address, street address, and tax map

parcel number for: all owners of property that directly abuts and/or is directly across the street or stream from the subject parcel; all owners of property located within 200-ft of the subject parcel; and, any holders of conservation, preservation or agricultural preservation restrictions. The list shall also include the name and mailing address of the applicant.

- D.** 2 sets of mailing labels for each abutter and others requiring notice, including the owner of the subject property and their authorized agent.
- E.** Application fee as set forth in the LDC Schedule of Fees in Appendix B of the City Code of Ordinances, including the costs for published and mailed notice, ~~which shall be Certified Mail.~~

26.6.5 Procedure

In addition to the common application and review procedures of this Article, the following review and approval procedures shall apply to applications for a special exception.

- A.** Once an application is determined to be complete, the Zoning Administrator, or their designee, shall forward it to the Zoning Board of Adjustment for a public hearing.
- B.** The Zoning Administrator, or their designee, shall provide published and mailed notice of this public hearing pursuant to NH RSA 676:7.
- C.** Prior to deciding on the application, the Zoning Board of Adjustment shall render, as appropriate, findings of fact by majority vote.
- D.** The Zoning Board of Adjustment shall give reasons for all decisions on special exception applications and shall make reference to the appropriate sections of the Zoning Regulations, where applicable.

26.7 EXPANSION OR ENLARGEMENT OF A NONCONFORMING USE

26.7.1 Description

A nonconforming use of a structure or land may be expanded or enlarged with approval from the Zoning Board of Adjustment, provided such expansion or enlargement does not violate any of the basic zone dimensional requirements of the zoning district in which it is located.

26.7.2 Initiation

The applicant seeking approval to expand or enlarge a nonconforming use shall either own the fee simple interest in the property(s) that is the subject of the review or have written permission of the fee simple owner.

26.7.3 Authority

The Zoning Board of Adjustment shall have the authority to hear and decide on applications to expand or enlarge a nonconforming use.

26.7.4 Submittal Requirements

An applicant shall submit a completed application to the Community Development Department, which shall include the following.

- A. A written narrative that describes the property location, owner of the subject property, and explains the purpose and effect of, and justification for, the proposed expansion or enlargement of a nonconforming use, including a response to each of the relevant approval standards.
- B. A scaled plot plan clearly displaying the location and dimensions of all existing structures and open spaces, as well as any proposed changes to the site, such as, but not limited to, additions to existing structures or the construction of new structures.
- C. A list of abutters and others requiring notification. This list shall include the name, mailing address, street address, and tax map parcel number for: all owners of property that directly abuts and/or is directly across the

street or stream from the subject parcel; all owners of property located within 200-ft of the subject parcel; and, any holders of conservation, preservation or agricultural preservation restrictions. The list shall also include the name and mailing address of the applicant.

- D. 2 sets of mailing labels for each abutter and others requiring notice, including the owner of the subject property and their authorized agent.
- E. Application fee as set forth in the LDC Schedule of Fees in Appendix B of the City Code of Ordinances, including the costs for published and mailed notice, ~~which shall be Certified Mail.~~

26.7.5 Procedure

In addition to the common application and review procedures of this Article, the following review and approval procedures shall apply to applications to expand or enlarge a nonconforming use.

- A. Once an application is determined to be complete, the Zoning Administrator, or their designee, shall forward it to the Zoning Board of Adjustment for a public hearing.
- B. The Zoning Administrator, or their designee, shall provide published and mailed notice of this public hearing pursuant to NH RSA 676:7.
- C. Prior to deciding on the application, the Zoning Board of Adjustment shall render, as appropriate, findings of fact by majority vote.

26.7.6 Approval Standards

The Zoning Board of Adjustment may approve an application for an expansion or enlargement of a nonconforming use, only when the Board finds that all of the following conditions apply.

- A. Such expansion or enlargement would not reduce the value of any property within the zoning district, nor otherwise be injurious, obnoxious or offensive to the neighborhood.
- B. There will be no nuisance or serious hazard to vehicles or pedestrians.

26.8 EQUITABLE WAIVER OF ZONING DIMENSIONAL REQUIREMENTS

26.8.1 Description

In situations where a lot or structure is discovered to be in violation of a physical layout or dimensional requirement of the Zoning Ordinance, and such lot or structure is not legally nonconforming, a waiver from the requirement may be sought under certain conditions.

26.8.2 Applicability

- A.** An equitable waiver shall only apply to waivers from physical layout, mathematical or dimensional requirements, and shall not apply to use restrictions.
- B.** An equitable waiver shall not be construed as a nonconforming use and shall not exempt future use, construction, reconstruction, or additions on the property from full compliance with the Zoning Regulations.

26.8.3 Initiation

The applicant for an equitable waiver of dimensional requirements shall either own the fee simple interest in the property(s) that is the subject of the review or have written permission of the fee simple owner.

26.8.4 Authority

The Zoning Board of Adjustment shall have the power to hear and decide on equitable waivers of zoning dimensional requirements, subject to the requirements of this Section and NH RSA 674:33-a.

26.8.5 Submittal Requirements

An applicant for an equitable waiver of dimensional requirements shall submit a completed application to the Community Development Department, which shall include the following materials.

- A.** A written narrative that describes the property location, owner of the subject property, and explains the purpose and effect of, and justification for, the proposed waiver, a response to each of the equitable waiver criteria.
- B.** A scaled plot plan clearly displaying the

locations and dimensions of all structures and open spaces on the lot in question and on the adjacent lots.

- C.** A list of abutters and others requiring notification. This list shall include the name, mailing address, street address, and tax map parcel number for: all owners of property that directly abuts and/or is directly across the street or stream from the subject parcel; all owners of property located within 200-ft of the subject parcel; and, any holders of conservation, preservation or agricultural preservation restrictions. The list shall also include the name and mailing address of the applicant.
- D.** 2 sets of mailing labels for each abutter and others requiring notice, including the owner of the subject property and their authorized agent.
- E.** Application fee as set forth in the LDC Schedule of Fees in Appendix B of the City Code of Ordinances, including the costs for published and mailed notice, ~~which shall be Certified Mail.~~

26.8.6 Procedure

In addition to the common application and review procedures of this Article and NH RSA 676:5 through 676:7, the following review and approval procedures shall apply to applications for an equitable waiver of dimensional requirements.

- A.** Once an application is determined to be complete, the Zoning Administrator, or their designee, shall forward it to the Zoning Board of Adjustment for a public hearing.
- B.** The Zoning Administrator, or their designee, shall provide published and mailed notice of this public hearing pursuant to NH RSA 676:7.
- C.** Prior to deciding on the application, the Zoning Board of Adjustment shall render, as appropriate, findings of fact by majority vote.
- D.** The Zoning Board of Adjustment shall give reasons for all decisions on equitable waiver of dimensional requirements applications and shall make reference to the appropriate sections of the Zoning Regulations, where applicable.

- c. A proposed conditions plan (at a scale of 1-in = 100-ft or at a larger scale) showing all parcels affected by the proposal, and depicting the following information.
 - i. Owner names and tax map parcel numbers for all direct abutters.
 - ii. Boundaries and acreage of the proposed lots subject to review.
 - iii. Location of any existing structures or site features, driveways, parking areas, public streets, rights-of-way, easements, surface waters (including wetland areas delineated by a NH certified wetland scientist), precautionary and prohibitive slopes, 100-year floodplain and floodways delineation, and wooded and vegetated areas that are displayed on the existing conditions plan, and are proposed to remain.
 - iv. The location of proposed structures and site features, lot lines, public streets, rights-of-way, easements, driveways and parking areas.
- 3. Any additional information the Planning Board, or its designee, may reasonably deem necessary to determine compliance with the applicable regulations of this LDC.
- 4. Any technical reports prepared by a NH licensed engineer or qualified professional, which may be required or reasonably requested by the Planning Board, or its designee, based on the nature and scope of the proposal. Such reports may include, but are not limited to drainage, traffic, and/or soils analyses.
- 5. A list of abutters and others requiring notification. This list shall include the name, mailing address, street address, and tax map parcel number for: all owners of property that directly abuts and/or is directly across the street or stream from the subject parcel; all owners of property located

within 200-ft of the subject parcel; and, any holders of conservation, preservation or agricultural preservation restrictions. The list shall also include the name and mailing address of the applicant.

- 6. 2 sets of mailing labels for each abutter and others requiring notice, including the owner of the subject property and their authorized agent.
- 7. Application fee as set forth in the LDC Schedule of Fees in Appendix B of the City Code of Ordinances, including the costs for published and mailed notice, ~~which shall be Certified Mail.~~

C. Conservation Residential Development Subdivision Applications

In addition to the submittal requirements for a subdivision or boundary line adjustment in Section 26.10.5.B, a completed application for a proposed conservation residential development subdivision shall include the following.

- 1. An overview plan (1-copy on 22-in by 34-in paper or larger size; 1-copy on 11-in by 17-in paper; and, an electronic pdf file), which displays the entire tract and any existing public roads, public or private protected lands, woodlands areas, surface waters, and precautionary or prohibitive slopes located within 200-ft of the tract.
- 2. An existing conditions plan displaying the location of primary and secondary conservation values as defined in Section 20.3 of this LDC.
- 3. A proposed conditions plan including the following.
 - a. The area(s) designated as Open Space, any common land and any specifically protected conservation values.
 - b. Any proposed uses of the Open Space (e.g. agriculture, recreation, forestry, etc.) and/or common lands shall be noted on the plan.
 - c. The location and dimensions of any

- D. Elevations (3 color copies on 22" x 34" sized paper or larger size, 1-color copy on 11"x17" paper and an electronic pdf file) showing the visual appearance and architectural details of all proposed structures, with proposed façade height and length dimensions, construction materials, finishes, and colors clearly labeled. Landscaping should not be included on elevations.
- E. Additional color representations, simulations, or renderings of a proposed development may be required by the respective decision-making authority, during the review process.
- F. Any additional information the respective decision-making authority may reasonably deem necessary to determine compliance with the applicable regulations of this LDC.
- G. A list of abutters and others requiring notification. This list shall include the name, mailing address, street address, and tax map parcel number for: all owners of property that directly abuts and/or is directly across the street or stream from the subject parcel; all owners of property located within 200-ft of the subject parcel; and, any holders of conservation, preservation or agricultural preservation restrictions. The list shall also include the name and mailing address of the applicant.
- H. 2 sets of mailing labels for each abutter and others requiring notice, including the owner of the subject property and their authorized agent.
- I. Application fee as set forth in the LDC Schedule of Fees in Appendix B of the City Code of Ordinances, including the costs for published and mailed notice, ~~which shall be Certified Mail.~~

26.12.6 Submittal Requirement Exemptions

- A. An applicant may make a request to the Community Development Director, or their designee, to exempt their application from specific submittal requirements.
- B. Any exemption granted by the Community Development Director, or their designee, shall be evaluated and approved by the respective decision-making authority during its review of application completeness. If the Planning Board or Minor Project Review Committee determines the exempted material is necessary to complete its review of the application, they may deny the exemption request and determine the application to be incomplete.
- C. If a requested exemption is not granted by the Community Development Director, or their designee, the applicant may appeal the decision to the Planning Board, in the case of major site plan applications, or the Minor Project Review Committee, in the case of minor site plan applications, prior to the respective decision-making authority's determination of application completeness.

26.12.7 Application Submittal Deadline

A. Major Site Plan Application

A completed major site plan application shall be submitted to the Community Development Director, or their designee, no later than 26 business days prior to the Planning Board meeting date at which the applicant desires the application to be reviewed.

B. Minor Site Plan Application

A completed minor site plan application shall be submitted to the Community Development Director, or their designee, no later than 14 business days prior to the Minor Project Review Committee meeting date at which the applicant desires the application to be reviewed.

- a. Owner names and tax map parcel numbers for all direct abutters.
 - b. Boundaries and acreage of the lot(s) subject to review.
 - c. Location of any existing structures or site features, driveways, parking area, wooded or vegetated areas, public streets, rights-of-way, and easements that are displayed on the existing conditions plan, which will not be altered or relocated.
 - d. The location of proposed structures and site features, driveways, parking areas, public streets, rights-of-way, easements, and landscaping.
- C.** Elevations at a maximum scale of ¼-in =1-ft (3 color copies on 22" x 34" or larger paper, 1-color copy on 11"x17" paper, and an electronic pdf file) showing the visual appearance and architectural details of all proposed structures, as well as any portions of the existing structure proposed for demolition or removal. Such drawings shall include proposed façade height and length dimensions, construction materials, finishes, and colors clearly labeled. Landscaping should not be included on elevations.
- D.** Additional color representations, simulations, or renderings of a proposed development may be required by the Community Development Director, or their designee, or the Historic District Commission during the review process.
- E.** Samples of mortar and/or brick for projects proposing new or replacement mortar and/or brick.
- F.** Manufacturer specifications (i.e. cut-sheets) for any proposed building materials, exterior lighting fixtures, windows and doors, mechanical equipment or other site elements (e.g. benches, railings). The applicant shall specify the proposed type, color and finish, if applicable, and if missing from the manufacturer specifications.
- G.** Manufacturer specifications (i.e. cut-sheets) for cleaning products, if applicable.
- H.** Photographs, renderings, and/or line sketches to visually demonstrate the scale, massing, and visual appearance of neighboring structures.
- I.** Major project applications shall include a list of abutters and others requiring notification. This list shall include the name, mailing address, street address, and tax map parcel number for: all owners of property that directly abuts and/or is directly across the street or stream from the subject parcel; and, any holders of conservation, preservation or agricultural preservation restrictions. The list shall also include the name and mailing address of the applicant.
- J.** Major project applications shall include 2 sets of mailing labels for each abutter and others requiring notice, including the owner of the subject property and their authorized agent.
- K.** Application fee as set forth in the LDC Schedule of Fees in Appendix B of the City Code of Ordinances, including the costs for published and mailed notice, ~~which shall be Certified Mail.~~
- L.** Other information as deemed necessary by the Community Development Director, or their designee, or the Historic District Commission to complete the review of the application.

26.15.6 Submittal Requirement Exemptions

- A.** An applicant may make a request to the Community Development Director, or their designee, to exempt their application from specific submittal requirements.
- B.** For minor project applications, the Community Development Director, or their designee, shall have the authority to approve such exemption requests, based on the nature and scope of the proposal.
 - 1.** If a requested exemption is not granted by the Community Development Director, or their designee, the applicant may appeal the decision to the Historic District Commission prior to the Commission's

5. Analysis of Important Habitat. All applicants for an earth excavation permit shall provide an environmental review of the excavation site obtained from the NH Natural Heritage Bureau, to determine if any lands within the excavation site are listed in the NH Natural Heritage Database as containing rare, endangered or threatened species, species of special concern, or exemplary natural communities.

- a.** If lands within the analysis area are included in the NH Natural Heritage Database, a natural resource inventory for both vegetation and wildlife shall be completed by a forest ecologist, wildlife biologist, or other qualified professional, to verify the presence and/or significance of the important habitat and to determine whether the excavation will cause an adverse impact, degradation, or fragmentation of said important habitat.

6. Miscellaneous Information. Applicants for an earth excavation permit shall provide to the Planning Board any and all additional information that the Board may reasonably deem necessary in order to complete a site-specific review of the excavation site and to determine whether the proposed excavation complies with NH RSA 155-E, and the Earth Excavation Regulations in Article 24 of this LDC.

F. Application fee as set forth in the LDC Schedule of Fees in Appendix B of the City Code of Ordinances, including the costs for published and mailed notice.

26.19.5 Submittal Requirement Exemptions

An applicant for an Earth Excavation permit may request the Community Development Director, or their designee, to exempt their application from any of the submission requirements referenced in Section 26.19.

- A.** Requests for exemption shall be made to the Community Development Director in writing prior to the submission of a completed

application and shall include an explanation of why the specified information is not relevant to the Planning Board's determination whether the applicant complies with NH RSA 155-E, the Earth Excavation Regulations in Article 25 of this LDC.

- 7.** The Community Development Director, or their designee, may grant an exemption of the submittal requirements if they find that the information is not relevant to the Planning Board's determination of whether the applicant complies with NH RSA 155-E and the Earth Excavation Regulations in Article 25 of this LDC. Factors to consider in determining whether to grant an exemption include consideration of the size, scale, scope, and nature of the proposed excavation project.
- 8.** Any exemption granted by the Community Development Director, or their designee, must be confirmed by the Planning Board during its completeness review of the application. The Board may consult City staff and/or a consultant retained by the Board in accordance with Section 26.19.7, prior to confirmation. If the Planning Board deems the information relevant to its decision on the merits of the application, then the applicant shall provide said information prior to the Planning Board making a finding that the application is complete.

26.19.6 Application Submittal Deadline

A completed earth excavation permit application shall be submitted to the Community Development Director, or their designee, no later than 26 business days prior to the Planning Board meeting date at which the applicant desires the application to be reviewed.

26.19.7 Procedure

In addition to the common application and review procedures of this Article, the following review and approval procedures shall apply to applications for Earth Excavation Permits.

- A. Presubmission Meeting.** Applicants for earth

26.21 CHANGE OF GOVERNMENTAL LAND USE

26.21.1 Description

In accordance with New Hampshire RSA 674:54, any substantial change in use or a substantial new use on land owned or occupied or proposed to be owned or occupied by the state, university system, the community college system of New Hampshire, or by a county, town, city, school district, or village district, or any of their agents, for any public purpose which is statutorily or traditionally governmental in nature shall be considered a change of governmental land use.

26.21.2 Initiation

The applicant for a change of governmental land use shall either own the fee simple interest in the property(s) that is the subject of the review or have written permission of the fee simple owner.

26.21.3 Authority

The Planning Board shall have the authority to provide nonbinding recommendations relative to the conformity or nonconformity of the proposal with normally applicable land use regulations.

26.21.4 Submittal Requirements

An applicant shall submit written notification and supporting materials to the Community Development Department, which shall include the following.

- A. A written notification providing an explanation of proposed changes.
- B. Plans and specifications showing the proposed changes.
- C. A statement of the governmental nature of the use as set forth in NH RSA 674:54.
- D. A proposed construction schedule.
- E. A list of abutters and others requiring notification. This list shall include the name, mailing address, street address, and tax map parcel number for all owners of property that directly abuts and/or is directly across the street or stream from the subject parcel. This list shall

also include the name and mailing address of the property owner and applicant.

- F. Two (2) sets of mailing labels for each abutter and others requiring notice, including the owner of the subject property and the applicant.
- G. Application fee as set forth in the LDC Schedule of Fees in Appendix B of the City Code of Ordinances, including the costs for published and mailed notice.

26.21.5 Procedure

The following procedures shall apply to all notifications for a change of governmental land use.

- A. **Determination of Public Hearing.** Upon receipt of a notification of a change in governmental land use, the Planning Board Chair shall determine whether the proposed change in use or new use warrants a public hearing. This notification must be provided at least 60 days prior to the start of construction and 10 business days prior to the Planning Board meeting at which the public hearing will be held.
- B. **Notice of Public Hearing.** If the Chair determines a public hearing is warranted, the Community Development Director, or their designee, shall forward the notification for a change of governmental land use to the Planning Board for a public hearing and shall provide published and mailed notice of this public hearing pursuant to NH RSA 676:4(l)(d).
- C. **Public Hearing.** A public hearing shall be held within 30 days after the receipt of the notice of governmental land use. A representative of the governmental entity which provided notice shall be available to present the materials and provide explanations to the Board.
- D. **Recommendations.** The Planning Board may issue nonbinding written comments relative to the conformity or nonconformity of the proposal with the normally applicable land use regulations to the applicant within 30 days after the hearing.

CITY OF KEENE
NEW HAMPSHIRE

O-2025-26 Relating Land Use Application Fees

This Ordinance proposes to amend various sections of Article 26 of the Land Development Code (LDC) in Chapter 100 of the City of Keene Code of Ordinances as follows:

- Update Tables 26-1 and 26-2 to include additional application types, including Appeals of Zoning Written Interpretations, Floodplain Variances, Earth Excavation & Street Access Permit application types, and Change of Governmental Land Use notifications, and consolidate the list of Conditional Use Permit (CUP) applications. The purpose of this proposed change is to provide clear information about the decision authority and notice requirements for these application types.
- Amend Section 26.4.3.B to include the Earth Excavation Regulations and application procedures. This change is proposed to ensure that any proposed modifications to the Earth Excavation Regulations will go through a public hearing process with the Planning Board prior to being incorporated into City Code.
- Amend Section 26.2.4.A.1 to change the certified mailing rate to a certificate of mailing rate and amend various sections of Article 26 to remove the language specifying that mailed notices must be sent via certified mail. This change is intended to improve convenience and timeliness of notification to abutters by removing the need to sign for the notice. This proposed change will also reduce mailed notice costs for applicants.
- Amend Section 26.19.4 to include application and notice fees in the list of submittal items for Earth Excavation applications. This change is proposed to ensure consistency with other sections of the LDC.
- Add a new section detailing the procedure for Change of Governmental Land Use notifications. The intent of this proposed change is to provide clarity to potential applicants regarding the process for Planning Board review of Governmental Land Use notifications.

The attached materials include the full text of Ordinance O-2025-26 and excerpted sections of the Land Development Code that are proposed to be amended with Ordinance O-2025-26. Text that is highlighted in yellow and bolded is proposed to be added, and text that is stricken through is proposed to be deleted.