

Plan for Tomorrow Update - Vision, July 2024 Draft

1 A VISION FOR CANTERBURY'S FUTURE

2 The Canterbury Plan for Tomorrow is created as a living
3 document that is periodically updated. It articulates the
4 vision, desires, and concerns of the community. It serves as
5 a road map for the future. This Plan describes Canterbury
6 today and the community's shared vision for the future.
7 Most importantly, it defines what the Town will need to do
8 over the next several years to fulfill that vision.

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10 This Plan provides recommendations on ways to maintain
11 or improve the features of the community and aims to
12 serve as a blueprint for planning Canterbury's future. This
13 Plan can help support economic development efforts,
14 amendments to land use regulations, environmental and
15 historic preservation efforts, expansion of community
16 facilities and services, transportation enhancements, and

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19 The Town's Master Plan is intended to be the guidebook
20 that supports the creation, interpretation, and
21 implementation of laws and procedures which give shape
22 and direction to the community. A Master Plan's purpose
23 and description are outlined by New Hampshire statute
24 (RSA 674:2), but it has no force of law and no way to
25 generate the resources required for implementation. The
26 Master Plan can be a powerful tool to help shape a
27 community by giving suggested direction to appointed and
28 elected officials for decision-making. However, the true
29 power of the document is derived from the residents who
30 approve the staffing, funding, regulatory alternatives, and
31 strategies identified by this Plan.

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17 much more over the next several years.

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35 COMMUNITY INPUT

36 Throughout the development of this Master Plan, engaging
37 residents and other community stakeholders was a
38 necessity. Two well-attended Visioning Sessions were held
39 in June and October of 2022 and a Community Survey was
40 also conducted in 2020 with over 200 responses. The
41 visioning sessions and the survey both provided the
42 Planning Board with important information on residents’
43 opinions on many topics related to Canterbury’s land use,
44 housing, transportation, natural resources, community
45 facilities, economic development, and many local priorities
46 and concerns. Stakeholder attendance at Planning Board
47 meetings related to master plan topics provided additional
48 information and insight for this document.

49 Respondents and stakeholders were most supportive of
50 small-scale farming, farming cooperatives, home
51 occupation, outdoor recreation businesses and restaurants
52 as the preferred types of commercial development types.

53 Keeping the Canterbury Center amenities as they currently
54 stand was of high importance. Priorities for conservation
55 and open space included wildlife corridors, wildlife and
56 plant habitat, and large forest blocks. Favorite locations
57 frequently mentioned in the Survey were Morrill Pond,
58 Kimball Pond, Shaker Village, the Merrimack River, and the
59 Town Beach.

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61 Additional marked and maintained trails, more waterfront
62 recreation and a Merrimack River boat launch were
63 preferred Town recreational facilities. The community also
64 expressed support for the construction of new facilities,
65 including soccer fields, softball/baseball fields, and
66 basketball courts.

67 Regarding housing in Canterbury, there was strong support
68 for workforce and affordable housing that will continue to
69 keep Canterbury accessible for all ages and incomes,
70 including housing for downsizing seniors wishing to remain
71 in Canterbury as well as homes for young families and those
72 in the workforce. This desire for new housing reflects the
73 needs of residents, but residents would also like to consider
74 how to preserve and protect Canterbury’s current
75 landscape.

76 Community input highlighted residents’ appreciation of the
77 Town’s rural landscape and small-town atmosphere,
78 including a vast selection of natural resources, recreational
79 opportunities, and historical character of Canterbury
80 Center. Concern was expressed about the current tax rate
81 and its potential for forcing residents out of the community.
82 To balance the traditional with the contemporary needs,
83 strong support was identified for additional commercial
84 development in areas of Town which do not compromise
85 Canterbury’s rural character, including the areas around Exit
86 17 and 18 of I-93 and in the Commercial Zone along NH
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89 With limited financial resources available by taxation,
90 respondents preferred local investment in road
91 maintenance, fire protection, recycling, and police
92 protection over other Town services.

93 A strong desire for adequate broadband internet service
94 and town-wide cellular coverage was expressed. The lack of
95 both discourages home occupations, local businesses,
96 emergency services, and new residents from moving to
97 Canterbury. Additional support for other emerging
98 technologies, such as those for harvesting solar energy will
99 set Canterbury on a path for future success.

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"Welcoming, supportive, community oriented, neighbors helping neighbors, natural beauty."

"Lack of affordable housing available for different age groups and income levels."

"Maintain the rural character of Canterbury. Promote land conservation/open space and a vital Town Center ."

"Expanding the tax base and supporting mixed uses near Interstate 93, Exits 17 and 18."

"Opportunities for people who live here to work here."

"Need to balance services to lower the tax burden ."

" A cross section of social economic diversity. Tradespeople, professionals, artist, agricultural. White and blue collar. Diverse age groups from young to old."



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143 OUR VISION

144 The vision for Canterbury's future is crafted from what residents
145 and community stakeholders value about the Town today and
146 what they hope to see in the Town for the future.

Existing and Future Land Use

To balance appreciation of the Town's rural landscape and small-town atmosphere, including a vast selection of natural resources, recreational opportunities, and the historical character of Canterbury Center, with the opportunity for commercial expansion at I-93 Exits 17 and 18 to enhance the local tax base.

Transportation

To provide a well-maintained and safe transportation system that meets the Town's needs; to encourage a transportation system that will meet the mobility needs of all residents within Canterbury and throughout the region; and to continue to develop trails for transportation and recreation.

Housing

To enhance and diversify Canterbury's housing inventory for residents of all ages while preserving the character of the Town and quality of life that are so highly valued.

Community Facilities

To evaluate and enhance Canterbury's community facilities, recreational facilities, and utilities; to provide and maintain the essential services needed for Canterbury residents and businesses to thrive; and to adjust services

and their delivery to the changing needs of the population.

Natural Features

To maintain Canterbury's defining characteristics of open space and natural resources, a small, rural town that is proud to continue farming, forestry, and enjoying the natural world; and to ensure permanent conservation of farm soils, water resources, and high-value natural areas to support a variety of plants and animals, provide clean water, create connectivity for climate adaptation, and provide space for human enjoyment.

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148 HOW TO ACHIEVE THE VISION

149 The following objectives are derived from each of the
150 Master Plan's chapters. They reflect the long term direction
151 for Canterbury's future as a thriving community. Working to
152 achieve each of these items will enable Canterbury to

153 LAND USE

- 154 • Encourage a mix of uses and densities in
155 appropriate parts of town.
- 156 • Promote and preserve Canterbury's agricultural
157 heritage.
- 158 • Continue to promote economic development in
159 areas of town that are well-suited for business uses.
- 160 • Encourage the construction of housing for residents
161 of all ages and income levels.

162 TRANSPORTATION

- 163 • Preserve and maintain the existing conditions of the
164 transportation system.
- 165 • Address capital improvement projects strategically
166 important to Canterbury's transportation network.
- 167 • Prioritize safety for all modes of transportation.

168 HOUSING

- 169 • Support a mix of housing densities and types in
170 Canterbury.

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177 COMMUNITY FACILITIES

- 178 • Develop the Capital Improvements Program (CIP)
179 with annual updates to transparently engage in
180 long-term planning for community facility and
181 capital needs projects.
- 182 • Continue to evaluate options for obtaining widely
183 available high-speed internet access, as well as
184 address the need to increase reliable cellular service
185 in town.
- 186 • Promote regular water quality testing and reporting
187 for contaminants and PFAS-type chemicals by
188 residents, businesses and Town facilities.
- 189 • Explore Community Power options via the newly
190 formed Community Power Committee with the goal
191 of reducing electrical costs for all Canterbury
192 customers.

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195 NATURAL FEATURES

- 196 • Conserve natural resources and habitats for plants
197 and wildlife and promote climate resilience locally
198 and regionally.
- 199 • Protect and conserve the resources that contribute
200 to human health and quality of life, including clean
201 air, clean water, and biological diversity.
- 202 • Conserve working landscapes for agriculture and
203 forestry.
- 204 • Conserve land, water bodies, and landscapes that
205 can maintain the Town’s rural character and beauty
206 and provide and expand opportunities for outdoor
207 recreation for current and future generations.

Regional Concerns

Canterbury can benefit from working regionally in many areas including population and housing growth, transportation improvements, natural resource protection, and watershed management.

Partnering with neighboring communities can cultivate strong momentum for projects that benefit Canterbury and the surrounding region. Shared services such as waste disposal, mutual aid, school systems, and emergency response sometimes make sense for smaller communities like Canterbury.

Wildlife corridors, habitat ecosystems, water bodies, and trail systems cross municipal borders, as do natural disasters. Broader approaches are required for successful protection and enhancement efforts.

Transportation networks are interconnected regionally, and most Canterbury residents travel out of the town for work and daily services. Ensuring all modes of transportation safely reach beyond the Town is essential for future success.

Chapters in this Plan for Tomorrow discuss regional issues – collaboration has the potential to achieve many important shared benefits.