



**CITY OF DOVER, DELAWARE  
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
Monday, March 23, 2026 at 6:30 PM**

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*City Hall Council Chambers, 15 Lookerman Plaza, Dover, Delaware*

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**AGENDA**

**THIS AGENDA HAS BEEN REVISED TO ADD ITEM #1 – TRIBUTE NO. 2026-01 – WILLIAM F. HARE AND REMOVE PREVIOUS ITEM #1 – DOVER HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT**

**VIRTUAL MEETING NOTICE**

**This meeting will be held in the City Hall Council Chambers with electronic access via WebEx. Public participation information is as follows:**

**Dial:** 1-650-479-3208

**Link:** <https://shorturl.at/ijXd9>

**Event number:** 2534 783 9888

**Event password:** DOVER (if needed)

**If you are new to WebEx, get the app now at [www.webex.com/](http://www.webex.com/) to be ready when the meeting starts.**

**The meeting can also be viewed on Comcast Channel 14, Verizon Channel 20, and on the City's Streaming Player located at [www.cityofdover.com](http://www.cityofdover.com) under "Quick Links".**

**OPEN FORUM - 15 Minutes Prior to Official Meeting (6:15 p.m.)**

The "Open Forum" segment is provided to extend the opportunity to the general public to share their questions, thoughts, comments, concerns, and complaints. Discussion of any item appearing on the agenda as a public hearing is prohibited during the Open Forum as an opportunity will be provided during consideration of that item. Citizen comments are limited to three (3) minutes. Council is prohibited from taking action since they are not in official session; however, they may schedule such items as regular agenda items and act upon them in the future.

**INVOCATION - Elder Ellis B. Loudon**

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE - Councilwoman Hall**

**ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

**ADOPTION OF CONSENT AGENDA**

All Consent Agenda items are considered routine and non-controversial and will be acted upon by a single roll call vote of the Council. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a member of Council so requests, in which event the matter shall be removed from the Consent Agenda and considered a separate item.

### **PRESENTATIONS**

- 1. Tribute No. 2026-01 - William F. Hare**

### **ANNUAL REPORTS**

- 2. Robbins Hose Company (Dover Fire Department) Annual Report**

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

### **ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

- 3. Regular City Council Meeting of March 09, 2026**

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- 4. Council Committee of the Whole meeting of March 10, 2026**

### **PRESENTATIONS**

- 5. Discussion on Affordable Housing (Michelle Williams, Executive Director, Fuller Center for Housing of Delaware)**
- 6. Springboard Delaware Proposal to Partner with New City Church to Create a Facility with Shelter and Wraparound Services for Homeless Women and Children (Mike Osborne, Pastor, New City Church, and Judson Malone, Executive Director, New City Church Family Village)**

### **COUNCIL REPORTS - FEBRUARY 2026**

- 7. First District**
- 8. Second District**
- 9. Third District**
- 10. Fourth District**
- 11. At-Large**
- 12. Council President Neil**

Utility Committee

**13. Dedication of Water Infrastructure – S. Bay Road (Jason Lyon, Director of Water and Wastewater)**

(Committee Recommendation: Acceptance of the water infrastructure within the right-of-way of Bay Road, and that the dedication includes all of the referenced water infrastructure as recommended by staff.)

**14. Dedication of Water and Wastewater Infrastructure – Oak Shadows (Jason Lyon, Water and Wastewater Director)**

(Committee Recommendation: Acceptance of the staff recommendation for the dedication of the infrastructure.)

Legislative, Finance, and Administration Committee

**15. Update from the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) on Membership Priorities (Matt Carey, President of the AFSCME Union)**

(Committee Action Not Required)

**16. Animal Control Officer Briefing (Caitlyn Smith, Animal Control Officer, and Sergeant Christopher Peer)**

(Committee Action Not Required)

(Clerk's Office Note: On February 25, 2026, this item was removed from the Consent Agenda and requested to be brought back for further discussion on March 9, 2026)

**APPOINTMENTS**

**17. Dover Human Relations Commission - At-Large Appointment - Jordan Spencer - Three-Year Term to Expire February 2029**

**CITY MANAGER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**COUNCIL MEMBERS' ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**ADJOURNMENT**

THE AGENDA ITEMS AS LISTED MAY NOT BE CONSIDERED IN SEQUENCE. PURSUANT TO 29 DEL. C. §10004(e)(2), THIS AGENDA IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE TO INCLUDE THE ADDITION OR THE DELETION OF ITEMS, INCLUDING EXECUTIVE SESSIONS, WHICH ARISE AT THE TIME OF THE MEETING

# DOVER FIRE DEPARTMENT Annual Fire Chief's Report *Volunteers Since 1882*



Item #2.

2025 Year in Review

Presented by Fire Chief David Carey



# Mission

The Dover Fire Department is committed to delivering the highest standard of fire and rescue services to the City of Dover and its surrounding communities. Through the professionalism, dedication, and pride of its members, the Department protects the lives and property of the citizens of the City of Dover and surrounding communities.

# 2025 Fire Line Officers

Item #2.



*(L-R) 2nd Fire Line Captain Nick Senne, 1st Fire Line Captain Drew Kuntzi, 4th Asst Chief Chris Riale, 3rd Asst Chief Brian Cullen, 2nd Asst Chief Jim Iannucci, 1st Asst Chief Jason Boc, Deputy Chief, Brian Bishista, Fire Chief David Carey*

# 2025 Accomplishments

## By the Dover Fire Department

- Facilities and Apparatus – Continued to maintain state-of-the-art facilities and fire apparatus for our members and to protect our citizens.
- Recruitment – Continued to increase volunteer membership through targeted marketing efforts on Facebook, Instagram and community outreach initiatives.
- Duty Crew Program – Continued to expand our duty crew program to enhance staffing of fire apparatus. The ultimate goal is to staff one Engine and one Ladder company around the clock, we are doing this approximately 95% of the time.
- Stipend Program – Created and implemented a well-designed stipend program to attract additional volunteers needed to staff fire stations, as well as home response personnel. 55 members are now enrolled in this program.
- Live-In Program – Increased the number of live-in members from 4 to 8, enabling staffing at both fire stations

# 2025 Accomplishments Continued

Continuously updating operating procedures for the Fire Department

- Duty Crew Program

- Staffed fire station 1 approximately 95% of the time, with at least one unit
- Decrease response times
- Better service to the Community
- Reduces the loss of life and property
- 30,934 Duty Crew Hours Logged (up 9,000 hours from last year)



# Fire Department Response

We now staff at least one Engine, or an Engine and Ladder, with a duty crew approximately 95% of the time. Our number of responses has increased by 1 percent, representing 42 additional calls compared to 2024.

- In the past year, we've responded to:
  - 1,781 calls for service
  - 1,251 Silent Alarms
  - 427 General Alarms
  - 78 Officer Calls
  - 27 Crew Calls



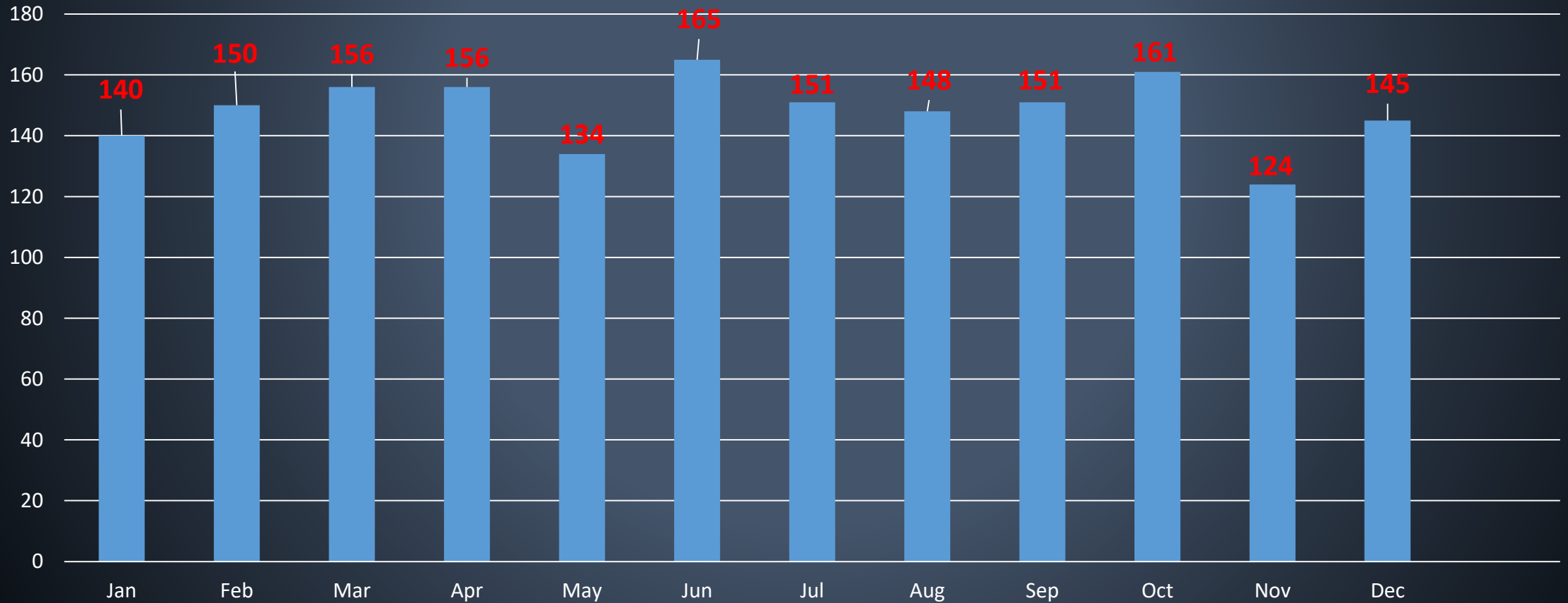
# Fire Department Response Times

- **Average response time: 1 minute, 43 seconds**
- **Average on-scene time: 5 minutes, 19 seconds**
- **Average time on call is 19 minutes, 22 seconds**



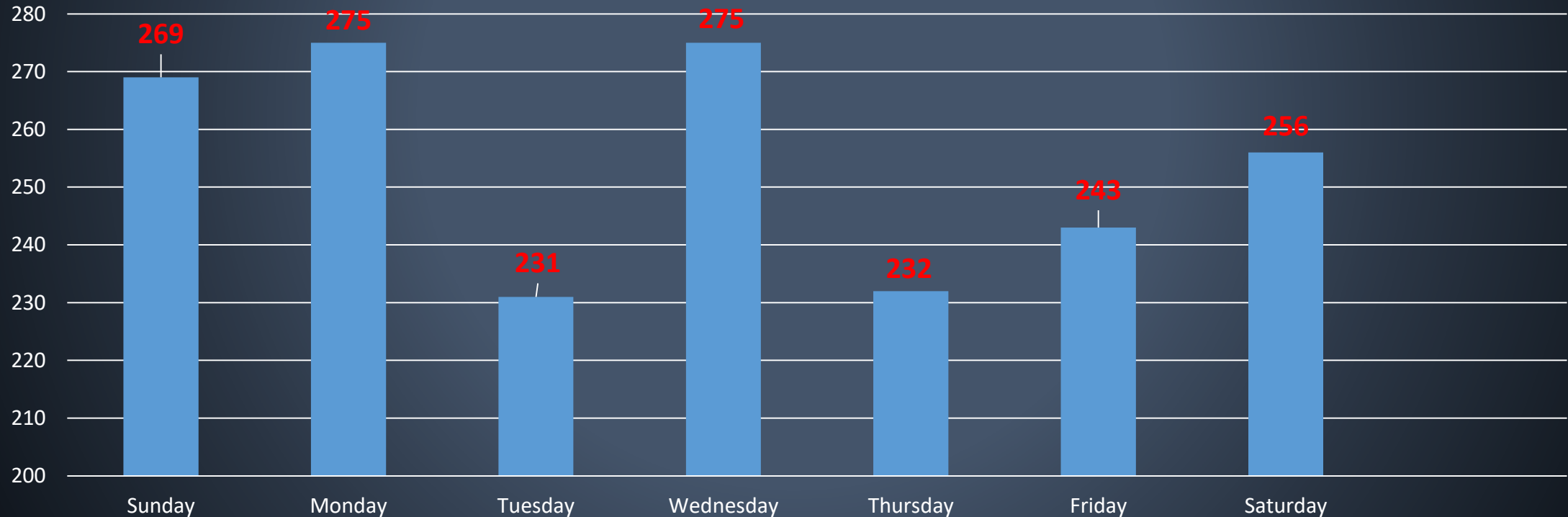
# Call Volume by Month

1,781 Calls for Service



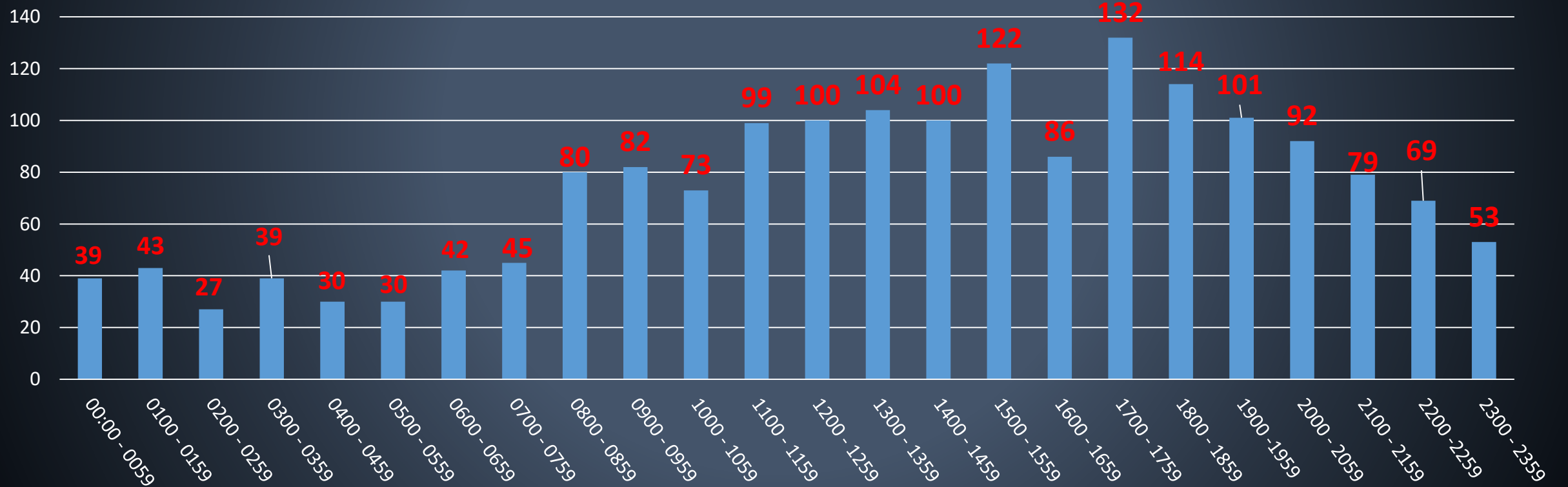
# Call Volume by Day of Week

1,781 Calls for Service



# Call Volume by Hour of Day

1,781 Calls for Service



# 2025 Hour Chart

Month	Meetings	Training	Duty Crew	Incidents	Totals
January	53	235	4,335	1,767	6,390
February	112	312	5,289	1,667	7,380
March	54	127	3,881	1,731	5,793
April	42	293	3,633	2,466	6,434
May	42	273	3,231	2,468	6,014
June	38	386	5,303	3,583	9,310
July	84	145	5,400	3,478	9,107
August	40	319	5,880	3,473	9,712
September	112	157	5,625	3,550	9,444
October	106	92	6,187	3,808	10,193
November	114	84	5,545	3,014	8,757
December	124	67	5,698	3,423	9,312
<b>Total:</b>	921	2,490	60,007	34,428	97,846
<b>Each Day</b>	2.52	6.82	164.40	94.32	268.07

# Recruitment

Our department is more diverse than it has ever been before, our well diverse membership has helped build an evolving extension of our community, committed to providing excellent service to all those we serve, while building a strong team atmosphere within our organization.

- In 2025, the Fire department took in 39 new members.
- 2025 Retention Rate is 66%



# Fire Department needs

- Continued assistance from our City, our members and community with recruitment of Volunteers
- Continued support of increasing Operational cost for the Fire Department
  - Apparatus Maintenance
  - Training of Firefighters
  - Turnout gear for Firefighters
  - Firefighter Physicals



# Training To Protect and Serve





# TRAINING

New member

14 hours of orientation



- 176 hours at the Delaware State Fire School which includes the following Certifications (\$1,800 per student)
  - National Pro-board and IFSAC Firefighter I
  - National Pro-board and IFSAC Firefighter II
  - National Pro-board and IFSAC Hazmat Awareness
  - National Pro-board and IFSAC Hazmat Operations
  - National Pro-board and IFSAC Vehicle Rescue Technician



# CONTINUED TRAINING

- Mandated Training
  - Delaware State Fire Prevention Commission (effective January 1, 2026)
    - Fire Officer I (40 Hours) Plus Fire Instructor I prerequisite (24 Hours)
    - Fire Officer II (40 Hours)
  - Dover Fire Department Firefighter 3: - Dover Fire Department Firefighter 2 and – Pro-Board or IFSAC Fire Officer 1
    - Or Delaware State Fire School equivalency as determined by the DSFS Director or his/her designee
  - Dover Fire Department Fire Officer: - Dover Fire Department Firefighter 3 and – Pro-Board or IFSAC Fire Officer 2
    - Or Delaware State Fire School equivalency as determined by the DSFS Director or his/her designee

# Goals for 2026

- Continue to work on staffing issues for both fire stations.
- Continue to improve our volunteer incentive program.
- Continue to improve our Duty Crew program with staffing for at least an Engine and Ladder around the clock.
- Rebuild membership for Station 2

# Goals for 2026

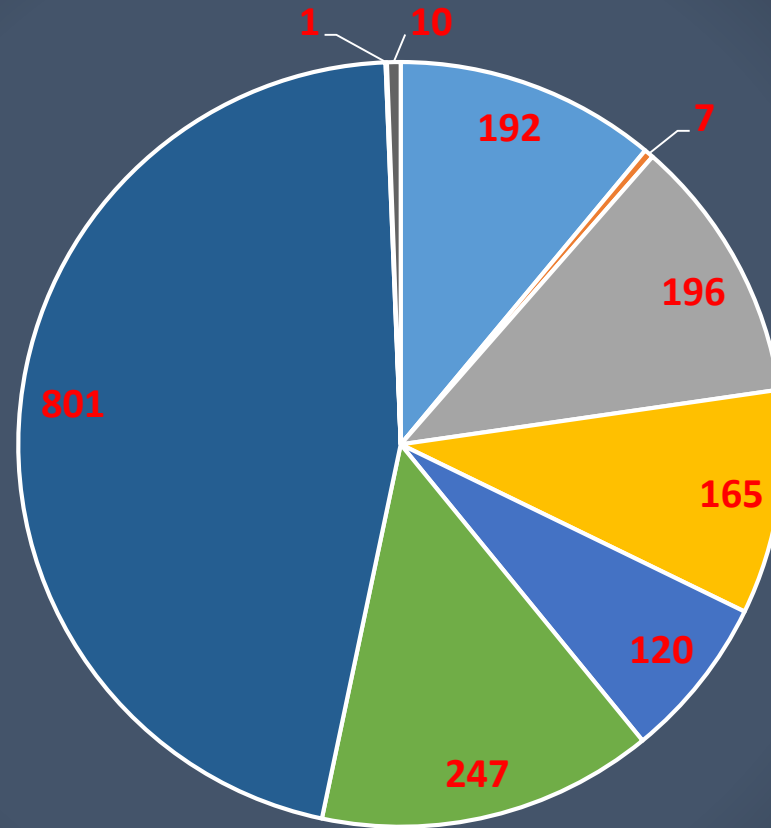
- Improve Fire Station Security (Install Fence Station 1)
- Continue with Recruitment and Retention of new members
- Continue to create avenues to retain experienced members
- Condensing, while improving fire department response information for fire hydrants, Knox Boxes, Sprinkler connections and Standpipes, putting better information at the finger tips of responding firefighters

# A Look into the Future

- **2026**
  - We will need to evaluate the Replacement of Ladder 1.
  - Ladder 1 will be 15 years old
  - Delivery time as of today is 48 months (2029)
  - Ladder 1 would be 19 years old by the time a replacement would arrive.
  - Cost estimated 2.5 million
- **Evaluation will include**
  - Delivery time frame versus age of the truck
  - Cost savings
  - This would put all fire apparatus within the 15 year replacement plan



# Incident Type Chart



Fire (192) 11%

Hazardous Condition (165) 9.48%

False Alarm (801) 46%

Overpressure (7) .004%

Service Call (120) 7%

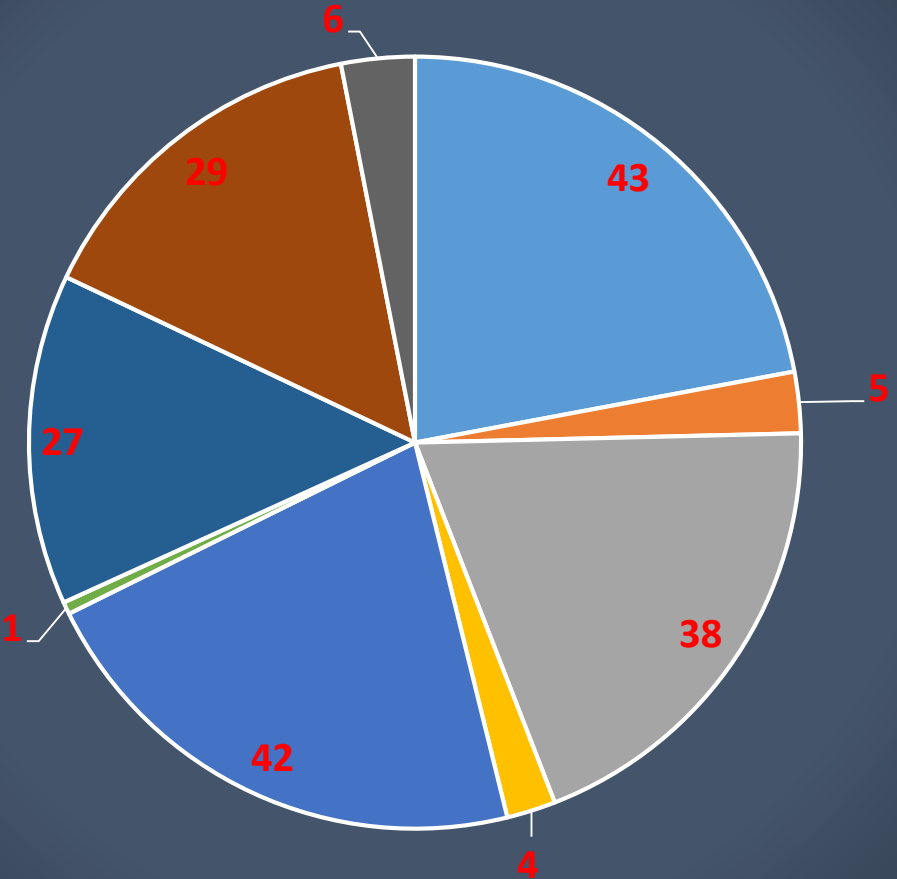
Weather (1) .0005%

Rescue & EMS (196) 11.27%

Good Intent Call (247) 14.20%

Special Incident (10) 0.005%

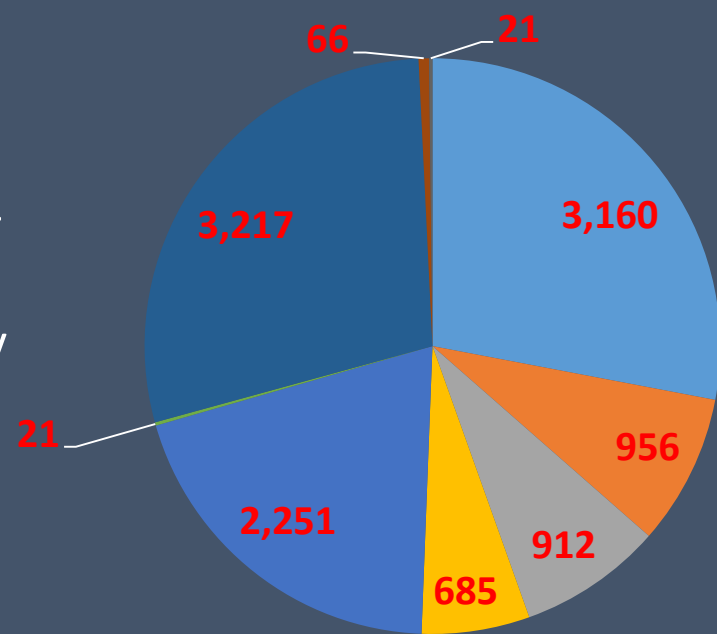
# Fires Broken Down by Type



- Building (43)
- Out Building (5)
- Cooking (38)
- Heater (4)
- Rubbish (42)
- Mobile Home (1)
- Vehicle (27)
- Brush (29)
- Dumpster (6)

# Total Personnel Hours

Overall 2024  
Incident Duration Times  
11,289 Hours  
Increased hours from 2024  
31 personnel hours per day



■ False Alarm (3,160)  
■ Hazmat (685)  
■ Fire (3,217)

■ Good Intent (956)  
■ Rescue/EMS (2,251)  
■ Special (66)

■ Service Call (912)  
■ Overpressure (21)  
■ Severe Weather (21)

# Fire Prevention



The fire department reached 9,750 children through Community Outreach in 2025.

- 5,000 Fire Prevention
- 4750 Public Outreach
- Other public events

# Department Social Media

## Facebook

Over 16k followers  
Up approximately 4k this year



## Instagram

Over 3.5K followers  
Up over 1k this year



## DFD Website

Over 2.3 million views



The Officers, men and women of the Dover Fire Department are proud to protect the Capital of the First State. We are prepared and ready to provide the City of Dover with the finest fire protection in the State. We look forward to a safe and productive year working with City officials, the Mayor, and Council.



# Questions????



## REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING

The Regular City Council Meeting was held on March 9, 2026, at 7:00 p.m. with Council President Neil presiding. Council members present were Ms. Hall (via Webex), Mr. Boggerty, Mr. Anderson (via Webex, in at 6:27 p.m.), Dr. Pillsbury, Ms. Arndt, Mr. Rocha, and Mr. Lewis (left at 10:01 p.m.). Dr. Sudler was absent.

Staff members present were Police Chief Johnson, Ms. Marney, Ms. Duca, Ms. Melson-Williams, Mr. Griffith, and Ms. Rivera. Mayor Christiansen was absent.

### OPEN FORUM

The Open Forum was held at 6:15 p.m., prior to commencement of the Official Council Meeting. Council President Neil declared the Open Forum in session and reminded those present that Council was not in official session and could not take formal action.

Debra Butcher, a Dover resident, read her statement into the record (**Exhibit #1**).

William Faust, 136 Orchard Avenue, voiced several concerns during the open forum. First, he asked Police Chief Johnson to address whether the Delaware State Police could assist the Dover Police Department with the recent increase in gun violence as the warmer weather approaches. Second, he referenced previous comments about funding involving the People's Church and commended Mr. Rocha for recusing himself before an agenda item was discussed due to a conflict of interest. He stated that Mr. Anderson should be sanctioned and disciplined for his actions because council members receive ethics training, and if he hadn't shouted from the floor that there was a conflict of interest, Mr. Anderson would have never recused himself or handed over to Council President Neil. He emphasized that although Mr. Anderson was no longer on the People's Church board, failing to disclose something could put the city in an ethical and legal bind. He mentioned that he had emailed Mr. Hugg to update constituents on the city's finances, especially since budget discussions are upcoming in June, and the city is expected to make some tough decisions. He added that he would like to see a report on the current state of the finances.

Don McNeil, Patterson Real Estate, representing Lupe N. Fuller for the address 7 Nixon Lane, stated that they were looking to put the property back to the way it was back in 2001, before three (3) lots were consolidated into one (1) lot. He noted that they were asking for the zoning to go from an RS-1 (Residential Single Family Zone) to R-8 (One Family Residence Zone) zoning.

Armina Dominique, Interim Executive Director and Director of Women and Children's Services for Dover Interfaith Mission for Housing, spoke about rising housing instability and the multiple systemic challenges contributing to homelessness. She emphasized the need for funding that supports not only housing programs but also workforce development, transportation, healthcare, education, and food assistance to ensure long-term stability. She noted the importance of case management and collaborative partnerships, and appreciation was expressed to community partners, including People's Place, Shepherd's Place, People's Church, Code Purple, and Delaware Department of Health and Social Services. She reaffirmed Dover Interfaith's commitment to working with the city toward sustainable housing solutions.

Michelle Walls, a Dover resident, expressed concerns about experiencing ongoing crime and safety concerns, including being awakened by a nearby police raid involving flashbangs. She stated that there was frequent drug activity and loitering in the alley behind their home, stating that it has become a hub for hand-to-hand drug transactions, causing them to feel unsafe. She further expressed concerns about programs at the People's Community Center, questioning whether public funds are producing meaningful rehabilitation outcomes. She requested that council conduct a financial and operational audit of the People's Community Center and asked for a consistent daily police presence to address ongoing drug activity and improve neighborhood safety.

Belinda Main, a Dover resident, expressed appreciation to council members, such as Mr. Boggerty, Dr. Sudler, Ms. Hall, and Mr. Lewis, for their support in addressing speeding concerns within her development, particularly noting past assistance in investigating the issue. However, she stated that after six (6) years of advocacy, no concrete solutions, such as speed humps or cushions, have been implemented. She emphasized that speeding posed a serious safety risk to children and elderly residents in the neighborhood and expressed frustration over delays in addressing the matter. She voiced concern that action may only occur after a serious injury or fatality. She urged council to prioritize public safety more broadly, including speeding enforcement, gun violence, and assisting vulnerable individuals, and called for action beyond discussion, stressing the need for safety improvements throughout the city.

Chris Hulstine, Dover resident, stated that he was unaware who was involved with his ex-father-in-law's plan, but he believed he had a solution to an issue that the city has caused globally. He noted that he needed to ask permission to be able to go about it his way, which was a justifiable way with no disrespect to anyone. He added that he did not want to see anyone who got involved sent to jail. He stated he had come up with a program and realized that it was part of a historical lawsuit that happened in an international court. He noted that if anything was labeled something such as Project MK Ultra, Chris Hulstine versus Kent County, the Nelsons involved got everyone else involved. He realized that it was something that could not be discussed publicly since it was more of a classified case, but he wanted to show that he was trying to come up with a solution for something that he knew none of them meant to end up causing.

Chelle Paul, 501 Silverside Road, stated that many Dover residents do not feel safe and noted that some are hesitant to call 911, even when encouraged to do so, because they do not feel comfortable or secure reporting incidents. She emphasized the need to bridge that gap in trust. She acknowledged that the Street Crimes Unit was actively working and addressing gang-related violence, including retaliatory shootings, and expressed appreciation for law enforcement efforts. However, she urged the city to take additional proactive measures rather than remaining reactive. She suggested implementing or enforcing a youth curfew, stating that it would provide police with an additional tool to identify and address potential issues, help reduce youth presence during late-night hours, and improve the overall sense of safety within the community.

Ms. Paul stated that the previously proposed mobile police substation, which was discussed in 2021, was never implemented due to a lack of funding for assigned officers. She noted that a full operational plan had been developed but was not carried out. She suggested that a mobile substation, working in coordination with the Street Crimes Unit, could better utilize the city's camera system and provide a visible presence in neighborhoods across all districts, as crime was

no longer concentrated in one (1) area. She acknowledged prior comments that staffing limitations affected camera monitoring but argued that additional resources should be prioritized if public safety was the city's top concern. She urged council to identify funding within the budget to support safety initiatives, emphasizing that residents must feel protected and confident calling 911, particularly in light of ongoing gang-related activity throughout the City.

George Johnson, a Dover resident, expressed concerns that many young lives were being lost to gun violence. He noted that the community deserved to feel safe walking the streets, sitting on the porch, and having children play outside. He suggested that they should consider implementing a citywide curfew during late hours and that the goal was not to punish the constituents but to create structure and reduce opportunities for violence that were happening late at night. He explained that it needed to come with supportive investments and youth programs, job opportunities, mentorship, and community resources.

Jayson Brooks, a Dover resident, read his statement into the record (**Exhibit #2**).

Larry Arellano, a Dover resident, expressed concerns about the criminal activity, drug use, and gun violence at Barrister Place. He stated that he has called the City of Dover Police several times about drug dealings, drinking, and the throwing of alcohol at the front of his property. He asked that the City of Dover Police patrol and have more police surveillance in Stoney Creek because the situation was getting worse. He emphasized that most residents were afraid of the so-called "gangster" type individuals who were around his neighborhood. He urged the city to put up a brick wall in Stoney Creek.

### **INVOCATION**

The invocation was given by Councilman Boggerty.

### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Councilwoman Pillsbury.

### **ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

Ms. Arndt requested that Item #22 be moved to Item #20 on the consent agenda.

**Ms. Arndt moved for adoption of the agenda, as amended, seconded by Mr. Lewis, and unanimously carried (Sudler absent).**

### **ADOPTION OF CONSENT AGENDA**

All Consent Agenda items are considered routine and non-controversial and will be acted upon by a single roll call vote of the Council. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a member of Council so requests, in which event the matter shall be removed from the Consent Agenda and considered a separate item.

**Ms. Arndt moved for the adoption of the consent agenda. The motion was seconded by Mr. Boggerty and carried by a unanimous roll call vote (Sudler absent)**

**PROCLAMATION – IRISH HISTORY MONTH**

The City Clerk read the following Proclamation into the record:

**WHEREAS**, the City of Dover proudly joins communities across the nation in recognizing March 2026 as Irish History Month, a time to celebrate the rich heritage, culture, and enduring contributions of Irish Americans; and

**WHEREAS**, Irish immigrants began arriving in America in significant numbers in the 18th and 19th centuries, bringing with them resilience, faith, and a strong work ethic that helped shape our nation's growth and prosperity; and

**WHEREAS**, Irish Americans have played a vital role in the founding and development of the United States, including three signers of the Declaration of Independence, George Read, Thomas McKean, and Charles Carroll of Carrollton, each of Irish descent; and

**WHEREAS**, throughout American history, Irish Americans have served with distinction in government, public safety, education, business, military service, labor, arts, and civic life, strengthening communities large and small; and

**WHEREAS**, the traditions of Ireland, including music, dance, literature, and celebration, continue to enrich our cultural landscape, especially as we commemorate the legacy of Saint Patrick each March; and

**WHEREAS**, in the City of Dover, residents of Irish heritage and all those who embrace Irish culture have contributed meaningfully to the civic, economic, and social fabric of our community.

**NOW, THEREFORE, I, ROBIN R. CHRISTIANSEN**, Mayor of the City of Dover, Delaware, do hereby proclaim March 2026 as **IRISH HISTORY MONTH** in the City of Dover and encourage all residents to recognize and celebrate the achievements, history, and lasting contributions of Irish Americans, and to reflect on the values of perseverance, community, and service that continue to inspire our nation.

On behalf of the Mayor and Council, Ms. Arndt presented the proclamation to the Irish Society of Delmarva President, Mr. Al Claycomb, Ed McNamara, Sandy Kinkus, Marge Felty, and Roberta Faircloth.

**PROCLAMATION – AMERICAN RED CROSS**

The City Clerk read the following Proclamation into the record:

**WHEREAS**, for 145 years, the American Red Cross has provided relief, comfort, and hope to those in need, inspired by its founder, Clara Barton, who first brought humanitarian relief efforts to communities across our nation; and

**WHEREAS**, the American Red Cross Delmarva Chapter faithfully responds to disasters of all sizes, whether it is delivering shelter, food and comfort after disasters; providing safe, lifesaving

blood supply for patients facing conditions like cancer treatments, childbirth complications and traumatic injuries; assisting military members, veterans and their families with 24/7 global support; or empowering individuals with skills like first aid and CPR that save lives; and

**WHEREAS**, these collective efforts are a powerful reminder that the strength of our community lies in our shared commitment to one another; and

**WHEREAS**, March is nationally recognized as American Red Cross Month, a time to honor the everyday heroes who give their time, donate blood, contribute resources, and answer the call to serve neighbors in times of crisis.

**NOW, THEREFORE, I, ROBIN R. CHRISTIANSEN**, Mayor of the City of Dover, Delaware, do hereby proclaim March 2026 as **AMERICAN RED CROSS MONTH** in the City of Dover and urge all residents to recognize the vital contributions of the American Red Cross Delmarva Chapter and to support its humanitarian mission through volunteerism, blood donation, financial support, and community engagement.

On behalf of the Mayor and Council, Dr. Pillsbury presented the proclamation to Ms. Therese Fresconi.

Dr. Pillsbury stated that the American Red Cross does an outstanding job and, on behalf of everyone, expressed sincere gratitude to Ms. Fresconi for her service. She acknowledged her efforts not only during disasters and emergencies, but also in organizing blood drives and providing numerous other services, noting that the organization has been a tremendous resource to the community.

Ms. Fresconi expressed her gratitude for the proclamation and stated that she was honored to be present to receive it. She shared that the area of the American Red Cross she was most involved with was the Red Cross Clubs program in the State of Delaware, where several high schools participate at the same level as adults. She noted that the clubs organized blood drives and fundraising. She added that they welcomed the opportunity to become more involved with high schools throughout the State of Delaware. She concluded by thanking everyone again for their support and dedicated volunteerism, stating that their work would not be possible without it and that it was truly appreciated.

**PRESENTATION – CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION – KAY SASS**

Councilman Lewis read the following Certificate of Recognition into the record:

CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION

*presented to*

*Kay Sass*

*In sincere appreciation and recognition of your exceptional leadership, diligence,  
and unwavering commitment to the safety and well-being of the residents of the*

*City of Dover during the two most recent snowstorms.  
Your proactive planning, careful coordination, and steadfast attention to critical safety concerns ensured that city operations continued efficiently and effectively during challenging weather conditions. Your consistent communication and timely updates to City Council and the public provided clarity, reassurance, and transparency throughout each event.*

*The City of Dover extends its deepest gratitude for your professionalism, dedication to public service, and tireless efforts to keep our community informed, prepared, and safe.*

*On behalf of The City of Dover,  
Councilman Brian E. Lewis extends his sincere gratitude for your tireless efforts and compassionate service to the community.*

On behalf of the Mayor and Council, Mr. Lewis presented the proclamation to Ms. Kay Sass.

Ms. Sass expressed her gratitude for the proclamation presented to her and stated that she is blessed to work with a great team. She recognized several additional individuals and departments, including the following: from Public Works, Mark Nowack, Antonio Bray, Mark Heard, and their crews; from the Parks and Recreation Grounds Division, Roger Ridgeway, Nate Farrow, and their crews; from the Central Services Fleet Division, Mike Hamlet, Brian Ennison, and their crew; from the Electric Department, Paul Waddell, Sean Burgett, Chris Vincent, Jamie Sack, and their crews; and from the Water and Wastewater Division, Jason Lyon, Kate Mills, John Sisson, Sean Ridgeway, and their crew. She also expressed appreciation for the first responders, police, fire, and EMS personnel, and offered a special thanks to the Fire Department for allowing EMS resources to be staged at Station One (1) and Station Two (2). She further noted that Ms. Sharon Duca does not always receive the acknowledgment she deserves, highlighting that she has participated in every phone and bridge call alongside her throughout storms for the past 15 years.

#### **ANNUAL REPORT – DOWNTOWN DOVER PARTNERSHIP**

Ms. Diane Laird, Executive Director of the Downtown Dover Partnership, briefed members on the Downtown Dover Partnership Annual Report.

Responding to Mr. Neil, Ms. Laird clarified that they were not looking for \$175,000 at the moment.

Mr. Neil stated that they had begun the budget process, which was a continual process and involved collaboration and ongoing discussions between departments regarding submitted requests. He noted that they would periodically hold additional meetings with council to provide updates on the status of the budget and then continue moving forward.

Responding to Mr. Neil, Ms. Laird clarified that she would like the \$175,000 to be included in the budget and explained that the funds would be used to hire personnel. She further noted that they have contracted with Falcon, an accounting firm, for the year.

Ms. Arndt stated that change was hard and that it was very hard for individuals to process change. She expressed gratitude for showing them what was possible, because that was the hardest part for so many. She noted that they see downtown and do not see what downtown could be. She was thankful that Ms. Laird brought the vision and that she had worked so hard to make that vision happen.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Ms. Laird clarified that the audit was scheduled for this year to be completed.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Ms. Laird clarified that the audit would be made available to the public.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Ms. Laird clarified that the accounting firm they had contracted with was Falcon.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Ms. Laird explained that they provide extensive technical assistance to applicants. This includes guidance from consultants working with Delaware State Housing Authority (DSHA) on funding access, bridge loans, and capital structuring, as well as consulting through Anne-Marie Townsend to help applicants navigate permitting, building code, and sprinkler requirements. She noted that over the past three (3) years, they have worked on Loockerman Street with more than 20 applicants, eight (8) of whom have completed projects. To ensure responsible use of funding and encourage progress, they were broadening the definition of critical improvements to include restaurants and new construction, reallocating funds from stalled projects to support active initiatives.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Mr. Stonesifer stated that it was important to note that the funding came from the state of Delaware through the bond program, and it had specific stipulations so that they could use the funds.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Mr. Stonesifer stated that it was important to note that the funds that come from the State of Delaware were earmarked for specific projects. As such, the funding could not be redirected or redeployed for crime prevention purposes. He further explained that the proposed project would bring approximately 120 additional “sets of eyes” to the street. He noted that increased activity and occupancy would serve as a natural deterrent to crime. He added that constructing a new building in what he described as a current “vacuum”, a dark area with no lighting that has allowed for open-air drug activity and other mischief, would significantly change the environment. Although the funds were not being directly spent on crime prevention, he believed the project would have a positive impact on reducing crime through increased visibility, lighting, and presence.

Responding to Mr. Stonesifer, Mr. Lewis stated that he disagreed, but he figured he would ask about the funds as far as it being allocated to assist with public safety, but he understood that since it was coming from the state, they had to follow the guidelines.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Ms. Laird stated that it was a matter of the Downtown Dover Partnership (DDP) staying within their lane, which was economic development and doing more moderate crime prevention kinds of tactics, such as the improvements made at the former Sears building,

including the installation of an attractive, artful metal railing designed to serve as a deterrent to crime. She emphasized that it would be irresponsible for the Downtown Dover Partnership (DDP) to step outside its focus to handle safety, legal matters, or social services, which were separate pillars of the revitalization. She noted that Police Chief Johnson has the expertise and the mandate to address safety, but the Downtown Dover Partnership (DDP) was open to partnering when appropriate and was willing to take on initiatives where they could contribute.

Responding to Mr. Rocha, Ms. Laird stated that the removable bollards proved to be a good barrier, and they could explore with the city and with the police department as they move forward into having more outdoor events.

**Ms. Arndt moved to approve the Downtown Dover Partnership Annual Report. The motion was seconded by Mr. Rocha and unanimously carried (Sudler absent).**

**PUBLIC HEARING – ANNEXATION/REZONING OF PROPERTY LOCATED AT 7 NIXON LANE**

Ms. Dawn Melson-Williams, Principal Planner, reviewed the Annexation/Rezoning of property located at 7 Nixon Lane.

**Public Hearing – Zoning Classification**

Members considered a request for the Property located at 7 Nixon Lane, consisting of 41,526 SF +/- (0.9533 acres +/-), owned by Lupe N. Fuller. This property is currently zoned RS-1 (Residential Single Family Zone) (Kent County Zoning Classification) and the proposed zoning is R-8 (One Family Residence Zone)(City of Dover Zoning Classification) (Tax Parcel: ED-00-068.19-01-28.00-000; Planning Reference: AX-26-01; Third District Council)

A public hearing was duly advertised for this time and place to consider the rezoning of property located at 7 Nixon Lane, owned by Lupe N. Fuller.

Council President Neil declared the Public Hearing opened at 7:55 p.m. There being no one else present wishing to speak during the public hearing, Council President Neil declared the Public Hearing closed at 7:55 p.m.

**Adoption of Annexation Resolution No. 2026-03**

Members considered Annexation Resolution No. 2026-03 for property located at 7 Nixon Lane, owned by Lupe N. Fuller.

**By motion of Ms. Arndt, seconded by Mr. Neil, Council, by a unanimous roll call vote (Sudler absent), adopted Annexation Resolution No. 2026-03, as follows:**

**A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE INCLUSION OF AN AREA WITHIN THE LIMITS OF THE CITY OF DOVER.**

**WHEREAS**, the Charter of the City of Dover authorizes Council to extend the boundaries of the 5 said City in accordance with Title 22, Chapter 1, Section 101 of the Delaware Code (22Del.C.§ 6 101); and

**WHEREAS**, the Mayor and Council deem it to be in the best interest of the City of Dover to include an area contiguous to the present City limits, and hereinafter more particularly described, within the limits of the City of Dover; and

**WHEREAS**, the Charter of the City of Dover provides that if an annexation is petitioned by all owners of all property considered for annexation, no election shall be required. For an annexation petition not requiring an election, such petition shall be processed in accordance with procedures established for amendments to the zoning map, specified in Dover Code, Appendix B – Zoning. All annexation petitions shall be processed concurrently with the rezoning of the property considered for annexation and shall be subject to public hearing before City Council. Public notice shall be completed in accordance with the provisions of the Dover Code relating to amendment of the zoning map.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF DOVER, IN COUNCIL MET:**

1. That the following described area, situated in East Dover Hundred, Kent County, State of Delaware, along with all adjacent paths, sidewalks, roadways, and rights-of-way in their entirety, shall be annexed to and included within the limits of the City of Dover:

ALL that certain lot, piece, or parcel of land, with all the improvements thereon erected, situate in East Dover Hundred, Kent County and State of Delaware; lying on the easterly side of Nixon Lane (County Road #201400), a short distance south of North Little Creek Road (County Road #16) being bound on the West by Nixon Lane, on the North by lands now or formerly of Paul C. Phillips & Theresa Hoshue, on the East in part by lands now or formerly of Elizabeth M. Hampson, in part by lands now or formerly of Richard R. Edgar and in part by lands now or formerly of Mary A. Helmer, and being all of Parcel 27.00 and Parcel 28.00 as shown on the Lot Consolidation Plan for the “Lands of Stephen F. & Lupe N. Fuller” as recorded in the Office of the Recorder of Deeds in and for Keny County, Delaware in Plat Book 144 Page 94, and being more particularly bounded and described in accordance with said plan as prepared by Scott Engineering, Inc., Consulting Engineers and Surveyors, Drawing No. M-5549, dated May 5, 2021, as follows, to wit:

BEGINNING for the same at a point in the easterly right-of-way line of Nixon Lane (30 00 feet wide) at a corner for this lot and lands now or formerly of Mary A. Helmer, said point being located North 17° 46’ 15” West – 69.88 feet from the point of commencement being the northwesterly end of a daylight corner joining the northerly right-of-way of North Little Creek Road (width varies) with the easterly right-of-way line of Nixon Lane; thence from said point of beginning running with the easterly right-of-way line of Nixon Lane North 08° 30’ 00” West, passing over a found iron pipe at a distance of 99.47 feet, a total distance of 299.47 feet to a found iron pipe at a corner for this lot and lands of formerly Paul C. Phillips & Theresa Hoshue; thence running with the line for lands now or formerly of said Paul C. Phillips & Theresa Hoshue North 80° 57’ 03” East – 126.90 feet to a found iron pipe at a corner for this lot and lands now or formerly of Elizabeth M. Hampson; thence running in part with the line for lands now or formerly of said Elizabeth M.

Hampson and in part with the line for lands now or formerly of said Elizabeth M. Hampson and in part with the line for lands now or formerly of Richard R. Edgar, South 08° 30' 00" East – 200.48 feet to a point at a corner for this lot and lands now or formerly of said Richard R. Edgar: thence continuing with the lands now or formerly of said Richard R. Edgar, North 81° 10' 00" East – 24.60 feet to a point at a corner for this lot and lands now or formerly of Harry Robert Chambers, III & Tracey E. Chambers; thence running with the line for lands now or formerly of said Harry Robert Chambers, III, & Tracey E. Chambers, South 07° 42' 00" East – 114.36 feet to a found post in the line of lands now or formerly of Mary A. Helmer at a corner for this lot and lands now or formerly of said Harry Robert Chambers, III, & Tracey E. Chambers; thence running with the line for lands now formerly of said Mary A. Helmer, South 86° 50' 00" West – 150.55 feet to a point, the place of Beginning. Containing within the above-described metes and bounds 41,526 sq. ft. (0.9533 acres) of land, be the same more or less.

2. That the above-described property shall be annexed into the City of Dover with a zoning classification as set by City Council and in accordance with the zoning map and environs then in force, effective upon such lands being included within the limits of the City of Dover.
3. That the certified copy of this resolution of annexation, together with a plot of the area annexed, shall be filed for record with the Recorder of Deeds of Kent County.
4. That the effective date of this resolution shall be the 10th day of March, 2026, at 12:01 a.m.

ADOPTED: March 9, 2026

**Final Reading/Adoption of Rezoning Ordinance #2025-23**

Members considered Ordinance #2025-23, rezoning property located at 7 Nixon Lane, owned by Lupe N. Fuller.

**Ms. Arndt moved that the Final Reading of Ordinance #2025-23 be acknowledged by title only, seconded by Dr. Pillsbury, and unanimously carried (Sudler absent).** (The First Reading of the Ordinance was accomplished during the Regular Council Meeting of December 08, 2025.)

**Ms. Arndt moved for approval of the rezoning, as recommended by the Planning Commission. The motion was seconded by Mr. Rocha and, by a unanimous roll call vote (Sudler absent), Council adopted Ordinance #2025-23:**

**AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE ZONING ORDINANCE AND ZONING MAP OF THE CITY OF DOVER, CHANGING THE ZONING DESIGNATION OF PROPERTY LOCATED AT 7 NIXON LANE**

**WHEREAS**, the City of Dover has enacted a zoning ordinance regulating the use of property within the limits of the City of Dover; and

**WHEREAS**, it is deemed in the best interest of zoning and planning to change the permitted use of property below from RS-1 (Residential Single-Family Zone) to R-8 (One Family Residence Zone).

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF DOVER, IN COUNCIL MET:**

That from and after the passage and approval of this ordinance the Zoning Map and Zoning Ordinance of the City of Dover have been amended by changing the zoning designation from RS-1 (Residential Single Family Zone) to R-8 (One Family Residence Zone) on that property located at 7 Nixon Lane (on the east side of Nixon Lane to slightly north of North Little Creek Road), consisting of 41,526<sup>+/-</sup> S.F.(0.9533 acres<sup>+/-</sup>), owned by Lupe N. Fuller.

(Tax Parcel: ED-00-068.19-01-28.00-000; Planning Reference: AX-26-01; Third Council District)

ADOPTED: March 9, 2026

**PUBLIC HEARING – ANNEXATION/REZONING OF PROPERTY LOCATED AT 1624 NORTH LITTLE CREEK ROAD**

Ms. Dawn Melson-Williams, Principal Planner, reviewed the Annexation/Rezoning of property located at 1624 North Little Creek Road.

Ms. Arndt recused herself from the vote due to her relationship with DelDOT.

Mr. Greg Scott of Scott Engineering, Inc., representing United Worldwide Express, LLC, stated that they had reviewed the comments and recommendations from the Development Advisory Committee (DAC) and the Planning Commission. He addressed Dover/Kent Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) comments regarding a potential southbound on-ramp to Route 1, noting that his client first learned of the concept at the Development Advisory Committee (DAC) meeting and has not been contacted by DelDOT or any agency about it. Although a July 2025 study recommended the ramp, he noted that the project had not received funding or prioritization, and could take an estimated eight (8) to 12 years before construction, if it proceeds at all. As no detailed plans currently exist and potential impacts to the property were unknown, he requested approval of the annexation to allow development of the single-story mini-storage buildings on the site.

Ms. Marilyn Smith, Executive Director of the Dover/Kent Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), stated that she was not taking a position on the annexation or rezoning but was providing information. She explained that the East/West Freight Routes Phase II Study, approved in July 2025, focused on improving efficient, safe, and reliable freight movement in the City of Dover, particularly by completing the interchange to allow full northbound and southbound access. She emphasized that preserving the access was important for economic development and industrial growth in areas such as Garrison Oak, the Sea Deck, and Lafferty Lane. Although the project was not currently included in the Corridor Transportation Plan (CTP), she noted that the study was completed after the most recent Corridor Transportation Plan (CTP) submission cycle and would be amended into the Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) long-range plan for consideration in the next two (2) year Corridor Transportation Plan (CTP) cycle.

Responding to Mr. Rocha, Ms. Smith stated that council was considering the annexation and rezoning of the parcel and was not reviewing a site plan or considering a right-of-way for a road, as that was not part of the discussion. She asked whether both items could be addressed for that parcel. She noted that she did not want to overstep or interfere with staff's responsibilities.

Responding to Mr. Rocha, Ms. Melson-Williams clarified that council's decision was about whether the properties should be incorporated into the city or remain in the county, noting that any future road projects could proceed regardless. She explained that annexation would require assigning a city zoning classification to determine permitted uses, but council's action would not design-specific future development or roadway design. She recommended annexation as being in the city's best interest, as it would provide greater control over future projects and ensure compliance with city regulations. She added that the applicant had been informed of the various studies that could impact the property in the future.

Responding to Mr. Boggerty, Ms. Melson-Williams stated that if the property were added to the city that was subject to assessment, it would generate additional property tax revenue. She noted that the amount of tax collected would depend on what was currently on the property or what may be developed in the future, as that would determine the property's assessed value. She further added that annexing the property would broaden the city's tax base.

Mr. Neil stated that the road was going to happen and that it would become the owner of the property to decide how they were going to use their property. He explained that, due to truck traffic and the movement of materials, they would prefer to have greater access to accommodate where they need to go.

### **Public Hearing – Zoning Classification**

Members considered a request for the Property located at 1624 North Little Creek Road, consisting of 5.12 acres +/- and two unaddressed parcels of 3.15 acres +/- and 0.48 acres +/-, owned by United Worldwide Express, LLC. This property is currently zoned IL - Limited Industrial Zone and RHM - Residential Manufactured Home Zone (Kent County Zoning Classification) and the proposed zoning is IPM (Industrial Park Manufacturing Zone) and subject to the AEOZ (Airport Environs Overlay Zone): APZ II - Accident Potential Zone II (City of Dover Zoning Classification) (Tax Parcel: ED-00-068.20.01-15.00-000; Planning Reference: AX-26-02; Second District Council)

A public hearing was duly advertised for this time and place to consider the rezoning of property located at 1624 North Little Creek Road, owned by United Worldwide Express, LLC.

Council President Neil declared the Public Hearing opened at 8:21 p.m.

Ms. Linda Parkowski, Executive Director, Kent Economic Partnership, emphasized that three (3) studies, the Dover Air Cargo Freight Access Study, the East/West Freight Route Phase II Study, and the Dover Freight Plan, highlighted the critical need for improved transportation access to Route 1, particularly a southbound entrance near North Little Creek Road. She noted that the City of Dover, Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), and the Kent Economic Partnership have invested significant time and resources into those studies to support freight movement and

economic development, especially for Garrison Oak Industrial Park. She explained that the studies identify the parcels under consideration for annexation as the proposed location for the south entrance and connector road from Garrison Oak Road to Route 1, which has long been a top transportation priority in the city's Comprehensive Plan. She urged council to carefully consider the annexation, cautioning that it could jeopardize the long-advocated connector road project, which she described as critical to job creation, business growth, and broader economic development beyond the annexation of the three (3) parcels.

Responding to Mr. Rocha, Ms. Parkowski stated that she did not want to answer for DeIDOT and that was not a question she was prepared to answer. She noted that she has had discussions with the owner's representatives and made them aware of the project in those studies, and that they could always negotiate with DeIDOT.

Responding to Mr. Rocha, Ms. Parkowski suggested that they take a pause and get the answers they need to make the decision, and for the future, the property was going to have a lasting impact on the city and its transportation needs.

There being no one else present wishing to speak, Council President Neil declared the Public Hearing closed at 8:32 p.m.

#### **Adoption of Annexation Resolution No. 2026-04**

Mr. Neil stated that it would be moot for the city not to proceed with annexation. He noted any negotiations between the property owner and DeIDOT would be a separate matter and would not affect what would occur if and when the connection to Route 1 would be created. He added that the city's concern was ensuring access for all properties that would be able to be used moving forward. Negotiations between the state and a private property owner were not within the city's purview, and the city could not protect the property owner by turning the annexation down.

Mr. Neil moved for the adoption of the Annexation Resolution No. 2026-04, seconded by Dr. Pillsbury.

Mr. Boggerty acknowledged that the matter before council was annexation, not rezoning, and stated that council must carefully consider all relevant factors, including the potential pros and cons, future revenue generation from new businesses, and the impact on existing development and future opportunities. As Chair of the Safety Advisory and Transportation Committee, he expressed a desire to review additional information before making a fair and informed decision.

Responding to Mr. Boggerty, Mr. Neil stated that Mr. Scott wanted the property to be annexed.

Mr. Boggerty stated that he had heard from Mr. Scott and from Ms. Parkowski and that he wanted to know more about the property's future impact. He noted that he had never tried to abstain from anything but felt that he was at a disadvantage.

Mr. Anderson stated that he would need more time to find more information, particularly with the zoning for the mini storage, if IPM were a by-right use.

Responding to Mr. Anderson, Ms. Melson-Williams clarified that the zoning for the mini storage was a by-right use in the IPM zone. She explained that it was a use that was permitted in the IPM zone for mini storage facilities and noted that they would have to confirm the ability in the airport environment overlay zone. Depending on the size of the facility, development would require a site plan review process. She stated a site development plan review process would be necessary, but a mini storage facility was one (1) of the permitted uses, and any rezoning would not lock them into that one (1) particular use.

Mr. Anderson stated that he wanted to be fair to both sides and felt that there was not enough information for them currently.

**Mr. Anderson moved to defer the Annexation Resolution No. 2026-04 for 30 days, seconded by Mr. Rocha, and carried by a roll call vote of six (6) yes (Hall, Boggerty, Anderson, Pillsbury, Rocha) and one (1) no (Sudler and Arndt absent).**

Mr. Neil clarified that council was still required to vote on the annexation motion, as that was the matter under consideration. He further stated that if the motion was deferred, then the annexation itself was deferred, meaning there would be no annexation action taken that evening. He explained that the deferment would allow up to 30 days before the matter is returned to council for further discussion.

**Final Reading/Adoption of Rezoning Ordinance #2025-24**

Members considered Ordinance #2025-24, rezoning property located at 1624 North Little Creek Road, owned by United Worldwide Express, LLC.

Mr. Neil stated that because the annexation had been deferred, the motion to proceed with the Final Reading of the proposed ordinance by title only could not take place.

Mr. Neil clarified that the previously made motions should be formally withdrawn for the record, since the rezoning would not proceed. He noted that because the annexation was deferred, the rezoning was void. He further added that any future actions regarding the property would be considered new. He stated that the item would be going on to be discussed by the Council Committee of the Whole under the Safety Advisory and Transportation Committee agenda.

**PUBLIC HEARING – FINAL READING/REZONING REQUEST PROPOSED ORDINANCE #2026-07 – LANDS OF UNITED WORLDWIDE EXPRESS, LLC AT 1600 NORTH LITTLE CREEK ROAD AND AN ADJACENT PARCEL AT 0.509 AC NORTH LITTLE CREEK ROAD.**

A public hearing was duly advertised for this time and place to consider the rezoning of property located at 1600 North Little Creek Road and an adjacent parcel at 0.509 AC North Little Creek Road, consisting of 1.77 acres +/- and the adjacent parcel to the east, consisting of 0.52 acres +/-, owned by United Worldwide Express, LLC. The properties are zoned C-PO (Commercial and Professional Office Zone) and subject to the AEOZ (Airport Environs Overlay Zone): APZ II - Accident Potential Zone II. The proposed zoning for both properties is IPM (Industrial Park Manufacturing Zone) and subject to the AEOZ (Airport Environs Overlay Zone): APZ II - Accident Potential Zone II. (Tax Parcel: ED-05-068.20-01-61.00-000. Planning Reference: Z-26-

## 01. Council District 2.)

Council President Neil reminded members of the public that copies of the proposed ordinance were available at the entrance of the Council Chambers or on the City's website at [www.cityofdover.gov](http://www.cityofdover.gov) under "Government".

**Dr. Pillsbury moved that the Final Reading of the Proposed Ordinance #2026-07 be acknowledged by title only, seconded by Mr. Rocha, and unanimously carried (Sudler absent).** (The First Reading of the proposed ordinance was accomplished during the Council Meeting of December 08, 2025.)

Ms. Arndt recused herself from the vote due to her relationship with DeIDOT.

Responding to Mr. Rocha, Ms. Melson-Williams clarified that the two (2) parcels of land were already within the boundaries of the City of Dover within the corporate limits, so there was no need for annexation, but it was for a rezoning application.

Council President Neil declared the Public Hearing opened at 8:55 p.m.

Mr. Greg Scott of Scott Engineering, Inc., representing United Worldwide Express, LLC, stated that their client intended to take all the parcels under consideration that were in city limits and outside city limits, and bring them all into the city to rezone them to the same zoning so that they could develop those parcels into their intended purpose, which was indicated as a mini storage. He explained that whether or not those parcels come into the city or get annexed, they still have the ability to develop the larger portion of the property under the county's zoning regulations. His client desired to have his properties in the city. He noted that approximately 3.15 acres south of the previously discussed property were wetlands and suggested that the primary reason a ramp had not been constructed there. He explained that there was also a stormwater pond built by DeIDOT as part of Route 1, and constructing a southern ramp through those properties would affect both the wetlands and the existing pond, which would need to be relocated. He added that his client would be willing to collaborate, but emphasized that regardless of whether the property was developed for its intended use or not, DeIDOT would need to negotiate with his client if they wished to purchase the property and construct the ramp in that location.

Responding to Mr. Neil, Mr. Scott stated that his client would still be interested and anxious to have both properties annexed into the city and both zoned IPM.

Responding to Mr. Scott, Mr. Rocha stated that they were not opposed to the proposal, but emphasized the need to gather more information. He noted that they want to understand the pros and cons of the matter, which they have not been able to obtain from anyone, and therefore would like additional time to conduct further investigation on the matter.

Responding to Mr. Scott, Mr. Rocha clarified that they needed to talk with DeIDOT, not with him. He noted that they need to find more information before they make a decision.

Responding to Dr. Pillsbury, Mr. Scott clarified that there were five (5) separate parcels, and two (2) parcels were already in the city that needed to be rezoned to IPM. Three (3) of the parcels were

out of city limits, but needed to be annexed and rezoned to IPM, so they can make it one (1) contiguous parcel.

Dr. Pillsbury stated that if they had done these two (2) parcels first, they would have had less discussion about the remaining three (3) parcels because it did not make sense to her to defer those three (3) parcels when the other two (3) parcels were already in the city limits and they just needed to be rezoned.

Dr. Pillsbury moved for the adoption of Ordinance #2025-24.

Ms. Linda Parkowski, Executive Director of the Kent Economic Partnership, stated that if council chose to defer Annexation Resolution No. 2026-03, then the two (2) parcels involved should also be deferred to allow for gathering as much information as possible. She emphasized that it was one (1) large project, and if it ultimately involved a southbound ramp for Route 1, she recommended and requested that Ordinance #2026-07 be deferred as well.

Ms. Marilyn Smith, Executive Director of Dover/Kent Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), explained that, looking at the map, all five (5) parcels in question were shown (**Exhibit #3**) along with the stormwater retention pond referenced by Mr. Scott, the wetland areas, and the previously approved development. She pointed out that, according to the East/West study document, the Century Engineering team designed the concept for the road to fit within the constraints of the site. She emphasized that, to the best of their ability in the concept plan, they “squeezed” the road between the wetlands, stormwater pond, and the undeveloped parcels (shown in red on the map). She clarified that while she does not disagree with any of the concerns raised, all those factors were considered by Century Engineering Group when developing the proposal to improve East/West freight movement relative to the Route 1 interchange.

Council President Neil declared the Public Hearing closed at 9:07 p.m.

Mr. Rocha moved to defer the Proposed Ordinance #2026-07, seconded by Mr. Lewis.

Mr. Neil that Proposed Ordinance #2026-07 would be going on the Council Committee of the Whole under the Safety Advisory and Transportation Committee agenda to be discussed.

Ms. Hall stated with concern that the developer’s plans may be left in limbo, and while there may be a willingness to wait on the other three (3) parcels, it would at least give the development opportunity with the two (2) parcels already within the city limits. She explained that she does not want to jeopardize the opportunity for growth, economic development, and infusion of revenue for the city. Since those two (2) parcels were already within the city limits, and were seeking approval for rezoning, she was in favor of approving the proposed ordinance to rezone the two (2) parcels so they would not further jeopardize the opportunity in delaying action for 30 days while additional information was gathered on the remaining items.

Mr. Anderson stated that he supported the deferment and did not believe separating the parcels was advisable. He reminded council that the proposed transportation project, including the off-ramp, has been identified as one (1) of the city’s highest priorities and should be allowed to move forward

through the requested submission process to determine its potential impact on the City. He noted that the motion was intended to follow the same timeframe as the previous deferment and emphasized the importance of working collaboratively. He requested that council defer the proposed ordinance, as recommended by the Economic Development Partnership, and stated that allowing 30 days for additional information and consideration was not unreasonable.

Responding to Mr. Boggerty, Mr. Griffith stated that a decision to defer would not prejudice the city and that the city would have the abilities at a future hearing that it does at the current hearing.

**Mr. Rocha moved to defer the Proposed Ordinance #2026-07 for 30 days, seconded by Mr. Lewis, with a roll call vote of six (6) yes (Boggerty, Anderson, Rocha, Lewis, Neil), two (2) no (Hall, Pillsbury), and one (2) absent (Sudler, Arndt).**

**ADOPTION OF MINUTES - REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING OF FEBRUARY 25, 2026**

**The Minutes of the Regular Council Meeting of February 25, 2026, were unanimously approved by motion of Ms. Arndt, seconded by Mr. Boggerty, and bore the written approval of Mayor Christiansen (Sudler absent).**

**COUNCIL COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE REPORT – FEBRUARY 26, 2026**

The Council Committee of the Whole met on February 26, 2026, at 6:10 p.m. with Council President Neil presiding. Members of Council present were Mr. Anderson, Ms. Arndt, Mr. Boggerty, Ms. Hall (via WebEx), Mr. Lewis, Dr. Pillsbury, Mr. Rocha, and Dr. Sudler. Mayor Christiansen was absent. Civilian members present for their Committee meetings were Ms. Smack (*Safety, Advisory, Transportation*), Mr. Garfinkel, and Mr. Shevock (via WebEx) (*Legislative, Finance, and Administration*). Ms. Jackson (*Safety, Advisory, Transportation*) was absent.

**ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

**Mr. Boggerty moved for adoption of the agenda, seconded by Dr. Pillsbury and unanimously carried.**

**Future Trends in Zoning and Economic Development (Linda Parkowski, Executive Director, Kent Economic Partnership)**

Ms. Linda Parkowski, Executive Director, Kent Economic Partnership, reviewed the presentation entitled “Choose Central Delaware (CDCC) Economic Forecast”.

This item was informational, and committee action was not required.

Responding to Dr. Sudler, Ms. Parkowski stated that she believes zoning, housing growth, and the Dover/Kent MPO Comprehensive Safety Action Plan can coexist and complement one another. She stated that roadway and transportation safety are important and noted that DeIDOT’s shift from a level-of-service model to a safe system approach is a positive development. She expressed that this approach is well-intended and should integrate effectively with ongoing planning efforts.

She further explained that the Kent Economic Partnership (KEP) commissioned the East-West Freight Study to better understand how trucks and trains move materials to and from facilities, emphasizing the importance of coordinating freight movement with land use planning. She acknowledged that past planning decisions over the last 20 years have at times placed housing adjacent to freight rail lines and indicated that improved coordination and safety-focused planning will help avoid similar conflicts in the future.

Ms. Parkowski also stated that her organization works closely with the MPO and has commissioned several studies, including the connector road study from Garrison Oak to Horse Pond Road, as well as a rail study and other transportation-related analyses. She concluded by noting that additional truck parking is needed.

Dr. Sudler recommended including more information on the growth of the road infrastructure to start planning how to handle the traffic volume that will come as the city continues to grow.

Responding to Ms. Arndt, Ms. Parkowski stated that in the industrial land needs assessment, they are looking at both redeveloping current sites that are underutilized and new lands. She explained that the study is ongoing and they are looking to have it completed by the end of summer.

Responding to Mr. Boggerty, Ms. Parkowski stated that she had suggested to the County that one of the simplest ways to expedite development would be to designate certain uses as “by right,” thereby eliminating the need for extended public hearing processes. She indicated that if the goal is to incentivize specific types of development, such as housing, permitting those uses by right would help avoid months of delay.

She acknowledged that the City of Dover’s system differs from the County’s but advised that planners could provide guidance on how to structure an expedited process. She further noted that other jurisdictions across the country have implemented alternative approaches, including allowing construction to begin while permits are still being processed. She offered to provide additional information

Responding to Mr. Anderson, Ms. Parkowski expressed the opinion that, to effectively incentivize middle-market housing, such uses should be permitted by right. She explained that by-right zoning involves an administrative review process without public hearings and reflects trust in the administrative framework to implement established policy goals. She stated that if that type of housing is desired, the approval process should be simplified. She further noted that contractors would likely agree that such an approach would ease the financial burden associated with prolonged approval timelines, including the significant costs incurred while awaiting project approval.

Responding to Mr. Anderson, Ms. Parkowski expressed hope that planning and development efforts would begin to focus on the area near the Dover Air Force Base and the broader East Dover industrial area, with the goal of making it the next major project for the City of Dover and the County. She noted that several industrial parks throughout the county were currently in various stages of development, including projects in Smyrna, Milford, and Harrington, and that the Garrison project was nearing completion. She emphasized the need to initiate another industrial park project in Dover as soon as possible.

**Proposed Audio and Visual Upgrades for the City Council Meetings (Joe Simmons, Information Technology Director, and AJ Rahman, Assurance Media)**

Mr. Joe Simmons, Information Technology Director, and Mr. AJ Rahman, Assurance Media, reviewed the proposed audio and visual upgrades needed for the City Council meetings.

This item was informational, and committee action was not required.

Mr. Joe Simmons, Information Technology Director, provided an update on the status of the City Hall Council Chambers audiovisual (AV) system and discussed the need for upgrades. He stated that Assurance Media had recently conducted a comprehensive audit of the existing system and would present detailed findings and recommendations, while his remarks were intended to frame the broader discussion regarding next steps and direction.

Mr. Simmons emphasized that the Council Chambers are a critical space where city decisions are made and public input is received, and that reliable communication is essential. He stated that failures in technology do not merely create inconvenience but undermine public confidence. He explained that the current AV infrastructure is aging and no longer meets modern expectations for accessibility, reliability, and remote or hybrid participation.

He noted that the system had been installed incrementally over many years, resulting in a patchwork of equipment and temporary fixes that had become fragile and difficult to service. He cited outdated components, including a 12-year-old camera that had failed and could not be directly replaced due to obsolescence and lack of warranty or maintenance coverage. He stated that staff often rely on workarounds rather than sustainable solutions and expressed concern about potential downtime during meetings.

Mr. Simmons indicated that an upgrade was necessary to provide clear audio, assisted listening capabilities, captioning for remote participants, reliable hybrid functionality, user-friendly controls, backup systems, remote monitoring, and equipment suitable for continuous operation. He stated that the next steps would include evaluating the existing equipment to determine what could be preserved, identifying high-risk components for replacement, developing a budget, and drafting a request for proposals (RFP) for modernization. He concluded that AV

infrastructure should be viewed as an essential component of civic operations and public communication rather than an optional technology.

Mr. AJ Rahman, Assurance Media, is a professional AV integrator in Delaware. He presented their findings regarding the City Hall Council Chambers AV system. He stated that much of the current equipment was at the end of its life and no longer supported, including the failed camera noted by Mr. Simmons. He explained that replacing individual components, such as the camera, would require replacing interconnected equipment, which could become very costly. He emphasized that continued use of temporary fixes or “band-aids” would likely be more expensive over time and would reduce system reliability.

Mr. Rahman stated that a full system upgrade would provide a stable, fully supported, and cost-effective long-term solution. He indicated that his colleague, Josh McKinley, an engineer and programmer, could address more technical questions for council if needed.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Mr. Rahman stated that an exact cost for the AV system upgrade could not yet be determined. He explained that a full evaluation of the system had been completed, noting that while much of the equipment was outdated and at risk of failure, some components, such as the microphones, remained fully functional. He emphasized that certain underlying equipment for the audio system would need updates, and that a complete assessment was necessary to identify which components were likely to fail or required replacement to prevent further issues. Once that evaluation was finalized, a reliable cost estimate could be provided.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Mr. Rahman stated that the expected warranties of the AV systems varied, with some products being covered for a minimum of one year, others for two or three years. He explained that a maintenance agreement could be established, which, depending on its level, would provide full replacement and service for any hardware that failed during the coverage period. This agreement would ensure that repairs or replacements were handled as needed each year.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Mr. Simmons stated that the level of maintenance required depended on the type of equipment. While the IT department could manage standard computers, specialized AV components, such as encoders, bridges, and feeds to Comcast, required expertise from AV professionals. He recommended establishing a maintenance contract with an AV company to ensure proper upkeep of those systems.

Regarding cost, he explained that a precise figure could not yet be determined, as additional options could be considered if council chose to pursue them. These options included streaming meetings to social media platforms, upgrading remote meeting capabilities, and enhancing video retention and indexing tools to allow easy access to past meetings. He emphasized that the upgrade could not only

replace aging equipment but also expand and improve city communications, offering a broader enhancement to public accessibility and engagement.

Responding to Mr. Rocha, Mr. Rahman stated that the issue with staff having to hold the microphone to the streaming camera so that the speaker can be heard online is a big part of the plan to repair the issue.

Responding to Mr. Rocha, Mr. Simmons stated that the choice of platforms for streaming meetings would ultimately be a decision for council. He noted that the existing agreement with Comcast, managed in part by Kay Sass, involved public funding for that service. He explained that while additional streaming platforms, such as YouTube or Instagram, were not required, having the capability to use them would be highly beneficial. He emphasized that expanding streaming options and social media integration were important considerations for the city's future communications strategy.

Ms. Arielle Rivera, Assistant City Clerk, stated that the current broadcasting company with access to the encoder and decoder is Telvue. During a review of their system improvements, they noted that they are beginning to incorporate the new ADA compliance features with subtitling, and they also have the capability to take the meeting recordings and upload them to a YouTube channel for staff. The changes simply need to be implemented.

Responding to Mr. Rocha, Ms. Rivera stated that the city's encoder and decoder had failed, which was the primary reason meetings were not currently being broadcast live. She noted that she, Kay, and Andria had been in contact with Telvue Solutions regarding the issue and that the replacement equipment would be covered at no cost to the city. Ms. Rivera stated that the installation of the new equipment would serve as the next upgrade when the technicians began work. She also noted that Telvue Solutions provides technical support by phone and that staff often troubleshoot issues with them.

Responding to Mr. Rocha, Ms. Rivera noted that broadcasting on television was a benefit to the city, as Mr. Simmons stated, because funds were collected from the broadcasting services.

Responding to Dr. Sudler, Mr. Rahman stated that much of the existing equipment would be able to migrate to the new location. He noted that some components that are part of the current infrastructure, such as the speakers, would likely remain in place rather than be replaced immediately, as they were still functioning adequately but may become outdated. Mr. Rahman explained that much of the equipment located in the AV rack would be transferable. He further noted that, depending on the timeline for relocation, some equipment might be considered for upgrade due to typical technology lifespans of approximately five to six years, while certain components, such as control processors and touch panels, may have a lifespan closer to eight or nine years.

Dr. Sudler expressed concerns about keeping the failed equipment and replacing bits and pieces to cut costs. He noted that eventually those pieces will be outdated, too. He requested that Mr. Rahman provide the cost of replacing all the components and the cost of upgrading the system to one that is compatible with today's technology.

Mr. Simmons stated that the purpose of the presentation was to begin the discussion and obtain Council's direction regarding potential upgrades. He explained that the project would ultimately require an RFP process and that specific cost estimates were not yet available. Mr. Simmons noted that costs could vary depending on whether the city chose to replace the entire system or reuse certain high-quality components, such as the existing microphones. He emphasized the importance of implementing a system that would be easier for staff to monitor and manage during meetings while also providing high-quality audiovisual service for both in-person attendees and remote viewers through television or potential social media platforms. Mr. Simmons also noted that the discussion was being held during budget season, so council could begin considering the matter in advance and review potential options with varied costs. He stressed that the current systems are aging, lack a maintenance plan, and could potentially fail at any time.

Dr. Sudler acknowledged that the city would soon begin budget hearings and noted that council would be addressing complex decisions related to balancing the budget and allocating restricted and unrestricted funds. He stated that he would like to see several scenarios presented, including a worst-case scenario involving full system replacement, a maintenance plan, and an option for replacing equipment only as needed. Dr. Sudler also recommended providing a projected timeframe for when equipment may potentially fail so council could plan financial appropriations accordingly. He emphasized the importance of timing in the budget process and expressed appreciation for the issue being brought forward in advance of budget hearings so council could better evaluate the matter and ensure responsible stewardship of city funds while maintaining quality service for constituents.

Mr. Rocha concurred with Dr. Sudler's comments and stated that the matter should be presented during the upcoming budget hearings so council could determine how to incorporate it into the budget. He noted that he had raised concerns about the issue for several years and emphasized that delaying the project had likely increased costs. Mr. Rocha stated that the item should be included in the proposed budget, under the appropriate department, so council could review it and make a determination during the budget process if adjustments were necessary.

Responding to Mr. Boggerty, Mr. Rahman stated that a leasing option was available and noted that additional information could be provided, including a link previously included in email correspondence for review and distribution.

Mr. Boggerty requested that staff provide a comparison outlining the pros and cons of leasing versus purchasing the equipment outright. It was also acknowledged that an RFP process would be required, following an initial assessment of the existing system.

### **SAFETY, ADVISORY, AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE**

The Safety, Advisory, and Transportation Committee met with Chairman Boggerty presiding.

#### **Adoption of Agenda**

**Mr. Rocha moved for adoption of the agenda, seconded by Dr. Pillsbury and unanimously carried.**

**Request for Waiver – Appendix A – Subdivision, Article VI – Subdivision – General Requirements and Design Standards, Section E – Lots, Item 5. (Site Development Master Plan for Dupont Plaza Master Plan): Waiver to allow creation of lots without Public Street frontage with the associated Subdivision Plan to subdivide the proposed shopping center into multiple lots (Dawn Melson-Williams, Principal Planner)** (Property Owner: Rojan DD 15 LLC. Property Address: 747 N. Dupont Highway. Tax Parcel: ED-05-068.05-01-15.00-000. Planning Reference: S-26-04)

Ms. Dawn Melson-Williams, Principal Planner, reviewed the background and analysis regarding the Subdivision Waiver request for lots without public street frontage.

Planning Commission recommended approval of the Subdivision Waiver – Lots without Public Street Frontage.

Responding to Mr. Boggerty, Ms. Melson-Williams explained that the subdivision of land represents what she described as an “invisible line plan,” noting that property lines are not apparent on the physical site. She stated that site elements such as drive aisles, fire lanes, and parking would function as a unified development, and visitors or emergency responders would not necessarily be aware of the property boundaries. Ms. Melson-Williams indicated that, in her opinion, the subdivision would not create safety concerns. She also noted that the entrance to Leipsic Road already exists and was constructed as part of the adjacent Edge Apartments project, and that required linkages between the two sites are already included in both development plans.

Responding to Dr. Sudler, Ms. Melson-Williams stated that the property is located within a Source Water Protection Overlay Zone, specifically within the Tier 3 Excellent Recharge Area. She explained that this designation places limitations on the types of uses permitted on the site and includes regulations regarding impervious surfaces and the amount of paved or hard surface allowed. Ms. Melson-

Williams noted that the applicant is currently working to ensure compliance with the applicable provisions of the city's zoning ordinance.

Responding to Dr. Sudler, Ms. Melson-Williams stated that the request before the committee was for a subdivision waiver to modify the shape of the properties. She clarified that the waiver would not affect how the properties are developed, nor would it impact regulations related to water recharge, stormwater management, or other applicable provisions. The request solely concerns the configuration of the property lines.

Responding to Dr. Sudler, Ms. Melson-Williams stated that the Source Water Protection Overlay Zone does not have requirements for minimum lot size or anything that would affect striking property lines.

Responding to Mr. Rocha, Ms. Melson-Williams explained that the applicant intends to divide a single tract of land into three parcels. Under the city code, each lot is required to have frontage along a public roadway. In this case, the northernmost parcel, which contains the largest building, would have no frontage on a public street. A second lot would have some frontage but not meet the full requirement, while the third lot would have proper frontage on a public road.

Responding to Mr. Rocha, Ms. Melson-Williams stated that the property has some frontage on Leipsic Road and a larger frontage on DuPont Highway.

Responding to Mr. Rocha, Ms. Melson-Williams stated that a similar situation had occurred with the Dover Mall, where large "big box" stores occupy individual parcels without direct frontage on DuPont Highway. She noted that two parcels behind the mall, located behind the loop road, also lack frontage, and a waiver had previously been granted in that case. She explained that such waivers are common in shopping centers where land is subdivided to accommodate tenant preferences for property acquisition.

Mr. Rocha stated that he did not see an issue with granting the waiver. He noted that, as Dr. Sudler had mentioned, the owner's intent to sell the property could be beneficial, as owning the property may encourage business continuity and commitment to the city. Mr. Rocha expressed support for granting the subdivision waiver.

Ms. Arndt agreed with Councilman Rocha, stating that flexibility is beneficial for redevelopment. She also expressed appreciation for the thorough review the application had received from the State, the DAC, and the Planning Commission.

Mr. Neil noted that the site is located across from the Speedway complex on Leipsic Road, near a former Berry Van Lines location, and referenced the planned development of 250 apartment units and additional townhouses. While he acknowledged the city's need for housing and the associated tax benefits, he

expressed concern that the MPO had declined to conduct a study of Leipsic Road, which already experiences significant traffic from existing developments and the Speedway. Mr. Neil emphasized the importance of evaluating traffic impacts due to the anticipated increase in vehicles. He stated that he would vote to advance the project but stressed that a traffic study should be conducted promptly.

**Ms. Arndt moved to recommend approval of the subdivision waiver as recommended by the Planning Commission. The motion was seconded by Mr. Anderson and unanimously carried.**

**By consent agenda, Ms. Arndt moved for approval of the Committee's recommendation, seconded by Mr. Boggerty and carried by a unanimous roll call vote (Sudler absent).**

**Mr. Boggerty moved for adjournment of the Safety Advisory and Transportation Committee meeting, hearing no objection the meeting adjourned at 7:23 p.m.**

#### **LEGISLATIVE, FINANCE, AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE**

The Legislative, Finance, and Administration Committee met with Chairman Anderson presiding.

#### **Adoption of Agenda**

**Mr. Neil moved for adoption of the agenda, seconded by Mr. Shevock and unanimously carried.**

Mr. Rocha recused himself from the discussion regarding the People's Community Center Economic Development Fund Application.

#### **Review of The People's Community Center Economic Development Fund Application (Councilwoman Hall and David S. Hugg, III, City Manager)**

Mr. David S. Hugg, III, City Manager, reviewed the background and analysis regarding the People's Community Center Economic Development Fund Application.

Staff recommended approval of the grant by the Legislative, Finance, and Administration Committee in the amount of \$47,363.

Dr. Sudler requested, for ethical and litigation purposes, that the City Solicitor provide guidance on whether a resignation would require a 30-day period before a council member could participate without recusal. He emphasized wanting clarity to avoid potential violations or scrutiny.

Mr. Anderson noted that even if recusal was required, no personal benefits had been received and confirmed that the matter under discussion was a voting issue.

Dr. Sudler expressed that he would feel more comfortable obtaining an interpretation from Mr. Boggerty, given his human resources background, or having someone contact the City Solicitor to clarify the requirements.

Mr. Boggerty stated that, while the matter is not strictly a human resources issue, the timing of a recent resignation raises ethical considerations. He explained that resigning this week and then being involved in a matter where funding is requested, with the potential for reappointment afterward, could create public scrutiny. Mr. Boggerty noted that, under the City Charter, board members are generally not supposed to authorize funds to entities they serve. He described the situation as a close call and advised that it is ultimately a moral decision for the individual and the Council President to determine whether the person should participate or if someone else should be appointed to hear the matter. He clarified that this was his consulting opinion, not a directive from the City's bylaws.

Mr. Lewis recalled a prior situation involving Bay Health, where he is employed by the organization, and there was a vote on hospital expansion. He stated that he consulted the City Solicitor, who advised him to recuse himself, which he did, as reflected in the meeting minutes.

Dr. Sudler stated that, according to the city's ethics training, a conflict of interest does not have to be direct; even the appearance of impropriety is relevant. He expressed that, given the recent resignation, participating in the meeting could create such an appearance. Dr. Sudler clarified that he was not implying any intentional wrongdoing but emphasized the importance of protecting the city and constituents. He recommended that Mr. Anderson recuse himself to avoid any perception of impropriety, noting that the final decision remains with him.

Council President Neil took over as chair.

Ms. Hall stated that she had several areas of concern based on information that had been presented. She noted the importance of allowing Pastor Grimes and Mr. Stafford to give their presentations without wasting their time. However, Ms. Hall suggested that, due to the complaints received, the Council should consider holding off on a vote until the merit of those issues could be determined.

Mr. Hugg explained that the application had originally been presented in January, along with a similar application for the Rail Haus, and was postponed, allowing for additional information. He stated that the application proposes creating a workforce development program to assist community members, particularly those who have been incarcerated, in overcoming obstacles to employment, such as a lack of identification or an unprepared resume. Mr. Hugg noted that he had previously recommended approval of a grant in the amount of \$47,363 to develop and implement the program at the People's Community Center, based on funding requirements and information obtained from Dr. Hodge and others.

However, Mr. Hugg expressed concern that several outstanding complaints regarding the use of the building and its operations, which were brought to his attention, remain unresolved. He stated that these issues need to be addressed before moving forward with providing additional funding for the program.

Responding to Mr. Boggerty, Mr. Hugg stated that, to his understanding, the proposed program was new and would serve many of the clients that they already serve in their operations.

Mr. Neil requested that the application submitted by the People's Community Center, located within the People's Church, for economic development funds be denied at this time. He cited multiple complaints regarding zoning violations, ongoing unsafe activities at the center, and the potential for litigation. Mr. Neil noted that five convicted sexual offenders reside at the facility while programs for children operate in the same building (**Attachment #1**). He acknowledged the need for services for individuals with addiction or mental health issues but stated that the behavior of some individuals at the site had not improved and was negatively affecting surrounding neighborhoods and the downtown area.

He detailed that streets, backyards, and public spaces have been misused, including incidents involving trash, needles, public sexual activity, and solicitation. Mr. Neil indicated that as many as 23 properties, including historic homes converted to offices, have been sold due to the deteriorating conditions. He referenced a formal complaint submitted on December 2, 2025, and a follow-up letter from attorney Kevin Baird on February 4, 2026, which raised similar concerns. He noted that responses from staff and the City Solicitor had not been shared with council.

Mr. Neil acknowledged that three elected officials, including one Council member, serve on the Center's board, but stated they cannot control the behavior of individuals once they leave the facility. Mr. Neil stated that while he agreed individuals served by the center needed food and shelter, he expressed concern that the activities occurring there were not changing the dynamics of their lives and were negatively impacting the surrounding community. He stated that the city could not allow the inability of some individuals to act rationally to diminish the quality of life of others.

Mr. Neil further stated that the Attorney General's Office was not expected to object to the City of Dover reestablishing the Aldermen's Court. While he noted it would not be a panacea, he stated that it could provide a more responsive, community-based court and help restore accountability. He requested that staff provide information regarding the cost of reestablishing the court.

Additionally, Mr. Neil reported that the Delaware State Health Department had filed a complaint regarding the kitchen being used to serve approximately 75 to 100 individuals. He stated that the report had been provided to City Code Inspectors and subsequently forwarded to the Police Department; however, the council had not yet seen the contents of the report.

Mr. Neil concluded by stating that there continued to be ongoing concerns with the building and its impact on the surrounding area. He emphasized the city's responsibility to ensure that property uses did not negatively affect the tax base needed to support city services. Based on these concerns, he requested that the item be pulled from the agenda and denied at this time.

Mr. Neil moved to recommend removal and denial of the application submitted by the People's Community Center located within the People's Church for Economic Development Funds. The motion was seconded by Mr. Shevock.

Mr. Boggerty questioned what programs had been offered by the People's Church throughout the duration of its operations, stating that, given the number of years the center had been in operation, he would have expected work-life skills programming to already be established. He expressed concern that such initiatives appeared to be under consideration only now.

After briefly reviewing the proposed budget, Mr. Boggerty also inquired about a line item reflecting \$1,000 in rent for the organization that would be implementing the program. He asked what space within the facility would be utilized for that purpose and noted that while \$1,000 per month may not seem significant, it would total approximately \$12,000 annually.

Mr. Boggerty further noted that several institutions in the area already provide similar services, including Polytech and DelTech, which offer workforce development programs, skills training, and GED preparation. He suggested that transportation assistance to connect individuals with these existing programs might be a more effective approach and stated that partnerships and collaboration with organizations already providing these services could be more efficient.

He also noted that the People's Church had previously received significant funding from the city, including funds during the COVID-19 pandemic, and stated that he was concerned about providing additional funding without seeing measurable outcomes. Mr. Boggerty concluded by stating that, based on the concerns raised during the meeting and the matters that had recently come to light, he would not support the request at this time until those issues were resolved.

Mr. Lewis stated that he agreed with the comments made by Council President Neil. He noted that when the matter had previously come before the committee, there were issues with the application. He referenced an email sent to Council members by Mrs. Francis Perry, which raised concerns regarding possible misrepresentation of information in the application, including references to veterans.

Mr. Lewis further stated that, to his understanding, the Veterans Affairs Department already operates its own workforce development programs. He indicated that the concerns raised in the email were significant and contributed to his position on the matter.

Additionally, Mr. Lewis stated that he believed the proposal would duplicate existing services, noting that the Department of Labor already provides workforce development programs. He reported that he had spoken with representatives from the Department of Labor, who indicated that they already offer a range of programs available to assist homeless individuals seeking employment and job training.

Based on these concerns, Mr. Lewis stated that he would not support the funding request.

Responding to Mr. Neil, Mr. Hugg stated he was not aware of a recent decision from the solicitor and that no response had been received to the solicitor's letter to Mr. Baird. He noted that staff were reviewing several zoning issues, particularly regarding building uses that were inconsistent with current zoning. He reported that, following a meeting with planning, code enforcement, the fire marshal, and emergency management staff, serious violations relating to building use and condition were identified. Mr. Hugg recommended that the matter not proceed at this time. He acknowledged that a potential legal risk existed due to zoning issues.

Pastor Hodge introduced Pastor Grimes of Solid Rock Baptist Church and Harold Stafford, founding director of the HELP Initiative and former Delaware Secretary of Labor, noting that Mr. Stafford served on the board to guide workforce development efforts. He stated there appeared to be three main issues and noted several factual misunderstandings. He emphasized that all parties shared a common goal of reducing street homelessness, supporting individuals in stabilizing their lives, and protecting property values.

Pastor Hodge clarified that the economic development application was unrelated to the church's shelter operations, which had historically provided emergency winter housing for the homeless. He described the workforce development program's target population as individuals seeking to re-enter the workforce or stabilize their lives and emphasized that the program was not intended to duplicate existing services, including those for veterans, but rather to operate through partnerships with organizations such as Neighborhood Partners and the Delaware Department of Labor. He noted that funding had been secured to renovate a segregated space for program activities, including workshops, computer access, and vocational assessments.

Dr. Sudler stated that the proposed program primarily served as a mediator to connect participants with existing services and occasionally host workshops, rather than providing a unique or differential advantage in workforce development. He noted that partner organizations, including Neighborhood Partners and Solid Rock Baptist Church, already had space to host workshops, and questioned the necessity and amount of funding requested.

He emphasized support for housing and homeless services, including assistance for vulnerable populations, but expressed concern that unresolved compliance issues,

such as zoning, health, or code violations, needed to be addressed before additional city funding could be considered. Dr. Sudler concluded that, given current budget constraints and existing community services, approval of economic development funds at that time was not feasible, and that any proposal would need to demonstrate a clear, extraordinary advantage to justify funding.

Pastor Hodge stated that the program provided an advantage through partnerships and affirmed that the organization was in compliance with health and code regulations.

Mr. Neil expressed concerns that, despite claims of compliance, the city could be held liable if legal action arose, noting that the property's current use did not align with zoning and code requirements. He cited multiple detailed letters from residents reporting that activities at the location, such as feeding 75–100 people nightly, were negatively impacting the surrounding residential area, including property damage and quality-of-life concerns. He emphasized that while the program's goals were positive, the same services could be provided at alternative locations without affecting local homes, and that the city could not defend noncompliant uses.

Pastor Hodge stated that having a satellite location in the neighborhood would increase accessibility for individuals who might not travel to other sites, such as Blue Hen Mall, due to psychological or logistical barriers. He noted that situating services locally could facilitate workforce readiness assessments for populations less likely to access distant locations and asked Mr. Stafford to confirm this point.

Mr. Harold Stafford stated that he was the co-founder and board president of the HELP Initiative in Dover, which had provided services to over 20,000 residents since its founding. He noted he was not speaking in his former capacity as Delaware Secretary of Labor. He explained that the organization supported Pastor Hodge's workforce development program by supplementing services, providing funding for pre-apprenticeship positions, and partnering with vocational schools to train and employ participants, including individuals recently released from correctional facilities. Mr. Stafford emphasized that establishing a satellite location in the neighborhood would increase access to workforce development services for populations unlikely to travel to other sites, aligning with past efforts to bring services directly into the community.

Responding to Mr. Neil, Mr. Will Grimes, Pastor of Solid Rock Baptist Church, stated that the first floor of the CURE building housed Restore Central Dover, providing community development and engagement services, and the second floor was used by Delaware State University, clarifying that these functions were separate from the proposed workforce development activities. He emphasized that the center's programs were designed to bring resources directly into the community, serving residents who would not otherwise access college or Department of Labor services. Mr. Grimes noted that many of the people being assisted were already part of the neighborhood and that the center's work had positive outcomes for participants. He asserted that the People's Community Center was contributing to

solutions for vulnerable populations rather than creating problems, though he acknowledged that the organization could improve how it communicated its successes.

William G. Faust, Jr., Dover, expressed concerns regarding the proposed funding, noting that the Department of Labor already provided similar services and questioned the sustainability of the program after grant funds were expended. He cited fiscal constraints and emphasized the council's responsibility to protect vulnerable residents. He raised public safety concerns, particularly regarding the presence of sex offenders in the facility and potential conflicts with participants, including single parents and children. Mr. Faust concluded that the program should not receive funding until outstanding issues, including allegations and compliance questions, were resolved, and recommended postponing or voting against the proposal.

Cameron Llewellyn, property owner and business operator in Dover, stated that he owned several properties and businesses in the city and expressed concerns regarding the activities associated with the People's Community Center. He questioned whether workforce development activities were a permitted use within the applicable zoning district and raised concerns about the number of services advertised at the location and whether they were properly licensed.

Mr. Llewellyn reported that, based on his observations and security camera footage near his property, individuals frequenting the area had created public safety and quality-of-life concerns, including drug activity and medical emergencies. He stated that these issues had negatively impacted nearby businesses, including his own, including the closure of a retail shop operated downtown. He further alleged that individuals seeking assistance at the center were not receiving adequate services and called for further review, including an audit of the organization's finances and operations.

Andrea Freud, S. Bradford Street, stated that she had lived in the neighborhood for many years and previously participated in the Mayor's Unsheltered Working Group. She indicated that she supported efforts to address homelessness, addiction, and mental health issues, noting that her professional experience as a Superior Court Commissioner provided her with direct knowledge of these challenges.

Ms. Freud reported that conditions in her neighborhood had significantly worsened in recent years, particularly since 2023, citing increased drug activity, prostitution, and safety concerns. She stated that these conditions had impacted residents' quality of life and their ability to safely walk in the neighborhood. While acknowledging the need to assist vulnerable populations, she expressed concern that locating services in a residential area placed a disproportionate burden on nearby homeowners.

Ms. Freud also noted that, during the meeting, she overheard a conversation suggesting that a council member who had previously served on the organization's board may have resigned in connection with a potential mayoral run and being able to better assist the center. She stated that she was uncertain of the accuracy of what she heard, but raised the matter due to concerns about a potential appearance of impropriety.

Ms. Freud concluded by encouraging the city to pursue solutions that assist individuals in need while also protecting the safety and quality of life of neighborhood residents.

Ms. LaChelle Paul, Dover, stated that the issues being discussed were part of a broader, long-standing challenge in the city related to homelessness, drug activity, and public safety. She described participating in community cleanups in several neighborhoods and reported observing drug use, discarded materials, and other related activity during those efforts.

Ms. Paul noted that individuals experiencing homelessness often moved from one area to another when enforcement actions occurred and emphasized that the issue required a comprehensive community response. Drawing on her prior experience working at a shelter, she discussed the importance of providing structured services and resources, such as employment assistance, identification documents, and job readiness programs, to help individuals transition to stable housing and employment.

Ms. Paul questioned the proposed funding request and suggested that any financial investment should focus on resources that directly assist individuals in obtaining identification, employment, and other necessary services. She acknowledged the role of faith-based organizations in providing support but emphasized the need for accountability and clear expectations for individuals receiving services.

Ms. Paul concluded by urging the city to address crime and public safety concerns, including the establishment of a previously discussed mobile police substation, and to work toward a balanced solution that supports individuals in need while protecting neighborhood residents.

Mr. Anderson stated that he agreed with several points raised by Ms. Paul regarding public safety concerns in the downtown area. He noted that the council had previously approved the creation of a dedicated downtown policing unit based on a professional recommendation from the Police Department, but implementation had not yet occurred. He acknowledged the suggestion of a mobile police station by Dr. Sudler and explained that the Police Department had indicated a dedicated downtown unit would be a more practical approach due to cost considerations.

Mr. Anderson expressed hope that funding for such a unit would be considered during the upcoming budget process. He also emphasized the importance of

neighborhood watch programs and community involvement in addressing safety concerns.

Mr. Anderson further stated that programs such as the one proposed could potentially help address underlying issues rather than contribute to them, noting that some services referenced were already supported through other grant funding. However, he suggested that the applicant might consider withdrawing the request at this time due to the concerns raised, indicating that reapplying later would be preferable to having the request formally denied.

Mr. Neil called for a vote, seconded by Dr. Sudler.

Ms. Arndt requested that Ms. Rivera restate the initial motion.

Responding to Ms. Arndt, Ms. Rivera stated that Mr. Neil moved to recommend denial of the application submitted by the People's Community Center located within the People's Church for Economic Development Funds.

Responding to Dr. Sudler, Mr. Neil confirmed that they could bring their application back at a later time.

**Mr. Neil moved to recommend denial of the application submitted by the People's Community Center located within the People's Church for Economic Development Funds. The motion was seconded by Mr. Shevock and carried by a roll call vote of nine (9) yes (Hall, Boggerty, Pillsbury, Arndt, Sudler, Lewis, Neil, Shevock, Garfinkel), one (1) abstention (Anderson), and one (1) absent (Rocha).**

Mr. Anderson resumed his role as the chair, and Mr. Rocha entered the meeting again.

**Training, Conference, and Travel Policy Updates (Tammy Kelledees, Assistant Controller/Treasurer)**

Ms. Tammy Kelledees, Assistant Controller/Treasurer, reviewed the background and analysis regarding the proposed Training, Conference, and Travel Policy changes.

Staff recommended acceptance of the Training, Conference, and Travel Policy as amended.

**Mr. Rocha moved to recommend approval of the staff recommendation to accept the Training, Conference, and Travel Policy as amended. The motion was seconded by Dr. Pillsbury and unanimously carried.**

**By consent agenda, Ms. Arndt moved for approval of the Committee's recommendation, seconded by Mr. Boggerty and carried by a unanimous roll call vote (Sudler absent). (Sudler absent).**

**Mr. Anderson moved for adjournment of the Legislative, Finance, and Administration Committee meeting; hearing no objection, the meeting adjourned at 8:56 p.m.**

**By consent agenda, Ms. Arndt moved for acceptance of the Council Committee of the Whole Report, seconded by Mr. Boggerty and carried by a unanimous roll call vote (Sudler absent).**

**Mr. Neil moved for adjournment of the Council Committee of the Whole meeting; hearing no objection, the meeting adjourned at 8:56 p.m.**

**MONTHLY REPORTS – JANUARY 2026**

**By motion of Ms. Arndt, seconded by Mr. Boggerty, the following monthly reports were accepted by consent agenda (Sudler absent):**

City Council’s Community Enhancement Fund Report  
City Manager’s Report  
Fire Chief’s Report  
Police Chief’s Report

**REAPPOINTMENTS RECOMMENDED BY COUNCIL**

**By motion of Ms. Arndt, seconded by Mr. Boggerty, the following monthly reports were accepted by consent agenda (Sudler absent):**

**BOARD OF ASSESSMENT OF APPEALS**

A. Douglas M. Doyle – Four-Year Term Expiring March 2030

**FINAL READING – PROPOSED ORDINANCE #2025-14 - AMENDING CHAPTER 22 – BUILDINGS AND BUILDING REGULATIONS, BY INSERTING ARTICLE XIII (13) – LEMON HOUSING**

The First Reading of the Proposed Ordinance #2025-14 was accomplished during the Council Meeting of February 25, 2026. Council President Neil reminded members of the public that copies of the proposed ordinance were available at the entrance of the Council Chambers or on the City’s website at [www.cityofdover.gov](http://www.cityofdover.gov) under “Government”.

Mr. Neil, Council President, reviewed the Proposed Ordinance #2025-14 – Amending Chapter 22 – Buildings and Building Regulations, by inserting Article XIII (13) – Lemon Housing.

Ms. Butcher read her statement into the record (**Exhibit #1**).

Responding to Ms. Arndt, Mr. Neil stated that in cases of direct sales, he believed a motion would be made to recreate in the document as proposed. To his understanding of the proposal, if a home was being purchased, such as a repossessed property or one (1) that required repairs, the responsibility would fall on the individual handling the sale or the realtor. He explained that the

individual or realtor would be required to confirm that a full home inspection was conducted and that the buyer signed off on any deficiencies that were identified during the inspection. If the procedures were not followed, the individual responsible, namely the realtor handling the sale, would be subjected to a \$1,000 fine and could potentially lose their license to operate within the City of Dover.

Ms. Arndt made a motion to amend Proposed Ordinance #2025-14 to include an option allowing the buyer to waive the requirement for a home inspection. The motion was seconded by Mr. Neil.

Mr. Neil stated that if an individual was purchasing a property that had been repossessed by a bank or under other circumstances where the purchaser did not intend to reside in the home and instead planned to resell it, then a home inspection would not be required. He explained that the individual would have the option to purchase the property "as is." However, once the property was repaired and a home inspection was conducted pursuant to the amendment, the applicable requirements would then apply.

Responding to Ms. Arndt, Mr. Neil stated that the city would need to educate realtors to ensure that they understood what the requirement applied to within the city. He explained that if a buyer believed a violation had occurred, the information would be submitted as a complaint to the City Manager. The City Manager would review the matter and decide, and any decision made by the City Manager could then be appealed to the Board of Appeals.

Ms. Arndt suggested that if the ordinance passes, the Delaware Division of Professional Regulation should be notified of the change to home sales within the city, and that the Kent County Association of REALTORS® be informed of the changes regarding the purchase of homes within the city.

Mr. Anderson stated that he was in favor of the ordinance.

Responding to Mr. Anderson, Mr. Neil clarified that Ms. Butcher had looked into the Milford Housing Development Corporation, and she was not eligible for the home repair fund.

Mr. Eddie Kopp, Chief Code Enforcement Officer, expressed multiple concerns regarding Proposed Ordinance #2025-14. He stated that in cases such as sheriff's sales or properties declared dangerous, requiring a housing inspection report could delay or hinder a sale, especially if the buyer intended to demolish the structure. He also raised concerns about the ordinance's lack of specificity, noting that while it required inspections and referenced safety standards, it did not cite specific codes, laws, or clearly defined standards, nor did it clarify whose inspection standards would apply. Additionally, he questioned how records would be collected and retained, pointing out that all city records were subject to FOIA and that the ordinance did not outline document retention procedures. He stressed that enforcement actions should be supported by proper documentation. He also noted that the ordinance did not allow a buyer to decline an inspection and observed that, similar to business and rental licenses, there was a provisional order process required before revoking or suspending a license.

Responding to Mr. Rocha, Mr. Kopp stated that he did make recommendations, but those recommendations were not made to the final draft of the ordinance.

Responding to Mr. Neil, Mr. Kopp stated that he could have the staff recommendations written up by the next Regular Council Meeting.

Ms. Hall stated, for clarification, that the matter was somewhat moot since the matter needed to be brought back. She noted that she was a licensed realtor and had missed the opportunity to recuse herself. She clarified that she did not intend to participate in the vote.

Mr. Kopp stated that Ms. Arndt's amendments were provisions he had already intended to include in the proposed ordinance for clarity. He explained that those items were reflected in his original comments and would be incorporated into the draft.

**Mr. Lewis moved to defer the Proposed Ordinance #2025-14 with amendments by Mr. Kopp to the next Regular Council Meeting, seconded by Mr. Rocha, and unanimously carried by a roll call vote (Sudler and Hall absent).**

#### **SETTING OF PROPERTY ASSESSMENT APPEALS**

Staff recommended that the 2026 Property Assessment Appeals be scheduled for June 1, 2026, through June 5, 2026, from 9:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m., and one (1) evening (if needed). The hearing times are subject to change.

**Ms. Arndt moved for approval of the dates and times recommended by staff for the 2026 Property Assessment Appeals, seconded by Dr. Pillsbury, and unanimously carried (Sudler absent).**

#### **FEBRUARY 25, 2026, CONSENT AGENDA ITEM #14. ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER BRIEFING (CAITLYN SMITH, ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER, AND SERGEANT CHRISTOPHER PEER)**

Mr. Neil stated that the item had been pulled from the record for clarification. He further noted that the miscommunication had since been resolved and that he was allowing the item to proceed to a vote.

**Mr. Lewis moved to put Item #14. Animal Control Officer Briefing back on the consent agenda, and seconded by Mr. Rocha, and was unanimously carried (Sudler absent).**

#### **CITY MANAGER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Ms. Duca reminded everyone that to report an emergency involving water or sewer service, an electric outage, or a sewer light outage, they should contact Electric System Operations at (302) 736-7086 and select option three (3). She also noted that, beginning last week, crews have been collecting bulk yard waste following the recent winter storm, and the collection would continue through March 13, 2026. She stated that residents needed to follow regular-sized limitations until spring cleanup, which is scheduled to start April 6<sup>th</sup> through April 17<sup>th</sup>. She emphasized that there would be no size limitations on the piles.

#### **MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Mayor Christiansen was absent.

**COUNCIL MEMBERS' ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Mr. Boggerty congratulated the Dover Basketball Boys Unified Team for advancing to the playoffs, as well as the Boys Team.

The meeting adjourned at 10:02 p.m.

ANDRIA L. BENNETT, CMC  
CITY CLERK

All ordinances, resolutions, motions, and orders adopted by the City Council during their Regular Meeting of March 9, 2026, are hereby approved.

ROBIN R. CHRISTIANSEN  
MAYOR

/AB

Exhibits

Exhibit #1 – Debra Butcher’s statement for the Proposed Ordinance #2025-14

Exhibit #2 – Jayson Brooks’s email regarding traffic safety study

Exhibit #3 – Marilyn Smith - East/West Freight Routes, Phase 2 Study Handout

Exhibit #4 – Linda Parkowski - Proposed Connector Road for Proposed Site SR 1 Interchanged Handout

Chairpersons, Distinguished members of this committee, and Fellow citizens:

My name is Debra Butcher, I am a Retired/Disabled Federal Investigator and I appear before you today not only as a homeowner, but as a victim of systemic discriminatory housing fraud in the City of Dover, I was deceived, defrauded by my trusted Realtor and co-conspirators and abandoned by every system in the State of Delaware from Consumer Protection Agency, Professional Regulations, Realtors Board, and Dover Police department that was supposed to protect me. Delaware's current Real Estate system protects the Realtor, Broker, Seller, Lender, Appraiser, and closing attorney. The only person left unprotected is the buyer, the person who trusted the system the most.

In 2022, I contacted a state-supported program, "Kiss Your Landlord Goodbye," for assistance in purchasing a home. I followed the housing counselor's instructions. I trusted every professional involved, believing that the people guiding me were bound by ethics, laws, and basic human decency. I trusted the Lender from their list, who introduced me to his father, a licensed realtor, to help me purchase a safe home for my children and I. At the time, I didn't know the State agency didn't 'vet' its lenders.

As a result, My trusted realtor steered me, a disabled person on a fixed income into a severely dilapidated and dangerous property through discriminatory steering and housing fraud in an alleged "Profit for Sale scheme".

From the first day I moved into this home, my horrific nightmare began:

The basement flooded daily—even in dry weather—up to eight inches of water for weeks and months to date. In the beginning. My two eight-year-old children and I had to carry over 40 buckets of water because the sump pump motor repeatedly burned out from the volume of water in this home.

The home's complete plumbing system collapsed in the first week due to branches in the plumbing. Brown contaminated water came out of all faucets and shower/tub heads due to severely corroded pipes, exposing my children and I to copper poisoning. The contaminated water was undrinkable and unable to shower, causing skin rashes and irritation. I had to use cases of bottled water to drink, cook, and bathe. In Delaware, corroded copper pipes are a material defect that must be disclosed on the Seller's Disclosure of Real Property Conditions. A gas heater leak from illegal piping created the risk of fire or death, as we live each day in fear. Mold was concealed, severe water and termite damage was hidden, severe electrical and glued light fixtures were used to hide the electrical problems, asbestos, severe foundation and structural stability issues due to major defects that were never disclosed as required by law

The home had large holes from the roof to the basement area, exposing us to rodents, insects, water intrusion, and mold. The windows and doors are dry-rotted and are not secure to prevent intrusion. Structural holes were discovered in my son's room, which weakened the interior wall by no seals on windows to stop rainwater- if left unrepaired, possibly would have collapsed, causing injury or death to my young child.

This home has buried me in over 90,000 dollars in debt with liens against the loan from refinancing at higher rates to avoid foreclosure and being homeless on the street with my young children, and my financial obligation from the Delaware Housing Authority that I must stay in the home for 5 years or pay back all money used for closing. I am trapped in this dilapidated home that was not just misrepresented-it was dangerous, uninhabitable, and fraudulently sold, and the lender was found on Delaware Housing's website. A home I paid almost \$300,000 for. All of the home's defects were hidden, concealed, and not disclosed as required by law; inspections were manipulated by my trusted Realtor. My children and I have paid the price physically, financially, and emotionally in this home unfit for human habitation.

This was not a mistake. This was housing fraud. The home I was sold was unsafe, structurally compromised, and unfit for human habitation. This was not an accident. This was not a misunderstanding. This was fraud, concealed through cosmetic cover-up, colluding realtors, sellers, Lenders, appraisers, and Closing Attorneys who profited from this illicit transaction, which was aided by a system with no accountability and no enforcement of the Law.

When I sought help, all forms of this system failed again and again—Each agency dismissed me or did not want to hold anyone in the Real Estate Chain accountable for the alleged crime of Fraud, unethical acts, or harm done to my family and I. I was only re-victimized over and over and silenced by a system in which I was told: “No one in this State of Delaware will go against a Realtor, Seller, Lender, Appraiser, or Closing Agent.” These bad actors have a legal business license to commit fraud and harm the disabled, Elderly, 1st time buyers, and families, yet walk away with a commission check without accountability for their unethical and alleged criminal acts.

The problem: Without a police report, nothing moves forward. The FBI, which handles mortgage fraud, will not act without a police report. The Attorney General’s office will not act without a police report. Dover Police dismissed my evidence twice as civil and refused to review any documents outlining a possible crime. When law enforcement deprioritizes housing fraud crimes, it enables a system of discrimination in which perpetrators act with impunity, knowing there will be no accountability. Consumer Protection declined to act, citing “we don’t do those types of cases,” even though there are existing consumer protection laws that address misrepresentation by a realtor. Professional Regulation refuses to act against a Realtor or Broker. I received a letter from the DPR investigator stating insufficient evidence from the investigator because the final decision was made

by a Realtor (an advisor to the agency) in the same profession, protecting their colleagues. 0

In 2025, after three years of constant duress, stress, financial ruin, and instability, I was diagnosed with heart failure, which occurred 3 years ago when I purchased this home. My health decline is directly linked to this dilapidated home. **This is a Public health issue, a Consumer protection issue, and a Civil rights issue.** Yet, there is no one in the State of Delaware—not the Dover Police Department, no state agencies, criminal, or compliance that will go against a Realtor, Broker, Lender, Seller, or Closing Agent. No attorney will help me and others like me to hold the individuals accountable for the harm done to my young children and me or other families. Only two councilmen were willing to help and experienced the same closing doors of no one wanting to do anything.

As a disabled woman, I had the right to a safe home;

As a mother, I had the right to protect my children from harm in the purchase of a home.

As a consumer, I had the right to honesty and transparency; As a citizen, I had the right to justice.

I am here to tell you, my life matters, my children's lives matter, our voices matter, and our story still calls us to demand accountability and justice and not be dismissed.

I am here because the system meant to protect us did not simply fail—it collapsed. And I am here because policy change is not optional. It is urgent.

***Delaware lacks:***

- mandatory verification of disclosure form information
- Enforcement for false information or housing fraud cases
- Tracking of home repairs or permits
- Accountability for fraudulent appraisals, legal remedies for victims

- Law enforcement engagement and transparency in real estate transactions.

Silence is not an option, nor is complicity, and Justice should not be a request. It's a demand.

I am asking you—not as politicians, not as chairman or council members, but as human beings—to ensure that no other family endures what my two young children and I have suffered for over three years. I am told that everyone knows everyone in Delaware. So, I am asking for those who are here this evening to help us with finding a solution to fix these homes and find an attorney to make this right with the victims who have been suffering for over 3 years at the hands of unethical Realtors we entrusted to find a home but committed an alleged crime of fraud-while also violating our Civil Rights under the Fair Housing Act in an alleged Sell for Profit scheme.

We need Justice for the physical harm and alleged criminal acts done against us for purchasing a home to fulfill wanting the American Dream of homeownership for our families.

When each of you go home tonight, you will be going home to a safe, secure home. When I go home, my family and I live with the threat of illness, the threat of gas leaks due to illegal non-code piping, the threat of our home may collapsing due to severe foundational, structural water & termite damage, I live in fear daily of not having enough money for repairs, food, medicine, or being able to pay unforeseen devastating repairs. We live every day, hour, and moment in fear—all because we purchased a home from realtors we trusted.

**The question before you is not whether the system is broken. The question is how deeply it has been allowed to crack—and whether you will be the ones to start repairing it and help victims like me get justice.**

This house has financially destroyed me, causing severe financial hardship and immense emotional distress, which is directly linked to my tangible health decline due to financial instability caused by my realtors and other co-conspirators in my housing purchase. This house is physically killing me and causing harm to my children. We need an attorney who is not gonna re-victimize us by charging \$400 an hour, and telling the victim that they have to do all the work. We need individuals who can seek justice for the wrong done to my family and two other families in this area. We need help getting out of these compromised unsafe homes. This is why the Housing Lemon Law was created.

Thank you for your time, your attention, and your commitment to protecting the people in the city of Dover.

**From:** [Jay and Jess](#)  
**To:** [City Clerks Office](#)  
**Subject:** EXTERNAL: Mitscher Rd Traffic Calming  
**Date:** Thursday, March 5, 2026 11:59:20 AM  
**Attachments:** [Mitscher rd Speed humps 1 \(1\).png](#)  
[petition\\_signatures\\_jobs\\_490989144\\_20260305163645.csv](#)

Some people who received this message don't often get email from chaz.brooks30@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**WARNING:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

**To whom it may concern,**

I am writing on behalf of the residents of Mitscher Road to formally request a traffic safety study and the installation of traffic calming countermeasures.

Despite our community's efforts to self-regulate and numerous reports to non-emergency police lines, Mitscher Road continues to see high volumes of speeding and reckless driving. Our neighborhood is a high-pedestrian area with many children, and the current environment poses an unacceptable risk of injury or fatality.

**Attached below is a link to a formal petition signed by our residents, demonstrating the overwhelming community involvement and urgent support for these safety measures.**

We are requesting the following:

- **A formal traffic volume and speed study.**
- **The installation of physical speed reduction measures.**
- **An assessment of current signage and sightlines.**

We have documented a recurring pattern of unsafe behavior and believe that physical infrastructure is the only remaining solution to ensure the safety of our families. We look forward to your prompt response.

**Petition Link:** <https://c.org/dXmrDHvwhR>

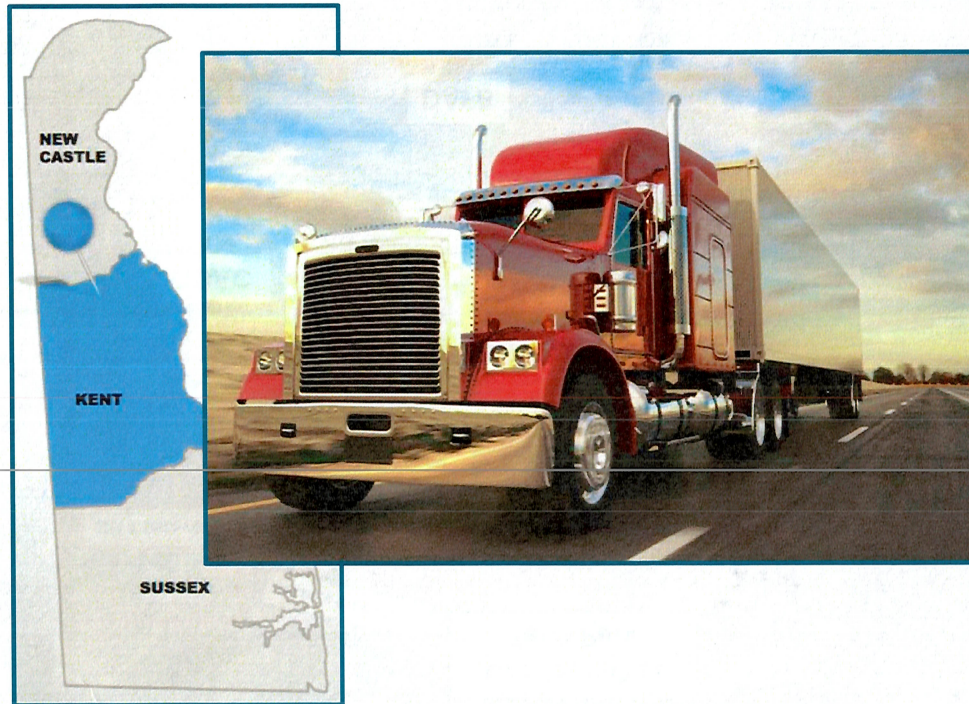
Best regards,

Jayson Brooks

919-600-4492

# East / West Freight Routes, Phase 2 Study

Adopted by MPO Council - July 2, 2025



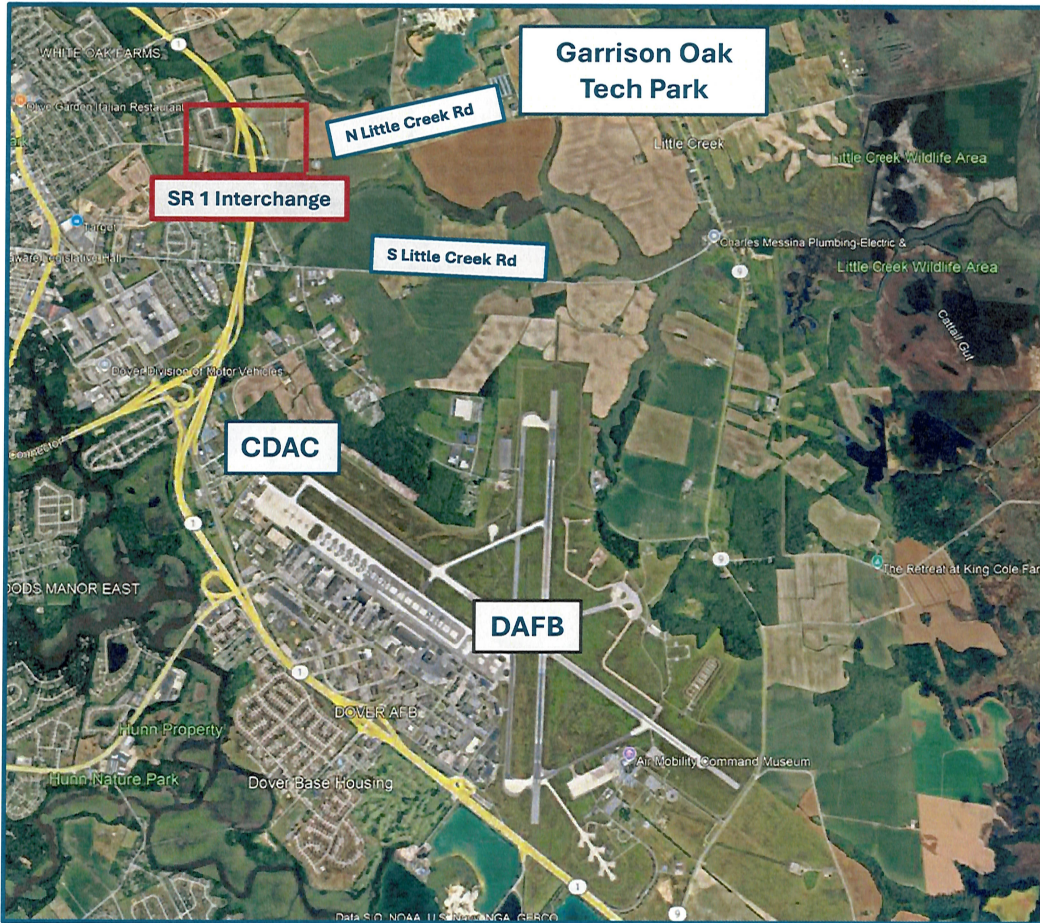
## Purpose & Need

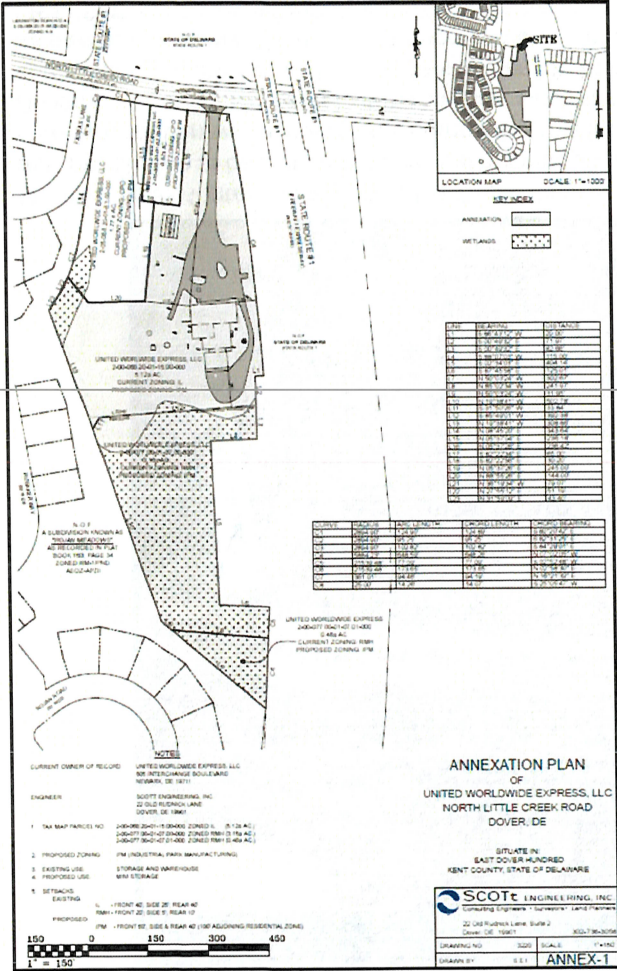
The purpose of this study was to identify east/west routes or portions of routes in Kent County, Delaware that present **challenges for freight movement**. These challenges may include congestion, limited access, roadway geometry, safety concerns, or conflicts with non-freight traffic. The goal is to assess these issues and **recommend targeted improvements or potential new alignments that would enhance efficiency, reliability, and safety of freight movement across the county.**

The need for this study arises from the **growing importance of freight traffic in supporting regional economic development**. As freight volumes increase and land patterns evolve, it becomes essential to ensure that Kent County can accommodate these changes while **also minimizing negative impacts on communities, infrastructure, and other roadway users**. This study supports the efforts to **strengthen the county's freight transportation network and position it for changes in the future.**



# SR 1 Dover Interchange

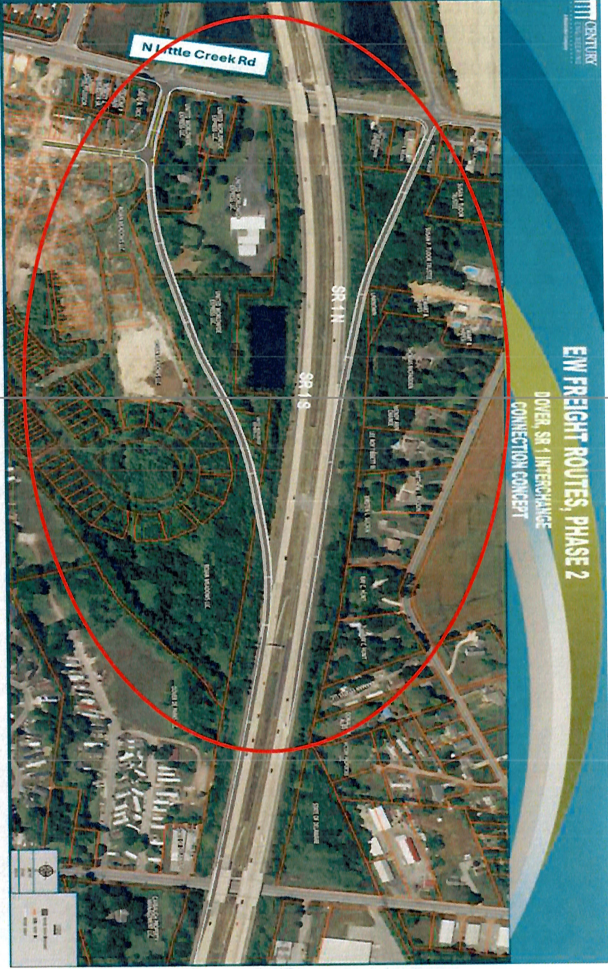




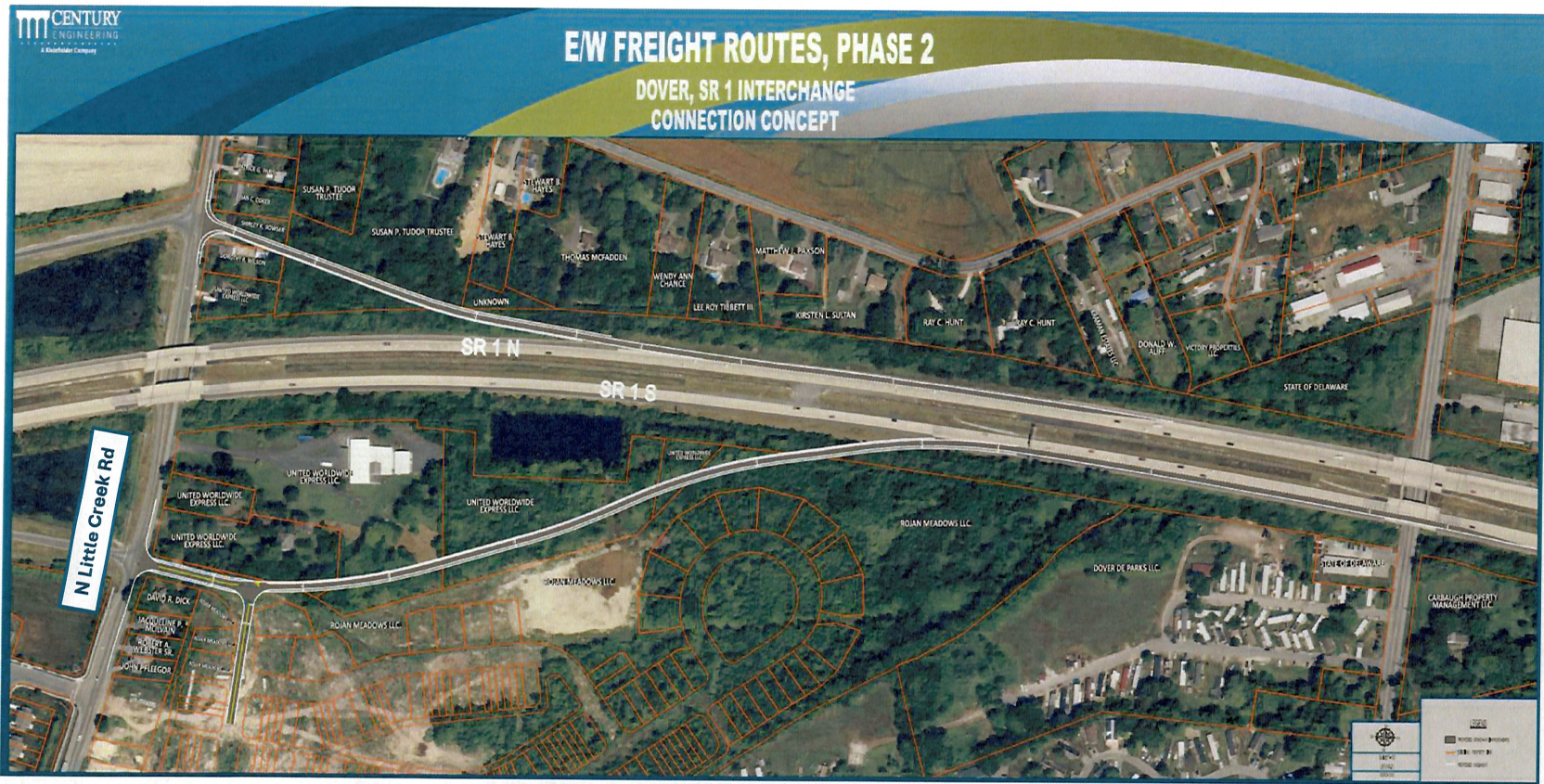
Proposed Annexation & Rezoning



Existing Conditions



Interchange Build-out Concept



The existing SR 1 Interchange at N. Little Creek Road in Dover is a half-diamond configuration, consisting of a northbound on-ramp and a southbound off-ramp. Requests for this interchange to be completed have been common through various past studies, including as part of the Dover Air Cargo Freight Access Study. At the time of that study, the recommendation was to not pursue completing this interchange due to several factors including geometric challenges and costs (the complete study is available on the Dover/Kent County MPO's website). However, since the time of that study, additional industrial development has occurred in this area and requests from the freight community for completing this interchange persist. **In addition, the City supports this improvement which was learned through coordination with City of Dover officials as part of this study.** The proposed improvement would add a northbound off-ramp from SR 1 to N. Little Creek Road and a southbound on-ramp from N. Little Creek Road to SR 1. Both ramps would greatly improve access to and from the industrial complexes in this area, including the CDAC and Garrison Oaks Technology Park and would make the area much more attractive for future industries.

**Garrison Oak**

1

**Proposed Connector Road**



8

**Site/ Proposed SR 1 Interchange**

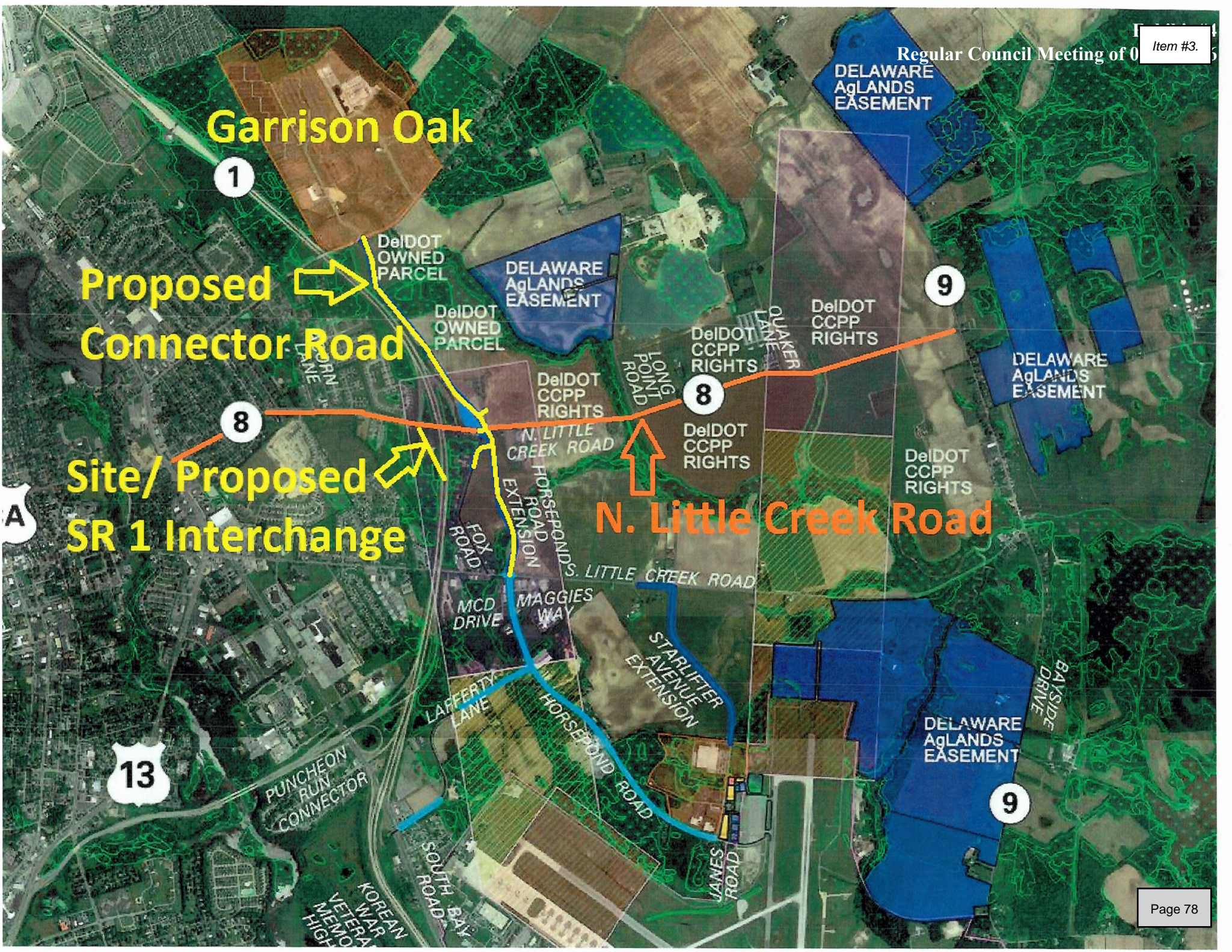


**N. Little Creek Road**

8

9

9



## COUNCIL COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

The Council Committee of the Whole met on March 10, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. with Council President Neil presiding. Members of Council present were Mr. Anderson, Ms. Arndt, Mr. Boggerty, Ms. Hall (via WebEx), Mr. Lewis (arrived at 6:18 p.m.), Dr. Pillsbury, and Mr. Rocha. Dr. Sudler was absent. Mayor Christiansen was also absent. Civilian members present for their Committee meetings were Mr. Iriowen (*Utility*), Mr. Garfinkel (via WebEx), and Mr. Shevock (via WebEx) (*Legislative, Finance, and Administration*). Mr. Wilson (*Utility*) was absent.

### **ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

**Dr. Pillsbury moved for adoption of the agenda, seconded by Mr. Anderson and unanimously carried.**

### **Discussion on Affordable Housing (Michelle Williams, Executive Director, Fuller Center for Housing of Delaware)**

Ms. Michelle Williams, Executive Director, Fuller Center for Housing of Delaware, reviewed the presentation entitled “Housing Snapshot: Dover and Kent County” (**Attachment #1**) and provided council with the Dover and Kent County Housing Snapshot (**Attachment #2**).

This item was informational; committee action was not required.

Responding to Mr. Anderson, Ms. Williams stated that the cottage houses are now commonly referred to as the “missing middle” in housing. She explained that the current housing stock primarily consists of single-family homes and large-scale developments, with a lack of housing options in between. She noted that, historically, smaller homes, such as approximately 1,000-square-foot houses accommodating families with children, served as starter homes, but such homes are no longer being constructed.

Ms. Williams further stated that developers often indicate they are building what the market demands. However, she suggested that market trends have shifted in recent years toward a preference for smaller, more manageable homes. She added that many individuals now prefer housing that is more affordable to maintain and furnish, which has contributed to her advocacy for smaller homes, including tiny homes and small-scale developments. She referred to a project in Georgetown that includes smaller housing units as an example of this approach.

She emphasized that housing types such as duplexes, quadplexes, and similar “missing middle” options are no longer commonly built. She also referenced historical housing trends, noting that following approximately the 1950s, housing development shifted toward larger suburban homes, particularly after returning veterans utilized VA loans.

Ms. Williams indicated that housing preferences have continued to evolve, with some individuals now expressing interest in alternatives such as mobile homes. She noted that no new mobile home parks have been developed in decades and stated that modern mobile homes differ significantly in appearance and quality from older models.

Responding to Mr. Anderson, Ms. Williams stated that one of the key findings of the task force was the need for smaller housing units. She noted that she was not alone in advocating for smaller units; however, current zoning regulations do not permit such development.

Ms. Williams explained that zoning limitations, including density requirements, restrict the number of units that can be developed on parcels of land (e.g., half-acre or one-acre lots). She stated that over time, lot sizes increased, land use patterns changed, and zoning regulations effectively limited housing density, thereby restricting the development of smaller housing options.

Mr. Anderson referenced the City of Dover's Planned Neighborhood Development (PND) as a mechanism intended to allow for smaller homes and similar housing types. He noted that there had been limited utilization of this option and inquired whether the ordinance may require revisions or whether the lack of participation was due to market conditions at the time.

Ms. Williams stated that multiple factors could have contributed; however, she suggested that, without reviewing specific locations and parcels, it was likely that developers were unwilling to assume the risk associated with non-traditional housing developments. She noted that projects such as tiny home or pallet home villages represent a departure from conventional development and therefore carry additional risk.

Ms. Williams further stated that there is a need for more developers willing to pursue such projects, including nonprofit organizations. She indicated that, despite her organization's willingness to move forward with development, they have encountered similar challenges. She referenced a property of approximately 20 to 25 acres in Frederica that is ready for development, but noted that regulatory constraints, including its designation within a growth zone, have limited progress.

She added that smaller-scale developments are feasible, citing a project in Georgetown on approximately 2.5 acres that includes 20 housing units ranging from approximately 500 to 1,000 square feet, with a mix of one, two, and three-bedroom units.

Responding to Mr. Rocha, Ms. Williams stated that 3D models, video walkthroughs, examples, and full neighborhood drawings are available. She noted that such materials are necessary prior to presenting to the Planning Department, as it can be difficult for individuals to visualize higher-density development, such as 20 units on approximately one and a half acres, without a clear understanding of the scale of an acre.

Responding to Mr. Boggerty, Ms. Williams stated that one concern often raised is whether affordable housing decreases surrounding property values. She clarified that she prefers to describe such housing as "housing that is affordable relative to income." She noted that there is a common misconception that this type of housing negatively impacts property values.

Ms. Williams explained that, in some cases, development can increase property values, particularly when vacant or blighted lots are improved with new housing. She provided an example from Georgetown, where two condemned lots had remained vacant for approximately 20 years before

being donated for development. She noted that, despite the longstanding vacancy, nearby residents expressed opposition once development was proposed.

Ms. Williams further stated that numerous studies conducted across the United States have found that affordable housing does not decrease property values.

Responding to Mr. Boggerty, Ms. Williams clarified that the type of housing she was referencing differs from high-end tiny homes often featured in the media and instead focuses on housing that is affordable relative to income. She provided an example from a current project in Georgetown, stating that rental rates are approximately \$950 per month for a one-bedroom unit, including utilities and internet, and approximately \$1,075 for a two-bedroom unit, both below market rate.

Ms. Williams explained that the units are intended for working individuals and are part of a broader continuum of care, whereby individuals transition into stable housing. She noted that the development will be professionally managed, with a standard application process in place. She further stated that the project is not currently utilizing housing vouchers and is instead focused on serving individuals within approximately 30% to 50% of Area Median Income (AMI), with the potential to extend up to 60% AMI, targeting those who can afford the stated rental rates.

Responding to Mr. Boggerty, Ms. Williams stated that studies comparing tiny home communities to homeless encampments have not identified similar safety concerns, particularly in cases where residents are homeowners. She noted that available research has not demonstrated a correlation between tiny home communities and increased safety issues.

Ms. Williams further stated that safety, property value, and overall suitability are important considerations for individuals when evaluating non-traditional housing options. She indicated that, based on the studies she has reviewed, there is no evidence linking tiny home communities, regardless of size, to negative safety outcomes.

Mr. Neil stated that while higher-income individuals can find various affordable housing options, his concern focused on low-income, workforce, and fixed-income residents who do not qualify under programs such as ALICE. He inquired whether the small houses Ms. Williams described were located on leased land or were traditional rentals.

Ms. Williams replied that two parcels were donated, and a third was purchased by the nonprofit for one dollar, establishing nonprofit ownership of the land.

Mr. Neil expressed concerns regarding leasehold communities, noting that although developers can borrow from Fannie Mae or Freddie Mac to provide affordable housing, the inability to control subsequent sales often results in higher rents for tenants. He explained that when developers sell properties, tenants may face increased payments, and there is no mechanism to ensure continued affordability.

Mr. Neil stated that the state has not addressed the grassroots problem of creating and maintaining affordable housing. He suggested implementing a rent justification system, like utility regulation, whereby developers are entitled to make a profit, but any sale must be to an entity that will maintain

affordability. He explained that this approach could allow community members to gain greater control over their housing, whether through condominium conversion or common-interest communities.

He concluded that while small housing units, such as those provided by nonprofits, are beneficial, they do not fully address the shortage of affordable housing for workforce and fixed-income residents. Mr. Neil emphasized that a long-term solution requires mechanisms to maintain affordability and give residents a stake in the housing, rather than relying solely on rentals.

Responding to Dr. Pillsbury, Ms. Williams stated that the single-unit homes in Georgetown are built on site. She noted that two additional manufacturers are used for modular homes. Beracah, which can construct up to 12 homes in a row within 60 days, and Great Outdoor Cottages, which produces homes under 400 square feet. She clarified that, for purposes of her discussion, “tiny homes” are defined as any home under 400 square feet, rather than the smaller 200-square-foot models, and that the Georgetown units are stick-built by a nonprofit developer.

Responding to Dr. Pillsbury, Ms. Williams stated that all of the homes are single-family, reflecting the preferences of prospective residents, who desire smaller homes rather than large ones. She invited anyone interested to tour the homes and noted a proposal for a military organization involving “tiny home townhouses,” consisting of three units on the bottom floor for disabled veterans and three units on the top floor for other working veterans. She observed that traditional townhouses average approximately 1,500 square feet, making these smaller units a viable alternative.

Ms. Williams further noted that the Georgetown development includes solar panels installed over a carport area, and that there are multiple proven models for ownership and property management. She explained that when evaluating a parcel of land, key considerations include the size of the lot, existing infrastructure, and what the parcel can sustain. She added that while the homes are generally standardized, some modifications are made to suit the land, and she expressed enthusiasm for assessing additional available sites.

**Springboard Delaware Proposal to Partner with New City Church to Create a Facility with Shelter and Wraparound Services for Homeless Women and Children (Mike Osborne, Pastor, New City Church, and Judson Malone, Executive Director, New City Church Family Village)**

Mr. Judson Malone, Executive Director, New City Church Family Village, reviewed the Springboard Delaware presentation.

This item was informational; committee action was not required.

Responding to Mr. Boggerty, Mr. Malone stated that an agreement had been reached with Davis, Bown, and Friedel, a design, architecture, surveying, and engineering firm based in Milford, to begin engineering work for the project. He explained that the goal is to minimize site impact so that the property remains pristine upon completion. He noted that lessons learned from the Georgetown project, including excessive ground disturbance and selection of a site lacking nearby

infrastructure, informed their current approach. Mr. Malone emphasized that the objective is to ensure the site is returned to its original condition when the project concludes.

Responding to Mr. Boggerty, Mr. Malone stated that careful attention was given to ratios of residents to hygiene facilities to ensure adequate accommodations. He explained that a trailer on site provides both ADA-compliant and standard facilities. He noted that, at the Georgetown project, there were no issues with residents waiting in line. Based on his experience, he estimated that one five-unit hygiene facility would be sufficient for a population of 50 to 60 individuals and would be located on site.

Responding to Mr. Boggerty, Mr. Malone stated that the project is considering two potential populations: adults experiencing homelessness and women or families with children. He noted that each group represents different profiles and associated safety considerations. In either case, he explained that the site would include a perimeter fence and controlled access. Drawing from the Georgetown project, he stated that the facility's welcome center serves as a central checkpoint, and individuals are not permitted beyond that point unless they belong on the premises or have a legitimate reason to visit, ensuring tight security.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Mr. Malone explained that, based on lessons learned in Georgetown, relocating approximately 40 individuals from a traumatic and lawless encampment required significant initial resources, including 24-hour staffing and paid security, which proved to be very costly. He noted that over time, staff recognized that treating residents with respect encouraged them to take ownership of the community, shifting the focus from protecting against them to protecting them. He further stated that residents were provided stipends and, while the program maintained a low-barrier approach, participants serving as resident stewards were expected to demonstrate progress, including maintaining sobriety and compliance with testing. He added that the community was staffed at a welcome center 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Mr. Malone stated that if approval was not granted, they would withdraw the proposal. He explained that they were seeking a reasonable understanding of what would constitute success and indicated their willingness to enter into a licensed contractor agreement with the city. He noted that the agreement would include a comprehensive operations plan for the village, subject to city approval and oversight, and would provide the city with remedies if obligations were not met. He further stated that performance would be evaluated over time based on established metrics and outcomes, and if expectations were not met within a period of one to four years, the city would have the authority to terminate the arrangement.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Mr. Malone stated that the site would be fully enclosed with fencing, with access limited to a single-entry point through the welcome center. He noted that the remainder of the perimeter would be secure and inaccessible, and added that, similar to the Georgetown site, cameras would be installed facing the surrounding streets.

Responding to Ms. Arndt, Mr. Malone stated that, under the program, the operational contract allows individuals to remain for 24 months. However, the average stay is about 4 to 6 months. Mr. Malone stated that the program did not allow participants to remain without expectations for an extended period; instead, it required adherence to a structured timeline. He explained that

participants were required to develop both a housing plan and an income or employment plan. He noted that while other issues, such as health, were addressed with encouragement, participation in the program required a willingness to make meaningful life changes, accept assistance, and actively engage with staff.

Responding to Ms. Arndt, Mr. Malone stated that approximately 40% of participants transitioned into permanent housing. He noted that other outcomes included placement into higher levels of care or relocation out of state, while less than 10% of individuals chose to return to unsheltered living conditions.

Responding to Ms. Arndt, Mr. Malone stated that the proposed target population included either homeless adults or families with women and children, noting that the church expressed a greater level of comfort with serving families, although both options remained under consideration. He explained that insurance considerations indicated differing levels of risk between the populations, which would need to be factored into the decision, and added that Springboard would carry liability insurance. He acknowledged concerns from local businesses regarding theft, suggesting that serving the adult homeless population could potentially reduce such impacts, though not eliminate them, while noting that families were less likely to contribute to those issues but faced significant need. He emphasized that both approaches offered benefits and stated that the organization was seeking guidance from the community, the church, and the City Council to determine the most appropriate population to serve.

Responding to Ms. Arndt, Mr. Malone stated that he had received reports that Target was not supportive of the project, though he was unsure whether the proposal had been fully understood. He noted that he had made an initial attempt to speak with store representatives and intended to follow up with management. He further stated that store staff reported issues with theft, including the need to secure certain departments such as men's clothing and cosmetics, and emphasized that these concerns were recognized and taken into consideration.

Responding to Dr. Pillsbury, Mr. Malone stated that potential populations included women and children as well as complete family units, including husbands, wives, and children. He emphasized that there was no single predetermined population, noting that each group had demonstrated need. He explained that, while they could not serve all populations simultaneously, they were seeking guidance and input to make an informed decision in partnership with the city, the church, and the broader community.

Mr. Anderson thanked Mr. Malone for the discussion and stated that it raised important considerations for further research. He referenced a property previously considered by an unsheltered working group as potentially more suitable for an adult homeless population and suggested it could be evaluated for a future phase of the project. He expressed the opinion that the current neighborhood may be better suited for a family-focused program, noting concerns about impacts to neighborhood character and emphasizing the importance of preserving intact families as a key factor in poverty reduction and crime prevention. He further stated that a family-centered approach may require more complex and costly infrastructure, but addressed an important need. He added that a separate site could potentially be identified for an adult-focused program in the future and encouraged continued coordination with city staff to explore available property options.

Responding to Mr. Rocha, Mr. Malone stated that accurately estimating the size of the homeless population is challenging without conducting extensive street outreach, noting that point-in-time counts offer limited information. He explained that in Georgetown, a lengthy outreach effort was carried out over several months, providing more detailed data but also revealing fluctuations in the population due to people moving in and out of visibility. He added that during a recent cold weather event, coordination with nonprofit partners, the Red Cross, and the town led to temporary shelter for individuals in a community center, where about 20 people were housed, and roughly 70 additional individuals sought shelter outdoors because of unsafe conditions. He suggested that these observations indicate the homeless population might be larger than the current number being served.

Mr. Malone further stated that while the proposed model could be successful if implemented properly, it would not address the full scope of need. He acknowledged that the initial effort in Dover would not eliminate homelessness but would provide a humane and structured approach that could demonstrate a path forward. He concluded by stating that meaningful progress in addressing homelessness requires providing individuals with safe and stable housing.

Responding to Mr. Neil, Mr. Malone stated that they were not seeking funding from the city, noting that in prior presentations in Newark, Milford, and Georgetown, the same position was communicated that such operations should be funded through state contracts. He explained that they had obtained a contract in Georgetown, though he believed the level of funding was insufficient to meet operational needs. He further stated that their model was for their nonprofit organization to operate and manage the project, with funding to be secured through state contracts for operations and private sector contributions for capital costs, including cottages.

He noted that they had a time-limited capital budget of approximately \$1.4 million available for the project, but acknowledged that expansion would require addressing both capital and operating expenses. He further stated that municipalities are often not structurally equipped to fund or manage this level of social service responsibility, despite being directly impacted by the issue.

Responding to Mr. Neil, Mr. Malone stated that the property's zoning is institutional office zoning, which includes language permitting emergency shelters and transitional housing as a use. He noted that this would be further reviewed to determine what is allowable under the code.

He explained that while the proposed model may appear similar to a "deconstructed hope center," there are distinctions, and described the hope center model as a facility that provides tiered levels of service, beginning with emergency shelter, followed by short-term stays, respite care, and potentially permanent supportive housing. He cited medical discharge situations as an example of the need for respite care, noting that individuals may be too ill for unsheltered conditions but not eligible to remain in a hospital setting. He added that some facilities have adapted by dedicating space for respite care and, in response to ongoing housing shortages, expanding into permanent supportive housing.

He further stated that the effort is intended to be collaborative, noting coordination with local and regional partners, including representation from New Castle County's Department of Community Development on the organization's board.

## Council Reports – February 2026

### First District

Dr. Pillsbury reported attending the Quarterly Joint Pension meeting.

Mr. Rocha reported attending internal meetings with Council President Neil, the Quarterly Joint Pension meeting, and the St. Patrick's Day Parade committee meetings. He also reported working with the City Manager's office on constituent complaints.

### Second District

Ms. Hall reported that her district experienced multiple complaints related to snow removal and stated that she and Councilman Lewis had been actively addressing those concerns. She thanked city staff for their assistance in responding to those issues.

She further stated that she had been conducting research regarding the potential development of a data center in the area and was gathering information to help the city be proactive in its response should such a facility choose to locate in Dover. She noted that she had also been engaged in conversations regarding additional community initiatives involving children.

Ms. Hall further stated that she was appreciative of discussions related to affordable housing and reported that she had been researching a national opportunity related to housing affordability. She indicated that she would share additional information as it became available.

Mr. Lewis reported, in line with Ms. Hall's comments, that he had been addressing numerous constituent concerns involving code enforcement issues and crime in his district. He stated that he referred most matters to Ms. Duca, Assistant City Manager, and Chief Code Enforcement Officer Eddie Kopp for follow-up.

He further stated that he had spoken briefly with the Chief regarding the potential installation or restoration of a surveillance camera in the alleyway between Stoney Creek Development and Barrister, noting that the area was experiencing significant issues, including trash accumulation and frequent complaints of suspected drug transactions and parking-related concerns, with approximately three to four constituent calls per week.

Mr. Lewis stated that he intended to continue discussions with the Chief and possibly schedule a meeting with Councilwoman Hall to explore solutions, including the possibility of securing a camera through collaboration with another state agency if funding was limited.

### Third District

Ms. Arndt reported that she had attended several constituent meetings, including most recently the Downtown Dover Partnership Board meeting. She stated that she had received constituent concerns regarding trash along roadways, particularly along curbs and in the medians on Route 13, noting that the issues had become more visible following the melting of snow. She indicated that she would look into the matter moving forward to see if additional cleanup efforts could be arranged.

Fourth District

Mr. Anderson reported that he wanted to thank all participants in a recent community trash pickup event organized by Booted and Suited, noting that it was a success with approximately 40 community members and partners participating. He stated that he was unable to attend due to prior work obligations but expressed appreciation for those who organized and participated in the effort. He further reported that he had spoken with several individuals following the event and noted overall positive community engagement.

Mr. Anderson stated that there were ongoing concerns regarding potential drug-related activity in the alley between North Governors Avenue and New Street, as well as other neighborhood issues that had been referred to staff for review. He thanked city staff for their work and noted that there had been significant positive feedback regarding snow removal efforts across the district, commending staff for their professionalism and hard work.

He further reported that residents along Silver Lake Boulevard had expressed appreciation for the replacement of a barrier in that area, noting minor delays due to weather conditions. Mr. Anderson concluded by noting that additional matters had been forwarded to staff for follow-up and expressed anticipation for the upcoming St. Patrick's Day parade, thanking volunteers for their efforts in organizing the event.

Dr. Sudler was absent; no report was given.

At-Large

Mr. Boggerty reported that he attended and spoke at the rescheduled Black History program at the Modern Maturity Center and noted that the event was well-received. He further reported that he attended a meeting with Councilman Rocha and Council President Neil. He also stated that he continued his duties, including participation in a Construction and Property Maintenance Code Board of Appeals meeting.

Council President Neil

Mr. Neil reported that he attended a Disabled Students poster contest at the George Mason Station near the Duncan Building. He stated that he also attended an appeals hearing with Chairman Boggerty and Councilman Rocha.

He further reported that he met with the Mayor and citizens interested in establishing a City of Dover museum. He noted that he addressed constituent emails regarding proposed pedestrian safety issues and sent a Third District snow alert on behalf of Councilwoman Arndt and himself to Third District HOA presidents and civic leaders, as well as responding to additional snow removal concerns.

Mr. Neil stated that he participated in email discussions with residents in the historic district regarding sidewalk repair needs, involving coordination with Mark Nowak, Public Works, and Councilman Anderson. He further noted discussions regarding the potential use or acquisition of the former Dover Sheraton Hotel owned by Delaware State University by the state for conversion into a Hope Center. He also reported receiving a call from a hotel owner expressing concerns and

stated that he encouraged the individual to visit the Hope Center in New Castle County to better understand its operations.

## UTILITY COMMITTEE

The Utility Committee met with Chairman Rocha presiding.

### Adoption of Agenda

**Mr. Lewis moved for adoption of the agenda, seconded by Mr. Boggerty and unanimously carried.**

### Dedication of Water Infrastructure – S. Bay Road (Jason Lyon, Director of Water and Wastewater)

Mr. Jason Lyon, Director of Water and Wastewater, reviewed the background and analysis of the dedication of the water infrastructure for South Bay Road.

Staff recommended acceptance of water infrastructure within the right-of-way of Bay Road. Dedication is to include all of the referenced water infrastructure.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Mr. Lyon stated that the city would not be spending any money on the project and that all associated costs would be borne by the developer. He clarified that the request was strictly for approval and that the city had not made any payment toward the project. He further acknowledged that the city would be responsible for ongoing maintenance moving forward.

**Mr. Anderson moved for acceptance of the water infrastructure within the right-of-way of Bay Road and that the dedication includes all of the referenced water infrastructure, as recommended by staff. The motion was seconded by Ms. Arndt and unanimously carried.**

### Dedication of Water and Wastewater Infrastructure – Oak Shadows (Jason Lyon, Director of Water and Wastewater)

Mr. Jason Lyon, Director of Water and Wastewater, reviewed the background and analysis of the dedication of the water and wastewater infrastructure for Oak Shadows.

Staff recommended acceptance of the water and wastewater infrastructure within the right-of-way of the Oak Shadows development. Dedication is to include all of the referenced water and wastewater infrastructure.

Ms. Arndt stated that she had met with the community on site on several occasions and attended an HOA meeting with Mr. Lyon. She expressed appreciation for his continued collaboration with the community and thanked him for working with residents. She noted that the community had expressed concern about securing funding to complete the work necessary to bring the project up to city standards for dedication. She further thanked Mr. Lyon for his commitment and for assisting in guiding the process to its current stage.

**Ms. Arndt moved to recommend acceptance of the staff recommendation for the dedication of the infrastructure. The motion was seconded by Dr. Pillsbury and unanimously carried.**

**Mr. Rocha moved for adjournment of the Utility Committee meeting, hearing no objection the meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.**

### LEGISLATIVE, FINANCE, AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

The Legislative, Finance, and Administration Committee met with Chairman Anderson presiding.

#### Adoption of Agenda

**Mr. Shevock moved for adoption of the agenda, seconded by Mr. Rocha and unanimously carried.**

#### Update from the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) on Membership Priorities (Matt Carey, President of the AFSCME Union)

Mr. Matthew Carey, President of the AFSCME Union, presented the committee with membership priorities.

This item was informational; committee action was not required.

Mr. Carey stated that he serves as the Emergency Communications Manager for the Dover Police Department and as President of AFSCME Local 2356. He thanked the Council for its support of city employees and stated that the relationship between the Council and employees had been positive overall.

He reported that the union currently has a 14.58% vacancy rate and expressed concern regarding employee retention, noting challenges related to pay structure, including the city's 5% pay increase limitation under the Pay Plan. He suggested the Council consider reviewing the policy to provide additional flexibility, stating that it may help address pay compression and improve retention, particularly among mid-tenured employees.

Mr. Carey further stated that the union has a strong interest in reinstating the pension system and referenced prior discussions held with the HR Director, City Manager, and union presidents regarding an educational process and employee survey. He stated that follow-up information had not yet been distributed since a meeting in early December and requested that the city move forward with providing the materials so employees could better understand and complete the survey.

He emphasized the importance of communication between the city and the union, noted he had recently sent correspondence to council through the City Clerk's Office, and requested continued dialogue to advance discussions and improve coordination. He concluded by thanking the Council and stating that his experience with the city over his 19-year tenure had generally been positive.

Responding to Ms. Arndt, Mr. Carey stated that a survey distributed to union members in the fall received inconsistent responses, noting that some members did not receive it, did not understand it, or left questions unanswered. He explained that he, along with the IBEW President and DOE President, met with the Assistant City Manager, the HR Director, and staff on December 1st to address these issues. He stated that all parties agreed to develop an informational packet, such as a slideshow or short video, to provide clear and concise information for employees.

He further stated that the group was expected to reconvene in January to review and approve the messaging before distribution; however, that follow-up meeting had not yet occurred. He explained that the intent of the process was to ensure clarity in communication regarding union questions and proposals so employees could better understand the issues and determine whether further action or advocacy was needed.

Responding to Mr. Rocha, Mr. Anderson stated that the 5% pay limitation appeared to relate to promotional increases, including situations where employees assume interim or supervisory roles. He noted that the cap may not provide sufficient compensation for the additional responsibilities. He further stated that there may be provisions allowing for higher increases under certain conditions.

Responding to Mr. Rocha, Mr. Carey stated that the 5% pay limitation was creating broader challenges across the city, affecting employees moving between departments, unions, and non-bargaining positions. He explained that the restriction limited the city's ability to offer competitive increases, even for highly qualified employees, which discouraged advancement and contributed to employees remaining in their current roles rather than accepting promotions.

He noted that this situation contributed to pay compression and reduced interest in leadership positions, as employees could earn comparable or greater compensation through overtime without taking on additional responsibilities. He further stated that this issue impacted multiple groups across the city and led to retention challenges, with some employees leaving their positions within a short period for better opportunities.

Mr. Carey confirmed that employees were gaining valuable training and managerial experience with the city and then leaving for other opportunities. He stated that the current pay limitations restricted the city's ability to negotiate or offer competitive increases, which hindered retention efforts. He acknowledged that not all employees may warrant increases beyond the existing cap, but emphasized that, in many cases, the limitation was preventing the city from appropriately compensating and retaining qualified personnel.

Mr. Rocha stated that he was interested in evaluating the pay gap between employees receiving a 5% increase and the salaries of those previously in the position. He noted that, in cases where there is a significant disparity, the limited increase may not provide adequate incentive for employees to assume additional responsibilities or pursue the position. He indicated that this issue warranted further review.

Mr. Lewis emphasized the need for continued discussions but reiterated the current budget constraints.

Responding to Mr. Lewis, Mr. Rocha stated that, in his view, the budget may already account for higher salaries associated with certain positions. He explained that if a higher-paid employee leaves and a lower-paid employee assumes the role, even with a 5% increase, there may still be unused funds within the existing budget allocation. He suggested that this could allow for greater flexibility in compensation without necessarily creating additional budgetary strain.

Responding to Mr. Rocha, Mr. Lewis stated that he had previously raised concerns regarding the use of funds from unfilled positions, noting that while those funds may be used temporarily, the positions remain budgeted and will eventually need to be filled. He questioned how utilizing those funds in the interim could impact the budget in the future and whether doing so could result in a deficit once the positions are filled. He emphasized the need for clarity on how this practice affects long-term budgeting.

Mr. Neil stated that the matter would need to be considered during upcoming budget discussions or in future budget cycles, noting that it involved broader issues such as pensions and challenges with recruitment and retention. He indicated that additional review was necessary to better understand the underlying causes, including long-standing vacancies.

He stated that the issue would be addressed moving forward, though specific outcomes could not yet be determined, and emphasized the need to evaluate it alongside other human resources concerns. He added that prior efforts had been made to adjust salaries and improve compensation structures and that further review would be conducted to find an appropriate balance.

Bob Murphy stated that he is a resident of Milford and a landowner of the proposed Little Living Project, noting that he and his wife are partners in the effort. He commended council for its engagement and discussion on the issue of affordable housing.

He referenced prior planning efforts and public input supporting affordable housing initiatives and stated that the city was taking proactive steps in coordination with agencies such as the Delaware State Housing Authority and other municipalities. He emphasized the importance of clear and accurate information, noting that misinformation could hinder progress.

Mr. Murphy explained the financial challenges associated with developing affordable housing, including land and construction costs, and described the concept of “little living” or cottage-style homes as a way to increase housing opportunities. He compared traditional density calculations to smaller home models, stating that higher unit counts could still be consistent with overall land use when considering total livable space.

He encouraged council to consider a pilot or “proof of concept” approach to demonstrate the viability of such developments. He also expressed concern about zoning and development inconsistencies, noting that higher-cost developments are often permitted while affordable housing projects face barriers. He concluded by reiterating his support for the initiative and encouraging continued progress in addressing housing needs for underserved populations.

Jeanie Anderson, Dover, expressed concerns regarding ongoing crime in her area and suggested the possibility of establishing a mobile or temporary police presence, potentially utilizing existing facilities such as the People’s Church or the nearby fire department. She stated that increased police presence in the area may help reduce crime and noted that available space in the community could potentially be used for this purpose.

She further raised concerns about unsanitary conditions in the neighborhood, stating that individuals were relieving themselves outdoors, and inquired about the possibility of installing portable restroom facilities to address the issue and provide a more dignified solution.

**Mr. Anderson moved for adjournment of the Legislative, Finance, and Administration Committee meeting, hearing no objection the meeting adjourned at 8:22 p.m.**

**Mr. Neil moved for adjournment of the Council Committee of the Whole meeting, hearing no objection the meeting adjourned at 8:22 p.m.**

Fred A. Neil  
Council President

Attachments

- Attachment #1 - Presentation entitled "Housing Snapshot: Dover and Kent County."
- Attachment #2 - Dover and Kent County’s Housing Snapshot



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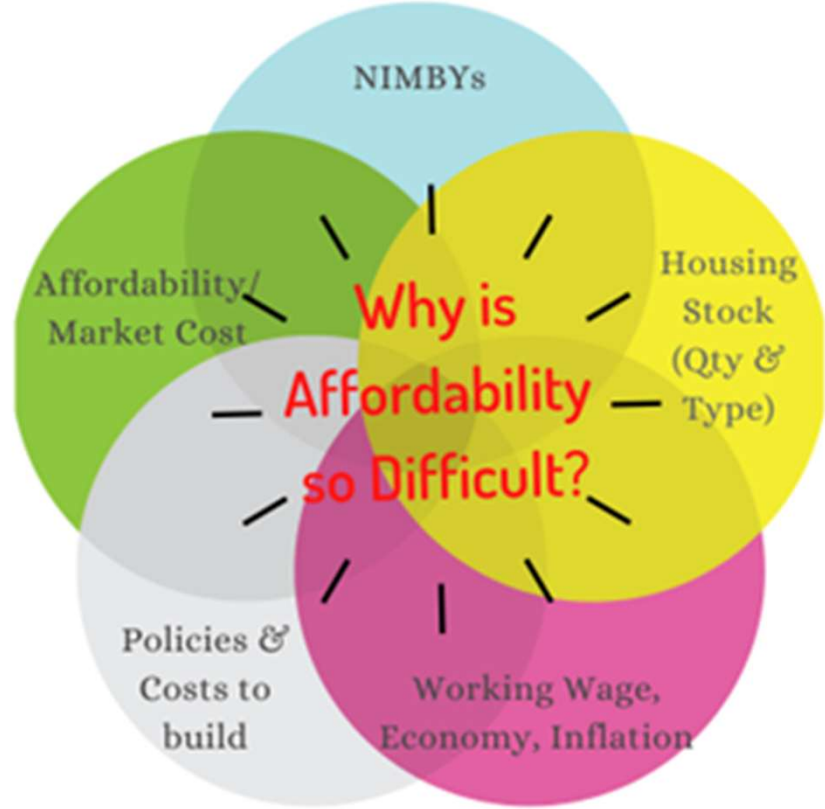
# Housing Snapshot: Dover and Kent County

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Dr. Michele Williams, aka Dr. Tiny  
Fuller Center for Housing of Delaware

# Agenda: Why is Affordability So Difficult? But Why it Needs to be Addressed

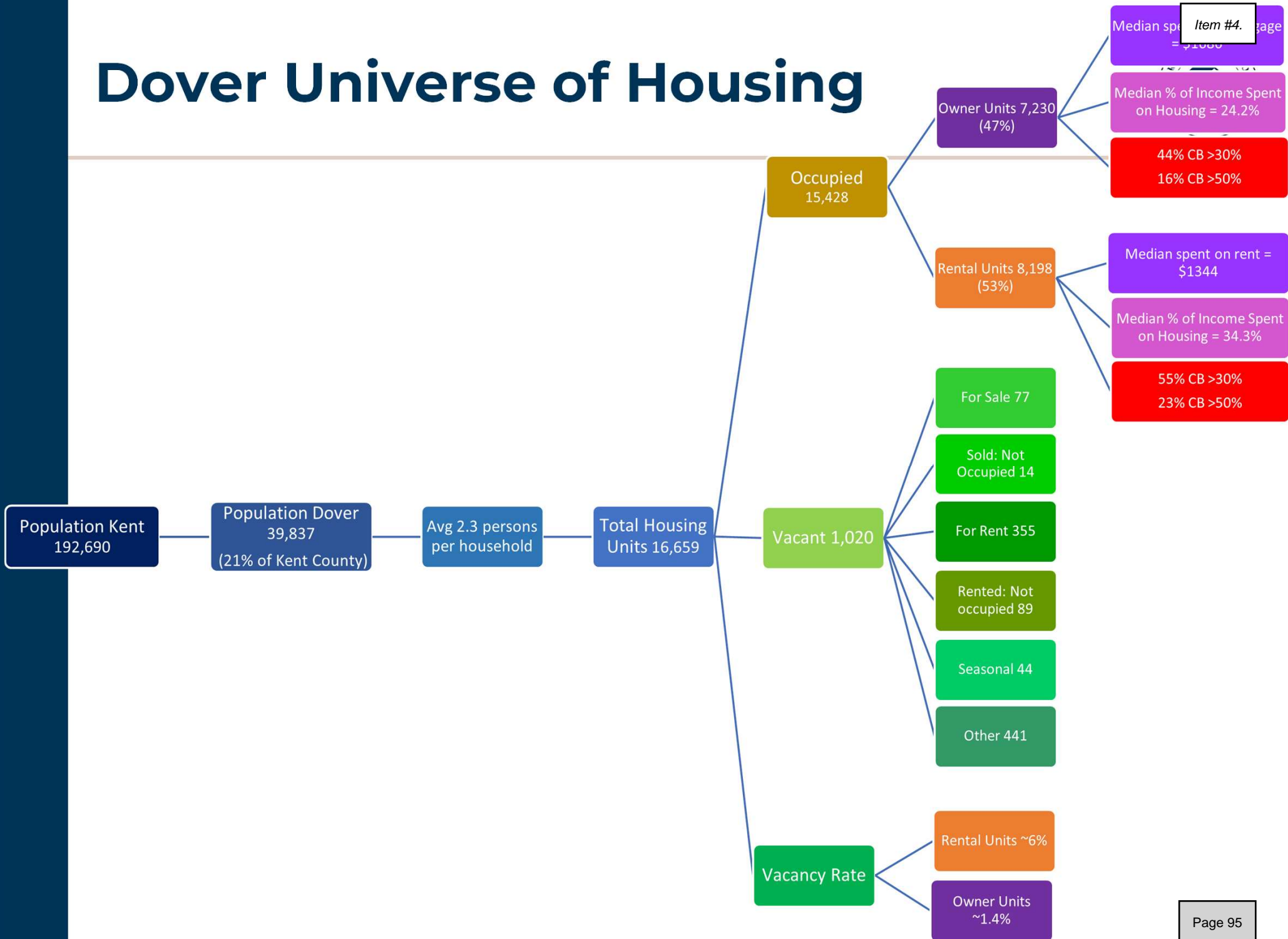
- **What Dover's Housing Looks Like**  
Housing inventory and tenure
- **Where the Pressure Shows Up**  
Cost burden and rent trends
- **Who Is Affected**  
Working households and ALICE
- **What Housing Is Missing**  
The affordability gap
- **What Is Within Local Control**



Sources:

- ACS 2020-2024 (5-year)
- HUD CHAS 2018-2022
- ALICE United Way 2023
- HUD Fair Market Rent 2026

# Dover Universe of Housing

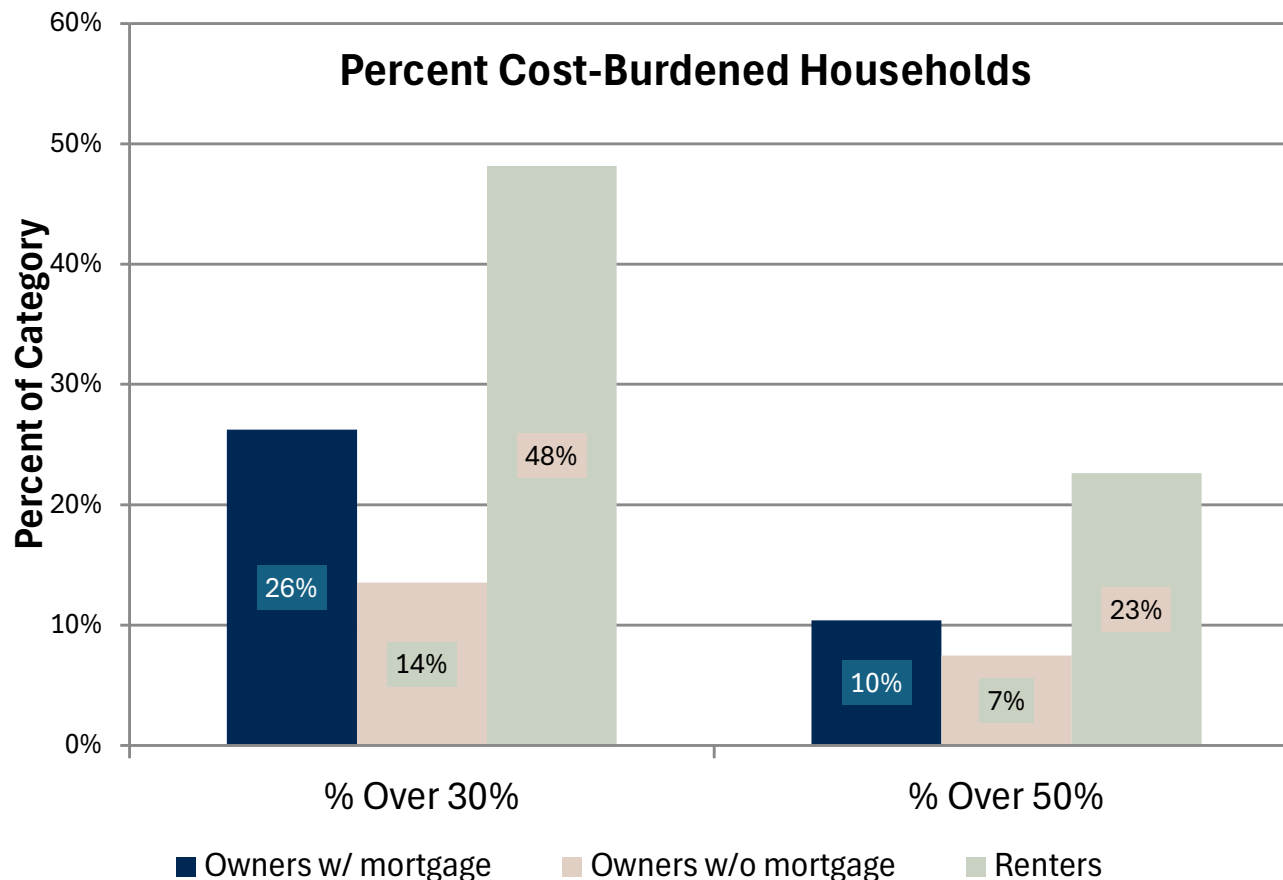


# Cost Burden Signal — All Dover MSA

## Metropolitan Statistical Area = Kent County

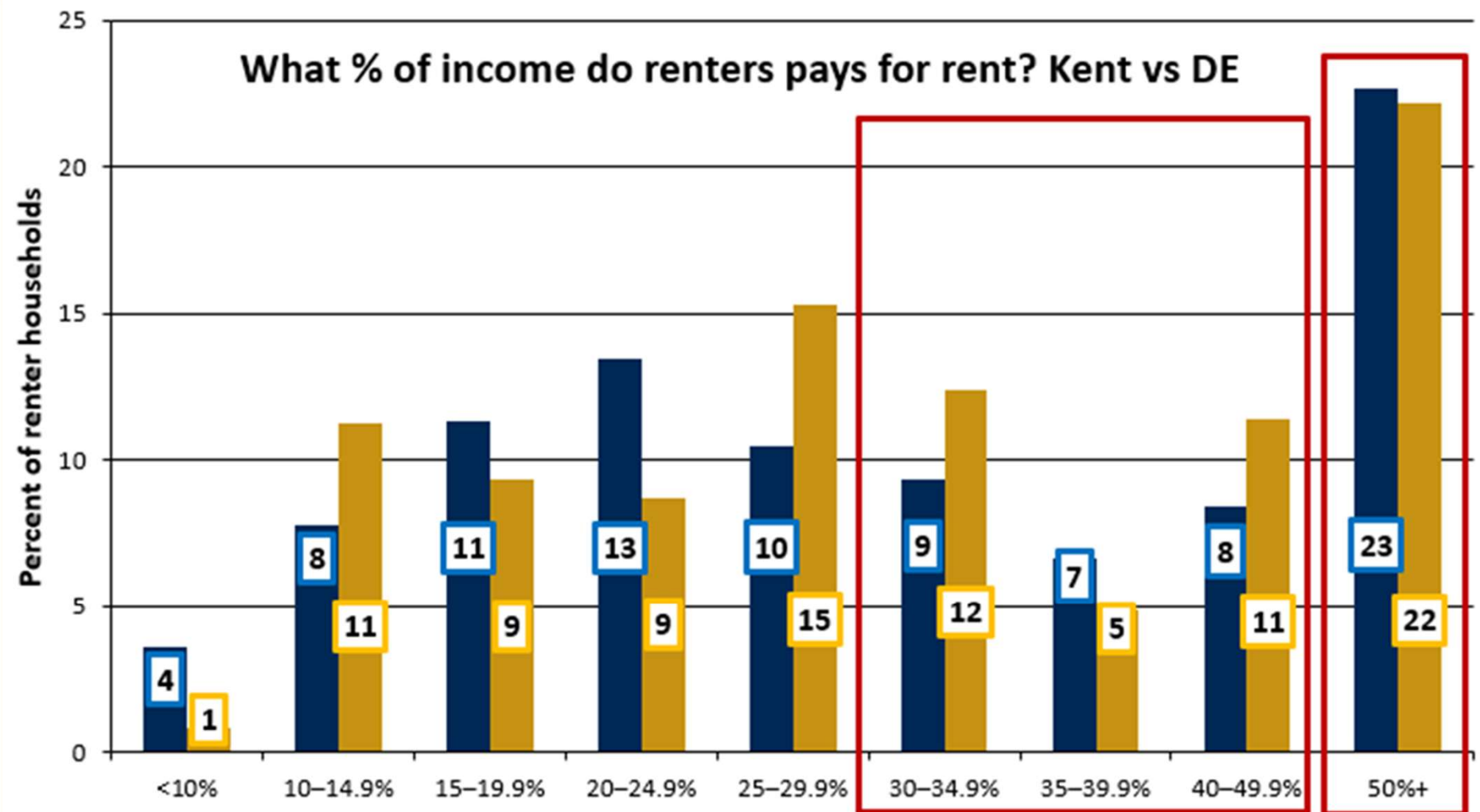


- **Cost-burdened** means a household spends 30%+ of its gross income on housing costs. **Severely cost-burdened** = 50%+ of gross income spent on housing.
  - For renters, housing costs usually include rent + utilities.
  - For owners, it typically includes mortgage (principal & interest) + property taxes + insurance + utilities (and sometimes HOA fees).





# Cost Burden Signal — Kent & DE Renters



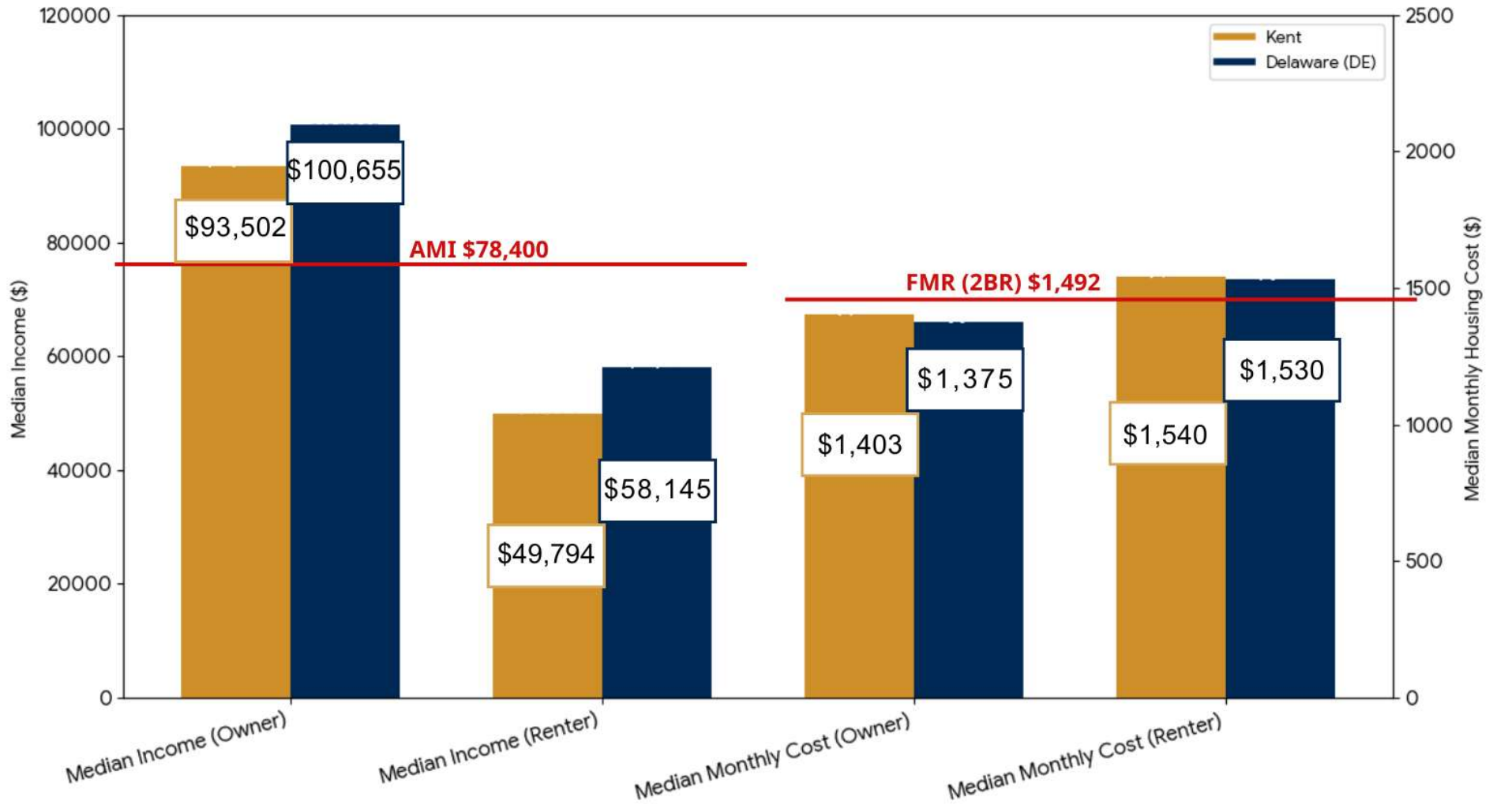
Kent CB 28%  
DE CB 24%

Severely Cost Burdened



# Monthly Cost vs Income — Kent & DE

Median Income and Housing Cost for Owners and Renters: Kent vs Delaware





# HUD FMR vs Realty

- **FMR (Fair Market Rent) is HUD’s estimate of what a typical, modest rental home costs to rent in a specific area, by bedroom size.**
- **It’s usually set around the 40th percentile of market rents (meaning about 40% of rentals cost less and 60% cost more), adjusted for recent rent changes.**

FY 2026 Fair Market Rent (effective 1 August 2025)					
FMR Area	0 BR	1 BR	2 BR	3 BR	4 BR
Kent County	\$ 1,158	\$ 1,165	\$ 1,470	\$ 2,044	\$ 2,285
New Castle County	\$ 1,397	\$ 1,520	\$ 1,810	\$ 2,170	\$ 2,423
Sussex County	\$ 1,059	\$ 1,066	\$ 1,399	\$ 1,757	\$ 2,172

FMR Area / County	Bedroom	FY2024	FY2025	FY2026	% Change 24→25	% Change 25→26	% Change 24→26
Dover, DE MSA	0 BR	\$ 1,110	\$ 1,173	\$ 1,158	5.7%	-1.3%	4.3%
Dover, DE MSA	1 BR	\$ 1,117	\$ 1,181	\$ 1,165	5.7%	-1.4%	4.3%
Dover, DE MSA	2 BR	\$ 1,368	\$ 1,492	\$ 1,470	9.1%	-1.5%	7.5%
Dover, DE MSA	3 BR	\$ 1,928	\$ 2,080	\$ 2,044	7.9%	-1.7%	6.0%
Dover, DE MSA	4 BR	\$ 2,152	\$ 2,278	\$ 2,285	5.9%	0.3%	6.2%
Phila-Camden-Wilm, PA-NJ-DE-MD MSA	0 BR	\$ 1,303	\$ 1,372	\$ 1,397	5.3%	1.8%	7.2%
Phila-Camden-Wilm, PA-NJ-DE-MD MSA	1 BR	\$ 1,451	\$ 1,512	\$ 1,520	4.2%	0.5%	4.8%
Phila-Camden-Wilm, PA-NJ-DE-MD MSA	2 BR	\$ 1,737	\$ 1,802	\$ 1,810	3.7%	0.4%	4.2%
Phila-Camden-Wilm, PA-NJ-DE-MD MSA	3 BR	\$ 2,100	\$ 2,171	\$ 2,170	3.4%	0.0%	3.3%
Phila-Camden-Wilm, PA-NJ-DE-MD MSA	4 BR	\$ 2,422	\$ 2,468	\$ 2,423	1.9%	-1.8%	0.0%
Sussex County, DE	0 BR	\$ 909	\$ 1,031	\$ 1,059	13.4%	2.7%	16.5%
Sussex County, DE	1 BR	\$ 988	\$ 1,066	\$ 1,066	7.9%	0.0%	7.9%
Sussex County, DE	2 BR	\$ 1,298	\$ 1,398	\$ 1,399	7.7%	0.1%	7.8%
Sussex County, DE	3 BR	\$ 1,656	\$ 1,763	\$ 1,757	6.5%	-0.3%	
Sussex County, DE	4 BR	\$ 2,037	\$ 2,197	\$ 2,172	7.9%	-1.1%	

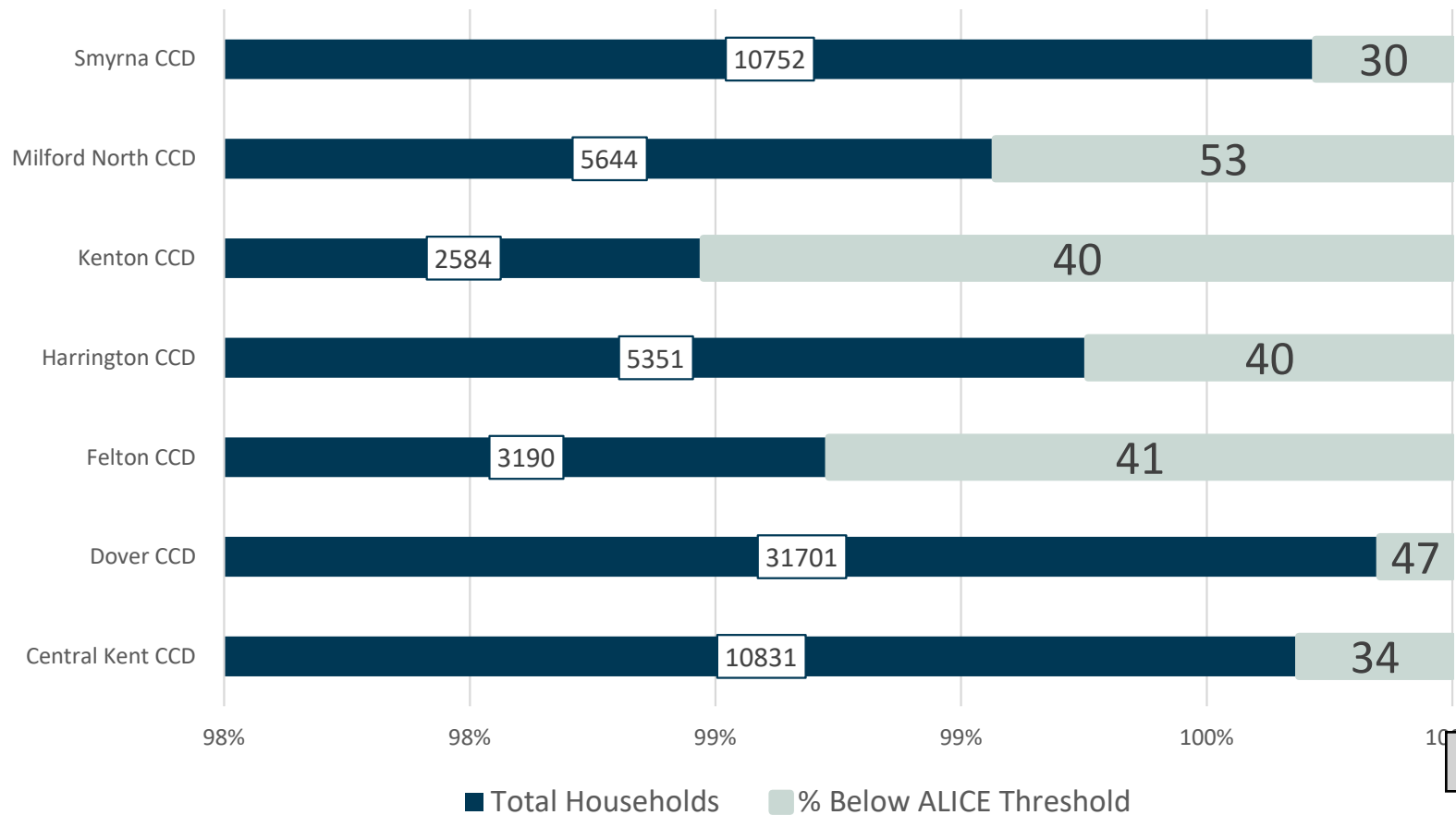


# What is ALICE?

## Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed

In 2023, FPL for DE households was 11%. This does not measure the additional 30% of the DE's households were also experiencing financial hardship. ALICE: earning above the FPL, but not enough to afford basic expenses in the county where they live.

How Many Kent County Households are Below ALICE Threshold?



# ALICE Household Survival Budget

Household Survival Budget reflects the minimum cost to live and work in today's economy and includes **housing, child care, food, transportation, health care, and technology, plus taxes** and a 10% **miscellaneous** category.

**ALICE Household Survival Budget, Kent County, Delaware, 2023**

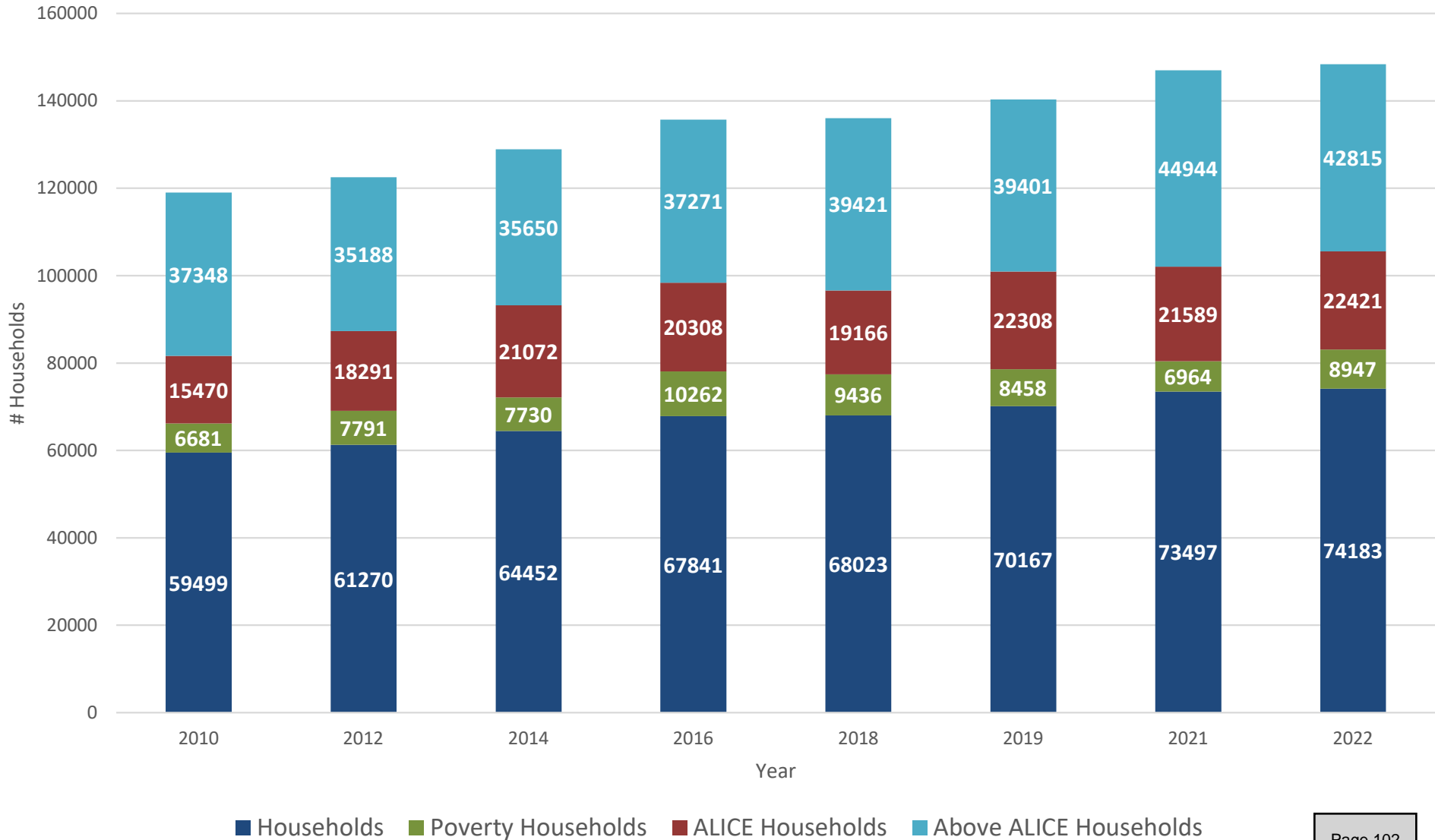
Monthly Costs	Single Adult	1 Adult, 1 Child	1 Adult, 1 Child (Child Care)	2 Adults	2 Adults, 2 Children	2 Adults, 2 in Child Care	Single Adult 65+	2 Adults 65+
Housing	\$1,078	\$1,082	\$1,082	\$1,082	\$1,300	\$1,300	\$1,078	\$1,082
Child Care	\$0	\$312	\$833	\$0	\$625	\$1,875	\$0	\$0
Food	\$456	\$771	\$692	\$836	\$1,402	\$1,237	\$419	\$769
Transportation	\$446	\$580	\$580	\$685	\$973	\$973	\$375	\$545
Health Care	\$184	\$516	\$516	\$516	\$756	\$756	\$547	\$1,094
Technology	\$86	\$86	\$86	\$116	\$116	\$116	\$86	\$116
Miscellaneous	\$225	\$335	\$379	\$324	\$517	\$626	\$251	\$361
Taxes	\$410	\$386	\$509	\$514	\$539	\$853	\$481	\$786
Monthly Total	\$2,885	\$4,068	\$4,677	\$4,073	\$6,228	\$7,736	\$3,237	\$4,753
Annual Total	\$34,620	\$48,816	\$56,124	\$48,876	\$74,736	\$92,832	\$38,844	\$57,036
Hourly Wage	\$17.31	\$24.41	\$28.06	\$24.44	\$37.37	\$46.42	\$19.42	\$28.52





# Kent County ALICE Over Time

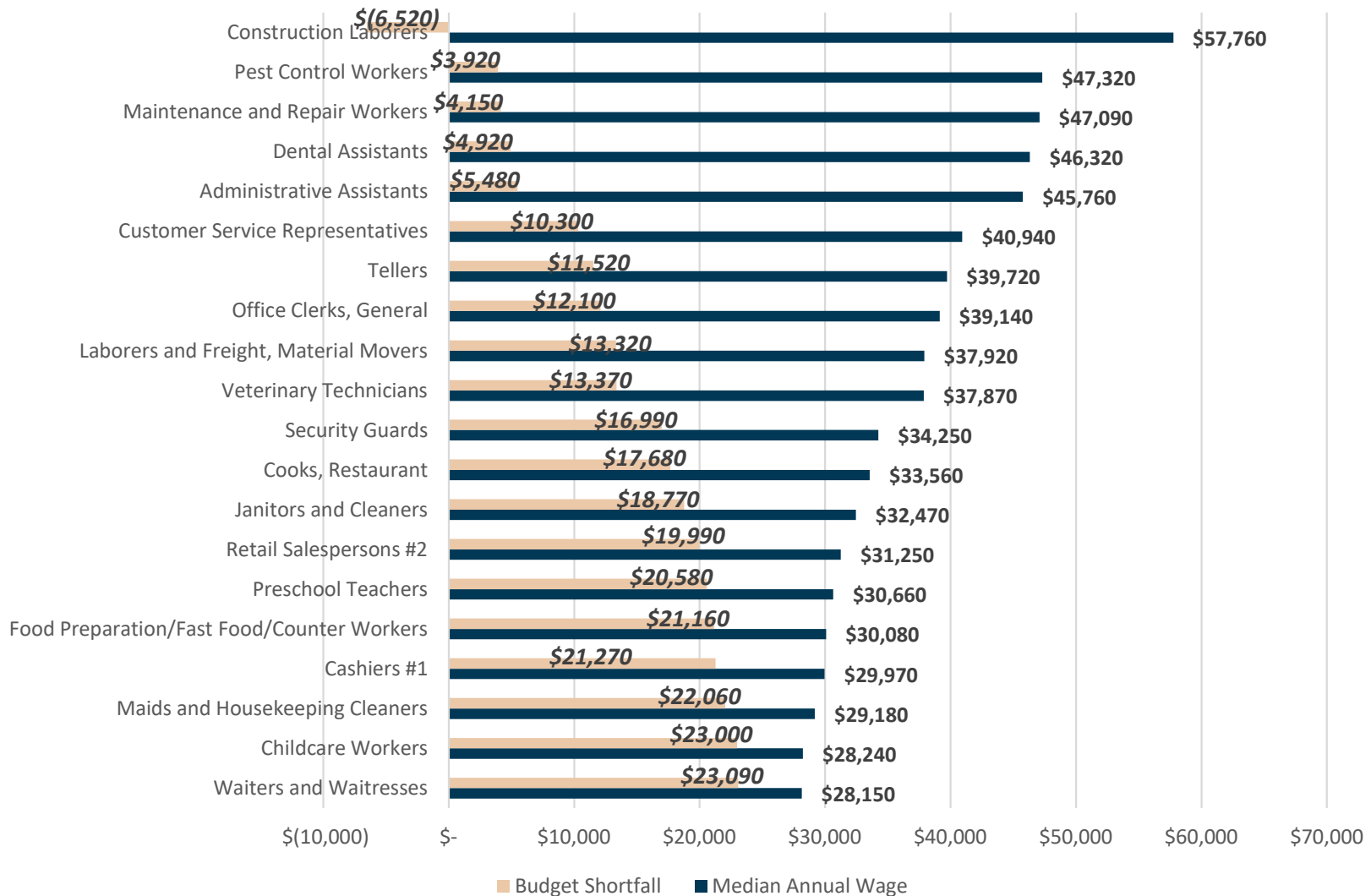
Kent County ALICE Over Time



# Median Wage vs ALICE Households



Median Annual Wages of Selected Common Occupations vs. Annual Total ALICE Household Survival Budget (1 Adult, 1 School-Age Child, \$51,240), Delaware, 2023



Kent County Median Sale Price \$365,000 (as of Feb 2026)

Item #4.

Kent County 2-BR Fair Market Rate \$1,492

If your household earns this:

You can afford this:

2 person 4 person

100%AMI

\$78,430 \$98,000

Occ Therapist \$90,300 Civil Engrs \$93,940

Rent Home Price  
\$2,450 \$294,000

Police, Sheriff Investigators \$80,920 Nurse BSN \$86,280 (#5) \$83,980

\$1,961 \$235,290

Moderate

80% AMI Computer Admin \$75,870 Guidance Counsel \$76,640 Architect \$77,860 Aircraft Mech \$78,770

\$62,750 \$78,400

\$1,960 \$235,200

HR \$61,310 Dietician \$62,620 Librarian \$63,320 PT Assts \$63,720 Business Ops \$69,820 Teacher \$73,940

\$1,569 \$188,250

Truck Drivers \$52,460 Paralegals \$52,770 Social Worker \$56,220 Postal Svs \$57,470 Electrician \$58,420

Low

50% AMI EMTs \$44,420 Bookkeeper \$44,710 Construction Mechanics \$44,630 Real Estate \$49,700

\$39,200 \$49,000

\$1,225 \$147,000

Retail Sales \$32,120 (#3) Medical Assts \$38,750 Customer Svs \$38,070 (#10) Secretary \$44,020 (#6)

\$980 \$117,600

Fast Food \$21,160 (#1) Cashiers \$29,160 (#2) Waiters \$33,050 (#9) Personal Care \$33,310 (#4)

30% AMI

\$23,550 \$29,400

\$735 \$88,200

\$588 \$70,650

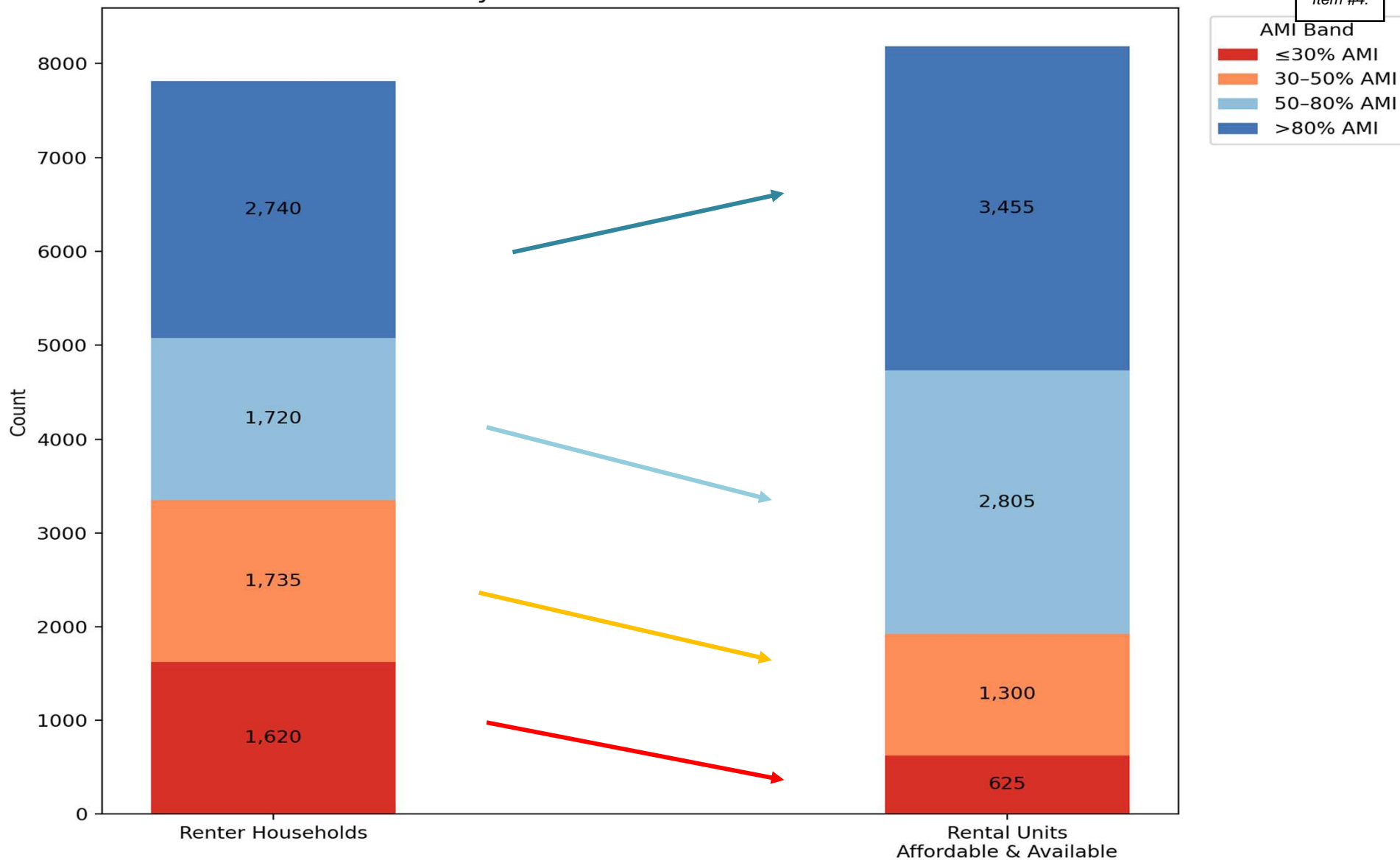
Seasonal Parks: \$15/hour

Top 4 jobs make a median of < \$35k/avg \$15.30/hr.

Dover: Min wage need to work per week: 60hrs/0BR, 61hrs/1BR, 77hrs/2BR, 107hrs/3BR, 122hrs/4BR

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## Dover, Delaware Rental Housing GAP Households by AMI vs Units Affordable & Available

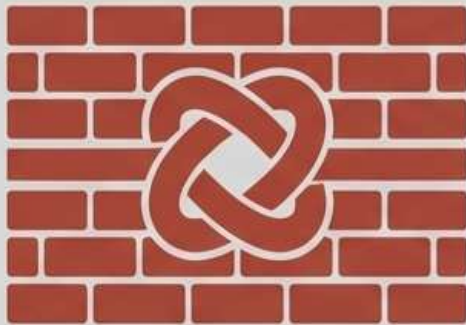


Threshold	#Renters	#Units	Gap
≤30% AMI	1,620	625	-995
30-50% AMI	1,735	1300	-435
50-80% AMI	1,720	2,805	1,085
80-100% AMI	2,740	3,455	715
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,815</b>	<b>8,185</b>	<b>370</b>

Note: “Affordable and available” units include vacant units and units occupied by households at or below the applicable income threshold. Data are rounded per HUD disclosure rules.

Chart replicates the **National Low Income Coalition GAP methodology** at a local (city) scale.

# The Paradigm: Local Barriers vs. Local Levers



## Local Barriers (The Friction We Create):

- Zoning and land-use constraints limiting small-scale housing
- Permitting timelines and development friction increasing project costs
- Infrastructure and site readiness issues
- Financing gaps for small developers and rehabilitation projects
- Market pressures such as rising construction costs, taxes, and insurance



## Local Levers (The Tools We Possess):

- Enable gentle density (ADUs, duplexes, triplexes)
- Streamline approvals for smaller housing projects
- Launch programs to bring vacant units back online
- Support small-scale developers and rehabilitation projects
- Expand attainable homeownership pathways

# Housing Policy Actions & Outcomes (2013-2026)

Foundational planning adoptions represent local effort, but site-specific friction has stalled critical density—paving the way for new State-level interventions.



# Key Takeaways

## The Structural Mismatch



- Building housing can help, but the real question is whether the housing being built **matches the incomes** of the people who live and work here.
- There are fewer affordable units than households who need them; this structural mismatch drives rising rents, overcrowding, and displacement.

## The Squeeze on Dover's Workforce

- When vacancy is limited and renter share is high, even small cost increases create outsized pressure.
- Cost burden is a **leading indicator of instability** — long before homelessness or displacement appears.
- Employment alone no longer guarantees housing stability in Dover.
- HUD's Fair Market Rent benchmarks confirm sustained upward pressure, not a short-term fluctuation.
- ALICE households earn above poverty levels but below what it costs to live locally.
- The gap between ALICE Budget and wages affects workforce stability, commuting patterns, and local employers.

## The Mandate for Local Action

- Local barriers create local opportunities for action...These are local decisions within **municipal control**.



# Interventions

- Governor's Affordable Housing Stock Task Force
- Increase gentle density (ADUs, duplex-fourplex)
- Attainable ownership (Down Payment Assistance (DPA), shared equity, CLTs).
- Preserve rentals (rehab, energy, tax relief)
- Unlock new supply (pre-approved plans, streamlining)
- Target vacancy (rehab incentives, conversions)
- Small Scale and Incremental Development



# Questions



Michele A Williams, PhD

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[michele@fullercenterdelaware.org](mailto:michele@fullercenterdelaware.org)

302-827-3596

**TO:** Dover Town Council

**DATE:** March 10, 2026

**FROM:** Michele A Williams PhD (AKA Dr. Tiny), Fuller Center for Housing of Delaware

**SUBJECT:** Dover and Kent County’s Housing Snapshot

## Part I: The Problem – Dover’s Universe of Housing & the Structural Mismatch

The current housing landscape in Dover is defined by a significant misalignment between the cost of available units and the actual incomes of residents.



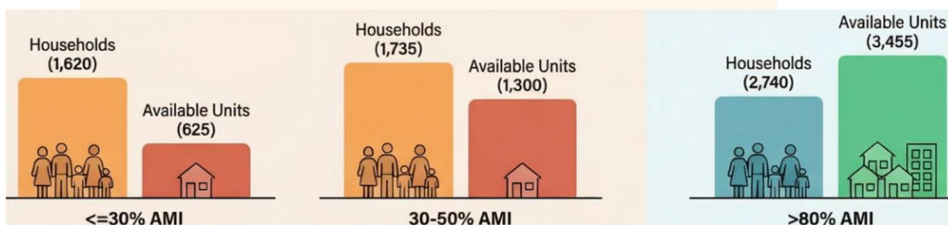
### WHY THIS MATTERS

Dover is a renter-majority city — more than half of all occupied units are rentals. In markets like this, renters absorb price pressure first and fastest. Even a modest rent increase can push hundreds of working families into financial crisis.

### FY 2026 Fair Market Rent (effective 1 August 2025)

FMR Area	0 BR	1 BR	2 BR	3 BR	4 BR
Kent	\$ 1,158	\$ 1,165	\$ 1,470	\$ 2,044	\$ 2,285
New Castle	\$ 1,397	\$ 1,520	\$ 1,810	\$ 2,170	\$ 2,423
Sussex	\$ 1,059	\$ 1,066	\$ 1,399	\$ 1,757	\$ 2,172

Threshold	#Renters	#Units	Gap
≤30% AMI	1,620	625	-995
30-50% AMI	1,735	1,300	-435
50-80% AMI	1,720	2,805	1,085
80-100% AMI	2,740	3,455	715
Total	7,815	8,185	370



### The Rental Market & Vacancy Signals

Because over half of Dover's population are renters, limited vacancy in specific price bands creates outsized market pressure. This pressure is sustained rather than seasonal; notably, the **FY 2026 FMR** for a 2-BR unit in Dover saw a **7.5% increase** over the previous year, signaling that costs are continuing to outpace local economic growth.

### The Structural Mismatch (The Gap)

The fundamental issue is a lack of homes at price points local households can afford. The surplus of units in higher income brackets suggests that higher-income units are being occupied by lower-income households who are forced to overspend, or they are held by those with greater financial mobility, leaving the lowest earners with no options.

### The Critical Deficit

Dover **faces** a staggering **995-unit gap** for households at or below **30% AMI** and a **435-unit gap** for those in the **30-50% AMI** range. While there is a combined surplus of **1,800 units** for

those earning above **50% AMI**, these homes do not "trickle down" effectively. Instead, the lack of units at the bottom creates a vacuum that drives cost burden across the entire city.

## Part II: The Impact – Local Workforce Stability and Cost Burden

### Renter Cost-Burden Analysis

Dover’s renters are under extreme financial duress, which serves as a leading indicator of community-wide instability:

- **55% of renters are cost-burdened** (spending >30% of income on housing).
- **23% of renters are severely cost-burdened** (spending >50% of income on housing).

#### TRANSLATING PERCENTAGES TO PEOPLE

Dover has approximately 8,198 renter households. At 28% cost-burdened, that is roughly 2,295 Dover families spending an unsustainable share on rent. At 22% severely burdened, roughly 1,804 households spend more than half their income on housing — leaving under \$2,000/month for food, healthcare, transportation, and childcare combined. These are not distant statistics. These are Dover's teachers' aides, home health workers, food service staff, and retail associates.



**55%**  
of Renters are  
Cost-Burdened

Over half of all renters in Dover spend a significant portion of income on housing, leaving little for other essentials.



**40%**  
ALICE Household Rate

Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed—earning more than poverty level but not enough to afford basic cost of living.

### The ALICE Threshold in Kent County

The crisis affects the "working middle" as much as those in poverty. **ALICE** (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) households earn above the Federal Poverty Level but cannot afford a basic survival budget. In Delaware, **11%** of households live in poverty, but an additional **30%** are ALICE. Collectively, **41% of households** are one emergency—a medical bill or car repair—away from total housing instability.

### Workforce Impact: The Survival Budget vs. Wages

The **ALICE Household Survival Budget** for a single adult in Kent County is **\$34,620**. **For a household with one adult and one school-age child, that requirement jumps to \$51,240**. Currently, a minimum wage worker in Dover must work **60 hours per week** just to afford a **0-BR unit** and an untenable **77 hours per week** to afford a **2-BR unit**.

#### THE AFFORDABILITY RULE

Housing is affordable when it consumes 30% or less of gross household income. A Dover renter earning the median of \$49,794/year who pays the median rent of \$1,344/month is already at 32.4% of income — above the threshold. Half of all Dover renters pay more than the median.

### Occupational Shortfall List

Despite being **Employed**, workers in Dover’s most common occupations cannot meet the **\$51,240** survival budget for a single-parent household:

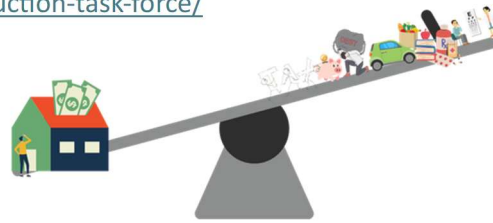
- **Waiters and Waitresses:** Median wage \$28,150 (\$23,090 shortfall)
- **Childcare Workers:** Median wage \$28,240 (\$23,000 shortfall)
- **Cashiers:** Median wage \$29,970 (\$21,270 shortfall)
- **Preschool Teachers:** Median wage \$30,660 (\$20,580 shortfall)

## Part III: The Solution – Local Levers and Interventions

Addressing this mismatch does not require massive new spending; rather, it requires the removal of regulatory friction and the activation of existing assets.

### Governor’s Affordable Housing Stock Task Force:

<https://www.destatehousing.com/about/housing-production-task-force/>



### Homelessness Data Table (2007–2025)

Year	DE (State)	Kent Co (Local)	Notes
2007	1,089	218*	Initial HUD PIT Count
2017	1,015	223	Pre-pandemic baseline
2019	921	168	Historic low point
2020	1,165	267	Start of upward trend
2021	1,579	183	Sheltered individuals only
2022	2,369	223	Pandemic peak (motel vouchers)
2023	1,245	176	Post-pandemic stabilization
2024	1,358	246	Resumed upward growth
2025	1,585	266	Current record high

### Bridging Dover’s Housing Gap: Barriers vs. Solutions

Dover faces a critical housing shortage, particularly for households earning less than 50% of the Area Median Income (AMI). By identifying systemic barriers and applying targeted local levers, the city can create a more resilient and attainable housing market.

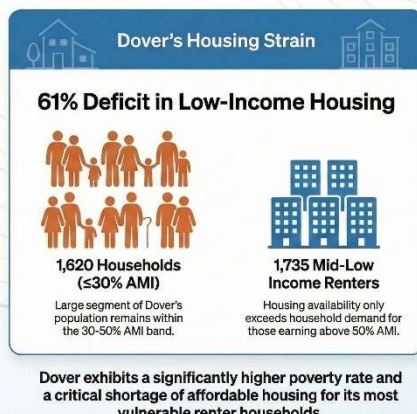
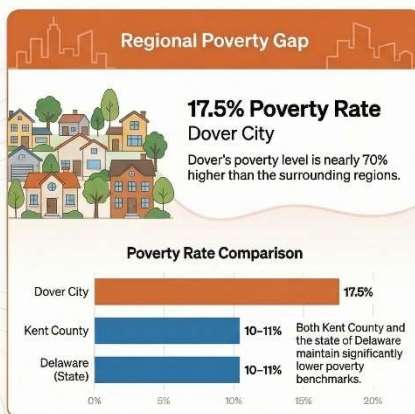
#### THE BARRIERS (WHY SUPPLY IS STALLING)

- Regulatory & Land-Use Friction**  
Zoning constraints and long permitting timelines limit small-scale housing and increase development friction.
- Financial & Infrastructure Gaps**  
Lack of financing for small developers and site unreadiness prevent necessary rehab projects.
- External Market Pressures**  
Rising construction costs, taxes, and insurance premiums further squeeze housing affordability and production.

#### THE LEVERS (HOW TO CLOSE THE GAP)

- Enable Gentle Density**  
Legalizing ADUs, duplexes, and triplexes creates more housing without changing neighborhood character.
- Accelerate Small-Scale Growth**  
Streamlining approvals and supporting local developers simplifies the path to new construction.
- Reactivate Existing Inventory**  
Launching programs to bring vacant units online quickly increases available housing stock.

## Poverty in Perspective: The Dover Disparity



### How Have Housing Choices Changed? (2010 vs 2024) Dover MSA

	Single-Family Detached	Single-Family Attached	2-50 Units or More	Manufactured/Mobile Home
<b>Owners</b>				
2010	80%	5%	1%	14%
2024	83%	6%	1%	10%
<b>Renters</b>				
2010	30%	15%	44%	10%
2024	24%	16%	50%	11%

# Dover Housing Crisis: Council Briefing Dashboard

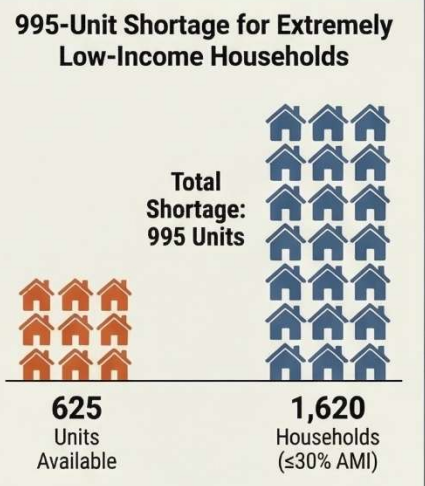
**55%** of Dover Renters are Cost-Burdened

Over half of all renting households pay more than 30% of their gross income on housing costs, while 25% are severely cost-burdened (paying over 50%).

**40%** of Households are "ALICE"

These Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed households earn above the federal poverty level but cannot afford a basic "Survival Budget" in Kent County.

## The Structural Mismatch (The Gap)



**Housing Supply Fails the Bottom of the Market**

While higher income bands (50-100% AMI) show a surplus of units, the structural shortage is concentrated among the city's most vulnerable renters.

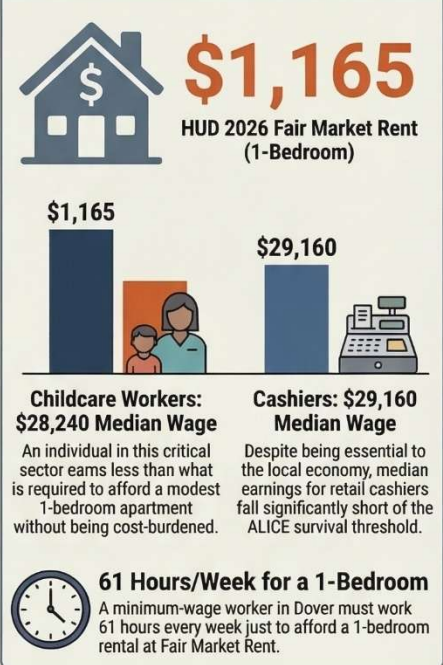
**Rental Housing Gap by Income (Dover, DE)**

Income Threshold	Renter Households	Affordable & Available Units	Unit Gap/ Surplus
≤30% AMI	1,620	625	-995
30-50% AMI	1,735	1,300	-435
50-80% AMI	1,720	2,885	+1,085
80-100% AMI	2,740	3,455	+715

**53% of Dover's Housing is Renter-Occupied**

With a majority of households renting, even small rent increases create outsized pressure on the local economy and housing stability.

## Wage vs. Reality



## Local Levers for Action

- Enable "Gentle Density"**  
Update zoning to allow Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), duplexes, and triplexes to increase the diversity of housing types.
- Streamlined Permitting & Approvals**  
Reduce development friction and project costs by accelerating timelines for smaller housing projects and affordable developments.
- Support Small-Scale Developers**  
Provide incentives and bridge financing gaps for local developers focused on rehabilitation and "missing middle" housing.

**Employment No Longer Guarantees Stability:** Cost burden is a leading indicator of instability, affecting workforce retention and local employer success long before homelessness occurs.

## Selected housing-affecting actions in Dover and related jurisdictions

- 2025-09: Delaware SB 190 (Affordable Rental Housing Program signed)
- 2024-03: Delaware SB 23 (Statewide ADU mandate proposal; not enacted)
- 2023-09: Kent County Ord. 23-20 (ADUs permitted countywide on residential lots)
- 2022-11: Dover Ord. 2022-14 (Rental ordinance update; Safe Communities removed)
- 2022-10: Dover Ord. 2022-08 (Manufactured housing inspection/habitability requirements)
- 2021-08: Dover Forest Ave rezoning motion fails (Ord. 2021-4; 2-21-08)
- 2021-06: Dover Ord. 2021-09 & 2021-10 (Comprehensive rezoning + Plan matrix update)
- 2021-05: Dover proposed rezoning 630 W Division fails under 3/4 petition rule (Ord. 2021-07)
- 2020-12: Dover Ord. 2020-05 (Short-term rental licensing)
- 2020-01: Dover Ord. 2019-21 (2019 Comprehensive Plan adoption)
- 2016-05: Dover Ord. 2016-14 (Parking req. cleanup for multiple dwellings)
- 2013-04: Dover Ord. 2013-04 (Rental Dwellings; Safe Communities addendum)
- 2013-03: Dover Ord. 2013-03 (New Buildings; zoning fees)



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