

CULTURAL & HISTORIC RESOURCES CHAPTER

Rochester, NH Master Plan

Adopted June 17, 2024



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Cover Photos clockwise from top left: 1) Greetings from Rochester mural by Bianca Mireles; 2) Front façade of the Salinger Block that dates to 1900; 3) J. G. Morrill Grocery Store was the first tenant in the Odd Fellows Block when the building was completed in 1874 at 91-95 South Main (photo courtesy of the Rochester Historical Society); 4) An unusual tripartite window, c. 1855, at 7 Hanson Street; 5) Stage entrance door at the 1907 Rochester Opera House; and 6) Bernier Room in the Rochester Museum of Fine Arts.

Unless otherwise noted, all photographs in this chapter are credited to Tom Morgan of TZM Planning, Portsmouth, NH.

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I. Introduction

THE PURPOSE OF THE MASTER PLAN

The Master Plan takes stock of Rochester’s past and present and addresses two fundamental questions: Where does the community wish to go? And how do we get there?

The Master Plan is a powerful tool that provides city residents with an opportunity to have a say in determining the community’s future. Ideally, municipal master plans should engage the public as they formulate a vision for the community’s future, assess current conditions, and finally, chart a path forward to help make the vision attainable.

The City’s land use regulations rely on the master plan for their legitimacy and legal authority. Courts in New Hampshire and elsewhere have ruled that a current and comprehensive plan is a prerequisite for a zoning ordinance. NH RSA 674:3 recommends that the plan be updated every 5 to 10 years. The plan can also be very useful in helping to obtain grants from federal agencies and private foundations for a wide variety of purposes.

In order for the municipal zoning ordinance to regulate private property, a public purpose for such restrictions must be articulated in a comprehensive community plan. NH RSA 674:1-4 authorizes the preparation of such plans and provides guidelines for the content of the plan. Regarding cultural and historic resources, the statute reads as follows:

“A section which identifies cultural, archeological, and historic resources and protects them for rehabilitation or preservation from the impact of other land use tools such as land use regulations, housing, or transportation. Such section may encourage the preservation or restoration of stone walls, provided agricultural practices, as defined in RSA 21:34-a, are not impeded.”

The last edition of Rochester’s Cultural & Historic Resources chapter was drafted in 2006 and adopted in 2010. The art scene in Rochester has seen significant changes since 2010, as will be evident in the pages that follow.

Make no little plans.
They have no magic to
stir men's blood and
probably will not
themselves be realized.

Daniel H. Burnham, 1910



THE STRUCTURE OF THIS CHAPTER

This chapter is organized around the task of seeking answers to these fundamental questions:

- What is our vision for the community?
- We are we now?
- Where does the community wish to go?
- How do we get there? What action is required?
- Under what timeframe should these action items be implemented?
- Who will be responsible for implementing the plan?
- How is it funded?



Figure 1. Postcard image courtesy of the Rochester Historical Society.

How do we determine where the community wishes to go? That question was posed to the citizens of Rochester, and we received many thoughtful responses. The approach to this chapter is very much from the ground up, not the top down. For that reason, the reader will note that the survey responses and other input from the community are featured prominently in the middle of this document, and not as an afterthought relegated to an appendix. Our intent is to make obvious the **direct link** between the aspirations of community residents, as expressed in the survey responses (see Section 6 that follows), and this chapter's goals and recommendations (Section 7). One invariably follows the other, as it should in all municipal planning endeavors.

OUR VISION

The community's heritage will be honored, protected, and celebrated. Rochester's historic built environment will be preserved to the extent practical. The design of infill development in urban settings will compliment and respect nearby historic structures.

Nineteenth century family graveyards will be inventoried, restored, and protected. Rochester's wealth of pre-historic archaeological sites will be provided appropriate treatment. Civic monuments and those honoring veterans will be maintained and respected.

To inspire a sense of place and pride in community, our unique heritage will be highlighted, and our cultural assets, historic infrastructure and artistic treasures will be celebrated, strengthened, and promoted.

Community involvement in the arts will be fostered, and the economic power of the arts and culture in Rochester will be widely recognized. Our community's unique blend of old-fashioned charm and progressive vision will invigorate Rochester.



Figure 2. Gravestone of Betty Page, Consort to Benjamin Page, who died in 1807, Old Town Farm Cemetery.

WHAT IS CULTURE?

What is meant by the term *culture*? Rochester's 2006 Cultural & Historic Resources chapter defined culture as follows:

“Culture while including painting, sculpture, classical music, theater, and dance, also encompasses natural history and science. It further includes cultural expressions like folk music, jazz, gospel, crafts, and folk art. In addition, the historical sites within Rochester from landmark areas such as the Rochester Common to cemeteries comprise part of its cultural richness. Also included in the definition of the word culture would be the traditions and events of the area, including The Rochester Fair, professional wrestling, and Shakespearean performances. All of these forms of expression are vital ways of identifying Rochester's citizens as individuals, and as a community. They embrace the past and lead to a strong future.”

The 2006 definition is broad and inclusive. More importantly, it is specific to Rochester. And it has stood the test of time.

In contrast to this broad definition, historic preservationists generally utilize the term “*cultural resources*” more narrowly. When the NH Division of Historical Resources employs this term, agency staff are referring to archaeological artifacts and sites, structures such as stone walls, family graveyards, and the remnants of historic buildings. This 2023 update to the Cultural & Historic Resources chapter will embrace a broad definition of “*culture*,” one that encompasses all the above.



Figure 3. Exhibit Hall at the Rochester Fairgrounds.

2. Rochester's Rich Heritage

A BRIEF HISTORY OF ROCHESTER

The land area encompassed by Rochester was originally inhabited by Abenaki Indians of the Pennacook tribe. These people hunted, fished, and grew pumpkins, squash, beans, and maize.¹ They spoke a dialect of Algonquian.²

The Abenaki in the vicinity of present-day Rochester wintered in villages further inland from the coast. In the late spring, they set up fishing camps near rapids and waterfalls, along Rochester's two principal rivers, in order to catch migrating shad, salmon and alewives.³ The Salmon Falls River was known as Newichwannoc, meaning "the place of many falls. Gonic was known as Squamanagonic, meaning "the water of the clay place hill." Those of European descent would later shorten the name to Gonic and utilize the clay to manufacture bricks.

The name Coheco translates into three words: Co (falls), Che (great), and Co again, or "falls and great falls." The rivers were dammed in the 19th century, thereby putting an end to the fish migration.

The Indian population was decimated by epidemics of influenza, smallpox, and diphtheria, diseases for which they had not developed immunity. King Philip's War in 1675 further reduced their numbers. Many eventually fled to Canada, and in particular, to St. Francis in southern Quebec.⁴

The town was incorporated in 1722 as Norway Plains, but settlement by those of European descent was delayed until 1728. The last violent incident between the English and the Abenaki occurred in 1746, and is memorialized by a plaque at Rochester Hill, erected in 1936 by the Daughters of the American Revolution.

The early European settlers farmed and harvested timber. Much of Rochester's 45 square miles of land area continued to host agricultural operations into the early 20th century. Many (former) farmhouses survive to the present day.

The Reverend Amos Main had arrived in Rochester in 1737, and was the first pastor of the Congregational Church, then situated on Rochester Hill. It was common in early 18th century New England to site churches and settlements atop high ground (such as Rochester Hill) because it was widely believed that low lying areas along rivers were plagued by unhealthy vapors.

During the early 1800's when local residents came to appreciate the economic benefits of waterpower, not to mention the cash wages the mills provided, the aversion to vapors was quickly forgotten. The Coheco River supported six tanneries, a sawmill, a fulling mill, and two gristmills.⁵ The Norway Plains Company erected a water-powered textile mill along the Coheco in 1846 that still stands and is known as the Wyandotte.

Downstream, the Gonic Woolen Mills had been erected in 1811. This structure was replaced in 1849 with a flannel mill. A major expansion occurred in 1864 under the auspices of the Gonic Manufacturing Company. Across town along the Salmon Falls River, the Coheco Woolen Manufacturing Company commenced



Figure 4. A map entitled New Hampshire. Pre-industrial Rochester is evident in the map segment above. The map was published in 1796 in Hamburg by Carl Ernst Bohn. Note that the town center was in the vicinity of Rochester Hill. Note also the German translations of terms such rapids and falls along the Salmon Falls River, and the “Place for Masts.”

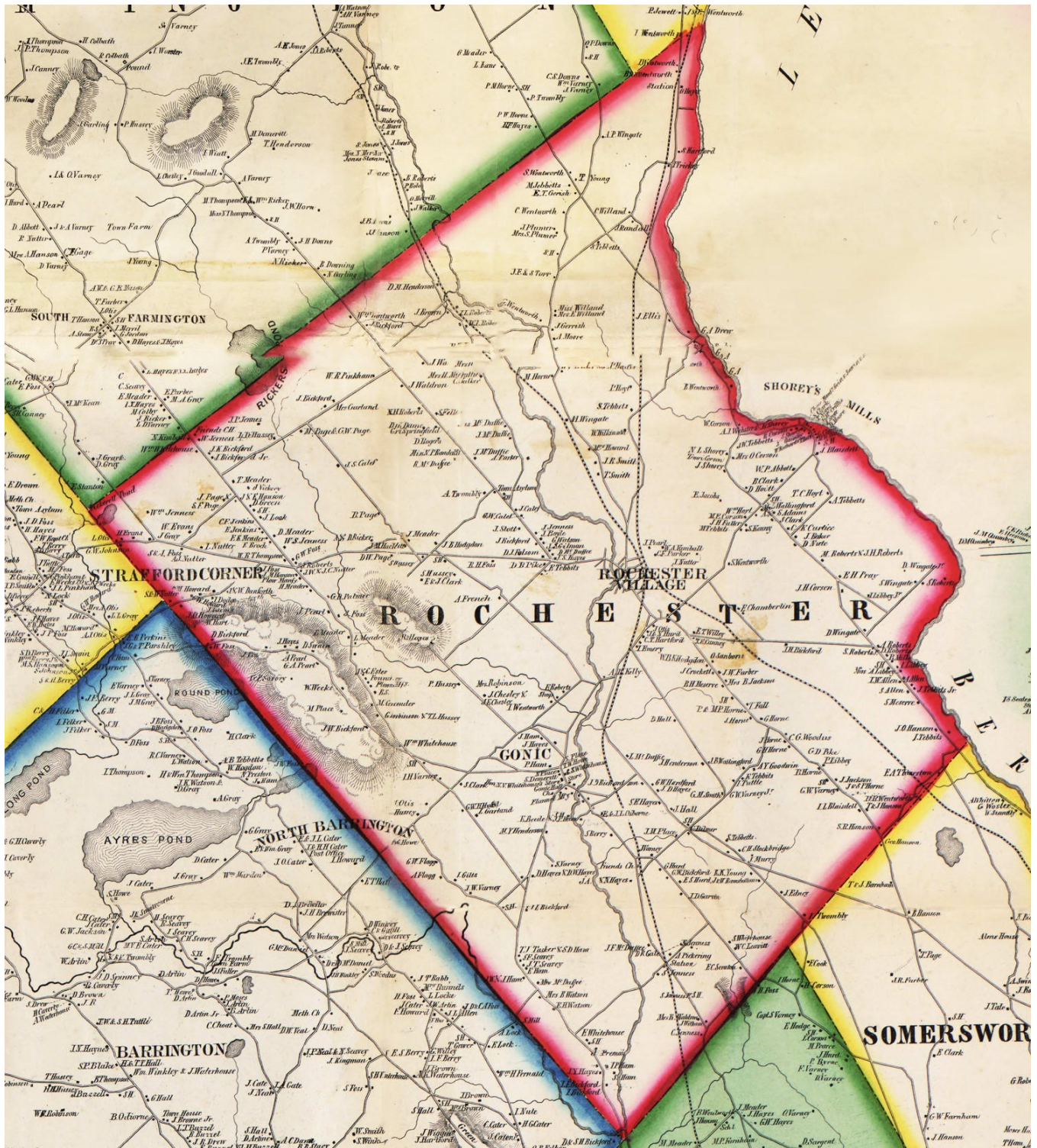


Figure 5. Map of Strafford Co. New Hampshire by J. J. Chace, Jr., Philadelphia, 1856. By 1856, the population had shifted to three locations clustered about textile mills powered by the Cocheco and Salmon Falls. The villages are identified above as Gonic, Rochester Village, and Shorey's Mills.

operations in 1862. The village of East Rochester emerged as a result. That which remains of the textile mill is occupied by the Bacon Felt Company. Cocheco Company housing survives on Front Street.



Figure 6. Gonic Mill operatives, courtesy of the Rochester Historical Society.

The arrival of the railroads in 1849 would bring coal from Pennsylvania and ushered in an era of coal-fired steam engines as a more reliable means to power industrial machinery. This development allowed the Wallace Shoe Company to erect a factory at some distance from the rivers. While shoes would eventually eclipse textiles in total number of employees in Rochester, both industries thrived in Rochester. That success led to another challenge: finding new workers. The Irish came in significant numbers in the 1850's, driven largely by a famine in Ireland. In the 1880's, desperate economic conditions in the Quebec countryside prompted an even greater influx of French Canadians. The Irish congregated in a neighborhood known as Dublin (Hancock Street and Charles Street) and erected a church and parochial school. The French Canadians did likewise at Frenchtown, situated in the vicinity of Lafayette and Chestnut Streets.

By 1874, Rochester was served by four railroads: Great Falls & Conway (1849), Cocheco (later the Dover & Winnipiseogee, 1849), Portland & Rochester (1871), and Nashua & Rochester (1874). Each had their own terminals near present day Columbus Avenue and Hanson Street. Some 40+ passenger trains served Rochester daily.

Rochester's industry-fueled prosperity peaked between 1890 and 1920. Many of downtown's mid-19th century pitched-roof buildings were replaced during this period with noticeably larger buildings with flat roofs and neo-classical ornament. A close examination of the 1877 birds-eye view of Rochester reveals the extent of this transformation.

In 1891, Rochester was incorporated as a city.

Having achieved considerable prosperity, Rochester had the means to support ambitious cultural endeavors. The new City Hall (1908) included an opera house on the second and third floors. In its early years, the Opera House served as a venue for plays, concerts, minstrel shows, vaudeville acts, dances, lectures, political rallies, graduation ceremonies,



Figure 7. Salinger Block. The Neo-classical facade was applied in 1900.

basketball games, and Broadway musicals. The theater suspended operations in-between 1974 and 1998.⁶

In 1984, the community undertook the enormous challenge of restoring the Opera House, and finally succeeded in 1998. During the past quarter century, the venue has hosted regionally and nationally recognized artists. Audiences, drawn from throughout the region, have had a substantial positive impact on the local economy.

1930 to 1990

The textile and shoe industries declined during the Great Depression of the 1930's. They eventually departed New England entirely and migrated to regions with lower prevailing wages. As was the case with New England's other cities that relied on textile mills and shoe manufacturing, when the industries moved to southern states, commencing in the 1930's, Rochester's economy struggled.

The spell was broken in 1985 when Rochester became the site of Cabletron's manufacturing operations. At its peak, the company employed 6,600 (3,672 in Rochester). The company's headquarters were located at an industrial park off Ten Rod Road. Alas, Cabletron's success faded as quickly as it had emerged, and by 2000, its Rochester operations had largely ceased.⁷

Rochester's workforce is more likely to commute out of town than to walk to local job sites, as had been the practice in past eras. At present, the two largest employers of Rochester residents are the naval shipyard in Kittery and the office park at the former Pease AFB.

HISTORIC BUILDINGS

Rochester is fortunate to enjoy a wealth of historic resources. The greatest concentration is found in the city center and at the two 19th century industrial villages, Gonic and East Rochester. It bears noting that much of the community's heritage is agrarian. There are several historic farmsteads in outlying areas. A farmhouse in the Greek Revival style at 326 Rochester Hill Road is particularly notable, and is listed on the [NH State Register of Historic Places](#).

The city was prosperous at the end of the 19th century, and consequently, most of the commercial buildings in the city center were replaced between 1890 and 1910. Those Victorian and Neo-Classical replacements continue to define the character of much of downtown Rochester.



Figure 8. Hartigan Block, N. Main St., 1901.



Figure 9. Gonic Mill.

In 1980, the regional planning commission hired a professional architectural historian, Roger Brevort, to document approximately 182 structures in the downtown. This documentation is now available online for exploring the city center via [a Virtual Historic Map or self-guided tour](#).

The 1980 survey was a precursor to a more ambitious undertaking, namely Mr. Brevort's nomination of an area in the city center encompassing approximately 100 buildings to the National Register of Historic Places.



Figure 10. Grace Baptist Church, East Rochester.

The nomination is noteworthy for the quality of the historical research and its detailed description of architectural features. It provides an exacting snapshot of Rochester in the early 1980's. Subsequently, there were several building losses due to fire and demolition. Accordingly, the district boundaries may need to be adjusted.

In 2022, the city retained the services of The Preservation Company to assess the changes in the downtown since the 1980's, and to update the 1981 survey. The assessment was completed in 2023.⁸

ARCHITECTURAL STYLES

In Rochester, one can readily find several examples of the Queen Anne style (1880 to 1910), and the Colonial Revival (1890 thru mid-20th century). Outside of the city center, several older buildings in the Georgian and Federal styles may be observed. All are well documented in [The Architectural Jewels of Rochester](#), by Michael Behrendt.

Rochester's 19th and early 20th century buildings are adorned with certain decorative features that reflect broader cultural trends at the time of the buildings' construction. As culture evolved over time the architectural styles that mirrored these cultural trends did too. The architectural styles that dominate Rochester's 19th century built environment are addressed in greater detail below.

GREEK REVIVAL

During the early 19th century, the Greek Revival style was immensely popular in the US, and Rochester was no exception. In part, this enthusiasm reflected American sympathy for the Greeks' rebellion (1821-1829) against an autocratic Ottoman Empire.



Figure 11. Greek Revival style house at 223 Rochester Hill Road.

ITALIANATE and FRENCH 2nd EMPIRE

By mid-19th century, building technology had evolved considerably, permitting innovative decorative elements such as brackets under the eaves and round-headed windows that are typical of the Italianate style. These decorative features were quite popular in New England factory towns. The French 2nd Empire style is easily recognized by its mansard roof (very popular in Paris in the 1850's) seen here in Gonic. The St. Charles School is another prominent example. In both instances, the buildings embrace both Italianate and 2nd Empire features.



Figure 12. A 2nd Empire style building in Gonic.

NEO-CLASSICAL

Rochester attained an era of unprecedented prosperity at the very beginning of the 20th century. During this time, many of the older buildings were replaced by late Victorian commercial style structures and the Neo-Classical style. The latter is exemplified by the Masonic Building, shown below.



Figure 13. A Neo-Classical style detail on the Masonic Block, Hanson Street, 1910.

ROCHESTER'S HISTORIC DISTRICTS

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

In 1983, the US Secretary of the Interior approved Rochester's [nomination of a National Register District](#) encompassing approximately 100 buildings in the city center. On the map on the page that follows, the National Register District is shown in blue. National Register status offers property owners some measure of protection from federally funded or licensed initiatives such as poorly designed transportation projects, or unwanted transmission lines.

The National Register district also permits property owners to qualify for federal rehabilitation tax credits. This is a popular and useful tool to enable the reuse of older buildings, and sometimes makes the difference between a project that is profitable, and one that is not.

HISTORIC OVERLAY DISTRICT

Rochester's City Council designated a [Local Historic District](#) pursuant to NH RSA 674:46 & 46-a. Proposed alterations to buildings within the district are subject to review and approval by Rochester's Historic District Commission. The boundaries of this district do not align with those of the National Register District. A map of the local Historic Overlay District is depicted in red on the map to that follows. In order to revise the district boundaries, City Council approval would be required to amend Chapter 275 Article 14.

The concept of the public welfare is broad and inclusive. The values it represents are spiritual as well as physical, aesthetic as well as monetary. It is within the power of the legislature to determine that the community should be beautiful as well as healthy, spacious as well as clean, well-balanced as well as carefully patrolled.

Justice William O. Douglas
Berman vs. Parker, 1954

NATIONAL VS. LOCAL

National Register Historic Districts are frequently confused with Local Historic Districts. In fact, the two are quite dissimilar. National Register Districts offer protection from the federal government. Specifically, National Register designation protects the historic resource from federally funded or licensed actions. National Register status does not prevent a property owner from altering or demolishing structures, except in those instances where the owner has voluntarily utilized federal rehabilitation tax credits.

Local Historic Districts, on the other hand, are intended to discourage property owners from making building alterations which would harm the historic character of the district. In a Local Historic District, proposed alterations to a building's exterior must be approved by the city's Historic District Commission prior to the issuance of a building permit. Unlike National Register districts, local districts offer no protection from federal agencies or from state sponsored projects that are funded or licensed by the federal government.

NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT AND HISTORIC OVERLAY DISTRICT

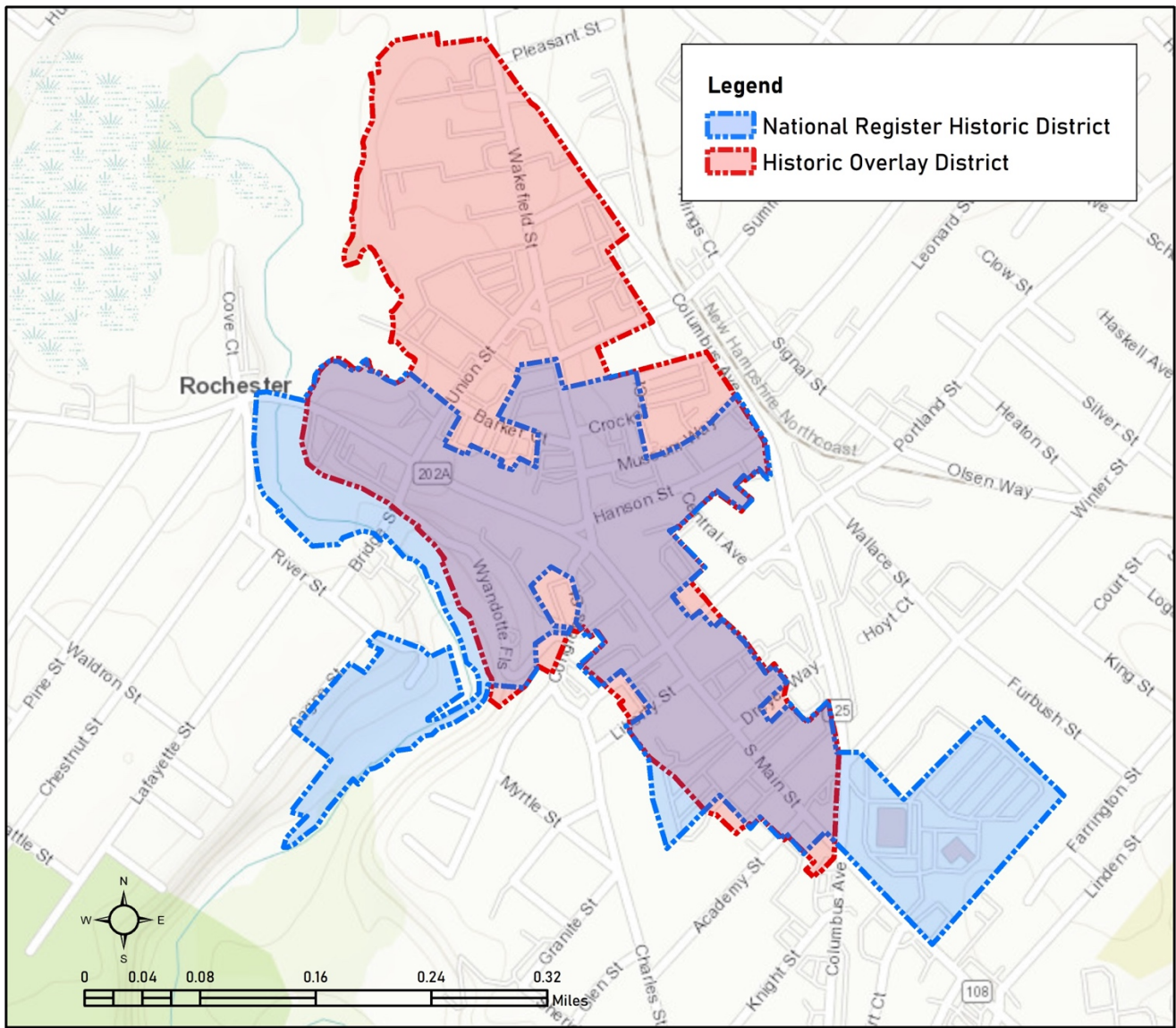


Figure 14. Comparison of the district boundaries: National Register vs. Local.

CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Rochester has qualified as a Certified Local Government (CLG) community. The CLG program is a partnership between municipal governments and the state historic preservation program that is intended to encourage and expand local involvement in preservation-related activities. CLG communities are eligible for grants from the National Park Service. As relatively few communities in NH applied for CLG status, there is little competition for these federal funds. Rochester has utilized this program to procure a CLG grant to fund the preparation of [Historic District Design Guidelines](#) in 2018, and to update the [1980 survey of downtown historic buildings](#) in 2023.

HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGN GUIDELINES

In 2018, the City hired a historic preservation consulting firm, BendonAdams, to prepare design guidelines to assist members of the City’s Historic District Commission (HDC), and the property owners who submit proposals for building alterations to the HDC. The guidelines provide a concise explanation of the (federal) Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Historic Treatment of Properties and explore the meanings of the following terms: preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, and reconstruction. The guidelines also offer expert advice on exterior siding, porches & stoops, windows & doors, architectural details, roofs, landscaping, the historic context, proportion, scale, height, commercial storefronts, color, accessibility, lighting, mechanicals, fences, signs, and integrating new buildings into the historic district.

Rochester is at a turning point in its history. Peel away the veneer, replace vinyl windows, and restore commercial storefronts and it is clear that Rochester’s historic character is comparable to other thriving downtowns in New England.

BendonAdams, 2018



Figure 15. Rochester Trust Company, South Main Street, 1903.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

When the glaciers receded approximately 11,000 years ago, people arrived in New Hampshire. They obtained food by hunting, fishing, and foraging. During the Woodland Period (1000 BC to 1600 AD) they started to settle down in villages and grow fruit and vegetables. The decedents of NH's early settlers are known collectively as the Abenaki, a name that translates from their language (known as Algonquian) as "People of the Dawnland."

The Rochester Historical Society's collections include an artifact from the Woodland Period that was excavated by archaeologists at the French-Hussey graveyard (near Staples) in 2006.

Physical evidence of the Abenaki's historic presence is most likely be discovered in the vicinity of inland fishing grounds, and along the Cocheco River and the Salmon Falls River.

Section 275-33.1 of Rochester's land use regulations requires developers of conservation subdivisions to "protect significant archaeological resources." The protection should be extended to all large development proposals, and particular those in the vicinity of the Cocheco and Salmon Falls Rivers. Where the rivers' water elevation drops, i.e. at rapids and dam sites, it would be prudent to require proponents of large projects to perform a Phase IA Archaeological Sensitivity Assessment.



Figure 16. Dam situated immediately upstream from the Wyandotte Mill.

Other sites that warrant attention are the remnants of 18th century homesteads that were occupied by those of European descent.

CEMETERIES AND FAMILY GRAVEYARDS

One class of historic resource that is often overlooked are the 19th century family graveyards. The website [Find-A-Grave](#) documents 50 cemeteries and graveyards in Rochester. There are quite likely many more family graveyards that have disappeared from public view, hidden by the transition of abandoned farmland to forest. These are important historical resources, and for that reason they should be located, preserved, and restored. The community is fortunate that several residents have volunteered to take the lead. The city should provide adequate funding to support the efforts of the Society For the Preservation of Rochester Burial Grounds.



Figure 17. Gonic Cemetery.

SCULPTURE

Rochester's first major monument was the civil war statue on the Common, dedicated in 1885 in memory of the Rochester soldiers who fought in the war. The names of the 54 who died in the war are engraved on the monument's base.

Rochester's first minister, Parson Amos Main, stands in the square. He served from 1737 to 1760. The bronze statue was cast in 1896 by Italian-born sculptor Giuseppe Morretti (1857-1935).



Figure 18. Parson Main. The postcard was published in 1905.

Cast iron fountains stand in front of the high school, adjacent to River Street, and along Charles Street. A war memorial with bronze relief is situated in front of City Hall, while next door a monument to local firefighters is etched in granite.

A sculpture by Adam Pearson stands behind the library and three installations of Mr. Pearson reside along Columbus Ave., while Nathan Walker's giant grasshopper guards the community center at 150 Wakefield Street.

Not to be overlooked is the wide range of sculptural artwork in Rochester's cemeteries, dating back to the 18th century.

GONIC

The current mill building in Gonic (population 4,132)⁹ was erected in 1849. This structure was expanded in 1864 under the auspices of the Gonic Manufacturing Company. The mill required a workforce, and that in turn spurred the construction of housing nearby. By the end of the 19th century, Gonic was the site of a school, shops, a cemetery, a fire station, churches, and a post office.

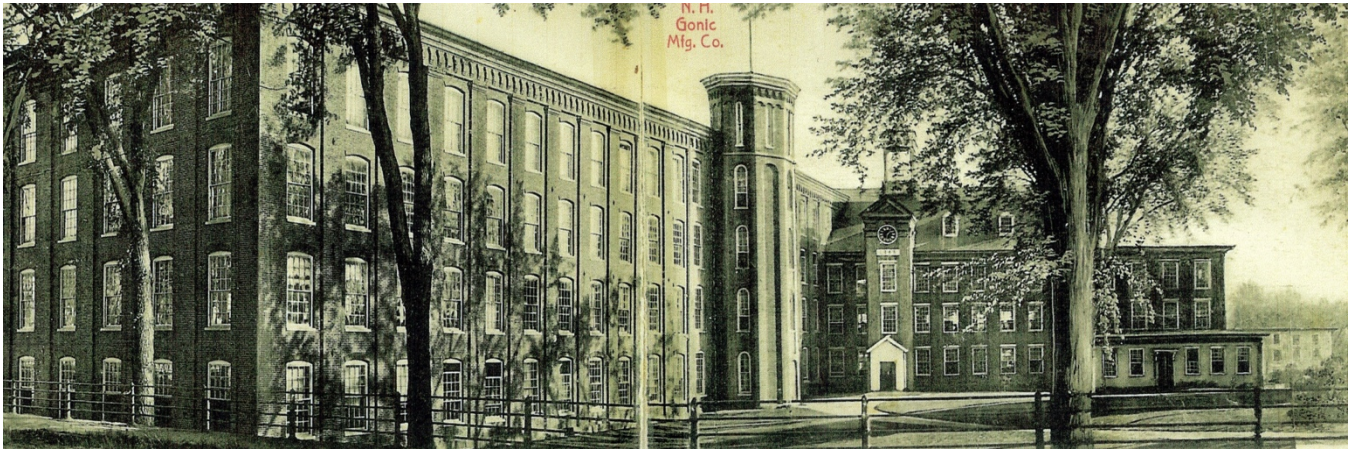


Figure 19. The 1864 Gonic Mill as seen in the late 19th century. Photo courtesy of the Rochester Historical Society.

The textile industry has departed; however, the mill remains mostly intact and houses several commercial enterprises. Much of Gonic's 19th century historical layout and buildings remain intact.

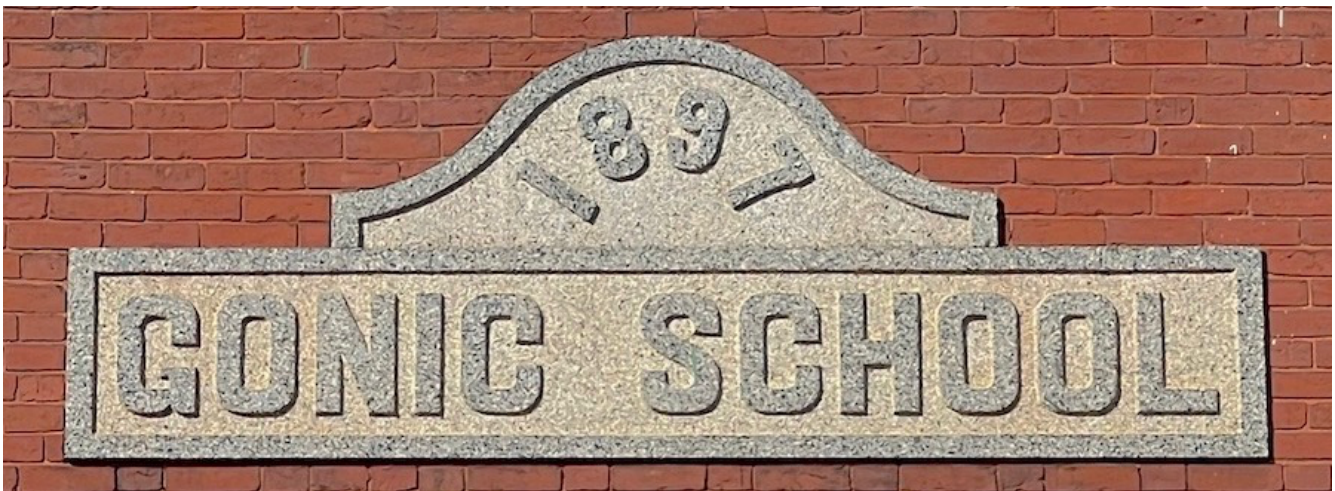


Figure 20. Gonic School, 1897.

This old industrial complex has great potential for reuse, as does the land abutting the river. The mill complex could house incubator space for fledgling industry, housing, artist's studios, exhibition space, or serve as an indoor venue for music, theater, and dance, as has been done in other under-utilized former mill buildings in New England.

EAST ROCHESTER

The Village of East Rochester (population 3,600) is situated three miles east of downtown, along the west bank of the Salmon Falls River, opposite Lebanon, Maine. East Rochester is the site of a school, two churches, a cemetery, several small stores, a number of beautiful Victorian homes, a former fire house, a former post office, and the site of a former railroad depot on Autumn Street. The Cocheco Woolen Manufacturing Company erected a mill here in 1862, at the present-day site of the Bacon Felt Company.



Figure 21. Late 19th century view of the Cocheco Woolen Manufacturing Company. Photo courtesy of the Rochester Historical Society.

Housing and commercial services soon followed. A classic example of the different types of company housing may be seen along Front Street. Almost all the structures on this street date to the construction of the woolen mill. The East Rochester mill went into decline during the 1930's.



Figure 22. Looking northwest along Front Street in East Rochester. The two children stand at the entrance to the mill office. Photo courtesy of the Rochester Historical Society.

The mill has lost its historic integrity, however much of the village's 19th century building stock remains intact. As is the case with Gonic, there is great potential for historic preservation and restorations in East Rochester.



Figure 23. Young Scholars pose for a group photo in front of the schoolhouse that would later be named the Nancy Loud School, c.1900. Photo courtesy of the Rochester Historical Society.



Figure 24. Corner of Highland and Portland in East Rochester, c.1905. Photo courtesy of the Rochester Historical Society.

RURAL ROCHESTER

Beyond the 19th century industrial hubs referenced above, Rochester’s 45 square miles was mainly forest and farmland up until the late 20th century. Nineteenth century farmhouses are scattered throughout rural Rochester, as are several instances of late 18th century buildings. Much of the farmland remains intact, however it may be threatened by single-family housing development driven by employment centers at the Pease Tradeport and the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, and the high cost of housing in coastal communities. It’s important to preserve not only the rural character of Rochester’s outlying areas, but also the farmland, as the importance of local agriculture will grow as western agricultural operations in the western US struggle to find adequate water supplies.



Figure 25. Walnut Grove Church off Salmon Falls Road. Photo courtesy of John Gisis.

3. Rochester's Remarkable Arts Renaissance

During the past quarter century, Rochester has enjoyed a remarkable renaissance in the arts. The visionary and innovative Rochester Museum of Fine Arts opened its doors in 2012. The museum features a varied collection of works by local and regional artists, and some from afar. Museum staff's concerted effort to engage the community expanded the accessibility of its collections to the corridors of the James W. Foley Community Center and the public library.

The Rochester Opera House re-opened in the 1990's after a lengthy period of decline. In 2017, the affiliated Rochester Performance & Arts Center was established on North Main Street.

Rochester enjoys a lively music scene as well. Many local restaurants feature live music on weekends. The Porchfest, an annual event sponsored by the Opera House, is quite popular in the summer, as are the concerts on the Common that are organized by the City's Recreation Department.

The annual LILA Dance Festival draws professional dance companies and performers from throughout the northeastern US.

Small businesses such as pottery, craft beer brewing, local food production, wool products, framing, and flower sales make significant contributions to the local economy.

Rochester's art scene is characterized by a distinctly populist approach and reflects the community's commitment to make art accessible to anyone who wishes to explore and to participate. In that regard Rochester distinguishes itself from other NH cities.



Figure 26. Painting by Holly McKay at the Irving Station, 201 Gonic Road.

ARTS & CULTURE COMMISSION

In 2011, the City established the Arts & Culture Commission. The commission's stated purpose is to:

- Highlight our heritage to inspire a sense of place and pride in the City of Rochester.
- Identifying, strengthening, promoting, and broadcasting Rochester's cultural assets, infrastructure, and artistic treasures.
- Facilitate community involvement in the arts.
- Recognize the economic power of the arts and culture in Rochester.
- Invigorate Rochester with an emphasis on the City's unique blend of old-fashioned charm and progressive vision; and
- Act on the City's behalf on arts and culture matters.



Figure 27. Mural on the side of Rochester Fire Station 1.

ROCHESTER MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS

The [Rochester Museum of Fine Arts](#) (RMFA) was founded in 2011 by local arts activist Matt Wyatt as well as dozens of volunteers and is kept going through the perseverance and hard work of volunteer effort. The RMFA enjoys broad support in the community. The centerpiece of the museum's 200+ piece collection is the Bernier Room. The collection is diverse and eclectic. Every piece was donated, in many instances by the artist. Download the RMFA app to get a sense of the scope and diversity of the museum's permanent collection, along with information on current exhibits and upcoming events.



Figure 28. Bernier Room, Rochester Museum of Fine Arts.

ART IN THE CORRIDOR

Unlike many conventional museums that house their collections in fortress-like structures, the RMFA's primary mission is to bring art to the local population and to make the collections as accessible as possible. Toward that end, a sizable part of the RMFA's collection is on display along the corridors of the James W. Foley Community Center. From the City's motor vehicle registration department to its indoor recreational facilities, it is hard for community center visitors to overlook the RMFA's Art in the Corridor initiative. On any given day, many Community Center visitors stop and contemplate the artwork that lines these corridors.

The Rochester Museum of Fine Arts and Rochester Recreation Department have partnered to make fine art easily accessible to everyone in our community. Visitors can see more art in *Suite 135* (at the end of the hallway) and at the Rochester Public Library.

Visit www.rochestermfa.org/collection to learn more about the art in the hallway.



THE CARNEGIE GALLERY

Another part of the RMFA's collection is on display at the Rochester Public Library. The 2nd floor Carnegie Gallery is named after the 19th century industrialist who provided funding to construct public libraries in cities and towns across the US, including the Rochester library, built in 1903. The building's historic interior is well suited to house a library and a gallery simultaneously. Art works are also found along the walls of the building's more recent addition. A banner in the 2nd floor gallery proclaims "Art for Everyone" in keeping with RMFA's mission to make quality art accessible to all.



Figure 29. Carnegie Gallery, Rochester Public Library, 2nd floor.

THE OPERA HOUSE

As is the case with the RMFA, the [Opera House](#) strives to make theatrical performances, music, and dance readily accessible to a wide audience, as reflected in the organization's logo "Arts for All Since 1908." Following several decades of decline during the mid-20th century (when the theater doubled as a gymnasium), a non-profit brought the venue back to life during the late 1990's. Their efforts met with spectacular success, and the theater has been restored to its 1908 grandeur. The Opera House is a significant component of the cultural life of the community, as the venue draws large audiences from throughout the region, and it has been a strategic asset in efforts to revitalize the downtown.

ROCHESTER PERFORMANCE & ARTS CENTER

The [Rochester Performance & Arts Center](#) (RPAC) is an affiliate of the non-profit Rochester Opera House. The RPAC opened in 2017 in the heart of downtown. The center includes a 150-seat recital hall, practice studios, a recording studio, and an art gallery. RPAC offers folks of all ages a range of classes and lessons in art, dance, music, and theater. These educational offerings are well patronized by community members.



Figure 30. RPAC Studio.

The basement of the facility serves as a de facto annex to the Opera House where costumes are stored, and theatrical backdrops and props are fabricated (see photo right).

As is the case with the Opera House, RPAC draws a significant number of patrons to the downtown, and for that reason the RPAC is an asset in efforts to revitalize the city center.



Figure 31. RPAC serves as an annex to the Opera House.

MURALS

Rochester is evolving into an artistic hub for southeastern New Hampshire, perhaps most visibly evidenced by a multitude of murals that appeared on the sides of buildings in the city center during the past decade. It is an exciting development. The artistic styles of the murals and the subject matter vary widely. The contributing artists include Sarah Koff, Bianca Mireless, Laura Harper Lake, Nate Twombly, Scotty Arsenaault, Susan Schwake, Mike Durkee, Dan Tavis, Josh Danin, Rachel Carpenter, Tom Glover, Michele Johnsen, and James Chase. Outside of downtown, Holly McKay painted a mural of downtown's Central Square.

Finally, Rochester's Matt Wyatt has arranged to reproduce large scale copies of historic postcards on the side of the Fire Station.

The murals are best viewed in person. However, if that is not possible or convenient, you may take a virtual tour via the [City's website](#).



Figure 32. Greetings from Rochester" (Columbus Avenue) by Bianca Mireles

MUSIC, DANCE, AND COMMUNITY EVENTS

Many of Rochester's restaurants offer a convenient venue for local musicians, as do the new performance stages at Central Square and Wyandotte Alley. Perhaps the most popular musical development in recent years is a free outdoor music festival known as Porchfest. In 2022, more than 30 bands from around the region performed. This annual festival is spread across the city center, thus allowing music fans to hear a variety of genres by simply walking from one city block to the next. Proceeds from the \$10 admissions fee go to support students at the Rochester Performance & Arts Center.

Concerts on the Commons continue to be one of Rochester's most popular cultural events, as evidenced by strong support among respondents to the 2023 public opinion survey. The annual LILA Dance Festival (on the Common) draws professional dance companies and performers from throughout the northeastern US.

Other popular events include the Lilac Fun Festival, Wings & Wheels, Free Comic Book Day, and holiday parades.

4. Economic impact of the arts

The arts benefit the local economy in multiple respects. Audiences drawn to cultural events tend to patronize nearby businesses, particularly those in the hospitality sector. For example, Portsmouth’s renowned restaurant success was in part driven by the renovation of the Music Hall and other arts-related destinations in the city center.

[Americans for the Arts](#) cites a refurbished theater in downtown Greensboro, NC that resulted in a 25% increase in patronage at nearby restaurants on show nights.¹⁰

The presence of a cultural organization has been shown to increase nearby residential property values by 20%.¹¹

In 2016, Americans for the Arts analyzed the fiscal impact of the arts in Rochester during FY 2015. The organization gathered data by interviewing 773 patrons at



Figure 33. Opera House stage.

cultural events via a methodology known as audience-intercept surveys. The average spending, excluding the cost of admission, was \$23.07 per patron.¹² This figure becomes more impressive when viewed in the context of a total attendance of 342,538 at arts and cultural events. The patrons spent \$7.9 million in Rochester, excluding the cost of admission.

The report notes that nonprofit arts and cultural organizations are businesses in their own right. In Rochester, these entities spent \$4.4 million during fiscal year 2015 to employ people locally, purchase goods and services from local establishments, and to attract tourists.¹³

How many local residents owe their employment to the arts? During the fiscal year 2015-2016, the Americans for the Arts calculated that spending (in Rochester) by arts and cultural organizations, and their audiences, generated 405 full time (equivalent) jobs with a total payroll of \$8,080,000.¹⁴

The data cited above suggests that a compelling case can be made that to the extent that the community invests in the arts, economic benefits will follow, to the benefit of a broad spectrum of the population.

5. Case studies to inspire us

CASE STUDY #1 – NASHUA, NH

Nashua has a history that is similar to Rochester's. The textile and shoe industries drove the economic development of both communities during the 19th century. In both cases, the requisite labor was supplied largely by immigrants. The largest numbers from this group had emigrated from French speaking Quebec in the late 19th century. When the textile and shoe industries departed New England, both communities struggled to regain their economic footing.

At Nashua's riverfront [Parc De Notre Renaissance Française](#), a 6-foot-tall sculpture (right) pays tribute to the women and children who worked in the mills. Along the riverwalk, illustrated historical signs tell a compelling story of hardship, hard work, and perseverance.



Figure 34. "La Dame et son fil Émile" by Christopher Gowell.

A sculpture walkway runs along the Nashua River's north bank. Native plants and trees are identified by informative plaques. Community gardens are situated at several locations downtown.

A local non-profit, [Positive Street Art](#) (see photo right), has been active since 2011 painting multi-story murals throughout the downtown and making clever use of LED lighting to illuminate the murals and nearby masonry walls. The organization sponsors the Downtown Arts Fest, community photography contests, and dance workshops.



Figure35. Water Street ramp.

CASE STUDY #2

LOWELL, MA

As was the case with Rochester and Nashua, Lowell, MA, too, struggled to rebound from the loss of industry in the mid-20th century. In 1987, community members established the [Lowell Folk Festival](#), and in 1990, the Summer Music Series. The festivals celebrate Lowell's industrial history, its ethnic heritage, and the community's diverse population. Lowell has demonstrated that music can be utilized to strengthen community bonds and can serve as a significant contributor to the local economy.



Figure 36. Photo courtesy of the City of Lowell.

CASE STUDY #3

LAWRENCE, MA

Also established in 1987 was [Bread & Roses Labor Day Festival](#), in Lawrence, MA, an event “that celebrates Lawrence’s history and diverse cultures through music, theater, dance, and art.” This event is family friendly. The all-day festival is held on Campagnone Common in the city’s downtown.

Outdoor theatrical productions are among the more popular activities at the festival.

Walking tours take in the city’s historic sites in the vicinity of downtown. Free trolleys bring visitors to historic sites that are situated further afield.

Admittedly, Rochester’s population is less than half that of Lawrence, however it’s possible that some of what makes the Bread & Roses festival so popular could be replicated in Rochester on a smaller scale.



Figure 37. Bread & Roses Labor Day Festival.

CASE STUDY #4 – FOOD TRUCK PARKS IN DURHAM, NH AND WELLS, ME

[Tideline Public House](#) in Durham recently opened what is billed as New Hampshire’s only year-round food truck court. The complex boasts up to 7 food trucks, three tap rooms serving craft beer, live music, fire pits, cornhole, and a children’s play area with a sandbox. The facility is billed as family and dog friendly.

Since 2017, [Congdon’s](#) in Wells has been hosting 10+ food trucks at a time. For a while, Congdon’s claimed to be New England’s only food truck park. The truck fare is complimented by a Maine-centric beer garden and live music. Like the Tideline Public House, Congdon’s is family and pet friendly.

The culinary offerings at both parks are diverse. As the trucks constantly rotate, the fare is far more expansive than what could be sampled in any one evening.

The food truck parks are fun, casual, situated outdoors, reasonably priced, appeal to all ages, and conducive to building community. The owners of Rochester’s downtown eating establishments work hard to play an important role in revitalizing the city center, hence food trucks should be situated well outside of downtown so as not to compete with the city’s brick & mortar restaurants.



Figure 38. Tideline food truck park in Durham, NH.



Figure 39. Congdon's Food Truck Park in Wells, Maine.

CASE STUDY #5 – HISTORIC PRESERVATION TAX CREDITS

The Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives Program allows for a 20% investment tax credit for rehabilitating historic buildings and placing them in service as income producing buildings, i.e. buildings that will be utilized as commercial, industrial, and/or rental residential space.

To qualify for these tax credits, the building must be: 1) listed on the National Register of Historic Places, 2) recognized to be eligible for listing by the National Park Service, or 3) situated in a National Register District as a contributing building. Rochester's (downtown) National Register District includes approximately 100 buildings, most of which meet criteria #3.

In 2020, a local real estate developer completed a \$3.6 million conversion of Somersworth's Hilltop School (see photo above) into 24 apartments, thereby qualifying for a tax credit in the amount of \$720,000. The company also utilized the tax credit for the \$17 million renovation of Newmarket's mills (see page that follows).

In 2003, the Emily Cross House, situated immediately south of the Rochester Library, was restored at a cost of \$200,000, thus qualifying the owners for a federal tax credit in the amount of \$40,000.

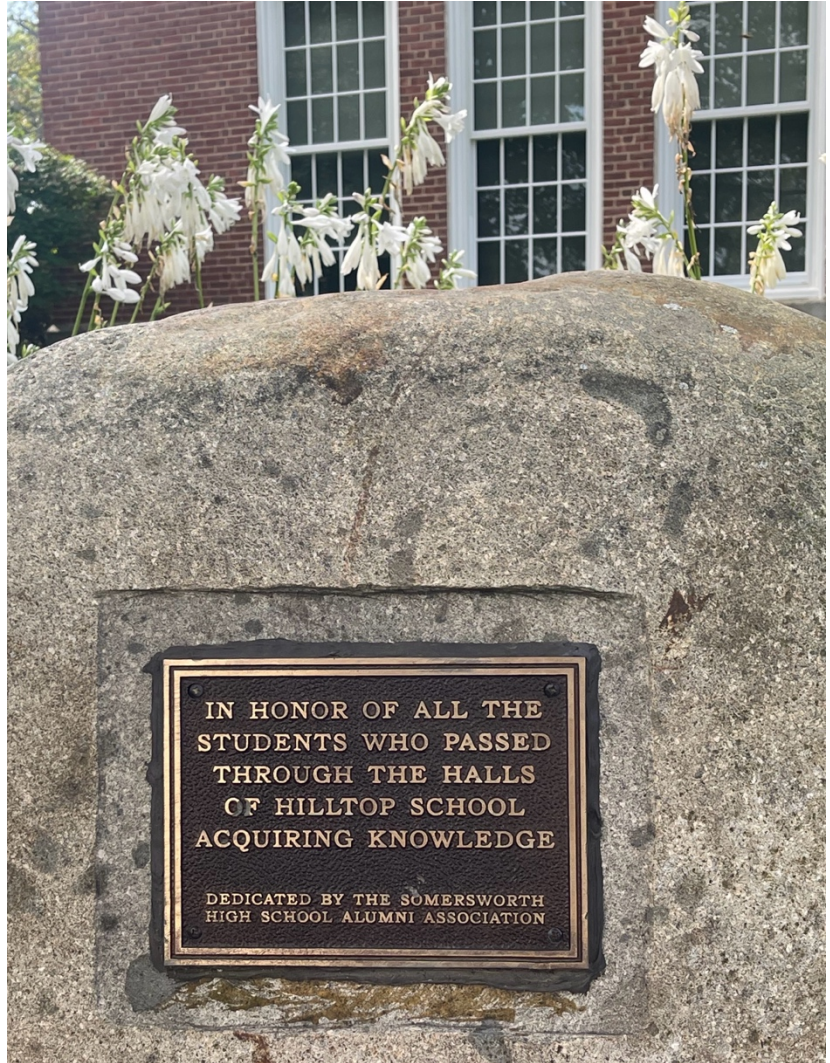


Figure 40. Somersworth's Hilltop School.

The 20% credit is oftentimes the difference between a profitable conversion and one that results in a financial loss. The tax credit program could be useful tool in spurring the revitalization of Rochester's downtown.

Gonic and East Rochester may qualify to be National Register Historic Districts. Further assessment would be required to determine eligibility.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation published a comprehensive list of the 34 development projects in New Hampshire that took advantage of the tax credit program between 2001 and 2021. For details, see Appendix A that follows.



Figure 41. Newmarket Manufacturing Company's Cotton Mill #2, built in 1825. The \$17 million redevelopment of the Newmarket mills utilized the 20% Historic Preservation Tax Credit.

6. Where does the community wish to go?

The authors of this Master Plan chapter sought an answer to that question via a [public opinion survey](#), followed by a lively dialogue during Downtown Architecture and Public Art Walking Tour in May 2023. The Rochester Arts & Culture Commission contributed a number of recommendations, as did the Historic District Commission. The public input is included in this document, as it is the authors' intent to ensure that Rochester residents and business owners drive the planning process, and that the plan's goals and recommendations reflect the aspirations of the community.



Figure 42. Rochester Bandstand.

In 2023, the City reached out to Rochester residents and business owners via a public opinion survey. [Eighty responded](#). The survey was intended to gauge public opinion on various proposals related to the community's cultural and historic resources. The response was varied and thoughtful. Many intriguing ideas and proposals were put forward. Survey results are reproduced on the pages that follow.

Question 6.1 *WHERE ARE YOUR FAVORITE BUILDINGS AND LANDSCAPES, AND WHAT MAKES THAT BUILDING OR PLACE UNIQUE?*

Downtown received a “favorite” from 60 respondents. The reasons cited include the following:

- The Age and Style
- Old and historic feel
- The historical architecture
- Murals downtown
- I love the parks and the historical buildings like the opera house.
- Old architecture
- The architecture. Always sad to see when another historic building comes down.
- People
- I really like the eclectic and community driven focus of newer businesses downtown.
- Small town feel with the conveniences of a bigger city.
- The murals!
- I like the character of the older buildings of Downtown, along with the art that is on display.
- There are more “third places” downtown/where I live- more options to hang out.
- Landscape and artwork. Also, the quaint nearby neighborhoods that represent the various decades of Rochester’s history.
- Brick, river view, historic.
- Appreciate the variety of the downtown architecture.
- Older buildings have character.
- The history of use changes over the years illustrates Rochester’s transformation and deep history.
- I like the historical aspect of these buildings.
- Style and era of the building.
- I like the older buildings.
- A mix of buildings from different eras blended together.
- The character and history.
- The old structures.
- Some of the buildings are becoming modernized and it doesn’t fit what Rochester is.
- Architecture and age of old brick buildings.
- The history, varied businesses, and community events and support.
- My grandfather worked at the Wyandotte mill.
- They are old and local.
- People live in them... they have character because people care about the places they live and there’s a “hustle and bustle” to people going about their days.
- Need more housing period but definitely more dense housing at that.
- Downtown has interesting shops that really capture my time and attention.
- Music, good bars/restaurants.
- The varied architectural styles present in the downtown and how they relate to the streetscape.
- The brick colonial/New England architecture.
- The history of these structures.
- Victorian era elegance.
- The downtown definitely has its charms with the older buildings. Sometimes I think what it must have been like for all the trolley cars and people going from shop to shop.



Figure 43. Hayes Block, 2 North Main St., 1878.

Rural Areas were favored by 36 respondents. Reasons cited included the following:

- Country setting.
- Nature, space less people.
- It's peaceful and scenic.
- Really enjoy nature trails and hikes in the more rural areas.
- New England style architecture.
- Open fields and forest.
- Architecture, the care property owners take to maintain properties, maintaining our ag heritage.

- Enjoy the scenic views of Gagne Farm and looking into the Rochester valley and the hills in the distance.
- The farming and manufacturing history of our city.
- Agricultural areas/farms add to our unique NH backdrop. I also like undeveloped lands.
- Open space & architecture.
- It's quiet... anyplace I can escape from traffic is a good place for me.
- I prefer nature and lack of buildings and people presence.

Rural areas are also a necessity for biodiversity and need to remain undeveloped.

- The rural areas are the classic New England agricultural beauty that's becoming more scarce.
- The history and calmness.
- The history of agriculture and presently the beauty.
- Nature and animals.
- The city architecture and rural vistas provides Rochester with its unique identity.

East Rochester was favored by 4 respondents.

Reasons cited included the following:

- East side is like its own separate entity from Rochester where there's a wonderful, small community of people centered along the Maine border.
- The East Rochester fire station is the cutest thing ever! Too bad it wasn't turned into a museum.

Gonic was favored by 12. Reasons cited included the following:

- Love Gonic trails and Pickering Pond.
- Gonic mill is nice looking too.
- The Gonic Mills are aesthetically pleasing, and Gonic itself is a unique suburb outside of Rochester itself.



Figure 44. Mill Office, Chochoeco Woolen Manufacturing Company, East Rochester.

Question 6.2 WHY DO YOU THINK HISTORIC RESOURCES ARE IMPORTANT?

Other comments included:

- All of the above.
- Remember the past.
- Sense of place to acknowledge who we can be better as a community.
- Preservation of heritage for future generations.
- Understanding our past dictates how we proceed into our futures.
- Mostly a sense of place.
- I don't like to see chain business architecture or some of the more modern architecture that does not fit with a New England town.

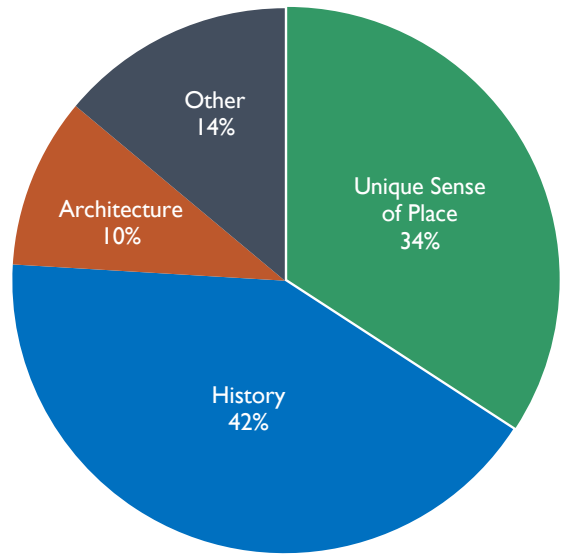


Figure 45. Importance of Historic Resources.

Question 6.3 IF ROCHESTER OFFERED WALKING TOURS TO THE PUBLIC ON A WEEKEND, WOULD YOU BE LIKELY TO JOIN ONE OR MORE OF THE TOURS?

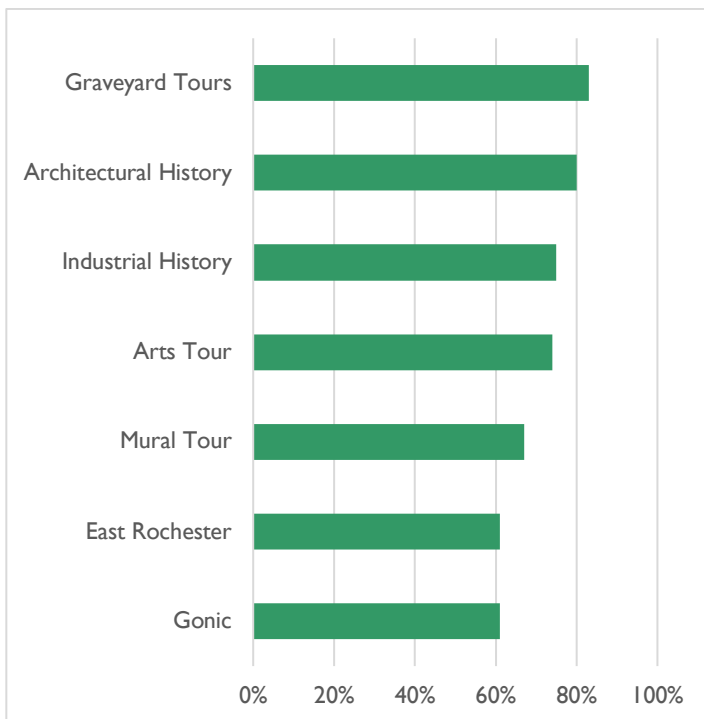


Figure 46. Walking Tours.



Figure 47. Downtown Architectural and Public Art Walking Tour, May 17, 2023. Photo by Liz Durfee.

Question 6.4 SEVERAL OF THE DOWNTOWN’S HISTORIC BUILDINGS ARE BEING RE-PURPOSED TO HOUSE RESIDENTS, OFFICES, AND LOCAL BUSINESSES. DO YOU SEE THIS AS A POSITIVE TREND IN TERMS OF:

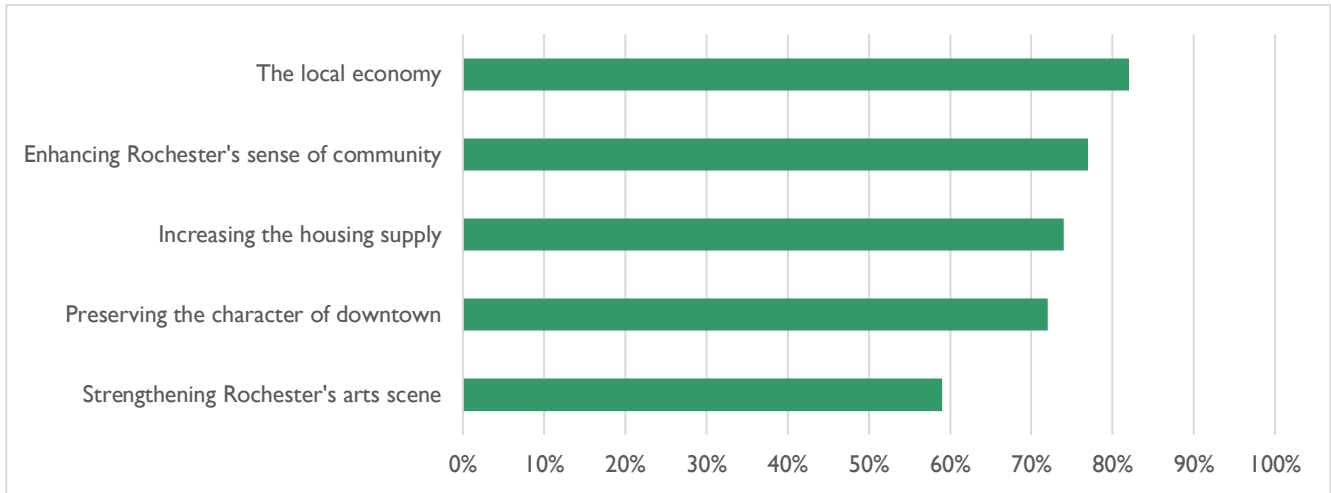


Figure 48. Downtown Buildings Being Re-Purposed.

Question 6.5 DO YOU SUPPORT THE ADOPTION OF A DEMOLITION DELAY ORDINANCE IN ROCHESTER?

In some communities, outlying rural areas are subject to a delay for proposed demolition of historic structures. The delay provides time for third parties to offer the property owner an attractive alternative to demolition. Forty comments were submitted with this question.

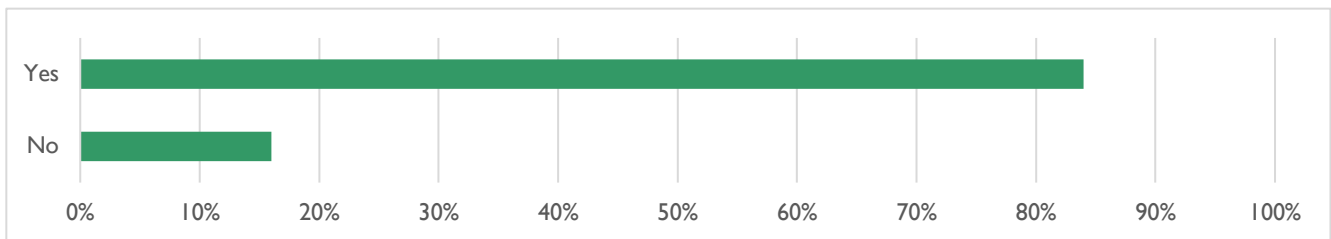


Figure 49. Demolition Delay Ordinance.

Question 6.6 *HOW SHOULD ROCHESTER APPROACH THE PROTECTION OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS?*

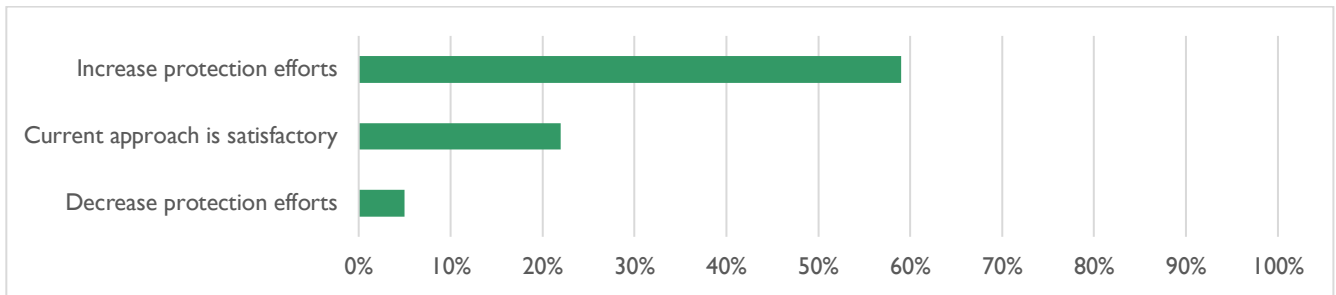


Figure 50. Protection Efforts.

Question 6.7 *DO YOU FAVOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN HISTORIC DISTRICT IN GONIC?*

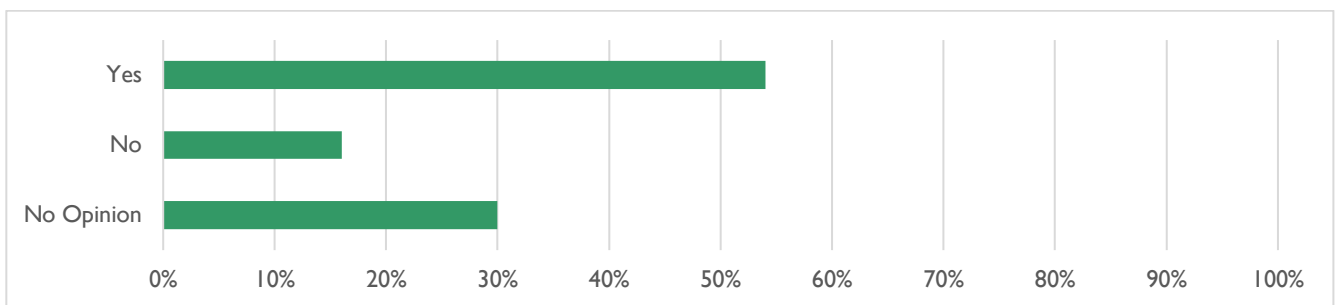


Figure 51. Historic District in Gonic.

Question 6.8 *DO YOU FAVOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN HISTORIC DISTRICT IN EAST ROCHESTER?*

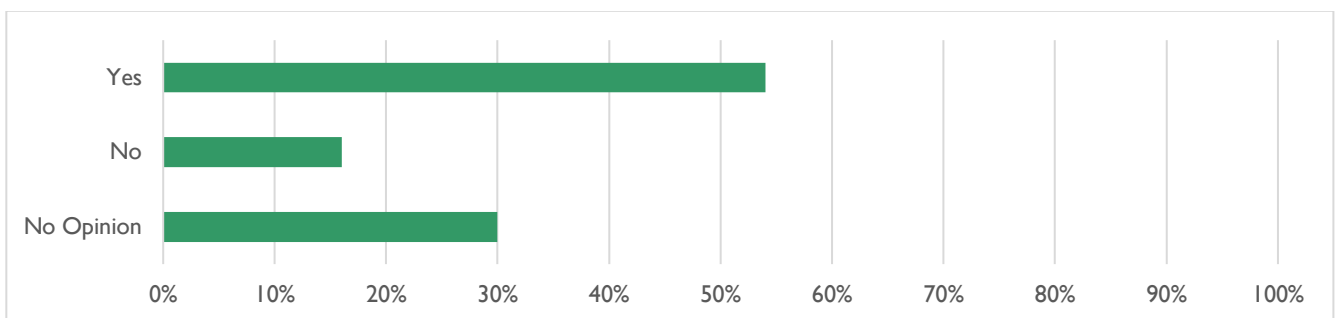


Figure 52. Historic District in East Rochester.

Question 6.9 DO YOU FAVOR THE EXPANSION OF ROCHESTER’S DOWNTOWN HISTORIC DISTRICT, FOR EXAMPLE, IN THE DIRECTION OF ROCHESTER HILL?

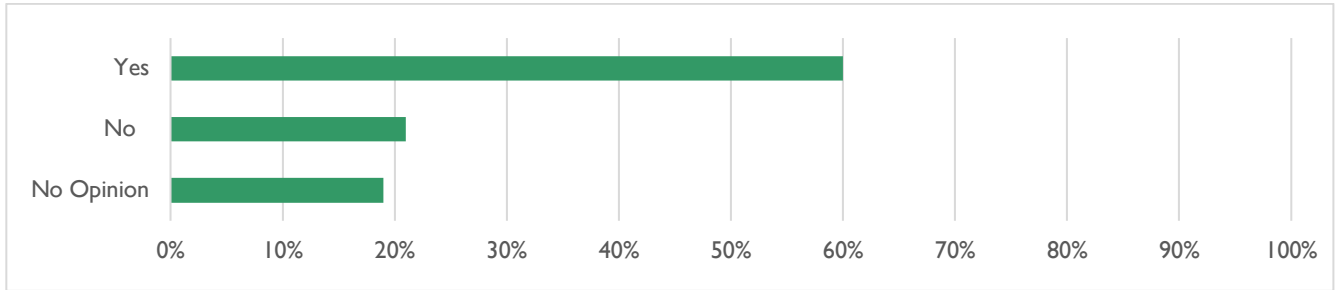


Figure 53. Expansion of the Historic District.

Question 6.10 DO YOU FAVOR A VOLUNTARY HISTORIC MARKER PROGRAM?

Typically, historic markers are small signs on the front of historic buildings that indicate the name of the builder or first owner and the year the building was constructed.

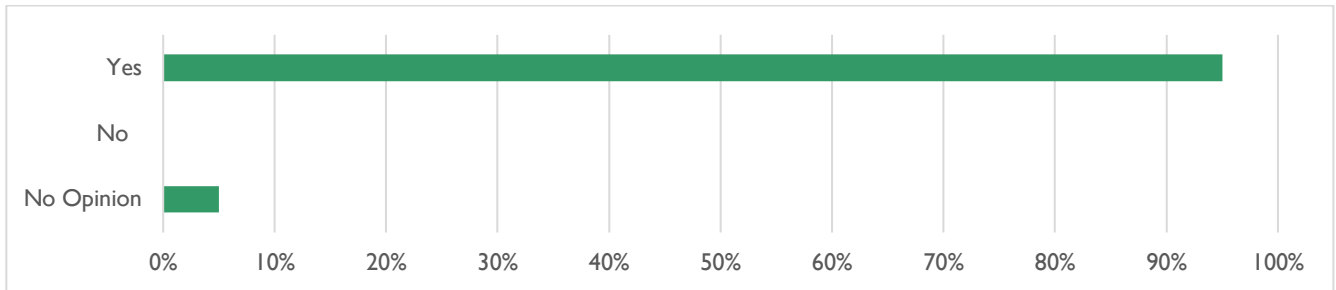


Figure 54. Historic Markers.

Question 6.11 DO YOU FAVOR AN INCREASE IN PUBLIC FUNDING FOR THE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION FOR THEIR PROGRAMMING AND HISTORIC RESOURCES PROTECTION EFFORTS?

The Historic District Commission (HDC) has a budget of about \$500/year.

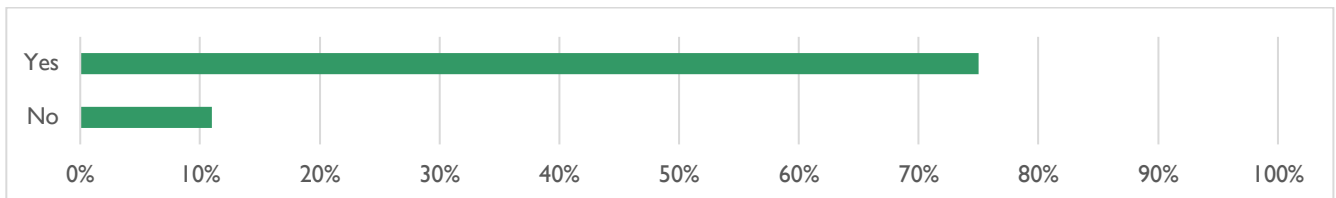


Figure 55. Increase in HDC Funding.

Question 6.12 IF YOU WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR ALLOCATING \$10 TO CULTURAL AND HISTORIC RESOURCES, HOW WOULD YOU SPEND IT?

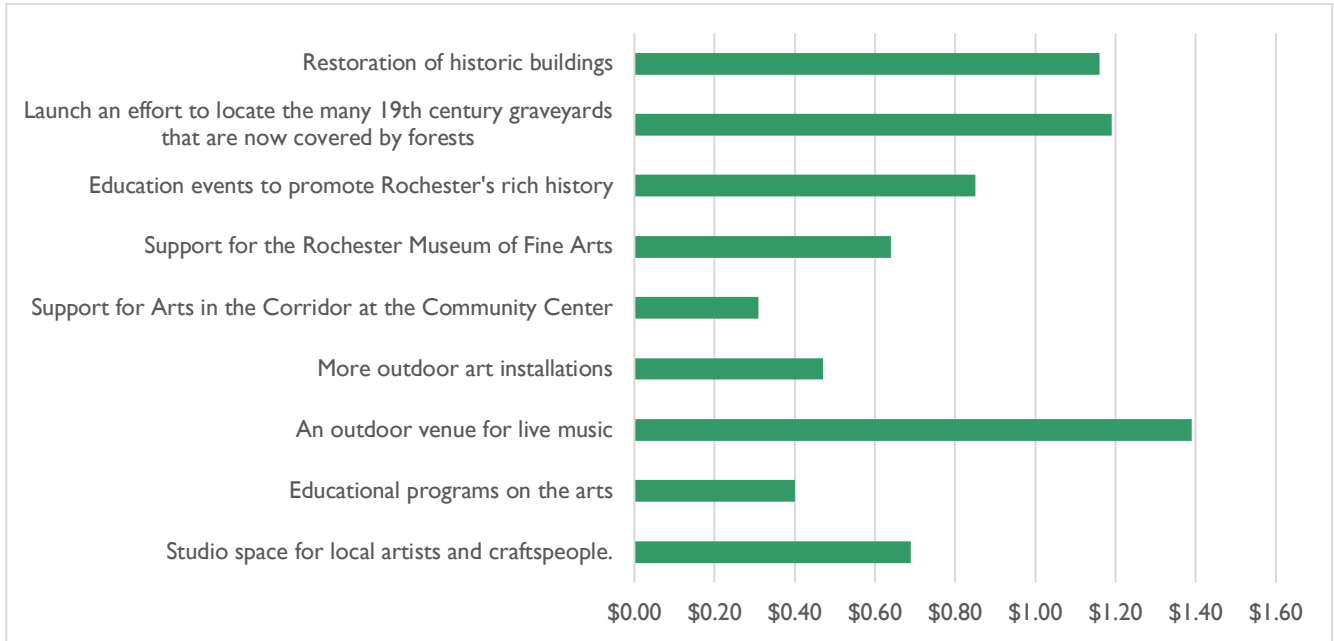


Figure 56. Allocation of \$10.

Question 6.13 IN RECENT YEARS, A LIVELY ARTS SCENE EMERGED IN ROCHESTER. PLEASE INDICATE YOUR LEVEL OF SUPPORT.

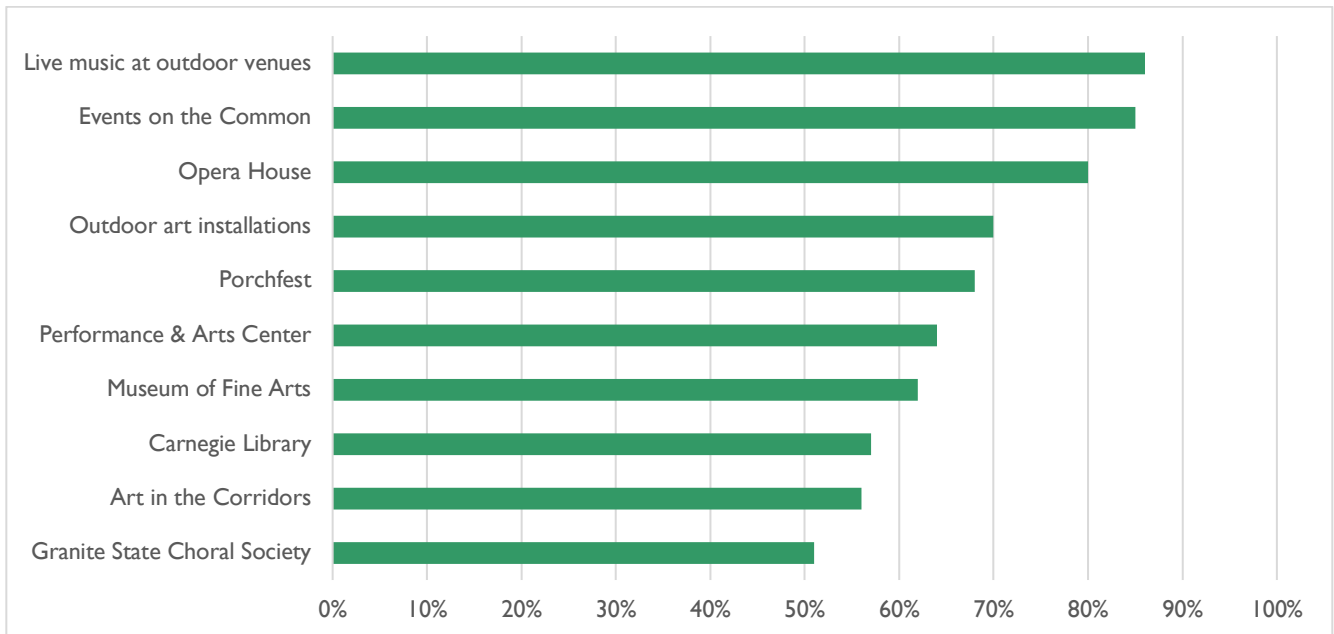


Figure 57. Level of support.

Question 6.14 ARE THERE OTHER TYPES OF CULTURAL/ARTISTIC EVENTS THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE IN ROCHESTER?

- Summer Food Trucks.
- More senior citizen events and groups/clubs. For instance, a singing choir of seniors with a recital to support other events/programs. This could happen by charging a low fee to attend the recital. Keeps seniors vibrant, relevant and gives back.
- Maybe connect with the NH arts and humanities council who host many art and cultural events.
- More concerts, larger concerts, perhaps on the common with larger acts. Community intramural sports for adults such as basketball, baseball, softball, etc.
- Craft fairs, festivals not carnivals. I would really like to see the Rochester fair raised the way it was meant to be. I hope someday they figure it out. It would be a great place for a venue for some of these festivals and other concerts
- I would love to see the farmers market brought back, with an artistic or cultural tie-in
- More outdoor live music.
- A downtown festival would be nice. A Lilac festival in spring?
- I would like to see the quality programming we attend at Rochester Opera House be more available to the public.
- Fiber arts.



Figure 58. Opera House props and costumes are in the basement of the Performance & Arts Center.

- Community art projects. More community engagement in creating art or music. Looking at art or listening to music is passive.

More emphasis on Free Comic Book Day. Dover has Apple Harvest Day, Portsmouth Market Square Day. Rochester needs a similar festival, might as well make it Free Comic Book Day. Turn it into a bigger event than it already is.

- Rochester had 17 woolen mills, including Rochester, east Rochester and Gonic. Textiles were a major part of the life here and it is forgotten. You have people who have a lot of knowledge here and in the area, how about promoting a textile event, similar to comic day, Porchfest, etc.

- Bigger pride scene. craft fairs/farmers markets without admission/vendor fees.

- When you ask if a person is supportive, I would generally support the organizations existing, but would be strongly opposed to being forever to subsidize them with tax dollars. Because of this, I wasn't able to indicate my level of support.

- Symphony and marching band shows that were very popular during the 60s and 70s to encourage Rochester's young people to become active in the community's tremendous music programs. During the 1970s, Spaulding High School Marching Band won several trophies and were earned the title Best in Small Band Competition trophy in the state alongside Portsmouth High School's Best

in Large Band Competition trophy. Also, Spaulding's concert band earned straight A's in the Large Group competition held at Plymouth State University, then Plymouth State College. These tremendous achievements should be acknowledged by the city.

- Indigenous markers and historic events and education.



Figure 59. Holy Rosary Credit Union Main Street Stage.

- More support for the opera house.
- Gazebo should be opened as a bandstand, farmers markets, more lighting downtown to promote a feeling of safety and bring a nightlife to it. Honestly, I would make the main street through downtown similar to Burlington (pedestrian only)/ during certain times).
- Bring back the Shoes!!!!
- Maybe a French Festival or something similar. I say French because of the history of so many French-Canadian

residents.

- History and arts event of the original Native American inhabitants of the Rochester area.

- Outdoor theater and dance.

- Additional interactive community days, perhaps movies on the common, open arts and crafts days, more art and culture use of the fairgrounds

- Bring back Midnight Madness and have more downtown activities.

- Pow Wow. Educate today's people of those which were here before us. Lectures on the history of Rochester. Maps of historical buildings and events.

- Costumed re-enactments of the heyday of Rochester.

- I like the walking tour, I loved the Rochesteropoly game, the historical books, and John G. Calendars. Our community events and orgs like Rochester Main Street are invaluable.

- No.

- I would like to see more involvement of the residents of Rochester in community art projects. More projects that are not passive entertainment.

- Food truck showcase/festival. Shut down Main Street for pedestrians only a couple times in the summer.

- Yes - the celebrating of other ethnic cultures especially indigenous. Also promoting food. We have lots of local diverse culture in the food category! Could be a great way

to tie in celebrating other ethnicities.

- Heritage festivals for our Irish and French-Canadian populations.

- More support for the Rochester Historical Society building and programs. Surprised this venue was not one of the options for question.



Figure 60. The Fairgrounds. Photo courtesy of John Gisis.

Pop-up events are temporary events in unique spaces that offer the passersby a brief sampling of local art, dance, music, crafts, theater, photo opportunities and refreshments. After a few hours or a few days, the event disappears.

Question 6.15 *WOULD YOU SUPPORT POP-UP EVENTS IN THE DOWNTOWN AREA INSIDE EMPTY STOREFRONTS, AT OUTDOOR SPACES, AND OTHER LOCATIONS?*

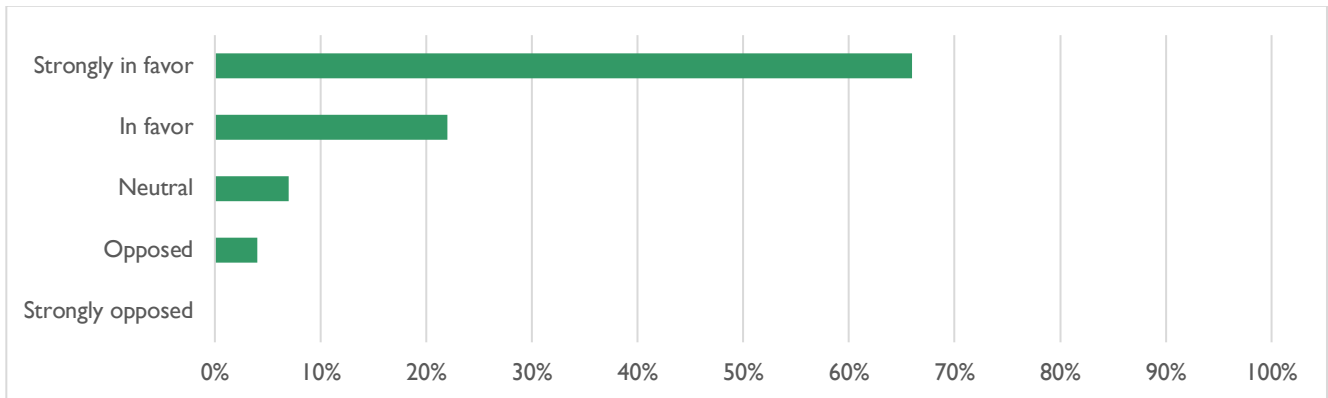


Figure 61. Pop-Ups.

Question 6.16 *WOULD YOU FAVOR A SEASONAL FOOD TRUCK PARK (IN A CASUAL ATMOSPHERE, WITH OUTDOOR SEATING) TO BE LOCATED SOMEWHERE OTHER THAN DOWNTOWN?*

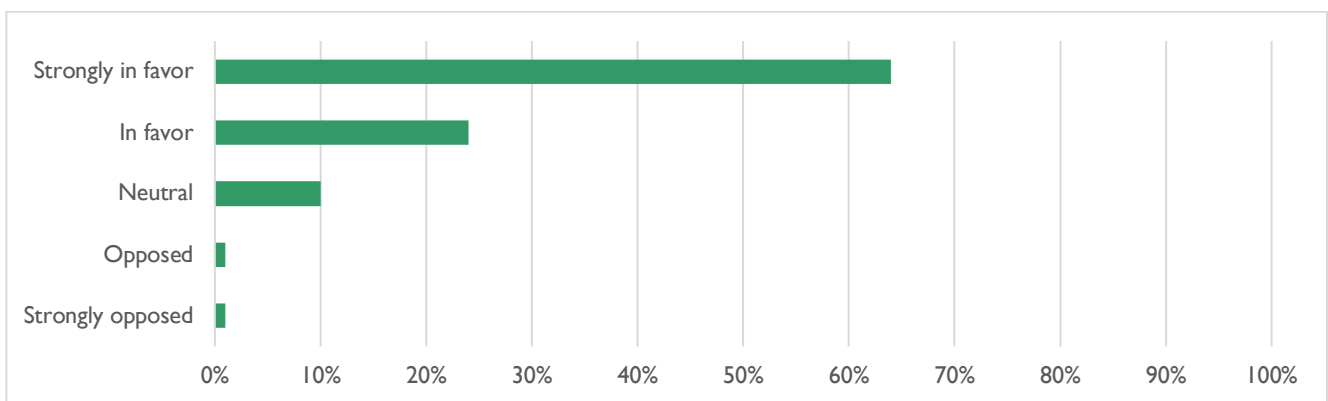


Figure 62. Food Truck Parks.

Question 6.17 WHAT TYPES OF LIVE ENTERTAINMENT VENUES WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE IN ROCHESTER? WHERE?

- I like concerts. The Commons.
 - Music
 - I'd love to see some seasonal historical things. Like a Halloween cemetery tour, Christmas celebration or food event that is Era specific....
 - Rec center, high school auditorium, commons, fairgrounds. (We don't utilize the fairgrounds enough,)the old ways of farming and crafts should be taught and displayed
- more!!!
- Commons or governor's inn area
 - More comedy, music, and historical events and venues
 - Larger venue maybe outside for larger more well-known artists
 - Country line dancing/the old brooks pharmacy, Ben Franklin building
 - Country line dancing venue
- Prescott park types, movies at the Commons however lack of parking makes it difficult Rochester fair ground. Spaulding high
 - Outdoor music
 - Local music. Concert in the park type events
 - Making more use of our shared spaces for music small plays
 - I would love to see an amphitheater constructed for outdoor live events.



Figure 63. Rochester Common in autumn.

- More for youth and seniors. Traveling shows to public and senior housing sites.
- Daily or weekly pop-up musical concerts around 3:30 or 4 pm downtown, 20-30 minutes. Ability to square dance, place to sit and listen, congregate with friends. Community gathering.
- Something like Prescott Park in Portsmouth - open space suitable for temporary stages with permanent buildings for concessions etc.
- Outdoor music, shows and plays.
- Live music, beer garden
- outdoor venue at the commons
- Would appreciate venues located within walking distance of downtown creating a vibrancy to the area and also providing visibility and support to the businesses downtown.
- Gonic mills?
- Emphasis on symphony and Broadway plays held at the Rochester Music Hall and utilizing Spaulding High School's beautiful, historic auditorium, in addition to The Commons. The bandstand is rarely used, and it is difficult to understand why. Rochester's families used to picnic on The Commons and listened to musicians from the community. Keep the holiday parades, also, that began and concluded at The Commons for Memorial Day, July 4th, and Spaulding High Football victories, and at Christmas.
- I'd like to see the grandstand at the commons used more. We have the space, why don't we use it more?
- Music venue at fairgrounds
- Bandstands outdoor, expand out into Eastern Rochester/clean it up, lilac mall area, also lowes/kohls mall up by Estes Rd. There could be a "skyshow" type event there- fireworks, music, with a view! Huge mostly empty parking lot...with great sunsets!
- Something intimate that is multi-purpose near downtown, perhaps near the river/riverwalk
- Local music arts, community theater
- Outdoor stage
- Like the one in Henry Law Park in Dover. Downtown
- Something outdoors along the river.
- Live music at the fairgrounds, to be used for larger acts.
- A sheltered area for entertainment for events regardless of weather. At the Pines.
- More utilization of the fairgrounds for concerts, community events (learning how to grow your own food/container garden, etc.)
- Bands at the commons or even the fairgrounds
- More outdoor Family friendly music events such as the Garage. (my grandchildren from Vermont always ask to go back to the Garage for music, dance and swing from the big tree). Music on the Common. Frequent porchfest(s) providing younger musicians or up and coming bands notoriety.
- Concerts by the Granite State Choral Society at Spaulding H.S.
- Bring back the comedy club! It was great and I got friends from Dover and Portsmouth to come here for fun! I like social media the Historical Society ours out and YouTube videos about our city's history.
- More free events, outdoor theater. Not sure about new locations.
- More family-oriented stuff.
- Music/concert hall with stage and standing room.
- Local venue for musicians and food
- Rentable theatre/venue in Gonic Mills
- PBA regulation bowling (NOT string pin)
- Music, in Gonic would be really neat for a smaller venue!
- More outdoor shows. Larger scale concerts.
- Use of Spaulding High School's beautiful auditorium/Cochecho River waterfront

Question 6.18 WHAT ACTIONS DO YOU THINK THE CITY CAN TAKE TO SUPPORT THE ARTS?

- Ease up on all the red tape, for non-profit without it we would not be growing as a community.
- Recognize them.
- Keep making these family friendly events that include all.
- Paint in the park, knit in public day, ask an artist forums, for all ages, theater for seniors: seniors act, make props, work the play for all ages to watch. Regular and low-cost class and workshops for all to dabble in the arts. The city can promote all of the aforementioned.
- Financial support and lifting red tape with policies.
- Provide funding and appoint dedicated professionals to organize meaningful events in the spirit of national night out
- Create a safer evening and nighttime space. Maybe somewhere within walking distance to downtown since parking in town is a nightmare
- Parking! Keeping it free and keeping space instead of subtracting spaces.
- Not sure
- Advertise! Half the time I only learn about events when I drive past them.
- Make it easier for musicians and artists to use the shared
- space like parks
- Don't be so rigid with the ordinances.
- More promotion.
- More advertisement
- For food trucks, why does the city mandate additional city permitting and not accept state licensing as being good enough. This is just another money grab and the food license you need is expensive and is not prorated. Doing business in Rochester, many are walking away due to unfriendliness. Why does the ridge seem to get the spotlight, i.e. food trucks allowed? Support local, not big box!
- Earmark more funding, more surveys like these
- I would like to see the City retake control of the Opera House. Hire a City Arts director to manage programs and art across the City. The ROH has the potential to bring in positive revenue under the right management. Any person who has watch what has happened over the years can see that it is being mismanaged all the while the director has attacked city agencies for their failures and decline in positive and meaningful entertainment.
- Invest in the arts
- offer \$\$\$ to local artists. sponsor their work. artists can't
- create without bills being paid.
- Investment in the infrastructure of the Opera House, encouraging and supporting more outdoor art, i.e. sculptures, murals,
- Don't get in the way (i.e. zoning). And this may fall on deaf ears, but please don't provide grants. If individuals or organizations wish to support and arts effort, then they will choose to do so. We shouldn't be forcing Rochester residents and organizations to pay for art.
- Pay artists and musicians for art
- Rochester should expand its musical talent because the city's families have a rich history in its music programs including the 1956 All State Choir that cut a 45 record with the Gospel song, Rock-a-My Soul in the Bosom of Abraham which was a tremendous achievement for the participants. Have never seen anything written about this historic event and it's a shame.
- Invest in the arts Use the people and resources already in Place.
- Keep politics out of the arts
- Funding, promotion. Outdoor dining.
- More outreach, engagement, and promotion.

- Reach out to local artisans and community members to share talent
- Funding
- I think the city does a good job supporting the arts.
- Mural space on currently sad looking buildings.
- Seek more grants for arts

buildings entry ways. Musicians playing at the park on Wakefield and North Main Street.

- Frankly - I think the middle and high schools should begin by playing light classical music during lunch. You have to start somewhere, and exposure to classical music is PROVEN to have a positive effect on academics across the board.

space for more live shows and music, festivals and events to showcase art and artists of different forms.

- Live venues / events.
- Stronger social media presence of news and events.
- invest resources (money and time)



Figure 64. Art In The Corridor, James W. Foley Community Center.

- Host an art festival, like Exeter and Dover have. Encourage live demonstrations and interactive activities. Have events during the evenings and weekends so people can bring their families
- Outdoor venues of people creating their art. Have people with easels painting at empty Rochester, NH Master Plan

- Continue strong collaboration with our community partners. Increase affordable housing to bring in working class, more public art.
- Invest in an amphitheater, provide more free events.
- Build studio space for artists to make and show art, build

- Ensure that housing is affordable AND attainable so that artists can continue to afford to live in Rochester.
- Encourage artists to move here.
- Support financially/Support Rochester Main St/Support existing resources and venue

DOWNTOWN ARCHITECTURAL AND PUBLIC ART WALKING TOUR

On May 17, 2023, 27 Rochester residents and business owners joined city staff and the master plan consultants for a downtown walking tour. They discussed Rochester’s ethnic history and how successive waves of immigrants shaped the community during the 19th and early 20th century. The built environment in the city center is part of that legacy.

The group examined public art installations, discussed preferences and the type of installations they would like to see going forward.

The tour served as an introduction to architectural history. Participants honed their skills at spotting clues in the streetscape that reveal changes over time, and the reasons for those changes.

Tour attendees discussed modern design and how that may be integrated into downtown’s historic fabric in a manner that does not detract from the district’s historic character. They also discussed rooftop solar panels, slate roofs, the repointing of historic masonry walls, and the neoclassical styles that characterized new buildings during an era of prosperity in Rochester from 1890 to 1920.

The importance of the Cocheco River in Rochester’s story was recognized, as was the potential of the riverfront to enhance outdoor recreation. Opinion was unanimous in favor of more historic plaques such as the one that tells the story of the Scenic Theater.



Figure 65. Downtown Architectural and Public Art Walking Tour. Photo by Liz Durfee. May 2023.

PUBLIC ART

Would you like to see more such installations? Ideas for locations? The following responses were noted:

- Like the vinyl on murals so that they don't fade and don't require maintenance.
- Would like to see more sculptures, different artists.
- Like the effort to get more art from the museum into the library.
- Don't love some of the artwork, but like the concept of murals.
- Would like to expand the presence of sculptures out of Downtown.

A discussion ensued on preferred themes for public art. Industrial heritage? Immigration? Celebration of diversity in contemporary Rochester? Seen here is Rachel Carpenter's mural on the Hartigan Block.



Figure 66. Downtown Architectural and Public Art Walking Tour. Photo by Liz Durfee. May 2023.

MODERN BUILDINGS

One participant commented on a controversial new building in Portsmouth, known as the Brick Market, or the Hearth Food Garden. The design is clever and imaginative, but how does it relate to the surrounding buildings? Would such a structure be appropriate in Rochester's historic district? Opinion was mixed. An architectural historian who also serves as vice chair on Portsmouth's HDC, joined the tour, and she was asked to weigh in on this question. Much discussion ensued. Opinions were decidedly mixed.

The discussion on modern architecture resumed when the group approached the Hoffman Block. This building was under construction at the time, and is taller than any seen in Rochester since the early 1900's. Is it too big? Response was mixed. The master plan consultants suggested that density is required to keep housing costs down, and to foster a vibrant, walkable downtown. Participants agreed, disagreed or were mixed?

HIDDEN CLUES IN PLAIN SIGHT

The tour revealed little noticed details on some of the older buildings. For example, the commercial structure at 44 North Main appears at first glance to date to the mid-20th century. Going around to the rear of the building, we spied a c. 1840 window sash up in the attic (shown here to the right). This type of detective work was well received by participants.

SLATE ROOFS

How many slate roofs are in downtown, and why are they special? Answer: They last forever and have a unique aesthetic appeal. Unfortunately, it is easy to lose these roofs because few roofers have the knowledge to make minor repairs. The group then spotted half a dozen slate roofs, most of which they had not noticed before.

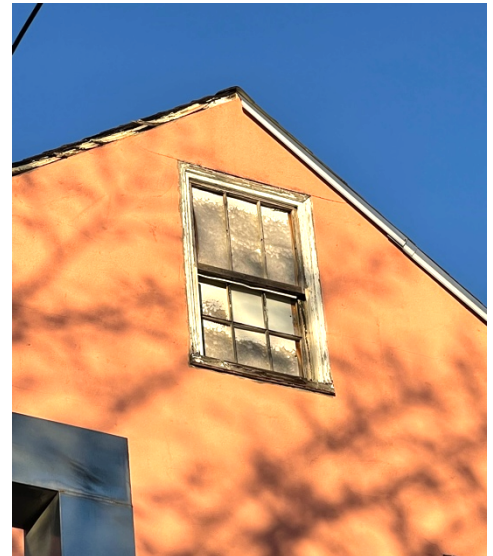


Figure 67. Rear, 44 North Main St.

CLASSICAL ORDERS

Rochester's economy peaked in the period from 1890 to 1920. That prosperity is reflected in the large buildings erected downtown during that era. Attendees learned to distinguish between the various classical orders, and the reasons that Rochester's economic elite favored classical architecture during this period.

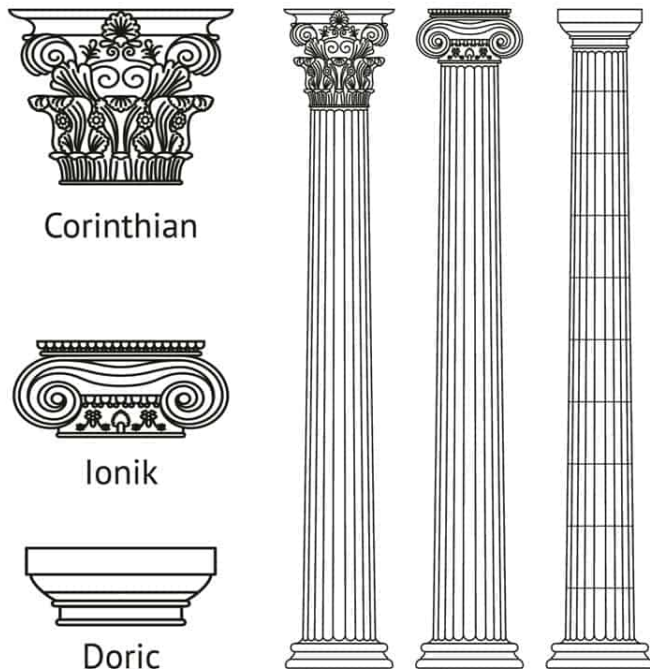


Figure 68. Classical Orders.



Figure 69. Rochester Trust Company, South Main Street, 1903.

HISTORIC PLAQUE COMMEMORATING THE SCENIC THEATER

In 2022, the city installed a historic plaque in Central Square commemorating the reuse of the historic Scenic Theatre and the building's history. The plaque included both a write-up as well as historic photos. The question was broached: Should we install more such plaques in Rochester? Opinion was unanimously in favor.

MASONRY WALLS

Attendees inspected several repointing jobs. Some of the work was respectful of the historic buildings, others were not. The HDC should ensure that owners of masonry buildings understand appropriate repointing techniques.

WYANDOTTE MILL

The history of industry in Rochester was discussed, and the central role of waterpower provided by the Cocheco and Salmon Falls rivers. One participant pointed out that much of the mill's old electrical generating plant remains inside the Wyandotte and should be preserved; maybe even open to the public. .



Figure 70. Wyandotte Mill.

COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS BY THE ARTS & CULTURE COMMISSION

The master plan consultants met with the Commission on December 13, 2022, to solicit input for the plan. The question posed to commission members was where do you want the city to be in five to ten years? A brief synopsis of their comments, observations, recollections, and responses follows.

- Interactive art map – add missing items
- Arts Stream moved out in 2014
- A lot of negative perceptions of the city as a whole, but Rochester is ready
- Mix of negative perceptions and who we really are
- Lots of music, a lot of local artists, art is displayed all over, people are very supportive
- Music at farmers market
- Shoe factory now housing,
- Future, art could be more encompassed in housing
- Shoes created with high school, lots of community involvement
- Art is Free did the shoe thing, post cards, community painting project, tried to do a project every summer, disbanded now, last project to paint traffic boxes
- All restaurants have music porters, governor's, revolution, lilac grill, garage, Mitchell hill, fallen leaf, smokeys
- Trunk or treat, parade, 4th of July event, opportunities to
- bring in more arts and culture, do more hands-on things, table at event, porch fest, comic book day, opportunity to bring people in.
- Where we can capitalize on the Ridge
- The Rec – outdoor space
- Rochester residents vs. tourists, distinction between the two, make sure tourist events are accessible
- Rochester on the commons – needed amplification outdoor, celeste just bought a PA system (gov channel runner)
- Granite State Choral Society
- Interest in using common space from other groups
- Anything done in Central Square or Commons would need amplification
- Fairgrounds is a space that is vastly underutilized, would love to see something like a Meadowbrook, outdoor concerts, used more, build it up, private for profit controls the space, not a good relationship with the City, their board has had a lot of turnover, covenant that the land is one doesn't let them do everything
- Really rural parts of Rochester
- Fairgrounds has an exhibition hall, historic building
- Outdoor part of culture – demo derby, snow mobile, agrarian aesthetic, Sanborn Hope Farm, farm folks
- Looking at Keene, similar sized city, doing a lot
- Used to be a Native American group at the fairgrounds
- Recognize indigenous land that we are on
- Great events, looking more at bigger names, picking Rochester over Dover, picking Rochester to put on their own events, Common, Parson-Main Statue Area, High School, Lilac City parking lot, are their big landowners and ag land.
- Zombie walk
- Indoor space, not outrageous to rent the space
- Community Center is acoustically bad
- RPAC and the opera house, how often do they put on shows/host/rent space for shows that aren't their own?

- RPAC venue
- Encourage musicians to live and practice here, accessibility to practice space, commercial rental space
- Noise ordinance may be a problem, there are some ordinances around sculptures and murals – lots of hand holding needed for getting a mural permit
- Digital mural tour, talked about doing a walking tour
- Tunnels – opera house to the annex
- Town supported art teachers in the school, town supported art community, funded art projects for kids, artwork displayed at town hall, something that every third grader does
- Did a student project with vacant storefronts
- Library has staged exhibits done by elementary schools
- Who this is for? – family town, having things that are oriented towards the whole family.
- Competitive gaming facility
- Theater space at the lilac mall
- Dance/gymnastics
- Underused spaces some housing developments have
- community space, the Rec is pretty booked
- Main street doing alright, what’s going to happen on Hansen Street
- Riverwalk folks, kayak launch
- Field on winter street, where the dentist office was
- Indoor space like Wentworth
- Studleys opens their space up in the back, festival
- Food security
- Is the community room available on Sundays in the community center
- Shaded space for the farmers market
- Bring more food vendors.
- Food truck park? Mondays and Tuesdays not in downtown to avoid competition
- Back hill beer company, Gonic mills
- Restaurants open less than pre-covid
- Cliff newton Facebook page – old photos of Gonic
- Performance art – holiday parade
- Comic book day
- Demo derby
- Bull riding and rodeos
- Utilize farmland
- Rochester carnival
- Christmas
- Rochester Art Pac 150
- Spaces for musicians to practice
- Utilize vacant store fronts
- Display student art works
- Check in with Marie Lejeame at library – monthly rotation
- Gaming competitions
- Behind Allen School – a Victorian park
- Ben Franklin building
- Studley Festival of Trees – south of the Governor’s Inn
- Farmers’ Market inside the community room
- Art Map
- Lots of live music, artists, lots of venues

7. Goals & Recommendations

The goals and recommendations that follow were largely derived from input provided by Rochester residents, business owners, and City officials. The reader will likely notice that the recommendations follow closely with public preferences expressed in the survey (page 29 above) and opinions shared by those who attended the Downtown Architecture and Public Art Walking Tour in May 2023.

GOAL A - PROTECT THE HISTORIC CHARACTER OF ROCHESTER

RECOMMENDATIONS

- A-1. Increase public funding for the Historic District Commission.
- A-2. Minimize the visibility of rooftop solar and HVAC from public ways.
- A-3. Every effort should be made to preserve slate roofs because they enhance historic character and last 200+ years.
- A-4. Provide adequate oversight for the re-pointing of historic masonry.
- A-5. Restore and rehabilitate downtown historic buildings to spur the local economy, enhance Rochester's sense of community, increase the housing supply, preserve the character of downtown, and strengthen Rochester's arts scene.
- A-6. Increase protection for historic buildings.
- A-7. Explore the possibility of adopting a historic district in Gonic. Solicit input from Gonic residents prior to submitting a formal proposal.
- A-8. Explore the possibility of adopting a historic district in East Rochester. Solicit input from East Rochester residents prior to submitting a formal proposal.
- A-9. Explore the possibility of adopting a historic district in the vicinity of Rochester Hill. Solicit input from impacted residents prior to submitting a formal proposal.
- A-10. Compile a comprehensive inventory of Rochester's cultural and historic resources that are situated outside of downtown. Include 18th & 19th century family graveyards.
- A-11. Adopt a demolition delay ordinance.
- A-12. Due to several building losses from fire and demolition, the National Register district boundaries may require some adjustment. The City should confer with the NH Division of Historical Resources.
- A-13. The NH Preservation Alliance publicizes seven historic buildings that are currently facing threats of demolition. The alliance terms this the "Seven to Save" list. Rochester could establish a similar program at the local level.

GOAL B - PROVIDE LOCAL RESIDENTS WITH EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES TO BETTER APPRECIATE ROCHESTER'S HERITAGE, ARTS AND CULTURE

RECOMMENDATIONS

- B-1. Organize and promote walking tours of graveyards, architectural history, arts, murals, Gonic, and East Rochester.
- B-2. The City should organize and promote an historic marker program that would permit property owners to affix a small plaque to the front of the building indicating the age of the building, and its notable occupants.
- B-3. Expand and support the placement of plaques similar to the one opposite the Scenic Theater that explains (in one or two paragraphs) the historic significance of various buildings and sites at appropriate locations throughout Rochester. The history of indigenous peoples should also be recognized.
- B-4. In recognition of the role played by the textile industry during the 19th and 20th centuries, exhibits should be organized around the fiber arts.
- B-5. Bring back The Shoe. This unique artwork was created with enthusiastic participation by community members, particularly high school students.
- B-6. Expand and support heritage festivals featuring the Irish, French Canadian, and others. Celebrate their role in Rochester's history.
- B-7. Expand and support costumed re-enactments of historic events in Rochester.
- B-8. Periodically conduct public opinion surveys such as the one that supported this update to the master plan.
- B-9. The City should consider issuing preservation awards on an annual basis.
- B-10. The City should organize a photography contest with a theme of "things people treasure in Rochester."



Figure 71. Civil War Soldier, 1885

GOAL C – PRESERVE ROCHESTER’S AGRICULTURAL HERITAGE

RECOMMENDATIONS

- C-1. Bring a farmers’ market back to Rochester.
- C-2. Celebrate Rochester’s agricultural heritage via exhibits that demonstrate traditional agricultural practices.
- C-3. Expand and support events that teach participants how to grow their own food.
- C-4. Support local agriculture, e.g., the Sanborn Hope Farm.
- C-5. Utilize farmland for cultural events.
- C-6. Protect agricultural open space.
- C-7. A number of outlying sites worthy of protection are found along Meaderboro Road and Ten Rod Road. Also noteworthy is the Jacobs Farm along Portland Street. Protect Salmon Falls River viewsheds, pastoral landscapes, and historic farmhouses and barns. Preservation of the latter may be facilitated by tax incentives as per RSA 79-E.
- C-8. Promote public awareness NH RSA 79-D that authorizes cities to grant property tax relief to barn owners in exchange for an easement that guarantees the building’s maintenance for at least 10 years.

GOAL D - PROTECT ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES AND 19TH CENTURY FAMILY GRAVEYARDS

RECOMMENDATIONS

- D-1. The protection for archaeological resources is specified in Rochester’s Subdivision Regulations. These protections should be extended to all large development proposals, and particularly those in the vicinity of the Cocheco and Salmon Falls Rivers. Where the rivers’ water elevation drops, i.e., at rapids and dam sites, proponents of large projects should be required to perform a Phase IA Archaeological Sensitivity Assessment.
- D-2. There are upwards of 50 cemeteries and graveyards in Rochester (see Appendix B for a detailed list). These are important historical resources, and they should be located and preserved.



Figure 72. Northside Cemetery

GOAL E - SUPPORT ROCHESTER'S CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS AND EXPAND CULTURAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ROCHESTER RESIDENTS

RECOMMENDATIONS

- E-1. Support the Opera House and the Performance & Arts Center. Encourage a diversified repertoire to include more symphonies and Broadway plays.
- E-2. The City should support the Rochester Museum of Fine Arts. An annual appropriation would make a great difference.
- E-3. Continue to bring art to the library.
- E-4. Support the Rochester Historical Society and its programs, particularly the video series on Rochester history.
- E-5. Encourage studio space for artists to make and show art, as was done at the Salmon Falls Mills in Rollinsford. Amend the zoning ordinance to encourage the establishment of studio space, as necessary.
- E-6. Support more outdoor art, sculptures, and murals. Promote sculptures outside of downtown.
- E-7. Identify appropriate sites for pop-up events. Amend municipal codes and ordinances as necessary and help to promote these events.
- E-8. Encourage fairground management to hold craft and arts fairs and festivals. The 19th century exhibition hall would be a great place to exhibit.
- E-9. Construct an outdoor stage like the one at Henry Law Park in Dover, perhaps along the river. Alternately, construct an amphitheater that could host outdoor music, dance, and theater productions.
- E-10. Encourage the establishment of a small performance space, perhaps in a location near the high school or community center.
- E-11. Expand and support community art projects and more community engagement in creating art and music.
- E-12. Construct a performance space for entertainment at Hanson Pines.
- E-13. Encourage comedy shows.
- E-14. Expand and support more family-friendly events.
- E-15. Expand and support Paint in the Park, knit in public day, ask an artist forum for all ages, theater for seniors where seniors act, make props, work the play for all ages to watch, and low-cost classes and workshops for all to dabble in the arts.
- E-16. Provide funding to organize meaningful events in the spirit of National Night Out.
- E-17. Seek more grants for the arts.
- E-18. Design outdoor venues for people to create art. Work with the Rochester Economic Development Department to display art in vacant commercial business's store-front windows.
- E-19. Work to ensure that housing is affordable and attainable so that artists can continue to afford to live in Rochester.
- E-20. Support local choral groups such as the Granite State Choral Society.

- E-21. Regulatory requirements for cultural events should be streamlined to make it easier for musicians and artists to use the parks.
- E-22. Support varied events at the Fairground.
- E-23. Promote student art projects in vacant storefronts.
- E-24. The library should host student art.
- E-25. Establish performance space at the Lilac Mall.
- E-26. Establish venues for dance and gymnastics.
- E-27. Expand and support gaming competitions.
- E-28. Expand programming for events on the Common, e.g., more concerts, more events with larger acts, and outdoor movies.
- E-29. Continue the tradition of holiday parades on Memorial Day, July 4th, high school football victories, and during other holidays.



Figure 73. Rochester Opera House

GOAL F - PROVIDE MORE MUSIC-RELATED OPPORTUNITIES FOR ROCHESTER RESIDENTS

RECOMMENDATIONS

- F-1. Plan and construct an outdoor venue for live music that is large enough to attract well known artists.
- F-2. Support musical events such as Porchfest, and expand opportunities for live musical performances.
- F-3. Expand and support a singing choir of all ages.
- F-4. Expand symphony and marching band programs at the high school, and classical music at the Middle School.
- F-5. Support and expand music venues, e.g. consider the Common, the Garage at Governor's Inn, the recreation center, the high school, fairgrounds, Brooks Pharmacy, the Ben Franklin building, sites along the Cocheco River, the park at Wakefield & North Main, at a farmers' market, and in restaurants.
- F-6. Bring county line dancing to Rochester.
- F-7. Promote live music in a beer garden environment.
- F-8. Establish and promote smaller venues for music.
- F-9. Permit sky-show type events with fireworks and music at the Lilac Mall and at Lowes and Kohls. Partner with the Rochester Airport to expand and promote the Wings and Wheels festival.
- F-10. Encourage musicians to live in Rochester and identify suitable places to practice.

GOAL G - EXPAND ROCHESTER'S CULINARY OFFERINGS

RECOMMENDATIONS

- G-1. Identify appropriate sites for food trucks and clusters of food trucks outside of the downtown area so that the trucks are not competing directly with downtown restaurants. Then amend municipal codes and ordinances as necessary to enable the trucks to do business in the city.
- G-2. Hold food events that are era specific.

GOAL H - BRING MORE PEDESTRIANS DOWNTOWN

RECOMMENDATIONS

- H-1. Organize and support downtown festivals and events that are unique to Rochester, e.g. free comic book day, or one that celebrates Rochester former textile industry, and a larger LGBT celebration.
- H-2. Convert downtown streets to pedestrian only during certain events.
- H-3. Enhance the pedestrian experience downtown by introducing traffic calming measures, installing pedestrian crossing signals, and lowering the speed limit. Install more lighting to instill a feeling of safety.
- H-4. Increase density to help keep housing costs down, and to foster a vibrant, walkable downtown. Bring residential and commercial density back to 19th and early 20th century levels by ensuring that municipal land use regulations (appropriate setbacks and minimal or no off-street parking requirements) support such density.
- H-5. Reclaim some of the surface parking lots for residential and small business use.
- H-6. Expand and support arts and crafts events and festivals similar to the ones in Exeter and Dover.
- H-7. Expand and support holiday celebrations.
- H-8. Engage in more outreach and promotion of cultural events utilizing a strong social media presence and engage local residents via tabling at outdoor cultural events.
- H-9. Encourage outdoor dining.
- H-10. Reclaim the historic Cocheco riverfront for public recreation in a manner that is consistent with Rochester's 2018 Riverwalk Master Plan.



Figure 74. Arch above Factory Court Pedestrian Walkway

GOAL I – CONTINUE DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION EFFORTS

Downtown Rochester’s historic character and its unique sense of place are two of the city’s greatest assets in terms of stimulating economic development and growth. The City has several strategies readily available to stimulate and guide revitalization. These include the following:

RECOMMENDATIONS

- I-1. Promote federal tax credits for historic building rehabilitation. See Case Study #5 above (page 28) and in Appendix A for more details on this program.
- I-2. Promote NH RSA 79-E that includes provisions to incentivize private investment in historic downtown buildings by deferring increases in property taxes.
- I-3. Suburban parking standards that are found in many zoning ordinances are oftentimes a bad fit for historic downtowns such as Rochester’s. The city center predates the automobile, and hence was not laid out to accommodate vehicle storage. In order to facilitate the conversion of underutilized historic buildings in the city center to residential use, the relaxation of the zoning ordinance’s minimum off-street requirements is a strategy worth considering. This approach worked well in downtown Manchester and in downtown Dover.
- I-4. Install more lighting to instill a feeling of safety.
- I-5. Electric vehicle (EV) fast chargers provide a charge in 25 minutes (not to be confused with Level 2 chargers that require many hours to do the job). Tesla’s installation at Hannaford provides an example of the strategic advantages afforded by this technology. Hannaford customers plug in, do their grocery shopping, and when they exit store, their vehicles are charged. Retail chains understand that the chargers provide them with a competitive advantage and are good for business. The City should help to ensure that local businesses situated in the city center enjoy the same competitive advantage as the chain stores at Rochester’s periphery.
- I-6. Pocket parks and places where the public can sit and relax enhance the pedestrian experience in the city center, and are well suited for outdoor dining, a cup of coffee, live music, a pop-up event, performance artists, or a combination of the above.
- I-7. The HDC could assist 79-E applicants by advocating on their behalf at the City Council meetings.

8. Implementation Schedule

The Implementation Schedule (on the next page) utilizes abbreviations to identify those parties who are responsible for implementing this Master Plan chapter’s ninety-one recommendations in a timely manner, and also those parties who are potential partners. In the implementation schedule on the pages that follow, the recommended project priorities and costs are each rated Low (L), Medium (M), or High (H).

Responsible Parties and Potential Partners

ACC	Arts & Culture Commission	MFA	Museum of Fine Arts
BD	Building Department	O	Rochester Opera House
C	Conservation Commission	PAC	Rochester Performance & Arts Center
CC	City Council	PB	Planning Board
CM	City Manager	PD	Planning & Development Department
DHR	NH Division of Historic Resources	PI	Public Information & Com. Engagement
ED	Economic Development Department	PW	Public Works Department
HDC	Historic District Commission	R	Recreation
HS	Rochester Historical Society	S	Schools
L	Library		



Figure 75. Rochester Opera House

#	Recommendation	Responsible Parties	Priority	Cost	Potential Partners
A-1	Increase public funding for the Historic District Commission.	CC	M	L	HDC
A-2	Minimize the visibility of rooftop solar and HVAC from public ways.	PD HDC	M	L	-
A-3	Every effort should be made to preserve slate roofs because they enhance historic character and last 200+ years.	BD HDC	H	L	PD
A-4	Provide adequate oversight for the re-pointing of historic masonry.	BD HDC	H	L	PD
A-5	Restore and rehabilitate downtown historic buildings to spur the local economy, enhance Rochester’s sense of community, increase the housing supply, preserve the character of downtown, and strengthen Rochester’s arts scene.	ED HDC	H	L	PD
A-6	Increase protection for historic buildings.	HDC CC	M	L	PD
A-7	Explore the possibility of adopting a historic district in Gonic. Solicit input from Gonic residents prior to submitting a formal proposal.	HDC PD	M	L	PB
A-8	Explore the possibility of adopting a historic district in East Rochester. Solicit input from East Rochester residents prior to submitting a formal proposal.	HDC PD	M	L	PB
A-9	Explore the possibility of adopting a historic district in the vicinity of Rochester Hill. Solicit input from impacted residents prior to submitting a formal proposal.	HDC PD	M	L	PB
A-10	Compile a comprehensive inventory of Rochester’s cultural and historic resources that are situated outside of downtown. Include 18 th & 19 th century family graveyards.	HDC PD	H	M	DHR HS
A-11	Adopt a demolition delay ordinance.	HDC & PD	M	L	PB
A-12	Due to several building losses from fire and demolition, the National Register district boundaries may require some adjustment. The City should confer with the NH Division of Historical Resources.	HDC PD	M	M	DHR
A-13	The NH Preservation Alliance publicizes seven historic buildings that are currently facing threats of demolition. The alliance terms this the “Seven to Save” list. Rochester could establish a similar program at the local level.	HDC	M	L	PD

#	Recommendation	Responsible Parties	Priority	Cost	Potential Partners
B-1	Organize and promote walking tours of graveyards, architectural history, arts, murals, Gonic, and East Rochester.	HDC PD	H	L	PI HS
B-2	The City should organize and promote an historic marker program that would permit property owners to affix a small plaque to the front of the building indicating the age of the building, and its notable occupants.	HDC PD	H	L	PI HS
B-3	Expand and support the placement of plaques similar to the one opposite the Scenic Theater that explains (in one or two paragraphs) the historic significance of various buildings and sites at appropriate locations throughout Rochester. The history of indigenous peoples should also be recognized.	HDC PD	H	M	PI HS
B-4	In recognition of the role played by the textile industry during the 19 th and 20 th centuries, exhibits should be organized around the fiber arts.	ACC PD	M	M	PI HS
B-5	Bring back The Shoe. This unique artwork was created with enthusiastic participation by community members, particularly high school students.	ACC	M	M	PI
B-6	Expand and support heritage festivals featuring the Irish, French Canadian, and others. Celebrate their role in Rochester's history.	ACC HDC	M	M	PI
B-7	Expand and support costumed re-enactments.	ACC HDC	M	L	HS
B-8	Periodically conduct public opinion surveys such as the one that supported this update to the master plan.	ACC HDC PD	L	L	ED
B-9	The City should consider issuing preservation awards on an annual basis.	HDC	H	L	PD
B-10	The City should organize a photography contest with a theme of "things people treasure in Rochester."	ACC	H	L	PI
C-1	Bring a farmers' market back to Rochester.	PD CM CC	M	L	PI
C-2	Celebrate Rochester's agricultural heritage via exhibits that demonstrate traditional agricultural practices.	ACC HDC	M	L	PI

#	Recommendation	Responsible Parties	Priority	Cost	Potential Partners
C-3	Expand and support events that teach participants how to grow their own food.	Con	M	L	S
C-4	Support local agriculture, e.g., the Sanborn Hope Farm.	Con	M	L	ACC
C-5	Utilize farmland for cultural events.	ACC	M	L	PD
C-6	Protect agricultural open space.	PB PD	H	H	CC
C-7	A number of outlying sites worthy of protection are be found along Meaderboro Road and Ten Rod Road. Also noteworthy is the Jacobs Farm along Portland Street. Protect Salmon Falls River viewsheds, pastoral landscapes, and historic farmhouses and barns. Preservation of the latter may be facilitated by tax incentives as per RSA 79-E.	HDC PD	H	M	Con
C-8	Promote public awareness NH RSA 79-D that authorizes cities to grant property tax relief to barn owners in exchange for an easement that guarantees the building’s maintenance for at least 10 years.	HDC PD	H	L	PI
D-1	The protection for archaeological resources is specified in Rochester’s Subdivision Regulations. These protections should be extended to all large development proposals, and particularly those in the vicinity of the Cocheco and Salmon Falls Rivers. Where the rivers’ water elevation drops, i.e., at rapids and dam sites, proponents of large projects should be required to perform a Phase IA Archaeological Sensitivity Assessment.	BD PB	H	L	DHR
D-2	There are upwards of 50 cemeteries and graveyards in Rochester (see Appendix B for a detailed list). These are important historical resources, and they should be located and preserved.	HDC	H	L	HS Con
E-1	Support the Opera House and the Performance & Arts Center. Encourage a diversified repertoire to include more symphonies and Broadway plays.	ACC CC	H	M	O
E-2	The City should support the Rochester Museum of Fine Arts. An annual appropriation would make a great difference.	ACC CC	H	L	MFA
E-3	Continue to bring art to the library.	MFA	H	L	L
E-4	Support the Rochester Historical Society and its programs, particularly the video series on Rochester history.	ACC CC	H	L	HS

#	Recommendation	Responsible Parties	Priority	Cost	Potential Partners
E-5	Encourage studio space for artists to make and show art, as was done at the Salmon Falls Mills in Rollinsford. Amend the zoning ordinance to encourage the establishment of studio space, as necessary.	ACC PD PB	M	L	PI
E-6	Support more outdoor art, sculptures, and murals. Promote sculptures outside of downtown.	ACC CC	H	L	PI
E-7	Identify appropriate sites for pop-up events. Amend municipal codes and ordinances as necessary and help to promote these events.	ACC PD PB	H	L	PI
E-8	Encourage fairground management to hold craft and arts fairs and festivals. The 19 th century exhibition hall would be a great place to exhibit.	ACC CM	M	L	-
E-9	Construct an outdoor stage like the one at Henry Law Park in Dover, perhaps along the river. Alternately, construct an amphitheater that could host outdoor music, dance, and theater productions.	ACC CC CM	M	M	PW
E-10	Encourage the establishment of a small performance space, perhaps in a location near the high school or community center.	ACC CC CM	M	L	PW
E-11	Expand and support community art projects and more community engagement in creating art and music.	ACC	M	L	-
E-12	Construct a performance space for entertainment at Hanson Pines.	ACC CC	M	M	PW
E-13	Encourage comedy shows.	ACC	M	L	-
E-14	Expand and support more family-friendly events.	ACC	M	L	R
E-15	Expand and support Paint in the Park, knit in public day, ask an artist forum for all ages, theater for seniors where seniors act, make props, work the play for all ages to watch, and low-cost classes and workshops for all to dabble in the arts.	ACC	M	L	R
E-16	Provide funding to organize meaningful events in the spirit of National Night Out.	ACC	M	L	CM
E-17	Seek more grants for the arts.	ACC PD	M	L	-
E-18	Design outdoor venues for people to create art. Work with the Rochester Economic Development Department to display art in vacant commercial business's store-front windows.	ACC	L	L	ED

#	Recommendation	Responsible Parties	Priority	Cost	Potential Partners
E-19	Work to ensure that housing is affordable and attainable so that artists can continue to afford to live in Rochester.	PD PB	M	H	CC
E-20	Support local choral groups such as the Granite State Choral Society.	ACC	M	L	-
E-21	Regulatory requirements for cultural events should be streamlined to make it easier for musicians and artists to use the parks.	PD BD CM	H	L	-
E-22	Support varied events at the Fairground.	ACC	M	L	-
E-23	Promote student art projects in vacant storefronts.	ACC	H	L	-
E-24	The library should host student art.	L	H	L	-
E-25	Establish performance space at the Lilac Mall.	ACC	M	L	-
E-26	Establish venues for dance and gymnastics.	ACC CC	M	M	PAC
E-27	Expand and support gaming competitions.	ACC	M	L	-
E-28	Expand programming for events on the Common, e.g., more concerts, more events with larger acts, and outdoor movies.	ACC CM	H	L	R
E-29	Continue the tradition of holiday parades on Memorial Day, July 4 th , high school football victories, and during other holidays.	CC CM	H	L	-
F-1	Plan and construct an outdoor venue for live music that is large enough to attract well known artists.	CC CM	M	H	ACC
F-2	Support musical events such as Porchfest and expand opportunities for live musical performances.	ACC CC	H	L	-
F-3	Expand and support a singing choir of all ages.	ACC	M	L	-
F-4	Expand symphony and marching band programs at the high school, and classical music at the Middle School.	ACC	M	L	S
F-5	Support and expand music venues, e.g. consider the Common, the Garage at Governor’s Inn, the recreation center, the high school, fairgrounds, Brooks Pharmacy, the Ben Franklin building, sites along the Cocheco River, the park at Wakefield & North Main, at a farmers’ market, and in restaurants.	ACC	M	L	-
F-6	Bring county line dancing to Rochester.	ACC	M	L	PAC
F-7	Promote live music in a beer garden environment.	ACC	M	L	ED
F-8	Establish and promote smaller venues for music.	ACC	M	L	ED
F-9	Permit sky-show type events with fireworks and music at the Lilac Mall and at Lowes and Kohls.	ACC	M	L	-
F-10	Encourage musicians to live in Rochester and identify suitable places to practice.	ACC PD	M	H	-

#	Recommendation	Responsible Parties	Priority	Cost	Potential Partners
G-1	Identify appropriate sites for food trucks and clusters of food trucks outside of the downtown area so that the trucks are not competing directly with downtown restaurants. Then amend municipal codes and ordinances as necessary to enable the trucks to do business in the city.	ED PD PB	H	L	CC
G-2	Hold food events that are era specific.	ACC	M	L	-
H-1	Organize and support downtown festivals and events that are unique to Rochester, e.g. free comic book day, or one that celebrates Rochester former textile industry, and a larger LGBT celebration.	ACC CM	M	L	R CC
H-2	Convert downtown streets to pedestrian only during certain events.	ACC CC	M	L	CM
H-3	Enhance the pedestrian experience downtown by introducing traffic calming measures, installing pedestrian crossing signals, and lowering the speed limit. Install more lighting to instill a feeling of safety.	CC PD ED	H	L	CM
H-4	Increase density to help keep housing costs down, and to foster a vibrant, walkable downtown. Bring residential and commercial density back to 19 th and early 20 th century levels by ensuring that municipal land use regulations (appropriate setbacks and minimal or no off-street parking requirements) support such density.	PD PB ED CC	H	L	HDC
H-5	Reclaim some of the surface parking lots for residential and small business use.	PD PB ED CC	H	L	HDC
H-6	Expand and support arts and crafts events and festivals similar to the ones in Exeter and Dover.	ACC	M	L	R
H-7	Expand and support holiday celebrations.	CC	M	L	ACC
H-8	Engage in more outreach and promotion of cultural events utilizing a strong social media presence and engage local residents via tabling at outdoor cultural events.	ACC	M	L	PI
H-9	Encourage outdoor dining.	ED	H	L	-
H-10	Reclaim the historic Cocheco riverfront for public recreation in a manner that is consistent with Rochester’s 2018 Riverwalk Master Plan.	PD CC	M	M	-
I-1	Promote federal tax credits for historic building rehabilitation. See Case Study #5 above (page 28) and in Appendix A for more details on this program.	ED PD	H	L	PI

#	Recommendation	Responsible Parties	Priority	Cost	Potential Partners
I-2	NH RSA 79-E includes provisions to incentivize private investment in historic downtown buildings by deferring increases in property taxes.	ED PD	H	L	PI
I-3	Suburban parking standards that are found in many zoning ordinances are oftentimes a bad fit for historic downtowns such as Rochester’s. The city center predates the automobile, and hence was not laid out to accommodate vehicle storage. In order to facilitate the conversion of underutilized historic buildings in the city center to residential use, the relaxation of the zoning ordinance’s minimum off-street requirements is a strategy worth considering. This approach worked well in downtown Manchester and in downtown Dover.	PD PB ED	H	L	CC
I-4	Install more lighting to instill a feeling of safety.	CM	H	M	CC
I-5	Electric vehicle (EV) fast chargers provide a charge in 25 minutes (not to be confused with Level 2 chargers that require many hours to do the job). Tesla’s installation at Hannaford provides an example of the strategic advantages afforded by this technology. Hannaford customers plug in, do their grocery shopping, and when they exit store, their vehicles are charged. Retail chains understand that the chargers provide them with a competitive advantage and are good for business. The City should help to ensure that local businesses situated in the city center enjoy the same competitive advantage as the chain stores at Rochester’s periphery.	ED	H	M	CC
I-6	Pocket parks and places where the public can sit and relax enhance the pedestrian experience in the city center, and are well suited for outdoor dining, a cup of coffee, live music, a pop-up event, performance artists, or a combination of the above.	ED ACC PD	H	M	CC
I-7	The HDC could assist 79-E applicants by advocating on their behalf at the City Council meetings.	HDC	M	L	CC

9. Further Reading

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Figure 76. Old Cold Spring Cemetery, East Rochester

Appendix A

HISTORIC PRESERVATION TAX CREDIT PROJECTS IN NH, 2001 TO 2022

Project Name	Municipality	Qualified Expenses (\$)	Fiscal Year	Project Use
St. Regis Academy	Berlin	5,414,553	2021	Housing
Burgess School / Notre Dame School	Berlin	7,659,443	2015	Housing
Goddard Block	Claremont	9,252,138	2021	Multi-Use
Boarding House / Store House #5, Monadnock Mills	Claremont	350,000	2017	Commercial
Oscar D. Brown Block - Blog. 1	Claremont	2,603,317	2010	Multi-Use
Monadnock Mills No. 2 and No. 6	Claremont	16,315,908	2009	Not Reported
McShane Block	Concord	530,977	2004	Multi-Use
Cocheco Manufacturing Company Mill #1	Dover	7,300,000	2020	Commercial
Woodbury Mill	Dover	8,215,000	2014	Housing
Cocheco Manufacturing Company-Mill#2 and Mill#3	Dover	6,542,492	2014	Multi-Use
Buzzell/ Burnham Houses (former Town Hall)	Durham	859,757	2019	Office
Riverbend Mill (formerly Acme Knitting Machine Co)	Franklin	11,572,436	2019	Housing
Faulkner & Colony Woolen Mill	Keene	10,000,000	2020	Commercial
Colony House	Keene	546,000	2005	Housing
Beaver Mills	Keene	167,000	2003	Multi-Use
Colonial Theater	Laconia	11,821,484	2022	Multi-Use
Mill No. 11 and Annex	Manchester	24,750,000	2019	Housing
Amoskeag New Mills No. 1, 2, 6 & Picker Houses	Manchester	8,100,000	2013	Housing
Dunlap Building	Manchester	1,785,737	2003	Multi-Use
Carpenter & Bean Block	Manchester	3,434,314	2002	Housing
Smith & Dow Block	Manchester	5,249,997	2002	Housing
Hillsborough Mills	Milford	8,484,000	2015	Other
Mill No. 1 and Boiler House	Nashua	24,000,000	2019	Housing
Nashua Manufacturing North Cotton Storehouse	Nashua	16,000,000	2014	Housing
Land Blacksmith Shop	Newmarket	870,000	2016	Housing
Newmarket Manufacturing Company	Newmarket	17,153,405	2013	Multi-Use
Drake Farm	North Hampton	600,000	2017	Housing
Lower Intervale Grange	Plymouth	120,000	2022	Multi-Use
Portsmouth Cottage Hospital	Portsmouth	2,524,395	2005	Housing
Emily Cross House	Rochester	200,000	2003	Multi-Use
Somersworth High School, aka Hilltop School	Somersworth	3,600,000	2021	Multi-Use
Mountain View House	Whitefield	11,417,418	2003	Hotel

Table 2. List of Tax Credit Projects in NH. The data in the table above was compiled by the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the Historic Tax Credit Coalition.

Appendix B

CEMETERIES AND GRAVEYARDS IN ROCHESTER

Cemetery/Graveyard	# of Grave stones	Location	GPS Coordinates
<u>Allen Burying Ground</u>	12	1103 Salmon Falls Road	43.29090, -70.91023
<u>Bickford - Hayes Cemetery</u>	23	Steele Road	43.24109, -70.96065
<u>Bickford Family Burial Ground #1</u>	1		
<u>Bickford Family Burial Ground #2</u>	6	Ten Rod Road & Melody	43.33472, -71.03278
<u>Brewster Farm Cemetery</u>	6	7 Janet Street	43.29583, -70.99083
<u>Caleb-Jackson Family Cemetery</u>	9	Rochester Hill Road	
<u>Clark Cemetery</u>	7	Bickford Road	43.30098, -71.00744
<u>Daggett Cemetery</u>	6	Rochester Neck & Taylor	43.24991, -70.97747
<u>Foss Cemetery</u>	15	67 Estes Road	43.28448, -71.01138
<u>Foss Family Cemetery</u>	14	Washington, near Dry Hill	43.27604, -71.01563
<u>French-Hussey Family Burial Ground</u>	1	Washington & Woodlawn	43.29794, -70.99190
<u>Friends Cemetery</u>	94	146 Meaderboro Road	43.31334, -71.05386
<u>Furber Cemetery</u>	6	17 Dustin Homestead	43.30260, -71.00770
<u>Garland Cemetery</u>	14	Cemetery Road, Gonic	43.25994, -70.98010
<u>Gonic Village Cemetery</u>	371	85 Main Street	43.27804, -70.97979
<u>Ham-Clark Cemetery</u>	13	Hansonville Road, Gonic	43.27213, -70.99522
<u>Haven Hill Cemetery</u>	361	Rochester Hill Road	43.28420, -70.93860
<u>Hayes Cemetery</u>	2		
<u>Hayes Family Cemetery</u>	2		
<u>Henderson Cemetery</u>	1	186 Farmington Road	43.34484, -71.02206
<u>Holy Rosary Cemetery</u>	2,113	133 Brock Street	43.29333, -70.98568
<u>Howard Cemetery</u>	42	47 Strafford Road	43.29471, -71.04377
<u>Hurd Cemetery</u>	28	Gear Road, Gonic	43.26986, -70.99382
<u>Isaac Bickford Family Burial Ground</u>	13	423 Rochester Neck Rd.	43.23316, -70.95552

Cemetery/Graveyard	# of Grave stones	Location	GPS Coordinates
<u>Jenness Family Cemetery</u> , aka Page	8	Boat Ramp Road	43.32000, -71.03722
<u>Jenness Cemetery</u>	3	128 Rochester Hill Road	43.28891, -70.94506
<u>Kimball Cemetery</u>	556	138 Meaderboro Road	43.31081, -71.05122
<u>McDuffee Cemetery</u>	23	170 Rochester Neck Rd.	43.24524, -70.96990
<u>McDuffee Family Cemetery</u>	68	17 Farmington Road	43.32417, -70.99944
<u>Mount Calvary Cemetery</u>	324	Cemetery Road, Gonic	43.25685, -70.98297
<u>New Cold Spring Cemetery</u>	624	Crow Hill Road, East Rochester	43.32765, -70.93555
<u>Old Cemetery</u>	837	S. Main & Franklin St.	43.29972, -70.96837
<u>Old Cold Spring Cemetery</u>	1,619	Spring Street, East Rochester	43.33184, -70.93424
<u>Old Town Cemetery</u>	128	N. Main & Twombly St.	43.30952, -70.99135
<u>Otis Family Cemetery</u>	3	85 Gear Road, Gonic	43.26920, -70.99019
<u>Pearl Cemetery</u>	11	143 Dry Hill Road	43.28516, -71.02932
<u>Ramsbottom Family Cemetery</u>	8	259 Old Dover Road	43.26694, -70.94111
<u>Richards Garrison Memorial</u>	4	89 Rochester Hill Road	43.29109, -70.95111
<u>Roberts Burying Ground</u>	4	981 Salmon Falls Road	43.29694, -70.92056
<u>Rochester Cemetery</u> , aka Northside	5,774	17 Franklin Street	43.30220, -70.96310
<u>Rogers Page Cemetery</u>	14	77 Farmington Road	43.33218, -71.00671
<u>St. Leo's Cemetery</u>	7	Gonic	
<u>Saint Mary's Cemetery</u>	1,084	71 Lowell Street	43.28852, -70.96667
<u>Seavey Family Cemetery</u>	10	Gonic	
<u>Tebbets Burying Ground</u>	10	Salmon Falls Road	43.28981, -70.90455
<u>Torr Cemetery</u>	1	Chestnut Hill Road	43.34806, -70.99778
<u>Varney Graveyard</u>	10	Farmington Road	43.34177, -71.01867
<u>Watson Cemetery</u>	2	97 Rochester Neck Road	43.24170, -70.96690
<u>Willand Family Cemetery</u>	7		
<u>Wingate Homestead Burial Ground</u>	23	Bernard Road	43.30278, -70.92444

Table 3. Cemetery & Graveyards in Rochester. Source: [Findagrave.com](https://www.findagrave.com). Table 3 above includes 50 cemeteries and graveyards. The inventory is remarkable in that the data collecting is primarily done by volunteers. As seen in the table above, there are still a few gaps in the data, as some graveyards are known to exist, but their exact locations are currently unknown.

End Notes

¹ Caduto, Michael. *A Time Before New Hampshire – The Story of a Land and Native Peoples*. University Press of New England, 2003.

² http://www.native-languages.org/abna.htm#google_vignette

³ Caduto, pages 147-171.

⁴ <https://www.nh.gov/folklife/learning-center/traditions/native-american.htm>

⁵ McDuffee, Franklin. *History of the Town of Rochester from 1722 to 1890, Vol. I*. John B. Clarke Co., Manchester, 1892, pages 351–356.

⁶ www.rochesteroperahouse.com/history.html.

⁷ Grover, Kathryn. *Rochester, New Hampshire 1890-2010 – A Compact Little City*. Peter Randall, Publisher, Portsmouth, 2013. Pages 106-107.

⁸ Rochester Historic District Resources Report, prepared by The Preservation Company, 2023.

⁹ American Community Survey, 2022 5-year estimate.

¹⁰ Parkinson, A., Kahn, G., Peck, E., & Cohen, R. (2017) *Business Contributions to the Arts*, 2017 edition.

¹¹ Americans for the Arts, *Arts & Social Impact Fact Sheet*.

¹² Americans for the Arts, *Arts & Economic Prosperity 5, The Economic Impact of Nonprofit Arts and Cultural Organizations and Their Audiences in the City of Rochester, NH (fiscal year 2015-2016)*.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.



Figure 77. Rochester Historical Society