

Newcastle Downtown Village Housing & Growth

1. Background

Recognizing several significant challenges and opportunities facing the Newcastle community, and building on the progress of the last two decades, the Select Board has prioritized the creation of a unified strategy to guide new development and investment within the town.

To start, focus will be on the general downtown village area, where important infrastructure and services are located. This area can better accommodate new growth with less investment in new or expanded infrastructure, and where recent and expected projects are making the need to coordinate and align public and private resources increasingly apparent.

2. Downtown Village Public Outreach

To ensure the strategy to guide new development and investments is well aligned with the interests of the community, a new program of public engagement and community conversations are being planned. To that end, the Town of Newcastle will be hosting a series of facilitated listening sessions to hear residents' thoughts.

These conversations will use the [2018 Comprehensive Plan](#) as a starting point and explore two main considerations:

1. To confirm that the Town's Comprehensive Plan remains aligned with the community's priorities. (A lot has changed over the last 8 years, and while the Plan remains extremely relevant, confirmation will reinforce that foundation.)
2. To explore issues and discuss details that may have been beyond the scope of the 2018 Comprehensive Plan. (Specific considerations for the downtown village area around attainability, building types, unit types, civic space, mobility, and more can be explored in more detail than most comprehensive planning processes allow.)

The intention is for these conversations to fit somewhere between a broad, town-wide perspective and a narrow, site specific focus—though community interests will ultimately guide the conversations.

3. Community Conversations & Listening Sessions

These will not be lectures or debates, but rather will be listening and conversations. Members of the community are encouraged to share their opinions about the things they love about Newcastle, the things they dislike, what they might change, and what they might preserve. All members of the community are invited and welcome.

In an effort to encourage as many people as possible to participate as much as possible, six listening sessions over five weeks are planned. Three sessions will be in-person and three sessions will be virtual/online. (The in-person sessions will not include a virtual component and the virtual/online sessions will not include an in-person component.)

The six listening sessions are split into three pairs, with each pair focusing on a different topic.

Topic 1: What makes Newcastle “feel like Newcastle”?

In-person: February 17, 2026 [Results](#)

Online: February, 18 2026 [Results](#)

[Summary of the 2018 Comp Plan and Big Ideas](#)

Topic 2: Housing That Works

In-person: March 10, 2026 [Results](#)

Online: March 12, 2026 [Results](#)

Topic 3: Neighborhood Growth & Local Vitality

In-person: March 26, 2026 [Results](#)

Online: March 27, 2026 [Results](#)

[Village Partnership Initiative April 2025 Report](#)