

8.4 TOWN CENTER

Several recommendations for Rye's Town Center came from past visioning sessions. Participants embraced a vibrant center with small-scale local commerce to augment the government services already available. This vision includes increased pedestrian access and as mentioned in vision statement limited retail opportunities. Nobody wants to increase traffic or parking congestion, we recognize that we can plan wisely to avoid those consequences.

It is worth recognizing some of the opportunities:

- Safe walkways within the Town Center;
- Senior housing near the Town Center;
- Protect the scale, proportion and semi-rural character that exist;
- Increase recreational opportunities for all ages;
- Enhance the role of the library for communications on Town issues.
- Create a natural outdoor experience in Parson's field by adding more recreational opportunities for children; and
- Establish an internet "hot Spot" in our Town center. By doing so we encourage our citizens and visitors to enjoy the ambience of the Town center.

The combination of future Town Center amenities and its usage will provide opportunities for social interactions for all members of the Community. With increased resources, this will contribute to the social and economic vitality of Rye.

In achieving the desired results we will need to struggle with our resistance to change. We like our Town uncluttered. We associate retail with traffic. The creation of zoning was based upon the notion that uses should be separated. Large lots were thought desirable in order to protect personal space.

We have since learned that in Town, i.e., in our Town Center, it is appropriate to concentrate some residences and services both for convenience and to protect larger tracts of land away from the center. Providing housing over shops creates affordable housing. Low Impact development near services reduces traffic.