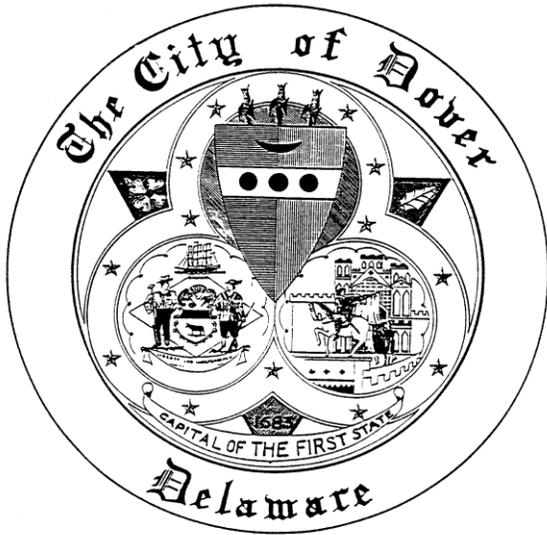


# City of Dover

## 2019 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



City of Dover, Delaware

*Planning for a Bigger Better Dover*

FINAL DRAFT  
ISSUED - 12.3.2019



# 2019 Comprehensive Plan

## The City of Dover

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# Chapter 1

# INTRODUCTION

## INTRODUCTION

### “BIG ENOUGH TO CALL A CITY BUT SMALL ENOUGH TO CALL HOME”

Dover began as a planned community intended to be a center of government and poised for growth. It was not until 1717 that the town was platted into lots, streets and a public green that exist to this day. From those early lots and streets, Dover has grown to be the largest and most populated City in the central Delmarva Peninsula. See Map 1-1 Location Map and Map 1-2 Aerial View.

Today Dover is distinguished as the dominant center of employment, commerce, and cultural activities in central Delaware. The 2000 Census found Dover and the immediate environs to have surpassed a total population of 50,000 people and thus became a designated Metropolitan Statistical Area. For July 2019, Dover’s estimated population is 38,058 while the population for Kent County as a whole is estimated to be 181,864 persons.

The City has grown to an area of over 23 square miles, including 170.33 miles of roads, 226 miles of water mains, and 192 miles of sewer lines. Homes and businesses in Dover produce 40% of the sewage treated by the Kent County Regional Resource Recovery Facility each day. It is estimated that 70% of the jobs in Kent County are located in Dover. Currently, there are over 4,030 businesses licensed, and the estimated value of buildings within the City is more than 3 billion dollars.

The preceding facts demonstrate Dover’s regional importance. Everyday thousands of people come to Dover’s shopping malls and stores, recreation facilities, hospitals, medical offices, four major colleges, hundreds of small businesses, and City, County, State, and Federal government offices.

Despite its size, growth, and regional significance, Dover strives to maintain a small-town feel, celebrating attributes that make it a desirable place to live, work and do business. Dover’s residential areas remain tranquil and have retained their small-town feel. When recently polled, residents of Dover cited the design and size of the City, its historic buildings, and its small-town atmosphere as among the qualities they like best about living in Dover. Dover is also known for

its parks, open space, cultural and recreation opportunities. It is these attributes that establish Dover's position on growth and the use of land, as set forth throughout this *Comprehensive Plan*.

## CITY HISTORY

Dover's early history was one of slow growth. In 1730 it was said that no more than 40 families lived in Dover. In 1777 after New Castle was captured by the British, Dover became the seat of government for Delaware. Modest growth occurred in the 1790s after the construction of a State House bolstered Dover's status as the State capital. However, Dover remained a small market and government town of less than 200 acres centered around The Green. By 1838 no more than 600 people lived within the City limits.

In 1855, a railroad line was extended to Dover allowing it to support a number of industries, including canneries that processed local produce for the large markets now accessible by train. The City experienced its first building boom after the Civil War. Commercial growth began to occur along both State and Loockerman Streets. Residential lots were platted further north and west of The Green, extending the City grid system with many new streets. The growth during this period gave birth to what is now the City's Victorian Dover Historic District, a National Register Historic District. The Green itself was transformed during this period from a commercial square to the park-like setting of today.

In the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Dover's pace of growth slowed, some new industries joined the area and a few pre-World War II suburban style subdivisions were platted around the periphery of the City. It was not until after World War II that Dover began another building boom spurred by the arrival of several large manufacturing companies.

By 1960, the City had grown to over 1000 acres and yet this was just a prelude. Over the following ten years, the City added 8000 additional acres to its jurisdiction. Through the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, growth continued at a consistently brisk pace. This was mostly due to annexations encouraged by a City policy of withholding services from areas outside the municipal boundaries. This policy enabled Dover to share in the fiscal and other benefits of new growth and allowed the City greater control over the character and quality of surrounding development.

Initial annexation activity during this period was concentrated on the east and south side of the City. Later annexations were conducted on the north and west sides of town. Most of the areas annexed were utilized for residential purposes. However, another significant trend was the development of the US Route 13 corridor as a highway commercial area. Large tracts of land associated with Dover Air Force Base, Dover Downs, Delaware State University, Wilmington University, and Delaware Technical & Community College were also annexed during this time.

Through the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the City has focused on "infill" annexations of individual parcels and also annexations of larger tracts on the north and west sides of the City for residential development or for specific major uses such as with Dover High School and the Woodlands of Dover International Speedway. This time period also introduced new zoning classifications as well as several overlay zones through the City.

## COMMUNITY CHARACTER

The result of this rich and textured history is that Dover today is a very diverse and multi-faceted community. It is this diversity of which we are most proud. This diversity has reflected itself in our urban fabric as well. This diversity is seen in the urban core with its two historic districts marking both our Colonial origins and our rich Victorian heritage. To the many subdivisions built starting in the post-World War II era providing the first suburban style tract housing that became such a quintessential component of the American urban landscape. To our broad Route 13 corridor with its national chain stores and the large Dover Mall. To the Dover Air Force Base which is a key element to both our local prosperity as well our national security. To the universities that every year welcome and educate thousands of new young minds. To the nature and forest preserves that seek to protect and maintain the natural landscape to be as it was before permanent settlement began. Dover's character is that of diversity. This diversity of character has developed over time and made Dover a city where people want to live, work, play, and do business. Diversity is our pride and our greatest strength.

It is these characteristics that we have adopted as guiding principles in composing this Comprehensive Plan. This Comprehensive Plan seeks to build on those characteristics of diversity and the fact that Dover is not defined by any “one thing.”

## COMPREHENSIVE PLANS OF THE PAST

Dover's first modern comprehensive plan was completed in 1960 by Raymond and May Associates for the City Council, entitled the *City of Dover Development Plan 1960*. This Plan covered the existing City limits which, generally, were Walker Road, the St. Jones River, the Puncheon Run stream course, and the railroad tracks with an extension into the Lincoln Park and Slaughter Street neighborhoods. This plan laid the foundation for the zoning ordinance and subdivision ordinance which were adopted a year later.

The major goals of the 1960 land use plan included bolstering the downtown retail core, expanding manufacturing and service commercial uses along the railroad, providing housing choices (including higher densities near the commercial core), and emphasizing the “long dreamed” public recreational development along St. Jones River. The transportation element principally focused on improvements to the existing road network. However, a “West Dover Connector” aligned west of the railroad track connecting Walker Road to Wyoming Road was proposed. Other new roads called for included northern and southern extensions of Kirkwood Street.

In keeping with the thinking of the early 1960's, the plan had an “urban renewal” component that called for the conversion of Loockerman Street and its side streets from Reed Street to North Street into a pedestrian shopping mall. The plan showed a civic center, band shell, landscaping, and wide expanses of parking lots. In addition, residential neighborhoods on the west side of town were slotted for spot “renewal” and in some areas “clearance.” These components show that there was a real concern for preserving the central area of Dover as a vital part of the community.

Two plans were produced over the 1970s. The first was completed in 1970 in conjunction with the State Planning Office. This Plan took on a much more regional tone considering land uses and

utility extensions beyond the City boundary. The Plan called for a concentric radial street network and a West Dover By-pass. Higher density housing was focused downtown, on the east side of Silver Lake and near major arteries, while lower density housing was determined by various environmental factors. Downtown was seen as an office location rather than a destination shopping area. A Civic Center was proposed for an area south of the Police Station. The land use proposals were planned to accommodate 80,000 people by 1990 “in a pleasant living environment.”

Only five years later, the City of Dover hired Kling Planning, professional planning consultants, to prepare a new Comprehensive Plan because “by 1973 the City found itself unable to deal adequately with development pressures.” Like its 1970 predecessor, this Plan envisioned the expansion of the City services and boundaries to the north and west and concentric radial roads around the City. There was little discussion of the re-development of older neighborhoods or the central business district. Typical of the period there was a marked concern with environmental and ecology issues related to the City’s expansion into outlying areas. The land use proposals were intended to accommodate 70,000 by 1990.

In many ways the 1975 Plan built upon the 1970 Plan by making more specific recommendations for implementation. Examples include the creation of cluster zoning, shopping center zones, enhanced buffering requirements, and medium density residential zones. Other recommendations included more restrictive development controls in ecologically sensitive areas, growth staging through infrastructure control, and stronger informational and procedural requirements for development applications.

Eleven years later the City revised its Comprehensive Plan, again using a planning consultant. Norman Day Associates of Philadelphia were hired to prepare the *1986 Comprehensive Plan*. The 1986 Plan noted that while many of the 1975 Comprehensive Plan’s components remained valid, changes in development pressures and in the actual patterns of development indicated a need for a revision. Population growth did not occur as rapidly as projected and the development pattern was more “piecemeal” than planned. It was also noted that many of the recommended infrastructure improvements did not occur, especially road improvements.

The 1986 Plan continued to express the desire to expand the City services and boundaries by considering an even greater planning area than considered in 1975 Plan. The path of the future was laid out in the plan; a State Route 1 on the east side of Dover was shown indicating the demise of the “West Dover By-Pass.” Both the Kenton and Saulsbury Road connections to New Burton Road remained from earlier plans. Land use patterns were similar to the 1975 Plan, except for the first time agriculture was shown as a land use category. The Plan called for greater efforts to link greenways (corridors of undeveloped City designed for recreational use) and identify open space preservation areas realistically. Finally, the 1986 Plan recognized the emerging commercial area on Route 8 west.

Some of the specific recommendations of the 1986 Plan were: a pre-determination of zoning outside the City boundaries for future annexations, the establishment of an agricultural zone, a modernization of the industrial zones, enhanced environmental protection regulations, more explicit historic district zone regulations, mobile home park regulations and enhanced buffering near arterial roads. It also recognized the importance of the central business district by calling for a specific central area plan, which was completed in 1989.

In 1991, due to development pressure in west Dover to permit commercial expansion on Route 8 (west), a Corridor Study of Saulsbury Road, Kenton Road and Route 8 was initiated. This resulted in an amendment to the *1986 Comprehensive Plan*. The plan designated areas around Greentree Village as most appropriate for commercial development and made recommendations to promote effective development throughout the three corridors.

By the mid-1990s rapid development again prompted City officials to pursue the development of a new comprehensive plan. There was a general concern that the 1986 plan simply did not reflect the values of the community. Funding for the plan was authorized in 1995. In May 1995, the Mayor proposed the plan and the City Council approved a “Development Policy” that limited new development proposals until a new Comprehensive Plan was completed. Thirteen months later, in June 1996, *The Dover Plan: From the People-For the People* was adopted by the Planning Commission and City Council as the 1996 Comprehensive Plan.

### ***1996 Comprehensive Plan – The Dover Plan: From the People, For the People***

The *1996 Comprehensive Plan* was a significant change from previous Comprehensive Plans. The development of the 1996 Plan included a strong community participation element. Multiple workshops were held throughout the City in order to ascertain the attributes citizens liked and disliked about living and working in Dover as well as surveys regarding issues and land planning exercises. Despite several challenges including staff vacancies and increases in development activity, the *1996 Comprehensive Plan* accomplished many of its objectives and implemented considerable positive changes to the *Zoning Ordinance*. Revisions to existing zones were accompanied by the creation of the Airport Environs Overlay Zone (AEOZ) and a revision to the C-2 (Central Commercial Zone). Dover’s sign ordinance was adopted in 2001 implementing new design-based principles. Other additions included the Senior Citizen Housing Option in the Planned Neighborhood Design Option, an expansion of Dover’s Historic District, and other amendments related to site elements.

The plan of action that was laid out in the 1996 Plan saw many of those programs and suggestions implemented. Among those programs, a Tax Credit Program for Historic Properties and increased focus on revitalization of the Downtown were included in this Plan. Educational and governmental growth were strong during this period with all four colleges and universities in the area expanding their campuses and facilities and the continued enhancement of State and City government buildings.

### ***The Dover Plan – 2003 Comprehensive Plan Update***

The *2003 Comprehensive Plan Update* was the first to comply with two significant revisions to the State planning enabling legislation regarding comprehensive plans. As in the 1996 Plan, public input was important and a required element in the creation of the 2003 Plan. Based on public workshops and the efforts of the Planning Department, each chapter listed goals and recommendations providing an expanded reference document with implementation guidelines and maps. The importance of this methodology becomes more relevant with each new implementation of the Comprehensive Plan as the citizens of Dover are able to realize and track the progress of City growth and progress over time. Dover’s Comprehensive Plan is now a living document which recognizes the input of its citizens and lays out a plan of action with clear and decisive direction

for the progress of the City. Between 2003 and 2008 there were several amendments to the *2003 Comprehensive Plan Update* such as text amendments to the Transportation Plan as well as Land Development Plan map updates.

### 2008 Dover Comprehensive Plan

The *2008 Dover Comprehensive Plan* sought to take the essential elements of the 2003 Plan Update and provide a more aggressive plan of action for the City. As in the 2003 Plan Update, citizen participation and public input regarding goals, recommendations and growth and annexation areas played a large part in the formation of the 2008 Plan. While many chapters remained consistent in subject, some chapters were expanded upon individually. With the increase in population within the City and the City providing essential services to more residents and businesses, as well as the expansion of the utility system, Public Utilities & Community Infrastructure Chapter was divided. Some information became the Public Utilities and Infrastructure Plan Chapter in order to address all infrastructure and utility system and services within Dover. Facilities and programs offered to residents became a part of the Community Services and Facilities Chapter. This chapter sought to address public safety, Parks & Recreation programs and services, and community services.

Economic development was one of the most pressing issues in Dover. To this end, Economic Development became a new chapter developed by an Economic Development Task Force Committee. The Community Development component addressed in the 2003 Plan became a part of the Housing and Community Development Chapter in 2008.

The *2008 Dover Comprehensive Plan* used the information gathered and analyzed through public participation workshops, City Commissions and Council input and comprehensive history of the previous five years to set forth goals and recommendations.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS SINCE 2008

As part of the efforts to develop the 2019 Comprehensive Plan project, Staff looked back over the last ten years (2008-2018) to document significant accomplishments that occurred in the City. A number of these items were outlined as Goals and Recommendations or Action Items in the *2008 Dover Comprehensive Plan*. The following chart summarizes these Accomplishments by chapter topic. This summary can be viewed as a type of Report Card which allows us to best see how well we worked towards and achieved our goals, and where there is still room for improvement.

**Table 1-1: Accomplishments 2008-2018 (Report Card Items)**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Natural Resources and Environmental Protection</b> | <p><b>Accomplishment 1:</b> Updated Tree Planting and Preservation Ordinance of the <i>Zoning Ordinance</i>.</p> <p><b>Accomplishment 2:</b> Updated Environmental Protection section of the <i>Zoning Ordinance</i>, particularly with regards to floodplains and wetlands.</p> <p><b>Accomplishment 3:</b> Adopted Solar and Wind Energy section of <i>Zoning Ordinance</i>.</p> |
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|                                     | <p><b>Accomplishment 4:</b> Developed riparian buffer along both Silver Lake and the St. Jones River. Completed remediation activities at Mirror Lake.</p> <p><b>Accomplishment 5:</b> Adopted Source Water Protection Overlay Zone (SWPOZ) as a zoning classification.</p> <p><b>Accomplishment 6:</b> Benefitted from a new trail system in the Fork Branch Nature Preserve and Anne McClements Woodland Preserve which was opened by the State.</p> <p><b>Accomplishment 7:</b> Held Outreach Event to educate public on floodplain management issues.</p>   |
| <p><b>Historic Preservation</b></p> | <p><b>Accomplishment 1:</b> Designated a Certified Local Government (CLG) in 2015.</p> <p><b>Accomplishment 2:</b> Ensured that the Historic District Commission consists of a full complement of members after the two retirements of long serving members.</p> <p><b>Accomplishment 3:</b> Updated the Architectural Review Certification review process.</p> <p><b>Accomplishment 4:</b> The Green designated as an <i>APA Great Places in America</i> by the American Planning Association in October 2009.</p> <p><b>Accomplishment 5:</b> The Green designated as a National Monument (2013) and a National Historical Park (2015).</p> <p><b>Accomplishment 6:</b> Held numerous Festivals, Parades &amp; Farmers Markets in the Downtown and at nearby historic areas.</p> <p><b>Accomplishment 7:</b> Completed historic building documentation of the George Parris House in the Garrison Oak Technical Park.</p> |
| <p><b>Public Utilities</b></p>      | <p><b>Accomplishment 1:</b> Adopted a Stormwater Management Plan for NPDES compliance in 2016.</p> <p><b>Accomplishment 2:</b> Commenced a wellhead improvement/redevelopment plan. Initial phases have been completed since 2008 and work is ongoing.</p> <p><b>Accomplishment 3:</b> Built over 12 miles of water lines throughout the City in addition to replacing almost 7 miles of existing water lines.</p> <p><b>Accomplishment 4:</b> Built new water interconnections to help with distribution to neighboring communities.</p>   |

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|   | <p><b>Accomplishment 5:</b> Replaced over 1 mile of Dover’s oldest sewer lines as well as relined many of the oldest existing sewer lines to help keep pace with growing demand.</p> <p><b>Accomplishment 6:</b> Implemented a Source Water Protection Overlay Zone which protects the quality and quantity of Dover’s water supply.</p> <p><b>Accomplishment 7:</b> Conducted an assessment of the impact of implementing a Stormwater Utility and how it would affect the City of Dover residents.</p> <p><b>Accomplishment 8:</b> Embarked on a City-wide program to replace outdated Electric substations and transformers, as well as general transmission system upgrades. This included building a new substation.</p> <p><b>Accomplishment 9:</b> Continued to update specific utility plans to identify key issues and the best practices to address them.</p>   |
| <p><b>Community Services and Facilities</b></p> | <p><b>Accomplishment 1:</b> Adopted 2009 International Building Code.</p> <p><b>Accomplishment 2:</b> Began providing special event management for the Firefly Music Festival.</p> <p><b>Accomplishment 3:</b> Updated and began implementation of the Dover Emergency Operations Plan.</p> <p><b>Accomplishment 4:</b> Conducted Recreation Needs Assessment in 2014.</p> <p><b>Accomplishment 5:</b> Developed Master Plans for Schutte Park and Dover Park in 2016-2018.</p> <p><b>Accomplishment 6:</b> Built the new Dover Public Library in 2012.</p> <p><b>Accomplishment 7:</b> Established a Job Center at the Dover Public Library in 2009.</p> <p><b>Accomplishment 8:</b> Welcomed the new Dover High School constructed in 2014-2015.</p> <p><b>Accomplishment 9:</b> Initiated the Police Athletic League.</p> <p><b>Accomplishment 10:</b> Extended recycling service to all City trash customers.</p> |
| <p><b>Transportation</b></p>                    | <p><b>Accomplishment 1:</b> Constructed 11 new miles of City streets.</p> <p><b>Accomplishment 2:</b> Constructed the new Dover Transit Center.</p> <p><b>Accomplishment 3:</b> Adopted <i>2015 Bicycle Plan and Pedestrian Plan</i>.</p> <p><b>Accomplishment 4:</b> DeIDOT constructed West Dover Connector/ POW-MIA Parkway in 2017.</p>   |

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|   | <p><b>Accomplishment 5:</b> Developed the <i>Dover Capital Gateway Plan</i> in 2015.</p> <p><b>Accomplishment 6:</b> Conducted a Downtown Dover Parking Study (2017-18).</p> <p><b>Accomplishment 7:</b> Expanded bus service.</p> <p><b>Accomplishment 8:</b> Began construction on the Senator Bikeway project between Weston Drive and Cecil Street.</p> <p><b>Accomplishment 9:</b> Improved safety of US Route 13 crossings near Delaware State University.</p>  |
| <p><b>Economic Development</b></p>                | <p><b>Accomplishment 1:</b> Several separate groups merged to create the Downtown Dover Partnership (DDP).</p> <p><b>Accomplishment 2:</b> Began participation in Restoring Central Dover in 2013.</p> <p><b>Accomplishment 3:</b> The City of Dover was designated a Downtown Development District by Governor Markell in January 2015.</p> <p><b>Accomplishment 4:</b> The City of Dover has invested in further infrastructure and marketing of the Garrison Oak Business and Technology Center.</p> <p><b>Accomplishment 5:</b> Adopted the IPM-3 (Industrial Park and Manufacturing Zone – Industrial Aviation and Aeronautics Center) to attract aeronautics and aviation related business to Dover.</p> <p><b>Accomplishment 6:</b> Began collaborative work in the Kent Economic Partnership.</p> |
| <p><b>Housing &amp; Community Development</b></p> | <p><b>Accomplishment 1:</b> Adopted the <i>2015-2019 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Consolidated Plan</i>.</p> <p><b>Accomplishment 2:</b> Adopted the <i>2011 Statewide Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice</i>.</p> <p><b>Accomplishment 3:</b> Received \$1.5 million in Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) funding in 2010 to purchase abandoned and foreclosed properties in the City to renovate and sell to qualifying families.</p> <p><b>Accomplishment 4:</b> Received \$100,000 in CDBG-R funding in 2010 to complete infrastructure projects in low to moderate income neighborhoods.</p> <p><b>Accomplishment 5:</b> Utilized CDBG funding in 2009 to make ADA improvements to city-owned buildings.</p>  |

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|  | <p><b>Accomplishment 6:</b> City Staff collaborated with NCALL Research as a stakeholder for the Restoring Central Dover (RCD) Initiative to revitalize the central downtown area.</p> <p><b>Accomplishment 7:</b> Increased homeownership in the Restoring Central area with over 28 homes constructed and sold to low to moderate income persons in the RCD area.</p> <p><b>Accomplishment 8:</b> Provided settlement assistance to approximately 67 first-time homebuyers from 2008-2019 to purchase affordable housing in the City through CDBG and NSP funding.</p> |
|--|--|

Source: City of Dover Department of Planning & Inspections and other City Departments

## 2019 DOVER COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The *2019 Comprehensive Plan* is seen as an opportunity to evaluate our successes in achieving our goals as laid out in the previous *2008 Comprehensive Plan*. As with the previous Comprehensive Plan, the process began with engaging with the public through a series of events whose chief aims were to gather feedback as to concerns and comments the public may have with the state of the City of Dover. The public’s opinion was sought as to help identify where both the City’s strengths and weaknesses lay and how these views compared to the public’s view as noted in the research gathering leading up to the 2008 Plan. From there, we were able to see where improvements had been made and where work still needed to be done.

Among our findings was that since the economic recession of 2008, the City of Dover has experienced a significant slowdown in residential development. There has also been an increasing lack of diversity in Dover’s housing stock. Members of the public have also identified that there does not seem to be enough affordable housing options within the City. This has been an impetus to add emphasis on strategies to address the City of Dover’s Housing in the *2019 Comprehensive Plan*.

Furthermore, at the center of the *2019 Comprehensive Plan* is the *Plan4Health*, a study commissioned to help integrate health equity into future planning efforts in the City of Dover and Kent County. Delaware Plan4Health used surveying, geospatial analysis, document review and community charrettes, to understand community health issues and how they may be addressed. Based on their findings, the Delaware Plan4Health team developed a series of recommendations for incorporating healthy living into Dover’s Comprehensive Plan. This is seen as an opportunity to benefit public health by codifying elements into the Plan that support healthy communities.

Having evaluated our accomplishments since the *2008 Comprehensive Plan*, the *2019 Comprehensive Plan* update began with a Report Card where we were able to analyze our successes, as well as where we still needed to do more work towards achieving our goals as laid out in the 2008 plan. From this approach we were able to develop a framework of a new set of goals for moving forward with the *2019 Comprehensive Plan*. The following is a summary of the Goals established with this Plan. Each of these topic area goals also have Recommendations and Action Items detailed in most chapters. Chapter 15 – Implementation Plan outlines the path forward to make a “Bigger Better Dover.”

**Table 1-2: 2019 Comprehensive Plan Chapter Goals**

|  |  |
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| <p><b>Natural Resources and Environmental Protection</b></p> | <p><b>Goal 1:</b> Protect the Natural Environment</p> <p><b>Goal 2:</b> Improve Watershed Quality</p> <p><b>Goal 3:</b> Improve Air Quality</p> <p><b>Goal 4:</b> Encourage Green Development and Sustainable Energy Practices</p> <p><b>Goal 5:</b> Preserve Access to Open Space and Scenic Resources</p>  |
| <p><b>Historic Preservation</b></p>                          | <p><b>Goal 1:</b> Preserve and Protect Historic Resources</p> <p><b>Goal 2:</b> Provide and Promote Incentives for Preservation Activities</p> <p><b>Goal 3:</b> Increase Public Information on Historic Resources</p> <p><b>Goal 4:</b> Collaborate with Diverse Groups and Governments</p>   |
| <p><b>Public Utilities and Infrastructure</b></p>            | <p><b>Goal 1:</b> Proactively Maintain Existing Infrastructure and Expand Infrastructure When Beneficial</p> <p><b>Goal 2:</b> Enhance Infrastructure to Meet Community Needs</p> <p><b>Goal 3:</b> Meet or Exceed the State and Federal requirements of the NPDES Permit and Stormwater Management</p> <p><b>Goal 4:</b> Continue to Strive for Excellent Service</p> |
| <p><b>Community Services and Facilities</b></p>              | <p><b>Goal 1:</b> Provide and Maintain Quality City Services</p> <p><b>Goal 2:</b> Invest in City Owned Resources</p> <p><b>Goal 3:</b> Provide a System of Interconnected Open Space Areas and Recreational Opportunities</p> <p><b>Goal 4:</b> Prepare Effectively for Disasters</p>   |
| <p><b>Transportation</b></p>                                 | <p><b>Goal 1:</b> Preserve and Maintain the Existing Transportation System</p> <p><b>Goal 2:</b> Increase Coordination with Agencies</p> <p><b>Goal 3:</b> Develop and Expand Alternate Modes of Transportation</p> <p><b>Goal 4:</b> Create Recommendations and Policies for Roadways and Development</p>   |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>Economic Development</b></p>                | <p><b>Goal 1:</b> Attract and Retain High-Paying Quality Jobs by Targeting Business Sectors that are Best Suited for Dover and Kent County</p> <p><b>Goal 2:</b> Encourage the Economic Revitalization and Integrity of Dover’s Downtown, including the Historic Core and the Traditional Communities Surrounding It</p> <p><b>Goal 3:</b> Promote the Revitalization and Redevelopment of the Center City</p> <p><b>Goal 4:</b> Ensure that Land Development, Zoning, Infrastructure and Other Development Requirements Encourage the Economic Development and Uses Desired</p> <p><b>Goal 5:</b> Actively market the Garrison Oak Business and Technology Center (GOBTC)</p> <p><b>Goal 6:</b> Pursue Economic Development Linked to Active Recreation</p> <p><b>Goal 7:</b> Pursue Economic Development Linked to Improved Healthy Food Access</p> |
| <p><b>Housing &amp; Community Development</b></p> | <p><b>Goal 1:</b> Encourage Balanced Housing Opportunities for all Residents of the City</p> <p><b>Goal 2:</b> Preserve Existing Housing Stock</p> <p><b>Goal 3:</b> Provide Safe and Healthy Livable Neighborhoods</p> <p><b>Goal 4:</b> Provide Homeownership Opportunities</p>   |

Source: 2019 Comprehensive Plan

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## Chapter 2

# PATTERNS OF CHANGE

### PATTERNS OF CHANGE: LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY

#### APPLICATIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY

Over the period of 2008-2018, the number of plan review and approvals resulting in construction projects was somewhat slower than the previous five years (2003-2007) but it remains steady. Over 2.5 million square feet of nonresidential development was approved including several Master Plans outlining phased multi-year projects. Although the City only annexed 269.58 acres in the ten-year period, Dover remains the commercial and employment core of central Delaware.

Institutional, office and retail land uses have dominated new development. Residential construction has seen increased focus on the build-out of previously platted subdivisions rather than applications for new subdivision development. The focus of residential development over the last ten years is the development of multi-family units (apartments). Retail and development have been concentrated along main transportation corridors, while residential development has been in several areas of the City. Institutional uses have expanded to keep pace with the demands of the growing City and Dover's industrial base has continued to expand with numerous industrial park developments being constructed and enlarged.

With the tracking of applications, the pace and type of development activity can be observed. Table 2-1 illustrates the number of applications submitted to the City for review between 2008 and 2018. This table, along with subsequent tables, shows the changes in development activity and uses throughout the City. In the previous six-year period (2002-2007), there were in total 703 applications. It is also noted that there were refinements to the application review process in 2011 (Ordinance #2011-14). These refinements simplified the Site Plan review processes allowing certain projects to complete Zoning Review as part of the Building Permit process when renovating an existing building. The building size and impervious area size that triggered Planning Commission review with a public hearing were also amended making some applications eligible for an Administrative Site Plan review process.

**Table 2-1: Application Count Table 2008 – 2018**

| Application Type             | 2008       | 2009      | 2010      | 2011      | 2012      | 2013      | 2014      | 2015      | 2016      | 2017      | 2018      | Total      |
|------------------------------|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| Board of Adjustment          | 20         | 15        | 15        | 13        | 15        | 17        | 14        | 15        | 16        | 17        | 12        | 169        |
| Annexations                  | 3          | 1         | 0         | 0         | 1         | 3         | 0         | 1         | 3         | 0         | 2         | 14         |
| Conditional Use              | 14         | 8         | 5         | 7         | 6         | 11        | 6         | 4         | 5         | 6         | 5         | 77         |
| Site Plans                   | 43         | 29        | 33        | 23        | 20        | 21        | 24        | 16        | 24        | 33        | 12        | 278        |
| Subdivisions                 | 2          | 7         | 5         | 2         | 2         | 6         | 5         | 2         | 0         | 2         | 4         | 37         |
| Rezoning                     | 11         | 5         | 8         | 6         | 2         | 3         | 4         | 4         | 7         | 5         | 3         | 58         |
| Miscellaneous                | 20         | 15        | 20        | 17        | 24        | 22        | 14        | 14        | 18        | 8         | 13        | 185        |
| Unified Sign                 | 3          | 1         | 0         | 2         | 2         | 3         | 1         | 2         | 4         | 2         | 0         | 20         |
| Historic District Commission | 4          | 4         | 11        | 5         | 7         | 5         | 6         | 8         | 6         | 4         | 3         | 63         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                 | <b>120</b> | <b>85</b> | <b>97</b> | <b>75</b> | <b>79</b> | <b>91</b> | <b>74</b> | <b>66</b> | <b>83</b> | <b>77</b> | <b>54</b> | <b>901</b> |

Source: City of Dover, Department of Planning and Inspections

## ANNEXATIONS

There were a series of annexations to the City over the planning period totaling 269.58 acres; thirteen annexation applications resulted in expansion of the City’s land area. The majority of this newly annexed land was the lands of Dover International Speedway Inc. located to the east of State Route 1 which brought in 258.43 acres of land. This area is also known as The Woodlands hosts the Firefly Music Festival and other special event related activities (RV camping and parking). This annexation was anticipated in the *2008 Comprehensive Plan* in order to bring most of the Speedway’s holdings under the City’s jurisdiction.

There was some annexation activity regarding enclaves in the City as property owners surrounded by the City have annexed. Additionally, property owners outside and adjacent to the corporate limits have also sought annexation and the resulting access to City services. Non-residential annexations have been concentrated along South Governors Avenue and on the northern portion of US Route 13 in the Rustic Lane vicinity. Residential properties in the vicinity of Acorn Lane were annexed as septic systems failed and the residences are required to connect to City water and sewer. Overall, about five (5) acres were annexed with residential zoning (R-8 or R-10); about six (6) acres were annexed with commercial zoning (C-2A and C-4); and 258 acres were annexed as RC (Recreational and Commercial Zone). The annexation activity for the City of Dover over the last ten years is depicted on Map 2-1: Annexations 2008-2019.

## ZONING CHANGES

### Rezoning Applications

Forty-nine (49) Rezoning Applications in the last ten years resulted in the rezoning of approximately 720 acres, or roughly 1.125 square miles. Thus, 4.7% of Dover’s total land area was rezoned through Rezoning Applications over the previous ten years. A large percentage of the regular Rezoning Applications requested the rezoning of residential properties to more intense residential zoning district or the rezoning of commercial properties to a different commercial zoning district. Table 2-2 shows the total rezoning for the period and comparison to the prior years.

**Table 2-2: Acreage of Rezoning 1997–2007 and 2008-2018 (rounded)**

| Year             | Acres From  |            |        |            |               |             | Acres To    |            |        |            |               |             |
|------------------|-------------|------------|--------|------------|---------------|-------------|-------------|------------|--------|------------|---------------|-------------|
|                  | Residential | Commercial | Office | Industrial | Institutional | Agriculture | Residential | Commercial | Office | Industrial | Institutional | Agriculture |
| <b>1997-2002</b> | 289         | 32         | 1      | 54         | 0             | 386         | 35          | 90         | 6      | 386        | 14            | 231         |
| <b>2003-2007</b> | 128         | 74         | 11     | 308*       | 3             | 15*         | 341*        | 100        | 11     | 272        | 13            | 0*          |
| <b>2008-2018</b> | 274         | 208        | 12     | 53         | 8             | 165         | 285         | 367        | 1      | 38         | 29            | 0           |

\*Inclusive of 2005 rezoning of Eden Hill Farms from IPM & A to TND (classified as residential) total acreage of 272.04 acres

Source: City of Dover Department of Planning and Inspections, Annual Reports

**Table 2-3: Net Gain / Loss of Land (in Acres) by Zoning Category 1997–2007 and 2008-2018**

| Year             | Residential | Commercial | Office | Industrial | Institutional | Agriculture |
|------------------|-------------|------------|--------|------------|---------------|-------------|
| <b>1997-2002</b> | -254        | 58         | 5      | 332        | 14            | -155        |
| <b>2003-2007</b> | 213         | 26         | 0      | -51        | 10            | 0           |
| <b>2008-2018</b> | 11          | 159        | -11    | -15        | 21            | -165        |

Source: City of Dover Department of Planning and Inspections, Annual Reports

With these Rezoning Applications, land area throughout the City has changed. Some Rezoning were requested to enable different housing types and densities for residential development. This occurred with the vacant properties that became the Leander Lakes Apartments, the Blue Hen Apartments (Phase 2), and The Arbors on College Road and also for the redevelopment of

existing residential areas such as Walker Woods (into the Village at McKee Run) and Whatcoat Apartments (Preserve at Whatcoat). Other Rezoning to residential zones included the lands of Bay Village on White Oak Road and 30-acres on College Road; however, residential development has not commenced on these properties as of yet. A number of rezonings of smaller properties have made changes to the commercial zoning classifications. Related to the IO (Institutional and Office Zone) zone, two significant properties were involved: the location of the old Sheraton Hotel upon acquisition by Delaware State University and the Kays property on McKee Road for the Post-Acute Medical Rehabilitation Hospital. The largest Rezoning involved the lands of Dover International Speedway where a majority of their existing (and recently annexed) lands were rezoned to RC (Recreational and Commercial Zone).

### **Other Rezoning Projects**

In addition to these Rezoning Application approvals, there were several larger Rezoning Projects over the last ten years. The 2009 Comprehensive Rezoning Project related to the recommendations of the *2008 Comprehensive Plan Update* and involved 282 properties citywide; see Table 2-4. The Project was required to ensure the City’s Zoning Map was in compliance with the Land Development Plan Map of 2008. In 2010, the ROS (Recreational and Open Space Zone) zoning district was established in the *Zoning Ordinance*. As part of the adoption of the new zone, a Comprehensive Rezoning Project identified properties to be rezoned to ROS. After the 2010 AICUZ Study associated with Dover Air Force Base, the AEOZ (Airport Environs Overlay Zone) underwent a text amendment update to its regulations and also a Zoning Map Amendment (rezoning). The Zoning Map Amendment was the result of revisions to the Noises Zones (A-D).

**Table 2-4: Count of Properties Rezoned by 2009 Comprehensive Rezoning Project**

| Year        | Property Count From |            |        |            |               |             | Property Count To |            |        |            |               |             |
|-------------|---------------------|------------|--------|------------|---------------|-------------|-------------------|------------|--------|------------|---------------|-------------|
|             | Residential         | Commercial | Office | Industrial | Institutional | Agriculture | Residential       | Commercial | Office | Industrial | Institutional | Agriculture |
| <b>2009</b> | 180                 | 61         | 10     | 19         | 12            | 0           | 152               | 79         | 24     | 5          | 22            | 0           |

Source: City of Dover Department of Planning and Inspections, MI-09-08

## **EXISTING LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY**

Dover contains a wide array of land use types that vary in extent and intensity across the City. See Map Series 2-2 for the Existing Land Uses throughout the City. Dover Air Force Base is the single largest homogeneous land use area within the City limits. Residential land use makes up the second largest area and is widely distributed throughout the City. The western portion of Dover has received the vast majority of new residential development since 1985 and with residential development activity also seen the central-east portion of the City. Commercial districts are primarily located along major arterial roadways and within the traditional downtown business district. National retail franchises and department stores have concentrated along the US Route 13 corridor in the area north and east of the Downtown and convenience retail/service commercial

uses have followed residential development along DE Route 8 in western Dover. In the recent few years, the Bay Road corridor also has been a focus of redevelopment activity. Additionally, the City is aware of the State policy of discouraging development on lands east of State Route 1 (with the exception of Garrison Oak Business and Technology Park).

Governmental and institutional uses are extensive throughout central Dover including the State Capital Complex, Bayhealth Medical Center, and Wesley College. Major institutional uses outside the traditional core area include Delaware State University, Delaware Technical & Community College, Wilmington University Campus, Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT) administrative campus (Danner Campus), and Kent County Levy Court administrative building.

Major industrial uses lie along the railroad line within the south-central planning region and north of Dover Air Force Base. Industrial land uses occupy a small percentage of total area. There are several large industrial complexes including KraftHeinz Foods, Energizer (Playtex Products), former Playtex Apparel facility, Enterprise Business Park, Proctor & Gamble, the Kent County Aeropark, and locations along Horsepond Road and Lafferty Lane.

Numerous vacant developable tracts of land exist within the City limits and are distributed throughout the urbanized area. Peripheral areas within and bordering the City are rapidly beginning to develop to the north and west, while the eastern areas of the City have remained predominantly commercial west of State Route 1 and agricultural east of State Route 1, except for two residential subdivisions near the State Route 1 and Route 8 interchange. The southern area of Dover is largely suburban, consisting of numerous single-family neighborhoods.

## **Residential Development**

Residential development over the past ten years has been characterized by the continued construction to build-out earlier subdivisions (pre-2008 applications), the development of multi-family (apartment) complexes, and the renovation of existing multi-family (apartment) complexes. Residential development has not kept pace with the growing commercial sector likely due to lower development costs and alternative housing selection options beyond City limits.

The City has reviewed a limited number of subdivision approvals either in the design or final plan process since 2008. The focus in the planning period was the development review of multi-family apartment complexes. These included Leander Lakes Apartments, The Arbors, Tall Pines, Dove View (The Grande) PND: SCHO, Luther Village III PND: SCHO, and Blue Hen Apartments. There were also several existing multi-family complexes that were reviewed for redevelopment activities: Walker Woods (Village at McKee Branch); Liberty Court; and Whatcoat Apartments (Preserve at Whatcoat). Table 2-5 shows the number of single-family lots and multi-family units approved from 2008 to 2018 in comparison to totals from 2003 to 2007.

**Table 2-5: Residential Units Approved by Type 2003 – 2007 and 2008-2018**

| Year   | 2003-2007 Total | 2008     | 2009      | 2010     | 2011       | 2012       | 2013       | 2014      | 2015       | 2016       | 2017     | 2018     | 2008-2018 Total              |
|--|-----------------|----------|-----------|----------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|------------|------------|----------|----------|------------------------------|
| Single Family Detached                           | 1,076           | 0        | 0         | 4        | 0          | 2          | 8          | 2         | 4          | 0          | 4        | 0        | 24                           |
| Single Family Attached (Duplexes and Townhouses) | 1,207           | 0        | 84        | 0        | 0          | 0          | 0          | 14        | 0          | 6          | 0        | 3        | 16 Duplexes<br>91 Townhouses |
| Multi-Family                                     | 1282*           | (216)    | (54)      | 0        | 144 (48)   | 243        | 125        | 24        | 317        | 168        | 3        | 0        | 847 New<br>177 Rebuild       |
| <b>Totals</b>                                    | <b>3,755</b>    | <b>0</b> | <b>84</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>144</b> | <b>245</b> | <b>133</b> | <b>40</b> | <b>321</b> | <b>174</b> | <b>7</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>1,155</b>                 |

\*300 of the units are classified as apartments but are dormitory apartments at Delaware State University and an additional 190 unclassified units in Maidstone are included. (#) are units approved but plan has expired; units are not counted in tally.

Source: City of Dover Department of Planning and Inspections, Annual Reports

## Residential Construction

The majority of new residential development has occurred in the suburban areas of west and east Dover. This focused on the build-out of earlier platted subdivisions. Multi-family units (Apartments) have become the dominant housing type, representing 58.6% of all housing units built since 2008. The largest of these apartment unit projects are the Leander Lakes Apartments off Dover High Drive and the Blue Hen Apartments just east of the Blue Hen Corporate Center.

A few single-family detached housing developments were completed during the period including Farthing Woods, Emerald Pointe, and Four Seasons. Construction continued in the mixed housing neighborhoods of Village of Cannon Mill PND, and Village of Westover PND with build-out of Phases V and VI. New conventional single-family detached housing subdivisions approved and under construction include Nottingham Meadows. Mixed unit subdivisions still under construction include Seskinore, Clearview Meadows Planned Neighborhood Design (PND), Lexington Glen PND, Patriot Village PND, and Eden Hill Farms TND.

The City has a large number of assisted living providers including Luther Towers, Dover Place (Heritage at Dover), Westminster Village, Owens Manor, Silver Lake, and Courtland Manor. This

time period saw a focus on construction of senior living facilities mainly in the form of apartment units. Projects included The Grande (DoveView Apartments), Luther Village PND: SCHO, Tall Pines, and The Arbors.

**Table 2-6: Residential Housing Starts 2003–2007 and 2008-2018**

| Year                   | 2003-2007<br>Total | 2008-2012    | 2013-2018    | 2008-2018<br>Total |
|------------------------|--------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------------|
| Single Family Detached | 670                | 168          | 415          | 583                |
| Single Family Attached | 308                | 198          | 167          | 365                |
| Multi-Family Units     | 678*               | 705          | 637          | 1,342              |
| <b>Totals</b>          | <b>1,656</b>       | <b>1,071</b> | <b>1,219</b> | <b>2,290</b>       |

\*300 units are classified as apartments but are dormitory apartments at Delaware State University

Source: City of Dover Department of Planning and Inspections, Annual Reports

## Non-Residential Development

The Planning Commission reviewed and approved applications (Conditional Uses and Site Plans) amounting to over 2.5 million square feet of new non-residential development projects in the 11 year period. Additionally, development in this sector also included the redevelopment or renovation of existing building space at a rate of over 75 more buildings/spaces. Table 2-7 shows the amount of new square footage approved by year including Master Plans with multi-year project proposals.

**Table 2-7: Non-Residential Floor Area Approvals for New Construction 2008-2018 (rounded)**

| Year        | Institutional | Retail | Commercial/ | Industrial | Office | Hospitality/<br>Entertainment | Total<br>Approved |
|-------------|---------------|--------|-------------|------------|--------|-------------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>2008</b> | 56,517        | 44,537 |             | 21,680     | 22,317 | 0                             | 145,051           |
| <b>2009</b> | 11,637        | 26,493 |             | 1,900      | 8,000  | 2,120                         | 51,150            |
| <b>2010</b> | 424,104       | 4,275  |             | 2,250      | 6,130  | 0                             | 436,759           |
| <b>2011</b> | 29,942        | 30,456 |             | 99,500     | 25,502 | 87,949                        | 273,349           |
| <b>2012</b> | 19,464        | 74,512 |             | 1,026      | 1,014  | 0                             | 96,016            |
| <b>2013</b> | 50,706        | 9,123  |             | 54,992     | 0      | 0                             | 114,821           |

|              |                |                |                |                |               |                  |
|--------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|------------------|
| <b>2014</b>  | 25,006         | 62,283         | 55,850         | 20,000         | 0             | 163,139          |
| <b>2015</b>  | 40,099         | 115,492        | 0              | 0              | 0             | 155,591          |
| <b>2016</b>  | 77,000         | 94,031         | 15,945         | 153,630        | 5,255         | 345,861          |
| <b>2017</b>  | 236,250        | 197,518        | 103,878        | 99,728         | 1,500         | 638,874          |
| <b>2018</b>  | 0              | 38,913         | 0              | 71,775         | 0             | 110,688          |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>970,725</b> | <b>697,633</b> | <b>357,021</b> | <b>408,096</b> | <b>97,824</b> | <b>2,531,299</b> |

Source: City of Dover Department of Planning & Inspections, Annual Reports

### **Commercial and Retail Development**

Commercial development activity in Dover regained its momentum at the end of this ten-year period. A majority of this activity can be attributed to redevelopment of several vacant buildings and shopping centers. Other restaurant and various food/entertainment establishments were built as either new construction or redeveloped within existing buildings throughout the City. Detailed information on these can be found in the Planning Department’s Annual Reports for 2008 through 2018. There is no defined area for retail growth other than that along Route 13/DuPont Highway, Bay Road, and portions of the Route 8 corridor. In this time period, the Route 8 corridor saw development of Walgreens, CVS, the rebuild of McDonald’s, Redner’s, AAA Auto Care, and planning for a new Dunkin Donuts. The Route 13/DuPont Highway corridor saw numerous improvements to the series of automobile dealership at Winner Ford, Winner Hyundai, C.F. Schwartz, and Volkswagen/Audi/Subaru, and the Truck Store. Retail improvements included Walgreens, Chick-FilA, two McDonald’s rebuilds, Dick’s Sporting Goods, and several shopping center renovation projects resulting in new retail and restaurant tenants.

### **Community Service Development**

The community service sector, which includes places of worship, social service organizations, childcare and community-based organizations, continued to expand during the planning period. The number of Child Day Care facilities grew significantly. Other community service and institutional projects included the Wesley U.M. Church elevator addition, sitework and parking at Grace Presbyterian Church, the new facility (place of assembly) for the Islamic Society of Central Delaware, and the YMCA acquisition of the Kent Swim Club and its Gymnasium Building addition at the YMCA facility on South State Street.

### **Hospitality and Entertainment Activities**

In general, the level of Hospitality and Entertainment development activity was lower than the previous ten years which saw significant hotel construction activity. Recently, the trend appears to be focused on improving community level activity opportunities as several residential developments added community center or clubhouse type amenities. The largest Hospitality and Entertainment related project was the 2017 Dover International Speedway – Firefly Music Festival Event Area Master Plan (not included in the table below).

Table 2-8 illustrates the major hospitality & community service approvals between 2008 and 2018.

**Table 2-8: Hospitality/Entertainment & Community Service Approvals 2008-2018**

| Location   | Square Footage Approved | Type                                       |
|--|-------------------------|--|
| Dover Downs                                      | 3,120                   | Maintenance Building                       |
| Loockerman East: Lands of HUB Associates         | 83,864                  | 92 Room Hotel (and Retail Building)        |
| InterCity Cultural League                        | 4,085                   | Community Center                           |
| Whatcoat Apartments: New Community Building      | 2,635                   | Community Building in an Apartment Complex |
| The Grande PND Senior Housing Clubhouse and Pool | 2,620                   | Clubhouse Building for Apartment Complex   |
| Lake Club Apartments Rental Center Building      | 1,500                   | Rental Center Building with Fitness Area   |
| Solid Rock Baptist Church Community Center       | 4,157                   | Community Center                           |
| <b>Total</b>                                     | <b>101,981</b>          |  |

Source: City of Dover Department of Planning and Inspections, Annual Reports

## Office and Office Park Development

Dover saw continued growth in the office sector over the planning period approving totaling. Enterprise Business Park also was approved for additional office buildings. There were renewed efforts to develop lots within the Northgate Center (previously known as the Stover Professional Campus). Table 2-9 shows these major approvals between 2008 and 2018.

**Table 2-9: Office Approvals 2008 – 2018\***

| Location   | Square Footage Approved |
|--|-------------------------|
| L & W Insurance Office Building                          | 16,442                  |
| NBR Properties Office Building                           | 20,000                  |
| Enterprise Office Building                               | 43,700                  |
| Chesapeake Utilities Office Building                     | 92,000                  |
| Bay Road Office Park Phase 1                             | 25,120                  |
| Enterprise Business Park: Lots 2A and 3 Office Buildings | 38,608                  |
| DGKP Property Office and Warehouse Facility              | 71,775                  |

\*Only those with square footage totaling in excess of 10,000 S.F. are listed. Expired plans are not included

Source: City of Dover Department of Planning and Inspections

## Governmental and Institutional Development

Major institutions providing essential services to the population have expanded as the City experienced steady and prolonged residential and commercial growth. Table 2-10 reflects major institutional development within the City limits.

**Table 2-10: Major Institutional Approvals 2008-2018**

| Applicant  | Square footage approved |
|--|-------------------------|
| Dover Anchor Public Library                                      | 46,000                  |
| Modern Maturity Center: two-story addition at rear building      | 14,486                  |
| Dover Behavioral Health Systems Building Addition Phases 1 and 2 | 24,000                  |
| Serenity Place   | 2,940                   |
| The Center at Eden Hill Skilled Nursing Facility                 | 65,000                  |
| Medcore Partners – Post Acute Rehabilitation Hospital            | 42,000                  |
| Dover Christian Church   | 9,699                   |

Source: City of Dover Department of Planning & Inspections, Annual Report

## Education

Several college campuses in Dover expanded their facilities over the planning period. Delaware State University (DSU) added a new Residence Hall, the Human Ecology Building Addition, the Applied Optics Research Building, as well as the New Office of the President. The acquisition of the old Sheraton Hotel building by DSU became the Early College High School and the DSU Leaning & Living Commons. Wesley College expanded its classroom facilities with the acquisition of the Frear Building (from the Federal government) converting it to a Health Sciences Building. Delaware Technical & Community College added an addition to the Energy Education Training Building, as well as adding a new Science and Engineering Building & Technology Center.

The Capital School District also was involved in significant construction projects including the Capital School District Office and Maintenance Facilities, the new Dover High School, renovations of William Henry Middle School/KCCS Site campus, and renovation of Booker T. Washington Elementary School. Central Middle School completed its construction adding a new gymnasium and auditorium renovation project. Also, a new elementary school on the property at South Dover Elementary was completed. The Dover First Christian School was built at a church property on Wyoming Avenue.

## Industrial Development

New industrial approvals were for a variety of uses ranging from energy generation facilities to manufacturing facilities. Several mini-storage facility projects were approved. The Garrison Oak Business and Technology Center was a focus of this development with four of its lots being constructed upon.

**Table 2-10: Major Industrial Approvals 2008 – 2018**

| Location   | Square Footage Approved                       |
|--|---|
| Dover Post Addition                                      | 20,480  |
| Dover Sun Park   | Electric Generator                            |
| West Drive Mini Storage                                  | 16,800  |
| Garrison Energy Center                                   | Combine Cycle Electric<br>Generating Facility |
| Uzin Utz (dry mortar plant)                              | 58,832  |
| Playtex Products Energizer<br>Personal Care Division     | 39,050  |
| Secure Storage Mini Storage<br>facility (Phases 2 and 3) | 90,000  |
| Advantech Facility                                       | 15,945  |
| Mitten Industrial Park Building<br>and Processing Area   | 9,600   |
| M & L Ventures-Warehouse<br>Buildings                    | 99,500  |

Source: City of Dover Department of Planning Inspections



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# Chapter 3

## POPULATION GROWTH, DEVELOPMENT, and EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

### ANALYSIS AND PROJECTIONS

Past population trends are an important tool for predicting City growth. The City of Dover is the largest municipality in Kent County, accounting for 20.9% of the County's population. The estimated population for July 2019 in the City of Dover is 38,058 people with Kent County, Delaware estimated at 181,864 people (*Delaware Population Consortium Annual Population Projections Report* issued November 13, 2018).<sup>1</sup> The City also serves as a major regional economic center. The Dover Metropolitan Statistical Area (calculated by combining Census tracts immediately surrounding and including the City) contains the vast majority of Kent County's employment and commerce. Dover's growth has continued, and the City is expected to continue its role in the center of Delmarva.

The City anticipates that it will remain the population and economic center of the County and the region throughout the planning period. It anticipates and welcomes continued growth as it becomes a more diverse community. It is expected that growth will be the result of redevelopment, infill of vacant areas, and newer forms of housing and urban living rather than a result of aggressive annexation like that of the past.

### HISTORIC POPULATION GROWTH

When the City of Dover was officially platted in 1717, it consisted of 125 acres of land and a few hundred inhabitants. Thus, began nearly three centuries of growth and change which continues today. The rural lands surrounding Dover converted to urban uses and new people and businesses joined the community over the years.

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<sup>1</sup> The *Delaware Population Consortium Annual Population Projections Report for 2019* did not make significant refinements to the City and Kent County projections. In the 2019 Report, the estimated populations for July 2019 in the City of Dover is 38,349 people with Kent County, DE estimated at 178,019 people. This Chapter continues to reflect the information from the DPC Annual Population Projections Report for 2018.

Successfully planning for change requires a sound estimate of population, housing and employment within Dover and the surrounding area. These estimates rely on the “natural increase” of the population (how many children will be born to current residents minus deaths) and the net number of new residents expected to move to the City over a given period. These estimates will guide the development of infrastructure, City services, open space areas, and land use/zoning as Dover continues to move forward.

The first step in developing a reasonable population estimate is to examine past trends of population growth. By reviewing previous decennial census counts, it is possible to model Dover’s historical population growth pattern which may illuminate future growth.

This task is complicated by the City’s aggressive annexation policy during the period of 1960-1980 that redefined Dover’s boundaries. In 1960, the City was comprised of approximately 1,000 acres. By 1969, the City had grown to 8,267 acres and by 1971 Dover had grown to 12,287 acres through annexations of adjacent land. Annexations were undertaken more slowly in the 1990’s with approximately 551 acres becoming part of Dover. Since 2000 the City has annexed approximately 898 acres. As of 2019, the City consists of an approximate total of 15,193 acres (23.74 square miles).

The 1950 Census counted 6,223 people living within the boundaries of the City. By 1960, the City contained 7,250 people, an increase of 16.5%. The population of Dover greatly expanded during the 1960s as indicated by the 1970 Census figures. In 1970, the City’s population was 17,488, an increase of 141% over the ten-year period. Much of this growth resulted from annexations of the 1960’s, which totaled approximately 7,200 acres over the decade. Many of these new municipal residents of Dover had been living in areas of the County directly adjacent to the City at the time of the 1960 Census.

During the period from 1970 to 1980, the population of Dover grew by 6,024 people to 23,512. This represents a 34.4% growth rate. Between 1980 and 1990 the City’s population grew at a rate of 17.1% to a total of 27,529 people. From 1990 to 2000, the population of Dover grew to 32,043<sup>2</sup> people. Between 2000 and 2010, the population of Dover grew at a rate of 8% to a total of 36,047 people. There was also significant population growth overall in Kent County during that ten-year time period as well. The population has continued to increase to 38,058 people (the July 2019 estimate of the *2018 Delaware Population Consortium Annual Population Projections Report* issued 11/13/2018.)

The following Table 3-1 depicts the population growth for Kent County and the City of Dover from 1980 to 2010 as documented in the decennial Census.

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<sup>2</sup> The US Census originally reported a total population of 32,135 for the City of Dover in 2000. City staff and elected officials questioned some of the Census block totals, which appeared to allocate population to areas that had no residential uses. After the Count Question Resolution Process of the Census Bureau, the total population for the City of Dover in 2000 was revised to 32,043. This revision occurred in April of 2002.

**Table 3-1: Population Growth 1980 – 2010**

|              | 1980   |         | 1990               |     |         | 2000               |     |         | 2010               |       |                    | Overall |  |
|--------------|--------|---------|--------------------|-----|---------|--------------------|-----|---------|--------------------|-------|--------------------|---------|--|
| Census Place | Count  | Count   | Increase From 1980 |     | Count   | Increase From 1990 |     | Count   | Increase From 2000 |       | Increase 1980-2010 |         |  |
| Dover        | 23,512 | 27,529  | 4,017              | 17% | 32,043  | 4,606              | 16% | 36,047  | 4,004              | 8%    | 12,535             | 53%     |  |
| Kent County  | 98,219 | 110,993 | 12,774             | 13% | 126,697 | 15,704             | 14% | 162,847 | 36,150             | 28.5% | 64,628             | 65.7%   |  |

Source: U.S. Census 2000 and 2010

## POPULATION PROJECTIONS

Using the trends found in past data, it is possible to project future population figures. Even the best projections provide only an estimate of future population levels. Many elements of population growth are somewhat difficult to predict across time, such as mortality and migration. Population projections decrease in accuracy in the out years.

This Plan utilizes projections developed by the Delaware Population Consortium (DPC), a group of representatives of state and local planning agencies and demographic work completed by the University of Delaware’s Center for Applied Demography and Survey Research. The 2020-2035 projections use numbers from the *2018 Delaware Population Consortium Annual Population Projections Report*.

The *2018 Report* figures project continued growth for both the City of Dover and Kent County. A period of very active growth is seen from 2010 to 2020 in the population estimates which the upcoming 2020 Census will document. Looking forward, Kent County is projected to grow by roughly 2.5% every five years to a total population of 197,682 in 2035. The City is expected to grow at a slightly higher rate of about 3% over each five-year segment, reaching 41,769 by 2035, for a total growth of approximately 15% since 2010. Table 3-2 lists the overall growth projections furnished by the Delaware Population Consortium through 2035.

**Table 3-2: Population Projections 2020 – 2025**

| Census Place | 2010    | 2020    |          |       | 2025      |          |      | 2030      |          |      | 2035      |          |      |
|--------------|---------|---------|----------|-------|-----------|----------|------|-----------|----------|------|-----------|----------|------|
|              |         | People  | Increase |       | People    | Increase |      | People    | Increase |      | People    | Increase |      |
| Dover        | 36,047  | 38,304  | 2257     | 6.2%  | 39,493    | 1,189    | 3.1% | 40,720    | 1,227    | 3.1% | 41,769    | 1,049    | 2.5% |
| Kent County  | 162,847 | 183,242 | 20,395   | 12.5% | 188,929   | 5,687    | 3.1% | 193,601   | 4672     | 2.5% | 197,682   | 4,081    | 2.1% |
| Delaware     | 900,429 | 989,803 | 89,374   | 9.9%  | 1,021,441 | 31,638   | 3.2% | 1,044,965 | 23,524   | 2.3% | 1,062,816 | 17,851   | 1.7% |

Source: Delaware Population Consortium, 2018 Annual Population Projections Report

The City of Dover and Kent County are expected to continue a steady increase in population through the year 2035. Dover is maturing as a City. As the existing vacant land is developed population growth appears to be stabilizing. The number of people living in the City of Dover by 2035 may be greater than the projected 41,769 people depending on annexation policies and development/redevelopment activity.

## AGE DISTRIBUTION

In addition to growth, it is useful to consider the future population's age distribution. This information (such as the number of school age children, elderly, or size of labor force) facilitates appropriate infrastructure planning.

The 2018 Delaware Population Consortium Report comparisons shows Dover to have a similar age distribution in the 2019 estimates with those of Kent County and the State. However, it demonstrates that Dover is younger which can perhaps be attributed to the influence of major institutions located in Dover including Dover Air Force Base, Wesley College, and Delaware State University. Table 3-3 demonstrates the age distribution of the City compared to the County and the State. There is also a slightly lower proportion of senior adults (65 and older) residing within City limits than the County. While Dover has a number of institutional and age-target housing options, the County has a growing number of retirement communities.

**Table 3-3: Age Profiles 2019**

| Census Place | Total Population 2019 | Percent of Total Population |       |       |       |       |
|--------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
|              |                       | 0-19                        | 20-24 | 25-44 | 45-64 | 65+   |
| Dover        | 38,058                | 27.7%                       | 12.6% | 24%   | 21.1% | 14.4% |
| Kent County  | 181,864               | 26.2%                       | 6.5%  | 25.9% | 24.9% | 16.5% |
| Delaware     | 982,188               | 23.8%                       | 6.1%  | 25.2% | 26.4% | 18.4% |

Source: July 2019 Estimates from the Delaware Population Consortium, 2018 Annual Population Projections Report

Predicting population demographics is critical to infrastructure planning. The historical trends that are evidenced by comparing the 2010 U.S. Census combined with projections from the Delaware Population Consortium provide a foundation for estimation. Table 3-4 depicts population trends in the various age groups. The age groups are broken into children (0-19); young adult (college-age) (20-24); working adult (child-bearing age) (25-44); older working adults (45-64); and older adults (65+). Growth in a particular age group can suggest where planning efforts may need to be focused. This information assists in planning for facilities, housing and other activities that are mentioned in other chapters.

These estimates hold the age profiles as a steady percentage of the overall population for the next few decades. Working age adults (25-64 years of age) are projected to remain relatively steady in percentage of the population and continue to make-up slightly less than half of Dover’s population over the next twelve years. The segment of senior citizens (65+) is expected to remain steady through 2030 to comprise almost 15% percent of the population. These two trends suggest a continued demand for high-quality and affordable housing.

The continued high levels of the older adult population may require more specialized services including health care, housing, and transportation. Those of retirement age may age-in-place or may seek to move out of larger single-family homes back into smaller dwellings or condominium/apartment units, which have fewer maintenance requirements. A trend to multi-generational households is also evident. Alternative housing options should be evaluated to address this situation.

**Table 3-4: Age Profiles in Dover, by Percent**

| Age group | 2010   |               | 2020   |               |          | 2025   |               | 2030     |        |               |          |
|-----------|--------|---------------|--------|---------------|----------|--------|---------------|----------|--------|---------------|----------|
|           | People | Percentage of | People | Percentage of | Increase | People | Percentage of | Increase | People | Percentage of | Increase |
| 0-19      | 10,007 | 27.7%         | 10,638 | 27.7%         | 6%       | 10,968 | 27.7%         | 3%       | 11,309 | 27.7%         | 3%       |
| 20-24     | 4,542  | 12.6%         | 4,826  | 12.6%         | 6%       | 4,976  | 12.6%         | 3%       | 5,131  | 12.6%         | 3%       |
| 25-44     | 8,668  | 24%           | 9,210  | 24%           | 6%       | 9,496  | 24%           | 3%       | 9,791  | 24%           | 3%       |
| 45-64     | 7,624  | 21.1%         | 8,100  | 21.2%         | 6%       | 8,352  | 21.2%         | 3%       | 8,611  | 21.2%         | 3%       |
| 65 +      | 5,206  | 14.4%         | 5,529  | 14.4%         | 6%       | 5,701  | 14.4%         | 3%       | 5,879  | 14.4%         | 3%       |
|           | 36,047 |               | 38,304 |               | 6%       | 39,493 |               | 3%       | 40,720 |               | 3%       |

Source: Delaware Population Consortium, 2018 Annual Population Projections Report

## ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF DOVER’S POPULATION

Understanding the composition of the local economy in terms of occupations and industry sectors is important for planning for certain kinds of land uses and in helping to establish and implement job retention and development policies. The following section examines these factors for Kent County as reported and projected by the Delaware Department of Labor and by the U.S. Census.

Data on employment trends, the location of jobs, and the type of employment available is difficult to compile. The problem lies in both the consistency of data compiled over time and the way in which employment is reported.

This segment explores the financial characteristics of Dover. Broadly, the importance of family or household income is important when projecting expenditures to assist quality of life concerns. To determine the economic health of Dover, one must designate the historical trends of median income levels, labor force, industry characteristics, and housing of the working population.

### **Labor Force Characteristics**

Although there are about 38,000 people residing in Dover, much of the approximately 78,000-person labor force in Kent County comes to work in Dover. This impacts the City in many ways. Daytime workers and regional shoppers have a beneficial impact on local businesses, as the money they spend circulates through Dover's economy. These same workers take advantage of and rely upon many City services, facilities, infrastructure and amenities (i.e. trash collection, streets, sewers, parks, library, police and fire protection) placing an additional burden beyond that of the resident population. Hence, the City must plan for these expanded demands for services that are typically not covered by local property taxes and other revenues.

### **Industry, Occupation and Labor Force**

It is clear from the previous sections of this chapter that many people call the City of Dover home and maintain residences here. Yet, even more people come to Dover to work. The City and the area that surrounds it are undeniably the primary employment center of Kent County and the central Delaware region. Dover is home to numerous large corporations such as Kraft Heinz Foods, Proctor and Gamble (formerly Scott Paper), and Edgewell Personal Products. The State of Delaware, Dover Air Force Base and Bayhealth Medical Center are also major employers in Dover. There are also a number of colleges and universities (Wesley College, Delaware Technical and Community College, Wilmington University and Delaware State University) as employers. Additionally, there are an abundance of commercial establishments within the City, which serve the whole area and provide a significant amount of employment.

To plan effectively for employment centers in and around the City, it is important to have an estimation of the number and types of jobs expected in the future. In order to ensure that adequate land is zoned for certain employment types (industrial, commercial, office, institutional) it is helpful to identify local growth industries. These analyses can focus on industry sector and the types of businesses most likely to be represented in the County (Table 3-5). This is important for planning for the types of employment sites and facilities that may be needed in the future. They can also focus on occupational classification as they are important to planning for education and skills development (See Table 3-6).

Table 3-5 identifies the employment in the County by primary industry sector including projections of employment to 2024. Table 3-5 indicates that Kent County is expected to gain employment at a rate of about 0.80% per year or about 6,000 jobs from 2014 to 2024. Major increases are expected in construction, retail trade, educational services, health care, accommodations and food related, and government sectors. Declines are noted manufacturing and agriculture, forestry and fishing sectors. This growth is significantly below the rates estimated for the period 2004-2014 reflecting

the significant economic slowdown that affected the region and State economy in the later part of the decade.

**Table 3-5: Employment Projections by Sector, Kent County, DE 2014-2024**

| <b>Sector</b>                                  | <b>2014</b> | <b>2024</b> | <b>Annual Change 2014 to 2024</b> |
|--|-------------|-------------|-----------------------------------|
| Total Employment                               | 70,050      | 75,990      | 0.80%                             |
| Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing                 | 1,610       | 1,520       | -0.60%                            |
| Utilities                                      | 220         | 230         | 0.40%                             |
| Construction                                   | 2,660       | 3,140       | 1.70%                             |
| Manufacturing                                  | 4,700       | 4,590       | -0.20%                            |
| Wholesale Trade                                | 1,060       | 1,070       | 0.10%                             |
| Retail Trade                                   | 9,340       | 9,890       | 0.60%                             |
| Transp. & Warehousing                          | 2,490       | 2,640       | 0.60%                             |
| Information                                    | 410         | 380         | -0.80%                            |
| Finance & Insurance                            | 1,120       | 1,320       | 1.70%                             |
| Real Estate & Rental/Leasing                   | 500         | 500         | 0.00%                             |
| Professional & Technical Services              | 1,740       | 1,890       | 0.80%                             |
| Management                                     | 220         | 150         | -3.80%                            |
| Admin. & Waste Services                        | 2,010       | 2,280       | 1.30%                             |
| Educational Services                           | 6,780       | 7,400       | 0.90%                             |
| Health Care & Soc. Assist.                     | 9,250       | 11,000      | 1.70%                             |
| Arts, Entertainment & Recreation               | 2,790       | 3,040       | 0.90%                             |
| Accommodations & Food                          | 5,430       | 5,900       | 0.80%                             |
| Other Services Excluding Public Administration | 2,650       | 2,860       | 0.80%                             |
| Government                                     | 11,760      | 12,500      | 0.60%                             |

Source: DE Department of Labor/OOMLI Long Term Industry Projections

Table 3-6 identifies employment within Kent County based on occupational or job type and includes data about the mean (average) hourly wage paid. As is obvious, the more skilled jobs receive higher wages. Comparison of trends between the two different analyses suggests that much

of the future job growth may occur in retail related fields (Food Preparation and Serving and Sales and Related) where wages are relatively modest. Conversely, strong growth in health care reflects a much stronger wage base. These are considerations for policymakers as they develop business retention and recruitment strategies.

This segment explores the financial characteristics of Dover. Broadly, the importance of family or household income is important when projecting expenditures to assist quality of life concerns. To determine the economic health of Dover, one must designate the historical trends of median income levels, labor force, industry characteristics, and housing of the working population.

**Table 3-6: Employment by Occupation, Kent County DE 2017**

| Occupational Group                         | Employment | Median Hourly Wage | Mean Hourly Wage |
|--|------------|--------------------|------------------|
| Total all occupations                      | 63,290     | \$16.88            | \$21.60          |
| Management                                 | 2,300      | \$50.07            | \$60.65          |
| Business & Financial Operations            | 2,870      | \$30.06            | \$32.10          |
| Computer & Mathematical                    | 1,060      | \$33.00            | \$35.14          |
| Architecture & Engineering                 | 750        | \$31.58            | \$32.87          |
| Life, Physical & Social Sciences           | 720        | \$28.24            | \$30.93          |
| Community & Social Services                | 1,340      | \$20.48            | \$21.86          |
| Legal                                      | 480        | \$31.18            | \$46.96          |
| Education, Training & Library              | 4,570      | \$26.32            | \$27.35          |
| Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, Media | 590        | \$18.15            | \$21.75          |
| Health Care Practitioners & Tech           | 3,970      | \$30.42            | \$36.08          |
| Healthcare Support                         | 1,930      | \$13.83            | \$14.49          |
| Protective Services                        | 1,420      | \$19.42            | \$23.54          |
| Food Prep & Serving Related                | 6,200      | \$9.97             | \$11.65          |
| Building & Grounds, Clean & Maintenance    | 2,110      | \$12.42            | \$13.60          |
| Personal Care & Service                    | 2,530      | \$11.33            | \$13.28          |
| Sales & Related                            | 6,910      | \$11.24            | \$15.41          |
| Office & Admin. Support                    | 9,690      | \$15.39            | \$16.51          |
| Farm, Fishing, Forestry                    | 180        | \$15.61            | \$17.60          |
| Construction & Extraction                  | 2,040      | \$18.91            | \$21.13          |
| Install, Maintenance & Repair              | 2,520      | \$22.03            | \$22.51          |
| Production                                 | 3,370      | \$14.86            | \$17.78          |
| Transportation and Materials Moving        | 5,730      | \$14.51            | \$16.26          |

Source: DE Department of Labor/OOLMI Occupation Series

While the data above reflects strong growth within most sectors of employment, the Census estimates of 2017 in Table 3-7 shows the actual makeup of the labor force. The following data lists the number of persons estimated to be in the labor force, the number employed and the number not in the labor force. A slightly lower rate of unemployed persons exists in the City while a slightly larger proportion of those over 16 are in the labor force in the County. Table 3-8 examines the

occupational distribution of the labor force between the City and County. The location of significant health care, government and professional employers in the City is apparent.

**Table 3-7: Labor Force, Dover and Kent County, DE 2017**

| Category             | Dover Number | Percent* | Kent County Number | Percent* |
|----------------------|--------------|----------|--------------------|----------|
| Population           | 37,109       |          | 173,145            |          |
| Population over 16   | 30,088       |          | 136,783            |          |
| Labor Force          | 18,356       | 61       | 86,035             | 62.9     |
| Civilian Labor Force | 17,468       | 58.1     | 83,641             | 61.1     |
| Employed             | 16,408       | 54.5     | 78,078             | 57.1     |
| Unemployed           | 1,078        | 3.6      | 5,563              | 4.1      |
| Armed Forces         | 880          | 2.9      | 2,394              | 1.7      |
| Not in Labor Force   | 11,722       | 39       | 50,748             | 31       |

Source: U.S. Census, American Fact Finder, Selected Economic Characteristics, 2017

\*Percent of Population over 16

**Table 3-8: Occupation of the Labor Force, Dover and Kent County, DE 2017**

| Occupation                                    | Dover Number | Percent | Kent County Number | Percent |
|---|--------------|---------|--------------------|---------|
| Management, professional & related            | 5,620        | 34.3    | 26,168             | 33.5    |
| Service Occupations                           | 3,797        | 23.1    | 15,457             | 19.8    |
| Sales & Office occupations                    | 3,972        | 24.2    | 17,912             | 22.9    |
| Farming, fishing & forestry                   | 60           | 0.003   | 441                | 0.005   |
| Construction, extraction & maintenance        | 711          | 0.4     | 7,317              | 9.4     |
| Production, transportation & materials moving | 2,248        | 13.7    | 10,783             | 13.8    |
| Total Employed                                | 16,408       |         | 78,078             |         |

Source: U.S. Census, American Fact Finder, Business and Industry, 2017

## DOVER DEMOGRAPHICS

Table 3-9 presents a glimpse of the demographic conditions in the City of Dover, as reported by the U.S. Census 2010 and the 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. The table also offers comparisons with conditions in Kent County and the State of Delaware.

**Table 3-9: General Demographic Conditions for Dover, Kent County, and Delaware, Kent County, 2010 and 2013-2017**

|   | <b>Dover</b> | <b>Kent County</b> | <b>Delaware</b> |
|---|--------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Total Population, 2010</b>   | 36,047       | 162,310            | 897,934         |
| <b>Total Population, 2017</b>   | 37,538       | 176,824            | 967,171         |
| <b>Race</b>   |              |                    |                 |
| White   | 45.9%        | 66.9%              | 69.7%           |
| Black or African American   | 42.8%        | 26.3%              | 22.8%           |
| Other (American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander) | 3.5%         | 3.2%               | 4.8%            |
| Two or More Races   | 5.8%         | 3.6%               | 2.6%            |
| <b>Hispanic Origin</b>  |              |                    |                 |
| Hispanic or Latino  | 8.8%         | 7.2%               | 9.3%            |
| <b>Households, 2013-2017</b>  |              |                    |                 |
| Total Households  | 13,427       | 63,381             | 352,357         |
| Households with children under 18 years   | 3,965        | 21,056             | 102,070         |
| Single parent family households   | 3,247        | 13,145             | 63,515          |
| Households with a computer  | 12,057       | 56,599             | 311,483         |
| Householder 65 or older, living alone   | 1,632        | 6,214              | 37,654          |
| Occupied Housing Unit with no vehicle available                                       | 1,606        | 3,959              | 21,760          |
| Persons per Household   | 2.42         | 2.65               | 2.61            |

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|   | Dover    | Kent County | Delaware |
|---|----------|-------------|----------|
| <b>Housing Units</b>                                |          |             |          |
| Total Housing Units                                 | 14,757   | 69,506      | 423,489  |
| One-unit structure (attached and detached units)    | 9,542    | 52,288      | 312,831  |
| Multiple Units in structure                         | 4,677    | 8,576       | 74,664   |
| Other Unit Types                                    | 538      | 8,642       | 35,994   |
| Occupied Housing Units                              | 13,427   | 63,381      | 352,357  |
| Owner Occupied Units                                | 6,747    | 44,132      | 251,098  |
| Renter Occupied Units                               | 6,680    | 19,249      | 101,259  |
| Vacant Housing Units                                | 1,330    | 6,125       | 71,132   |
| Units built 1940-1969                               | 3,663    | 10,979      | 104,791  |
| Units built 1939 or earlier                         | 1,126    | 4,609       | 28,752   |
| <b>Educational Characteristics, 2013-2017</b>       |          |             |          |
| High School Graduate, Population 25 and over        | 88.8%    | 87.4%       | 89.3%    |
| Bachelor's Degree or higher, Population 25 and over | 29.6%    | 23.5%       | 31%      |
| <b>Economic Characteristics, 2013-2017</b>          |          |             |          |
| Median Household Income                             | \$49,738 | \$57,647    | \$63,036 |
| Individuals, below poverty level                    | 19.4%    | 13.0%       | 12.1%    |
| Individuals 17 and younger, below poverty level     | 28.8%    | 18.4%       | 17.4%    |
| Individuals 65 or older, below poverty level        | 6.6%     | 7.3%        | 7.2%     |

Source: US Census 2010 and 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

As is seen from the information in Table 3-9, Dover is much more diverse and demographically different from Kent County and the State in many important areas. It is much more racially diverse than either the State of Delaware or Kent County's population. According to the most recent Census and American Community Survey Estimates, approximately 42.8% of Dover's population identified themselves as Black or African American, while only 26.3% of County and 22.8% of State residents were reported to be Black or African American. Also new to the Census was the ability to select the option of Two or More Races as a category when reporting Race. The ethnic background of Dover's residents is fairly similar to that of residents at the County and State levels. Approximately 8% of Dover's population was of Hispanic origin, while a slightly higher percentage was of Hispanic origin in the State at large and a slightly lower percentage was of Hispanic origin in Kent County.

Dover has a slightly smaller percentage of its households with children under the age of 18 than found at the county level. At the same time, compared to conditions across the State and County, a significantly higher percentage of Dover's households were classified as single parent family households. Dover also had a higher percentage of households occupied by residents 65 or older that were living alone. Approximately 6.2% of households in the State of Delaware and Kent County did not have a vehicle available to them, while almost twice that proportion (12%) of Dover's households did not have access to a vehicle.

Dover's housing stock is of a significantly different composition than the housing typically found in the rest of Delaware and Kent County. The City provides a larger percentage of multi-family units when compared to single-family units than the State or Kent County. Nearly half of all housing units in the City of Dover were occupied by renters in the 2013-2017 Survey period, significantly more than in the County or the State. The ACS estimates renters occupied less than a third of housing in Kent County and the State of Delaware. Historic development in Dover can be seen by the proportion of units built prior to 1969 compared to the County.

Reflective of a well-educated professional workforce, a higher percentage of Dover's residents have attained a Bachelors' degree or higher than have done so at the County level. However, Dover's median household income of \$49,738 is less than the median income for Kent County (\$57,647) and the State (\$63,036). Also, a greater percentage of Dover's total residents and those under the age of 18 live below the poverty level than do across the County and State.

Demographic and economic data for the City are incorporated throughout the *Comprehensive Plan* and into key components such as Economic Development (Chapter 10), Housing (Chapter 11) and the Land Development Plan (Chapter 12).

## 2020 CENSUS

The U.S. Census Bureau will be conducting the decennial census in 2020. This national count, mandated by the U.S. Constitution, will collect data about the population of the United States and territories that will be useful for distribution of Federal and local funds for schools, roads, hospitals, and other public infrastructure, allocation of representation and redistricting, information useful to business for decision-marketing and investment, and planning for services and programs

throughout the states. Although estimates are prepared between Census counts, the 2020 results will provide a comprehensive assessment of Dover, the County and the State. In preparation the City Planning Department participated in the 2020 Census Local Update of Census Addresses Operation (LUCA) to update the Census residential address list for Dover and in a review of the Census boundary information to ensure that an accurate count for the City is obtained. The City looks forward to the results of the upcoming Census.

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# Chapter 4

# CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

## CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

### THE PROCESS

Community involvement plays an important role in the preparation of the Comprehensive Plan. During the *2019 Comprehensive Plan* process beginning in Spring 2018, a series of public outreach activities were held to engage the community, gather input and present recommendations for the Plan. Several events and activities were scheduled prior to Summer and Fall workshops. Additionally, the Planning staff met with state government officials, contingent municipalities, and various City Council Committees presenting draft text and maps. All the public workshops were facilitated by the Planning Office.

The goal of the *2019 Comprehensive Plan* outreach activities was to offer the public an opportunity to directly input ideas, concerns, and personal experience into the development of Dover’s plan for land development and growth in the next ten years. Participation was varied in terms of demographics; however, homeowners, students, retirees, and members of the business and development community were often represented in identifiable groups depending on the location of the event. Local elected officials, representatives of state agencies and local businesses participated and were available to the public during the workshops.

Formal updates of the project were presented to City Council in April and September 2019. The City’s website provides information about the *2019 Comprehensive Plan* with updates and details about projects, presentations and data updates, and future engagement events.

### Engagement Activities

#### Goals and Recommendations

A series of discussions and reporting on Goals and Recommendations for the *2019 Comprehensive Plan* began in the Summer of 2018 and will be on going throughout the process. A release of the Preliminary Draft Goals & Recommendations was evaluated by and released to City Council, Planning Commission, Historic District Commission and posted on the City’s website.

## **Questionnaire**

A Survey Questionnaire was available online from June through July 2018 as well as paper copy formats for the citizens of Dover to share their thoughts on the current state of the various aspects of life in the City of Dover, as well as the vision for the future. The Questionnaire was divided into a variety of topics for respondents to rank a series of questions in each category and provide optional additional comments at the end of the survey on the topics covered. There were over 511 respondents. Many of the respondents agreed that Dover is a nice place to live and work and are satisfied with the current growth of the City. The majority of the respondents have concerns with the crime and safety in the Downtown area, lack of affordable housing, increase in the homeless population, lack of public transportation, deteriorated infrastructure throughout the City, the number of vacant buildings in the Downtown area, lack of cultural and recreational activities in the area, and the need for better bike and walkable paths.

## **Event Forums**

### **Economic Development Symposium**

On June 13, 2018, the City and Wilmington University held a “Dover Economic Development Forum” at Wilmington University with economic development and marketing representatives from Delaware State University, Delaware Technical and Community College, Wesley College, and Wilmington University along with a representative from Goldey Beacom College to discuss the future of Dover’s economy and build on the importance of higher education in the City. Further discussion of this event on Dover’s economy is found in Chapter 10 - Economic Development.

### **Housing Forum**

A Forum was held at the Economic Development Committee Meeting in July 2018 to discuss the Economic Development and Housing Issues in the City with representative of the Kent County Association of Realtors, NCALL Research and the Delaware Homebuilders Association to understand the current housing market and trends. It was noted in the discussion that the City’s inventory of homes is less diverse than the County in terms of style, options, and prices. More of the discussion on housing trends and the market is discussed in Chapter 10 - Economic Development and Chapter 11 - Housing.

### **Wesley College Forum**

The City’s Planning Staff held a Forum at Wesley College on September 27, 2018 with a presentation on the Comprehensive Plan process, the interactive discussion focused on Dover as a “College Town.” Students, staff and guests provided the following written comments regarding Dover as a “College Town.”

- The majority of college students don’t feel safe around the area and not comfortable walking Downtown from campus.
- Wesley students and staff feel disconnected from the City. There needs to be more engagement between the City and Wesley.
- Downtown merchants need to be more college friendly towards students such as “Wesley Night” for students Downtown.
- Internet café is needed in the Downtown area.

- Students prefer an off-campus bookstore in the Downtown area.
- More night life and restaurants are needed in the area.
- More retail stores that will attract college students.

## Workshops

### Open House Events

An Open House Event was held on August 23, 2018 from 3:00 pm to 7:00 pm at the Dover Public Library with presentations at 3:30 pm and 5:30 pm. The Open House Event was advertised in local newspapers, the City's website and information cards were dispersed throughout the City to citizens and civic organizations informing the public of the date and location of the event. There were over 65 attendees. There were hands on activities and maps on display for the attendees.

A session was devoted to a presentation given by the Planning Staff about the Comprehensive Plan process followed by facilitated discussion with the public. Participants were given an overview of the process, objectives and goals achieved from the *2008 Comprehensive Plan Update*, and a development timeline for the *2019 Comprehensive Plan*. Attendees were then given an opportunity to ask questions and share concerns regarding the process as well as the future of the City. Issues ranged from parking in the Downtown Dover area and traffic to annexations and growth of the City. A summary of the Survey/Questionnaire highlights was also presented.

A second Open House Event was held on October 23, 2019 from 3:00 pm to 7:00 pm at the Dover Public Library with presentations at 3:30 and 5:30 pm. There were 22 attendees and a series of maps on display for attendees to view. This event focused on the issuance of the Release Draft Plan (10.1.2019) made available for the public to view as well. Topics of discussion during the presentations included updates on project activities, review of the Draft, the formal review and adoption process, and the steps for Plan implementation.

On October 24, 2019, a Visitation Event was held from 8:30 am to 5:00 pm in the City Hall Conference Room. This event allowed the public another opportunity to view the Release Draft Plan document and the Draft Map Series. Staff was available to answer questions and explain the document and maps.

### Historic District Workshop

On June 20, 2019 Planning Staff held a Historic District Workshop Event in City Hall Council Chambers where the public was invited to view maps and learn about the Historic District, learn about the Architectural Review Certification process and learn about Tax Credit and Incentive Programs. A presentation was given by Staff about the Historic District and the Comprehensive Plan Historic Preservation Chapter. This outreach was targeted to property owners within the City's Historic District. The event was funded through a Certified Local Government grant (FFY 2018).

## SUMMARY OF COMMENTS/INPUT RECEIVED

### Public Comments for Focus Areas (Open House Event 2018)

At the Open House event held at the Dover Public Library on August 23, 2018, there were hands-on activities for the public. One activity to participate in included viewing six Focus Area Maps of locations within the City where participants were able to share their thoughts of what they would like to see in those areas. The results are described below. A number of the same comments were heard in the various written comments received with the Questionnaire and at Event Workshops.

#### Focus Area 1: Downtown Dover

The central or Downtown area of the City makes up a unique environment that includes the State government complex as well as the Historic District. The area involved in this description includes the area of central Dover bounded by the St. Jones River on the east, Mary Street to the north, the area surrounding the railroad tracks to the west, and the Bayhealth campus to the south. Dover's Downtown area primarily consists of small-scale retail and service firms that tend to provide products to the residents of the Downtown area as well as cultural and recreation centers. It is a mix of institutions, homes, businesses, retail establishments and offices.

The consensus of public comments for Focus Area 1: Downtown Area

- Fill vacant buildings
- Continue economic developments efforts
- Long-term affordable housing/Options for housing
- Internet Café/Social Media Hub/partnership
- Reduce traffic backup with timed lights
- Increase lighting
- Reduce crime in the area
- Add bike lanes and make roads more walkable
- Increase parking
- Revitalize the Downtown business area and encourage more business opportunities

#### Focus Area 2: Division Street Corridor

The Division Street Corridor consists of approximately 0.64 square miles surrounding Delaware Route 8 (Division Street). Delaware Route 8 consists of approximately 5.14 miles within the City and is an east-west State roadway. From the west, Route 8 is named Forrest Avenue then becomes Forest Street. Through the Downtown area Route 8 turns into Division Street. As the road crosses US Route 13, the name of Route 8 changes to East Division Street and then North Little Creek Road and continues through the east side of Dover.

Division Street starts at the location of the Booker T. Washington Elementary School on West Division Street. As you go east on Division Street, there are several commercial uses along the corridor that include a car wash, a funeral home, commercial office building, restaurants, auto sales and service, and churches. Across the railroad tracks at the intersection of North West Street and Division Street, it is primarily residential with a portion of Wesley College located at the intersection of North Governors Avenue and West Division Street.

The Restoring Central Dover (RCD) Plan is in the implementation process and revitalization efforts are underway that will improve the aesthetics along the corridor. The Capital Gateway project will also complement the work of the RCD area along the corridor with emphasis on the physical environment of the Division and Forest Street corridors.

The consensus of public comments for Focus Area 2: Division Street Corridor

- Redevelop, demolish and/or rehab vacant and dilapidated structures
- Construct a bike path
- Streetscape along Division Street and upgrade sidewalks
- Encourage more commercial uses

### **Focus Area 3: POW-MIA Parkway**

The POW/MIA Parkway also known as the West Dover Connector officially opened on September 15, 2017. Construction on the \$67.9 million project began in February 2015. Named after prisoners of war and those missing in action, the road stretches 3.2 miles from North Street and Saulsbury Road to Route 13 ending at Rodney Village with entrances and exits at Wyoming Mill Road and New Burton Road.

The consensus of public comments for Focus Area 3: Vicinity of POW-MIA Parkway

- Install more lighting along West North Street towards westside
- No future development around open space area
- Control speeding on the Parkway
- Preserve all of the woods and wetlands as public parks
- Develop better bike lanes or pedestrian facilities for New Burton Road
- React and find uses to complement and support Kraft Heinz Foods

### **Focus Area 4: McKee Road at College Road**

The intersection of McKee and College Road is a unique area in that it has three different zoning classifications surrounding the area. The southeast corner of McKee and College Road is zoned IO (Institutional and Office Zone) where Westminster Village, an assisted living facility is located. The southwest corner of McKee and College Road is zoned CPO (Commercial Professional Office Zone). This portion of the intersection is aligned with office buildings. The northwest side of McKee and College Road is zoned C-2A (Limited Commercial Zone) where there is a mixed-use building of commercial and residential. The northeast corner of McKee and College Road is zoned CPO (Commercial Professional Office Zone) that currently is vacant land.

The consensus of public comments for Focus Area 4: McKee Road at College Road

- Traffic on McKee Road is too congested during the rush hour
- Bike Lanes are needed at the College and McKee Road intersection
- Resurface multi-use path
- Streetlights are needed on McKee and Scarborough Road
- Improvements are needed on College Road

### **Focus Area 5: North Dover/Route 13 Corridor**

The North Dover Route 13 (DuPont Highway) corridor begins at East Division Street and extends to West Denney's Road in the City limits. The corridor is aligned with hundreds of retail stores, offices, commercial businesses, hotels and universities. The most recent addition to the corridor is the Capital Station Shopping Center that is located at the intersection of East Division and Route 13.

The consensus of public comments for Focus Area 5: North Dover /Route 13 Corridor

- Dover International Speedway should remain commercial
- Improve transportation and widen highway
- Implement the U.S. 13 Access Study and interconnect properties
- Facilitate safe bike transportation in the area
- Attract more state-of-the-art shopping
- More grocery stores are needed along the corridor

### **Focus Area 6: Bay Road Corridor Focus Area 6**

The Bay Road Corridor consists of 2.1 miles of roadway and adjoining land. This corridor is aligned with retail stores, restaurants, offices and other commercial businesses. Some of the most notable facilities along the corridor are the Blue Hen Corporate Center, the Kent County Administration Building, and the Dover Air Force Base. The most recent addition to the corridor is the construction of the new office building for Century Engineering.

The consensus of public comments for Focus Area 6: Bay Road Corridor

- A bike connection across Route 13 and Bay Road from Legislative Mall to South Little Creek Road
- Pedestrian safety update crossing Route 13 at Target and Wawa
- Rebuild Blue Hen Corporate Center to mixed use office/residential complex with new buildings and less parking
- Need to fill vacant existing non-residential buildings prior to building new ones

## **PLAN PREPARATION**

During the 2019 Comprehensive Plan process beginning in Spring 2018, a series of public outreach activities were held to engage the community, gather input and present recommendations for the Plan. Outreach activities included a Questionnaire, Workshops, Forums, and Open House Events. A page on the City's website was devoted to the Comprehensive Plan project. The Planning Staff met with State Government Officials, contingent municipalities, and various City Council Committees presenting draft text and maps.

As Staff prepared specific topic area chapters, there was data and information gathering meetings with various City Departments, State agencies and others. Early drafts of individual chapters were circulated for content review and comments. This involved: the Historic Preservation Chapter to the Historic District Commission and the DE Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs (State Historic Preservation Office); the Utility Chapter to City Departments; the Economic Development Chapter to the City Council Economic Development Committee; and the Transportation Chapter

to the Dover/Kent County MPO (Technical Advisory Committee). A Staff DRAFT #1 was issued on August 14, 2019 for internal review by Staff and City Department Heads.

## NEXT STEPS AND ADOPTION

For the City to achieve Certification for the 2019 Comprehensive Plan, it must complete the PLUS Review process and be adopted by the Planning Commission and City Council. The Release DRAFT was submitted to the Preliminary Land Use Service (PLUS) on October 1, 2019 for review and City Staff participated in the PLUS Review meeting on October 23, 2019. Upon receipt of the PLUS Review Comment Letter on November 8, 2019, Planning Staff worked to address certification items/comments and to incorporate other recommendation items.

At the same time in October, the Release DRAFT (10.1.2019) of the *2019 Comprehensive Plan* was also released to the Planning Commission, City Council Committee of the Whole, the Historic District Commission, and other groups. During October and November 2019, the Release DRAFT was available for public view and for written public comment. An Open House Event and Visitation Event were held in October as outreach specifically on the Release DRAFT. Other review comments were gathered and preparation of the Final DRAFT (12.3.2019) was completed.

The formal review processes for the 2019 Comprehensive Plan begin in December 2019. A Review and Public Hearing with the Planning Commission is scheduled for December 16, 2019. This will also include review of several specific Requests received for properties in the City. The Planning Commission will make specific recommendations on these Requests. Then Review and Public Hearing with the City Council is scheduled for January 13, 2020.



FINAL DRAFT – 12.3.2019

# Chapter 5

## NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION PLAN

### NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Dover's natural environment is one of its greatest assets. Our City is fortunate to have an abundance of mature trees, natural wetland and woodland areas, and a large lake which defines the central area of Downtown Dover. This Chapter's focus is on identifying lands which are important to protect in the context of urban development due to their ecological value. It also provides a framework to improve the City's stewardship of this land and its natural resources. The ecological value of these lands may include their flood storage capability, the value of the land or water as wildlife habitat, the ability of wetlands and other buffer areas to filter nutrients and other pollutants from stormwater, and the air quality benefits of trees and woodlands. Dover's natural resource areas also provide numerous aesthetic, recreational, and health benefits that contribute to the quality of life for all of Dover's residents and visitors. Since these lands are usually least suitable for intense urban development, the strategy of protecting these areas often has the corresponding effect of ensuring that more intense development occurs in areas free of constraints.

### THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT: DOVER'S LAND AND GROUND BASED FEATURES

#### **Topography**

Overall, the Dover area is very flat topographically. There are no significant elevation changes or natural features such as hills, mountains, valleys, or ravines. The western portion of the metro area is the highest at between 50 and 60 feet above sea level. The traditional Downtown area is around 30 to 35 feet above sea level. Silver Lake is 16 feet above sea level and the St. Jones River (south of the Silver Lake Dam) is at or near sea level. A ridgeline, running near and approximately parallel to the US Route 13/Bay Road corridor at a 40-foot elevation separates the two watersheds in the Dover area.

There are areas associated with Silver Lake and its major tributaries that have slopes approaching 30%, which would make them unsuitable for development. Yet these same areas are also generally associated with other natural constraints (wetlands, woodlands, soils unsuitable for development) and are unlikely candidates for development in the first place. Other than these areas, most of the metro area exhibits slopes of between 1% and 3%, which present few topographic constraints on development.

### **Soil Classifications**

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Soil Service produces soil surveys of Kent County including Dover. These soil surveys indicate that there is a broad range of different soil types within the City. Soil types differ based on a variety of factors including their proximity to saltwater, slope, flooding impacts, and how well they drain. These are important to note as some soils are better for agriculture, or development while others have limitations due to hydric conditions. Information regarding soil types can be found on the Web Soil Survey website administered by the USDA at <https://websoilsurvey.sc.egov.usda.gov/App/HomePage.htm>.

### **Woodlands**

Trees are an integral part of the image and heritage of Dover and significant efforts have been taken to preserve them by the City Council and the Planning Department. In 1992, the Council enacted the Tree Planting and Preservation Ordinance. This ordinance requires developers to plant trees as a component of development projects. There are also requirements for preserving woodlands and limits are set on the amount of woodland that can be cleared for development. The Tree Planting and Preservation Ordinance has undergone occasional updates to adapt to the changing needs of the City with the most recent update occurring in 2017 (*Zoning Ordinance*, Article 5 Section 16).

Most woodland within the City exists along streams and tributaries or in wetlands. These areas are generally unsuitable for development because of multiple environmental constraints. However, on wooded sites the design of development projects must first consider the preservation of existing trees and other natural features. Options exist in the *Zoning Ordinance*, such as the Planned Neighborhood Design Option (PND), which provide design flexibility and alternatives to developers to encourage design that is in harmony with natural features.

### **Wetlands**

There are two general types of wetland areas in Dover, tidally influenced and nontidal wetlands. Tidally influenced wetlands can be either salt or freshwater wetlands. Nontidal wetlands are strictly freshwater wetlands. The tidally influenced wetlands are associated with the Little Creek Watershed. The nontidal wetlands are associated with forested, upland areas which have high water tables and little or no topographic relief.

Wetlands generally constrain development. Wetland soils are poor for building, and usually require excessive fill to stabilize. Wetlands soils are generally found in low-lying areas, therefore structures built on them are susceptible to flooding. Wetlands also provide many crucial ecological functions, including wildlife habitat, water cleansing, and flood storage capacity. For these reasons, wetlands should not be disturbed, and adequate buffers of natural vegetation should be provided around them.

Both the federal and state governments regulate the alteration and filling of wetlands. State regulations only address tidal wetlands and federal regulations have been reduced in recent years. Currently, nontidal isolated wetlands are not protected by state or federal regulations. However, except for small intrusions into wetland systems, disruptions are generally prohibited by City regulations. Development projects undertaken with wetlands on site must accurately delineate wetlands and respect wetlands through the design of the project. Dover's *Zoning Ordinance* and *Land Subdivision Regulations* provide protection for wetlands with buffer standards that must be adhered to when designing land development projects. (*Zoning Ordinance*, Article 5 Section 11).

Regulatory protection of wetlands is mandated under Section 404 provisions of the Federal Clean Water Act. Certain other wetlands (mainly in tidal areas) are accorded additional regulatory protection under provisions of Title 7, *Delaware Code*, Chapter 66. Compliance with these statutes may require an Army Corps of Engineers approved field wetlands delineation and/or an official DNREC wetland jurisdictional determination.

Environmental features are shown on three maps in the Map Appendix. Map 5-1 shows natural features in Dover and Map 5-2 is a Source Water Map (See the Source Water Protection Overlay Zone section of this chapter). Map 5-3 shows lands under preservation within and immediately outside of Dover. The data for these maps is drawn from a variety of state and federal data sources combined and displayed using Geographic Information System (GIS) technology. These maps are intended to provide a general guideline to assist City staff, the public and developers in identifying natural features located in Dover. As always, land development must rely upon detailed site analysis and delineation of wetlands and woodlands to comply with the requirements of Dover's ordinances.

## THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT: DOVER'S WATER FEATURES

### Hydrology

The hydrology of the Dover metro area is defined by several watersheds: the Leipsic River Watershed, Little Creek Watershed, and the St. Jones River Watershed. The dividing line between these watersheds is a ridgeline, which runs approximately parallel to the US Route 13/Bay Road corridor. To the east of this ridge, the land drains to the Delaware Bay through a series of tributaries and saltwater marshlands associated with the Little River and the Leipsic River. To the west of this ridge line, the land drains to Silver Lake and/or the St. Jones River, and then to the Delaware Bay. Silver Lake is approximately 167 acres in size, making it the largest waterbody in the City. Other major water bodies within the City include the Cahoon Branch, the Dover Run, the Fork Branch, the Little River, the Maidstone Branch, the McKee Run, the Morgan Branch, the Muddy Branch, the Puncheon Run, and the St. Jones River. Portions of the Leipsic Watershed are found in the northeast portion of the City as well. See Map 5-1.

Dover's hydrology presents a couple of challenges to the City and its residents. First is the need for stormwater management. Stormwater runoff is an increasingly challenging aspect of urban development which, if unaddressed, may lead to localized areas of flooding and poor drainage. As properties develop, available soil into which stormwater can infiltrate becomes scarcer, leading to

a need for engineered solutions. The oldest such solution in Dover is the City's Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4). An MS4 is a publicly owned drainage system designed to collect and convey stormwater to a water body, and which usually does not treat the water before discharging it. Dover's MS4 collects water from the City's older neighborhoods and conveys it directly to bodies such as the Silver Lake and the St. Jones River. As the City has expanded, the prospect of conveying water over increasingly long distances through a larger, more maintenance-intensive system has made regular expansion of the core MS4 impractical. New developments are therefore required to have on-site stormwater management, typically in the form of engineered solutions such as retention basins, detention basins, or underground systems. These features are designed to hold water for an extended period before releasing it at a controlled rate to water bodies or groundwater. This allows pollutants to settle and reduces flood risk.

The City's *Zoning Ordinance* and *Land Subdivision Regulations* as well as the State's *Sediment and Stormwater Regulations* include requirements to mitigate stormwater impact. To enforce these requirements, the Kent Conservation District and/or DNREC review erosion and sediment control plans and stormwater management plans for most development projects within the City. For smaller projects where stormwater management plans are not required, the City's Department of Public Works performs review of the erosion and sediment control plans to ensure construction runoff does not enter the MS4. Dover's MS4 is permitted through DNREC under the US Environmental Protection Agency's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES). To remain in compliance with the permit the City must take steps to improve the water quality of the stormwater entering the system. The Department of Public Works has written a Stormwater Management Plan to comply with the requirements of the NPDES Permit.

The second challenge posed by Dover's hydrology is the threat of flood events. While sound stormwater management can reduce the effects of flooding, extreme rainfall events can easily overwhelm a system designed for more regular and moderate rain. Some Areas within Dover's watersheds that are known to be prone to flooding and poor drainage are shown on Map 5-1: Natural Features. These areas are known as Special Flood Hazard Areas. Special Flood Hazard Areas are typically associated with the major tributaries of the St. Jones River (to the west), the Puncheon Run (to the south) and the Little River (to the east). The floodways and 100-year flood plain boundaries represent areas where development is discouraged and most frequently prohibited for two reasons. First, any structures placed in these areas would be vulnerable to damage by flooding. Second, the tributaries' flood capacity and natural functions rely upon these areas being predominantly natural vegetation. The vegetation cleanses flowing water and can help slow and absorb flood waters during extreme rainfall events. Dover's *Zoning* and *Subdivision Ordinances* contain provisions which limit urban development in Flood Hazard Areas in order to prevent flooding and environmental disruption and to reduce the probability of property damage. (*Zoning Ordinance*, Article 5 Section 11 and *Dover Code of Ordinances*, Chapter 50).

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is responsible for mapping Flood Hazard Areas throughout the country. Their earliest Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) for the Dover area date to 1982, but over the years FEMA has updated its maps as more detailed data and information has been collected and analyzed. Different areas of Dover have had their maps (FIRM panels) updated or amended in 2003 and 2014. The updates through the Letters of Map Change (Map Amendment or Map Revision) processes occasionally result in situations where areas that were previously not considered to be in a Flood Hazard Area are now included. This can create a

hardship for property owners in the area because of the City’s limitations on new development in floodplain areas and the need for property owners to buy flood insurance. See Map 5-1 for general information and the FIRM Maps on floodplains.

Most recently, changes to drainage patterns associated with the construction of State Route 1 and related drainage improvements in a specific area necessitated a revised flood analysis to be performed for FEMA. Although the drainage improvements at the Garrison Oak Business and Technical Park did not worsen existing conditions, the addition of more accurate data for the west side of State Route 1 caused areas of the Baytree neighborhood to be mapped into a Flood Hazard Area in Map Revisions that became effective in 2018 and 2019 (LOMR #17-03-0901P and #18-03-1850P). In the future, a general expansion of flood hazard areas throughout the country is expected as extreme rain events become more frequent due to climate change. Further discussion of this possibility and how it could affect Dover is contained in the “Planning for Climate Change” section of this chapter.

## PLANNING FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

### Air Quality

The Delaware Division of Air Quality is responsible for monitoring concentrations of seven different pollutants which are subject to National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) set by the US Environmental Protection Agency under authorization of the Clean Air Act. These include ozone, carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, particulate matter less than 10 microns in diameter, particulate matter less than 2.5 microns in diameter, and lead. Concentrations of all these pollutants have fallen steadily in Delaware since passage of the Clean Air Act. Currently in 2019, Kent County meets the NAAQS for all seven of these pollutants.

Kent County’s attainment of these standards does not mean that Dover should be unconcerned about air quality. Staying within the standards requires active work to limit sources of pollutants, the most significant of which are automobiles and industries with “dirty” emissions. In addition, as the most urbanized area of Kent County, Dover has a higher potential to produce and a higher potential to suffer the effects of pollutant emissions compared to more rural areas.

Dover has a means of controlling emissions from industry within the City through zoning. Many particularly intensive industrial processes, such as the manufacture of various chemicals, are not permitted in the City’s industrial zones. All other industries are obligated to follow the Performance Standards listed in the *Zoning Ordinance* (Article 5, Section 8) which include the requirement that all forms of air pollution they emit conform to DNREC regulations. As part of the City’s Site Development Plan process, new developments in Dover’s industrial areas must go through a Performance Standards Review procedure, in which the developers report to the Planning Commission the steps they will take to meet the City’s Performance Standards. Through this process the City has a chance to scrutinize new industrial developments before they are built. It should be noted that there have been few cases in recent years where a development’s conformance to the Performance Standards was in doubt. This can be credited to an evolving regional economy that has shifted investment away from traditional manufacturing industries towards ones with a cleaner, technological focus.

Emissions from automobile sources are more difficult for the City to influence. In some ways, the hard work has already been done by others. For instance, fuel and engine technologies have improved over decades in response to pressure from EPA regulations, so that according to the EPA new cars made today are well over 90% cleaner than ones made in 1970. Efficiency gains can only reduce emissions so much, however, especially with the number of cars on the road increasing during that same time. The City has several strategies for checking the growth of auto use in Dover, primarily by providing transportation alternatives and ensuring Dover’s residents have ample opportunity to use them.

- The Land Development Plan encourages mixed-use development in Downtown Dover and provides for various well integrated residential and employment centers throughout the City. See Chapter 12 – Land Development Plan for more information.
- Opportunities for increased use of public transportation are supported.
- Numerous bicycle and pedestrian improvements are being suggested and implemented by DelDOT, the Dover/Kent County MPO and the City; and a major strategy of this plan is to encourage interconnections to provide a continuous bicycle and pedestrian transportation system.
- This Plan contains an Economic Development Chapter which seeks to attract business and industry to Dover. More employment opportunities may lead to more people living and working in the same community. Employees who live and work in Dover may find commuting by transit, bicycle or as pedestrians to be viable options. See Chapter 10 – Economic Development for more information.

The City recognizes that most residents will still use cars despite transportation alternatives being available. Therefore, in addition to the above, the City also supports the development of new automotive technologies which will further reduce auto emissions. The most significant development on the horizon is efficient and affordable electric vehicles. A potentially massive increase in the number of electric vehicles on the road is likely to occur within this Plan’s timeframe. Discussion of how the City can adapt to this coming trend can be found in the Chapter 9 - Transportation and the Chapter 7 - Utilities.

### **Water Quality and Total Maximum Daily Loads**

Dover is located within the St. Jones River and Little Creek Watersheds, which are impaired according to Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act. Under Section 303(d) of the 1972 Federal Clean Water Act (CWA), states are required to identify all impaired waters and establish total maximum daily loads to restore their beneficial uses (e.g., swimming, fishing, and drinking water). A TMDL defines the amount of a given pollutant that may be discharged to a water body from point, nonpoint, and natural background sources and still allow for attainment or maintenance of the applicable narrative and numerical water quality standards. A TMDL is the sum of the individual Waste Load Applications (WLAs) for point sources and Load Allocations (LAs) for nonpoint sources and natural background sources of pollution. A TMDL may include a reasonable margin of safety (MOS) to account for uncertainties regarding the relationship between mass loading and resulting water quality. In short, a TMDL matches the strength, location and timing of pollution sources within a watershed with the inherent ability of the receiving water to assimilate the pollutant without adverse impact. A Pollution Control Strategy (PCS) identifies the actions necessary to systematically achieve the pollutant load reductions specified by the Total Maximum

Daily Load(s). Reducing the pollutants to the level specified in the TMDL(s) will ensure that a water body meets the water quality criteria and goals required for compliance with the State Water Quality Standards.

The City of Dover is located within the St. Jones River and Leipsic Watersheds of the greater Delaware River and Bay drainage area. The watersheds are assigned a range of nutrient (nitrogen and phosphorus) and bacterial TMDL load reduction requirements that, as mentioned previously, must be met in order to meet the State Water Quality Standards (See Table 5-1). The current requirements date from 2006.

**Table 5-1: Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs)**

| Delaware River and Bay Drainage | Nitrogen Reduction Requirements | Phosphorus Reduction Requirements | Bacteria Reduction Requirements |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| St. Jones                       | 40%                             | 40%                               | 90%                             |
| Leipsic River                   | 40%                             | 40%                               | 75%                             |

Source: Delaware Code, Title 7 Natural Resources and Environmental Control, Section 7400 Watershed Assessment

The most recent Pollution Control Strategy (PCS) enacted for the St. Jones Watershed is the *2012 St. Jones Pollution Control Strategy*, published by DNREC and based on recommendations from the St. Jones Tributary Action Team. The PCS contains many recommendations for reducing pollutants in the watershed, including implementing riparian buffers, limiting impervious coverage, creating a stormwater utility, reducing stormwater infiltration into sanitary sewer systems, and educational initiatives. The City can help reduce pollutants in its waterways by supporting implementation of the PCS’s recommendations. This is an ongoing process; for instance, the City adopted its current riparian buffer requirement into the environmental protection section of the *Zoning Ordinance* in 2010, but the 2012 analysis in the PCS found that the adopted requirement may not be strong enough to adequately help protect the watershed. Because of this the City should revisit this section to see if an update is warranted. The City has made progress towards implementation of the other recommendations listed above as well, particularly through the actions of the Department of Public Works (DPW).

Though not a formal Pollution Control Strategy, the City also has its own watershed management plan, the *2011 Silver Lake Sub-Watershed Implementation Strategy for the Silver Lake Commission*. The City of Dover has been addressing water quality in Silver Lake for many years through the efforts of the Silver Lake Commission, an appointed advisory body of citizens. This group has worked closely with DNREC (particularly, the Division of Watershed Stewardship) on water quality issues and lake management issues. The *2011 Strategy* document is a result of that collaboration. The *Strategy* espouses a watershed-based approach to pollution control that addresses pollutant problems before they enter the lake. This contrasts with the Commission’s prior approach which focused on costly methods (such as aeration and dredging) of reducing pollutant concentrations in the lake and other City water bodies directly. The watershed in question is the Silver Lake Sub-Watershed, the largest of four sub-watersheds within the St. Jones River Watershed; most of the City of Dover is located within this sub-watershed. The *Strategy* contains a list of specific sites within the sub-watershed, both public and private, where stormwater management can be improved to in turn better the quality of water coming downstream from the

sites. The City should continue to support the Silver Lake Commission as they implement the *Strategy*.

At present, there is not a Pollution Control Strategy, watershed management plan, or other guiding document for the Leipsic River Watershed. Though the portion of Dover within this watershed is much smaller than that in the St. Jones Watershed, it does contain significant ongoing or envisioned developments, such as Patriot Village, Garrison Oak, and the Kent County Aeropark, which are likely to increase stormwater runoff to Little Creek and its tributaries. The City recommends creation of a plan for this watershed should the opportunity become available.

### **Source Water Protection Overlay Zone**

In 2001, the Delaware General Assembly passed the Source Water Protection Act, which requires all municipalities over 2,000 population, including Dover, to adopt ordinances and maps meant to protect excellent recharge areas and wellhead protection areas. This requirement was instituted under Title 7 of the *Delaware Code*, Section 6082(b). The law also instructed the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control to provide guidance to municipalities on developing these ordinances.

In 2007 and 2008, the City established by Ordinance an overlay zone known as the Source Water Protection Overlay Zone (SWPOZ), which affects over 500 parcels within the City. Within the overlay zone, there are three distinct kinds of protection areas, each of which is identified by a tier number. The section of the *Zoning Ordinance* (Article 3 Section 29) which sets forth the regulation of these areas creates distinct regulations for each tier as well as overall regulation of permitted uses on any parcel affected by the SWPOZ.

Tier 3 lands have been identified as Excellent Recharge Areas and are necessary for the adequate recharge and health of the subsurface aquifer. In these lands, restrictions upon development limit impervious surface coverage percentages to 30%, or where proper implementation of green technology is present up to 60% impervious cover.

Tier 2 lands are those lands which are within 300 feet of an unconfined well. These lands require that areas around these highly sensitive source water points remain open space. They also require uses within a 500-foot buffer to demonstrate that their intended use will not damage the well or water supply.

Tier 1 lands are those lands which are within 150 feet of a confined well. These lands require similar restrictions to the Tier 2 lands with smaller buffers and directions on where stormwater can flow on site.

Following adoption of the Source Water Protection Overlay Zone by the City, DNREC determined that the data provided for the ordinance included only municipal wells and not the wellhead protection areas around other public wells. The City's Zoning Map will need to be updated to apply correctly to all public wells within the City. DNREC offers up-to-date data regarding the location of wellheads within the City. This data has been used to create a Source Water Map for the Comprehensive Plan; See Map 5-2. The City's Zoning Map must be updated via the zoning map amendment process to reflect the new Source Water Map for the regulatory provisions of the Source Water Protection Overlay Zone to apply correctly to all public wells currently within the

City. As the data released by DNREC is periodically updated, the City's Source Water Map and Zoning Map will have to be updated as well.

The Source Water Protection Overlay Zone is implemented as development applications are reviewed. Properties within the zone are identified during the Pre-Application process and during the Development Advisory Committee review process.

### **Protection of Scenic Resources**

Scenic resources in Dover involve both the natural and the built environment. Much of Dover's character is derived from scenes that we associate with the City and its history. The historic Green, the trees and houses along State Street, and Silver Lake all convey images that we think of as uniquely Dover making it a distinct, historic, and vibrant place. Dover also shares a proud history with the wider community as evidenced by the designation of a scenic and historic byway known as the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Byway which passes through the core of the City. Scenic resources (as defined in the *Zoning Ordinance*) specific to Dover include the following: mature woodlands and most especially the edges of wooded areas adjacent to open fields, wetlands, or urbanized area and other areas of mature natural vegetation such as marsh grasses. In addition to their scenic values, these lands also provide important habitats for many species of fish and wildlife. Also included are the Historic District and areas listed on the National Register of Historic Places; freestanding historic buildings and sites, and other buildings or districts of the City exhibiting particular architectural or visual merit; buildings and places of special public or cultural significance; and significant views and view corridors to buildings or places of architectural, visual, public or cultural value, and to attractive natural areas.

While there are many different areas of Dover that can be considered scenic resources, a few are particularly noteworthy. Silver Lake is the premiere example. At approximately 167 acres in size, it is the largest water body in the City. It is a popular location for boating, fishing, and recreation. The focal point is Silver Lake Park located on the southwest and east side of the lake. Several private property owners also have docks and piers on the lake. The Silver Lake Commission reviews all Site Plan applications for new development adjacent to the Lake. They provide advisory comments to the Planning Commission on how the development might affect the Lake's scenic character, with the aim of preserving and enhancing that character wherever possible. At present there is not a procedure for reviewing development activity on the Lake which is too small to fall under the Planning Commission's purview.

Dover is also home to the Anne McClements Woodland of the Fork Branch Nature Preserve. Purchased in 2003 from Dr. James McClements by the State of Delaware Division of Parks & Recreation, this 236-acre tract of preserved land is host to a variety of old growth trees and numerous species of plants and animals. This parcel of land constitutes one of the largest and most significant pieces of protected land in the City of Dover and in the State of Delaware. The Preserve contains a stand of old growth American Beech, a wooded stream corridor and several rare and threatened species. Located in the northwest section of the City on Maidstone Branch, a St. Jones River tributary, its protection preserves a portion of the St. Jones River headwaters. In 2017, work began on the Fork Branch Trail to open the preserve to the public. As of 2019, the Fork Branch Trail is a 1-mile loop stone dust trail; a second  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile loop with natural surfacing is also proposed for a future phase of the trail.

For historic scenic resources, there are a wide variety of historic buildings in the City’s Historic District and elsewhere throughout the Downtown. However, the sites forming the First State Heritage Park at Dover together represent some of the most significant parts of the state’s history and provide a unique cultural experience for visitors. First State Heritage Park is known as Delaware’s first urban “park without boundaries;” it includes a variety of sites, including the Old State House, Legislative Hall, the Johnson Victrola Museum, the John Bell House, Woodburn, the Hall House, and the Biggs Museum of American Art, among others. First State Heritage Park promotes heritage tourism with innovative opportunities to learn about Dover’s history through costumed interpreters, hands-on children’s activities, and a variety of walking tours. (See Chapter 6 - Historic Preservation Plan for more discussion.)

Numerous elements of the *Zoning Ordinance* are intended to protect features defined as scenic resources. Some historic resources are protected by the City’s Historic District Zone. The local Historic District Zone encompasses many of the oldest areas in the City, which date back to the 1700s. The Tree Planting and Preservation Ordinance protects existing woodlands and requires developers to plant trees. This helps to preserve the natural features of the City. Most significantly, the Environmental Protection Ordinance requires the documentation of all scenic resources on a site when it is proposed for development. The Planning Commission when reviewing proposed developments can use the information in this report to help identify ways to preserve on-site scenic resources. Other City ordinances work towards ensuring that development activities are compatible with Dover, its character, and the surrounding environment.

### **Access to Scenic Resources and Open Space**

Between Silver Lake, the Fork Branch Nature Preserve, the Historic District, and Dover’s other scenic resources, there is no overall shortage of scenic resources in the City. Similarly, the City has ample open space resources in its public parks. However, not all City residents have equal access to these resources. The primary factor driving unequal access is transportation; while all these resources are only a short drive away for a City resident who has access to a car, one who does not have access or who has limited access to a car will have a harder time reaching them.

The data showing who has easier access to open space resources is more complete than the data available for scenic resources, but it is a useful proxy for both. The City’s 2015 *Recreation Needs Assessment* included a study mapping the “walksheds” of select parks in the City as well as the City’s park system overall. An individual park’s walkshed maps out which neighborhoods are within walking distance of the park. The overall park system walkshed shows which neighborhoods are within walking distance of any City park. The 2015 study found that 16% of City residents lived within 5 minutes’ walk of a City park, 39% lived within a 10 minutes’ walk, and 51% lived within a 15 minutes’ walk. Walkable access to City parks is concentrated in the City’s core and southern areas, while outlying neighborhoods to the west, north, and east do not have walkable access.

Because the City has very limited ability to create new parks to serve these outlying areas, overcoming unequal access to the City’s open space resources will have to come from a few different directions. One approach is to improve pedestrian, bicycle, and transit networks in the City so that residents of these outlying neighborhoods have a route to a park. Access in this case should be prioritized towards the City’s regional parks (Dover Park, Silver Lake Park, and Schutte Park). Some examples of neighborhoods that would benefit from this approach include

Nottingham Meadows with a sidewalk leading to Schulte Park; as well as Patriot Village, Independence Village, Acorn Farms, and Lexington Glen with a new entrance to Dover Park from Acorn Lane.

The approach is to use the open space and scenic resources that are already near these outlying neighborhoods, but presently give limited public access. Many of the City's outlying subdivisions were originally developed in wooded areas, and many of them retain an undeveloped area on their border that remains (and was always intended to remain) in a natural state. These areas tend to be owned either by the City or the homeowner's association of the neighborhood. While these areas may have originally been envisioned as community amenities, in practice neighbors' enjoyment of them is limited because the subdivisions were designed without a designated way to access them. Instead, only residents whose houses back onto the woods can enjoy them. Having a non-wooded area of open space in the neighborhood that borders both the street and the woods can help solve this access problem. Examples of neighborhoods where this approach has been used include Cranberry Run and the Fox Hall West Addition.

## PLANNING FOR CLIMATE CHANGE

The effects of climate change are already making themselves felt in Delaware and across the United States. Summers bring intense rainstorms and record-breaking heat almost every year, while in the winter temperatures fluctuate between unseasonable warmth and arctic chill every couple of weeks. Global climate change is only expected to worsen, bringing with it sea-level rise, flooding, and even higher temperatures. The City must do its part to combat climate change, both in terms of protecting Dover from climate change's worst effect, and in terms of reducing the City's contribution to the global buildup of greenhouse gases driving climate change.

### Sea Level Rise

Sea level rise will profoundly affect the landscape surrounding Dover, with some effects also felt in the City itself. Dover lies less than six miles from the coast of the Delaware Bay. Much of the area between the City and the coast consists of tidal wetlands, including large and well-known protected areas such as the Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge and the Little Creek Wildlife Area. The Delaware Geological Survey, working together with DNREC, developed models of sea level rise in Delaware and determined that a rise of 1.75 feet to 5 feet could put 97% to 99% (respectively) of these wetlands and others throughout the State completely underwater. A rise of 1.75 feet is expected by 2045, and a rise of 5 feet is expected by 2100. With the loss of these wetlands will come the loss of their role buffering inland areas, including Dover, from coastal floodwaters and storm impacts.

Within Dover, sea level rise is expected to cause the St. Jones River to swell from its banks. Silver Lake Park will be mostly inundated, and many homes near to the river will find themselves a great deal closer, making them more vulnerable to flooding events. Silver Lake itself as well as contributing waters to the north will not rise because of the high level of the Silver Lake Dam, but a higher water level below the level of the dam will put higher strain on it, increasing its maintenance needs and making it more vulnerable to damage from erosion.

There are a few things that can be done to address the effects of sea level rise in Dover. The 2019 Comprehensive Plan recommends that a Master Plan be developed for Silver Lake Park (see also Chapter 8). This Master Plan can use the future inundation of the park as a starting point; the Plan should determine how the parts of the park remaining above water can be reshaped, so they continue to play a flood mitigation role and continue to meet the recreational needs of City residents. The Master Plan should also address how the increased maintenance needs of the dam will be handled. Meanwhile, the City can encourage homeowners and other private properties throughout Dover finding themselves more vulnerable to flood impacts to follow best practices for flood mitigation, as discussed below.

### **Increased Flooding**

Currently, the FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps are the City's starting point for reducing flood risk in Dover. As previously discussed, the City restricts development in areas mapped as Flood Hazard Areas on the FIRM panels, generally only allowing nonresidential redevelopment in these areas, and even then, only in a way that mitigates flooding. For instance, the City's *Zoning Ordinance* specifies that nonresidential redevelopment must reduce impervious surface on a property by 15%, and that new residential building construction is not permitted. The *Dover Code of Ordinances* meanwhile contains requirements for how new buildings in Flood Hazard Areas must be constructed, including the requirement that the first finished floor must be constructed at least 18 inches above the Base Flood Elevation (BFE). These requirements allow reduced flood risk for the regulated properties. However, for the requirements to take effect, a property must be in a Flood Hazard Area in the first place. Currently, there are limited code provisions which would mitigate increased risk of flooding outside of Flood Hazard Areas.

This is an issue because while they are a useful guide, the FIRM have their limitations, particularly in that they look only to past data when predicting what land is at risk. Heavy precipitation events and flooding are occurring at an accelerating rate, meaning that even regularly updated maps will start becoming inaccurate faster as overall flood risk increases by a greater amount each year. Many areas of Dover are or may already be at risk of flooding without being mapped as such. For instance, currently some streets in Downtown Dover need only have a few drains blocked before they flood, despite not being on any flood map. Future heavy precipitation events may regularly overwhelm the Downtown's aging Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4).

There are a few things the City can do to address flooding, both within mapped Flood Hazard Areas and unmapped areas which may be vulnerable to flooding. One is to ensure the City always works from the latest FEMA maps (and Map Amendments and Map Revisions) available and enforces the regulations associated with Flood Hazard Areas rigorously. Even when that means applying the development restrictions to areas that previously did not have them before a map update. Another is to make improvements to the City's MS4 that will allow it to handle heavier precipitation events. Finally, the City can also encourage Dover residents and businesses who think they may be vulnerable to flooding to voluntarily follow best practices for reducing their flood risk. These include reducing impervious surface coverage, elevating buildings above the Base Flood Elevation, and if necessary, relocating to higher ground.

## **Rising Temperatures**

Dover has a few inherent defenses against the rising temperatures threatened by climate change. For instance, Dover benefits from dense vegetation throughout the City, which provides some cooling through transpiration. In addition, low overall impervious surface coverage and large setbacks for most buildings work against the urban heat island effect. Urban heat islands are felt mostly at night, when a sea of hard surfaces and closely packed buildings help each other retain heat absorbed throughout the day. When buildings and hard surfaces are isolated, they are much quicker to “bleed off” absorbed heat during the night. This means that air conditioning systems do not need to work as hard to cool buildings, even during the day. Despite these defenses there are still some vulnerabilities for the City to be aware of, as well as actions that can be taken.

Rising overall temperatures will mean there will be an increasing number of days when temperatures do not decrease during the night. On these days air conditioners will have to work harder. In addition, many older buildings may have air conditioning systems that are ill-equipped to handle the demand placed on them by more consistently high temperatures. This is especially a concern for low-income households, who may not be able to afford to upgrade their systems or run them more frequently. Residents who are more dependent on air-conditioning for their health (such as the elderly) are also at risk. These same populations are more vulnerable outside the home as well, as they may be more dependent on walking, biking, or public transportation all of which require spending extended time out in the heat (i.e. waiting at bus stations) compared to making trips in air-conditioned cars.

There are a few things that can be done to address the effects of rising temperature in Dover. The City must maintain its tree canopy for the transpiration benefits it offers, both to buildings and to people outside. The City can also ensure that rigorous standards for air conditioning systems are enforced through the Building Code; this will ensure that new and renovated buildings, at least, will have systems less likely to fail when confronted with extreme temperatures. Finally, the City can encourage Dover residents and businesses to take advantage of State programs geared toward building retrofits such as Energy Efficiency Investment Fund and the Delaware Weatherization Assistance Program. Even when such programs do not fund air conditioning improvements directly, they can free up funds which in turn can be used for such improvements.

## **Reducing the City’s Contribution to Climate Change**

Climate change is driven by rising amounts of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, which in turn come from a multitude of sources, the most prominent being vehicles, power plants, and industrial sources. All these sources can be addressed to some extent within Dover.

The City can reduce its greenhouse gas contribution from vehicles by encouraging residents to take alternative means of transportation (biking, walking, transit, carpooling, etc.) or switch to more eco-friendly vehicles such as electric cars. The City’s strategy for diversifying the means of transportation used in Dover can be found in Chapter 9 - Transportation.

The City can reduce its contribution from power plants by encouraging the production and consumption of clean energy. An example of this already implemented is the City’s accommodations for small solar and wind energy systems in the *Zoning Ordinance* (Article 5, Section 20). These provisions allow homeowners and businesses to install their own power

systems, which in turn generate clean on-site energy to reduce the amount of electricity they must buy from the power grid.

The City has decided to retire the McKee Run Generation Station effective May 31, 2021. The VanSant Generating Station will likely run for the foreseeable future, however it is rarely used, even when the demand is high. As the City plans for electric supply in the future, renewable resources, principally solar from large scale facilities, are becoming more financially attractive which will benefit both the environment and ratepayers

Reducing overall energy consumption is another route to reducing the climate change impact caused by the City's power demand. This can be done in many ways; one example is reducing the energy consumption of buildings by improving the efficiency of their heating systems. The Delaware Weatherization Assistance Program helps homeowners burdened by utility bills reduce the amount of heat escaping their homes by adding insulation, patching cracks, and fixing ventilation. Because less heat escapes, the homes' systems do not have to work as hard to heat the homes, and so consume less energy. There are other programs available that help residents and businesses improve the energy efficiency of their buildings. DNREC's Energy Efficiency Investment Fund, for instance, provides grants to businesses that either follow a prescribed path or come up with their own innovative way to reduce their energy consumption.

Finally, the City can reduce its contribution from industrial sources by working to attract manufacturing and technology companies that are committed to the practice of green industry. The City previously demonstrated its commitment to attracting such industry by developing the Garrison Oak Business and Technology Center, which contains fifteen large, shovel-ready lots (four now developed) ideal for technology firms. In 2019, the City renewed its marketing efforts for the Park in hopes of attracting buyers for the remaining lots. Focusing the City's economic development efforts on green manufacturing and technology firms will help ensure the demand for new industry within the City is fulfilled by forward-looking, environmentally conscious companies instead of those merely practicing "business as usual."

# NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

## Goal 1: Protect the Natural Environment

Protect the natural environment through the conservation of significant ecological systems that naturally work to enhance quality of life in the City.

### Recommendation 1: Develop New Code Amendments to Address Environmental Challenges

- Improve water quality and floodwater absorption capacity in the City through code amendments addressing topics such as pervious paved surfaces, stormwater management areas, and hydric soils.
- Reduce air quality impacts and climate change impacts through code amendments which aim to improve new developments' access to alternative forms of transportation.

### Recommendation 2: Protect Environmental Resources through the Development Review Process

- Identify environmentally sensitive areas early in the development process, so projects can be designed with conservation of these areas in mind.
- Ensure that the environmental standards encompassed in the *Zoning Ordinance* and *Land Subdivision Regulations* are upheld as part of development review.
- Reference the Land Inventory of Delaware's Open Space Program when reviewing development impacts.

### Recommendation 3: Coordinate with Other Environmental Agencies and Groups

- Include DNREC in the Development Advisory Committee for technical guidance on open space lands, natural resources, and environmental concerns.
- Share the FEMA floodplain maps and information which pertain to the City to ensure homeowners, businesses, Realtors, and developers have accurate information about flood risks.
- Continue the City's participation in the National Flood Insurance Program.
- Educate the public on floodplain topics through outreach to homeowners and residents focusing on helping residents understand their flood risk and what they can do to mitigate flooding in the City.
- Identify potential flood mitigation projects along City waterways such as the St. Jones River, Puncheon Run, and the Little River.
- Evaluate the process for referring development projects to the Silver Lake Commission to ensure they review all projects which may have significant impacts on Silver Lake.

## **Goal 2: Improve Watershed Quality**

Continue the City’s partnership with DNREC, Silver Lake Commission, and other environmental groups to improve the water quality in Silver Lake and the St. Jones River Watershed and Little Creek Watershed.

### **Recommendation 4: Participate in or Implement Measures Related to Impervious Cover and Water Quality**

- Continue using the City’s planning and permitting processes to limit overall impervious coverage in the City by setting and enforcing impervious coverage limits on individual properties.
- Update and maintain the Source Water Protection Overlay Zone (SWPOZ) on the City’s Zoning Map to ensure it covers all lands identified for protection by DNREC’s Source Water Map as wells and excellent recharge areas.
- Work with DNREC to identify potential water quality improvement projects in major City water bodies and dams such as Silver Lake and the St. Jones River.
- Implement a Stormwater Utility for the City to help fund the maintenance of stormwater infrastructure that improves water quality.

### **Recommendation 5: Support/Utilize the Silver Lake Commission**

- Continue to utilize the knowledge and expertise of the Silver Lake Commission as advocates for the lake, advisors to the City Council on matters regarding the lake, and as liaisons between the City, the public, and DNREC regarding lake management issues.
- Continue to support the Silver Lake Commission as they implement the *2011 Silver Lake Sub-Watershed Implementation Strategy*.

## **Goal 3: Improve Air Quality**

Continue the City’s partnerships with the Dover/Kent County MPO and DelDOT to reduce air quality impacts from auto emissions through sound land use planning, enhancing bicycle and pedestrian transportation networks, and encouraging increased use of public transit. Use the development review process to address air quality impacts coming from industrial sources.

### **Recommendation 6: Reduce Air Quality Impacts from Auto Emissions**

- Update the City’s Bicycle Plan and Pedestrian Plan to include air quality improvement as an explicit goal. This should be done because increasing the mode share of bicyclists and pedestrians improves air quality by taking vehicles off the road and air quality improvements in turn make walking and biking healthier and more pleasant experiences for these users.
- Improve the City’s bicycle and pedestrian networks in accordance with the recommendations of the Bicycle Plan and Pedestrian Plan.
- Encourage use in the City of vehicles powered by electricity or other alternative fuels in order to reduce emissions produced by users who choose to drive.

### **Recommendation 7: Reduce Air Quality Impacts from Industry**

- Continue to use the City’s Performance Standards to curb air quality impacts from industry.

- Evaluate the City’s Performance Standards and the lists of permitted and prohibited uses in the City’s industrial zones for possible code updates to ensure the City is both friendly to industrial development and up to date with air quality standards.

#### **Goal 4: Encourage Green Development and Sustainable Energy Practices**

Use code amendments and/or policy amendments and revisions to encourage environmentally sensitive development and allow emerging green trends to be easily established and grown in the City.

##### **Recommendation 8: Research and Implement Sustainable Development Practices**

- Conduct a “vulnerability assessment” of the City to determine which people and places within Dover are most at-risk from climate change pressures including sea-level rise, increased heavy precipitation, and rising temperatures. This assessment can be used to help the City decide what forms of sustainable development practices need the most encouragement.
- Evaluate ways to incentivize use of green practices in new development. Some green development practices include infill development, higher densities in areas with access to transit, and green building construction techniques.
- Evaluate ways to incentivize improvements to the energy performance of existing buildings. Energy performance improvements can come from adding insulation to reduce dependence on heating and cooling systems, installing energy-efficient appliances, and other changes.
- Catalog existing green development and green energy incentives offered by the State and federal governments and other sources and evaluate ways Dover can leverage these incentives.

#### **Goal 5: Preserve Access to Open Space and Scenic Resources**

Protect open spaces and scenic resources in the City while also preserving reasonable public access. While protected open spaces can in turn protect developed areas by absorbing the most direct impacts of climate change, open spaces and scenic resources also have value for their health and recreation benefits to residents and visitors.

##### **Recommendation 9: Support City Policies Allowing Public Access and Utilization of Open Space and Scenic Resources**

- Evaluate the *Dover Code of Ordinances* and other legislation to identify provisions that potentially limit public access to nature (e.g. parking requirements, use restrictions, fencing and screening requirements, etc.).
- Determine what valuable open spaces and scenic resources in the City currently have limited public access and evaluate options for improving access to these areas.
- Improve pedestrian, bicycle, and transit networks to parks, natural areas, and the Historic District.
- Support programs that promote access to nature (e.g. environmental education programs, Scouts programs).



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FINAL DRAFT – 12.3.2019

# Chapter 6

# HISTORIC PRESERVATION

## HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN

### HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE CITY OF DOVER

The founding and development of the City begins in the seventeenth century with William Penn's order to layout the Town of Dover in 1683 and is later realized by plat in 1717. Many residents of the Dover area played key roles in the development and formation of the City of Dover, State of Delaware, and even the United States of America. These people range from Caesar Rodney as a signer of the Declaration of Independence to members of the Ridgely family like Mabel Lloyd Ridgely as a Suffragist and preservationist. Although the City traces its roots over three hundred years, the City of Dover is known for its exemplification of a late-nineteenth century townscape. Dover's first modern development "boom" began immediately after the end of the Civil War when commercial growth was spurred primarily by the extension of railroad services to the City, connecting the Dover area's agricultural products to large urban markets to the north and west.

The Green and then the downtown core area of Loockerman Street were the significant commercial and cultural districts. Development of the City continued in the twentieth century with residential, commercial, and major industrial areas extending out from the core. Residential development expanded the downtown street grid to the north and south. Post-World War II residential subdivisions developed surrounding the City's core and continued into the mid-to-late twentieth century to provide housing for the workforce of the new industries like Playtex and Dover Air Force Base. The development then focused on auto-oriented commercial development along the Route 13 (DuPont Highway), Bay Road, and Forrest Avenue (Route 8) corridors.

A majority of the historic resources in Dover are centered around and to the north of The Green. The development of this historic area has been categorized into three distinct phases of growth. Identified by their historical incorporation of developed areas into the City during the period from the Civil War until the late 1920s, the dates assigned to these growth periods are 1868, 1885, and 1929. The 1868 City limits were bounded by Water Street on the south, Division Street on the north, West Street and the railroad on the west, and King's Highway on the east. In 1885, the City stretched northward as far as Clara Street and the 1929 limits reached Ross Street to the north and South Street to the south. Neither the 1885 expansion nor the 1929 expansion significantly added developed areas to the east or west of the original boundaries. The combined area covers the historic core of the City of Dover.

However, the City continued to grow extending into previous agricultural areas surrounding the City. This brought additional urban/suburban development and annexation of the areas into the

City. Auto-oriented commercial development occurred along major road corridors and residential development focused on subdivisions of the mid-to late twentieth century. Some of these areas contain potential historic resources as development (buildings) reach the 50-year age mark.

## IDENTIFICATION OF HISTORIC RESOURCES

### **Delaware Cultural Resource Survey**

The formal identification of historic resources begins with Cultural Resource Surveys according to the criteria and standards set by the Delaware State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs. This is a systematic inventory of Delaware's buildings, structures, sites, and objects over fifty (50) years old. Each property is assigned a Cultural Resource Survey (CRS) number. The public CRS (Cultural Resource Survey) information is accessible through CHRIS (Cultural and Historic Resource Information System). Government agencies, consultants, and SHPO staff supply this survey information by conducting projects, reviews, and grant-funded surveys. Within the City of Dover, the core Downtown area and some of the adjacent residential areas were subject to Cultural Resource Surveys completed in the 1980s. Additional historic resources have been surveyed as part of road development projects in other areas of the City. It is important to note that not all areas of the City have been subject to this survey, especially areas of early-to-mid twentieth century development. There is an ongoing need for updated survey information in order to address gaps in previous surveys and items of out-of-date information.

Information from the Delaware CRS can be used for local planning initiatives and the determination of local priorities for identification, evaluation, registration, and treatment of historic resources. The CRS information can be updated to record significant changes, including demolition, that have occurred to a historic resource overtime. The City can be an active participant to provide updated CRS information. There is a need for further survey work such as survey of early to mid-twentieth century resources within the City.

Further the evaluation and registration of historic resources may lead to specific types of designation including recognition of individual properties and historic districts. There are two types of historic districts established in the City of Dover: the federally designated historic districts listed in the National Register of Historic Places and a local Historic District Zone. The boundaries of the local Historic District Zone overlap portions of two of the National Register listed historic districts. The locations of each of the districts are shown on Maps 6-1A and 6-1B and are described as follows.

### **National Register of Historic Places**

Listing properties in the National Register of Historic Places is governed by a program established by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended. These properties are given protection when potentially impacted by federal actions. Further, the listed properties may be eligible to apply for the Federal and/or State Historic Preservation Tax Incentives program for certified rehabilitations. Other grants and incentives may also be available for these properties. The designation as a National Register Historic District does not impose land use or structure design restrictions on the property owners within the district boundaries. Most of the benefit to those properties within the National Register of Historic Places comes in the form of pride,

recognition, and local awareness. In Dover, there are three Historic Districts listed in the National Register of Historic Places. See Maps 6-1A and 6-1B for locations of National Register Historic Districts.

**National Register of Historic Places: Dover Green Historic District**

The Dover Green Historic District (K00394) encompasses the area of earliest development in Dover. It is bordered on the north by North Street, on the south by South Street, on the east by Federal Street, and on the west by South Governors Avenue. The Dover Green Historic District was established to recognize the historic importance of the area during the City’s development in the eighteenth century. The district includes a range of building types from residences and offices to governmental and church buildings. The key feature of this district is the park known as The Green. The Green is now part of the First State National Historical Park.

**National Register of Historic Places: Victorian Dover Historic District**

The Victorian Dover Historic District (K00396) includes the historic areas north of The Green surrounding both Governors Avenue and State Street. The district stretches as far north as Mary Street and Walker Road, and is bounded on the south by North Street, on the east by the St. Jones River, and on the west by North West Street and the areas of New Street and North Governors Avenue. The Victorian Dover Historic District was established to recognize a portion of the historic development of Dover during the nineteenth century and post-Civil War period. It includes residential and commercial areas.

**National Register of Historic Places: Little Creek Hundred Rural Historic District**

The Little Creek Hundred Rural Historic District (K-5686) includes an agricultural landscape located east of Dover and northwest of the town of Little Creek. A portion of this historic district on the west side of Long Point Road lies within the City of Dover boundaries.

**Table 6-1: Properties Listed in the National Register of Historic Places**

| <b>CRS#</b> | <b>Property Name</b>  |
|-------------|---|
| DE00104     | First Broiler House (relocated to DE Agricultural Museum & Village) |
| K00104      | Bradford-Loockerman House   |
| K00106      | Christ Church   |
| K00107      | Delaware State Museum Buildings                                     |
| K00110      | Governor’s House (Woodburn)   |
| K00112      | Loockerman Hall   |
| K00115      | Old State House   |
| K00125      | Eden Hill   |
| K00126      | Greenwold   |
| K00347      | John Bullen House   |
| K00486      | Hughes-Willis Site  |
| K06396      | Palmer House  |

Source: Delaware State Historic Preservation Office

### **National Register of Historic Places: Individual Properties**

A number of individual properties within the City of Dover are listed in the National Register of Historic Places. These properties include residences, governmental buildings, churches, and archaeological sites. The Table 6-1 above identifies these properties. See also Maps 6-1A and 6-1B for general locations of properties individually listed in the National Register.

### **Dover Local Historic District Zone**

Dover's local Historic District Zone was established by a set of local ordinances under state enabling legislation. The local Historic District Zone functions as an overlay zone. The provisions for the Historic District Zone (H) are outlined in Article 3 §21 of the *Zoning Ordinance* and its area is depicted on the City's official Zoning Map. The Historic District Zone was created in order to preserve the historic character of an individual historic resource or a district as a whole. The local Historic District Zone is a positive force in the active preservation activities regarding Dover's historic resources.

Established in 1961, the local Historic District Zone encompasses those historic areas of Dover whose design and environment are essential parts of the historic character of the City. The Historic District Commission was formally established in 1993 and the *Design Standards and Guidelines for the City of Dover Historic District Zone* were adopted. In 1997, the local Historic District Zone was expanded to encompass the properties fronting on Loockerman Street from State Street to Forest Street. The local Historic District Zone (H) is approximately bounded on the north by Reed and Fulton Streets, on the south by North and South Streets, on the east by the St. Jones River, and on the west by North West Street. See Maps 6-1A and 6-1B.

Within the Dover Historic District Zone, proposals for specific types of construction activities such as new construction, additions to existing buildings, exterior renovations, and demolition of buildings are subject to a design review process known as Architectural Review Certification. As stated in the *Design Standards and Guidelines for the City of Dover Historic District Zone*, an Architectural Review Certificate will be granted for the project "if it is found that the architectural style, general design, height, bulk and setbacks, arrangement location and materials affecting the exterior appearance are generally in harmony with neighboring structures and complementary to the traditional architectural standards of the historic district." Thus, proposals are reviewed for conformity with the design criteria and development guidelines found in the *Design Standards and Guidelines of the City of Dover Historic District Zone*.

For Architectural Review Certification, the Staff reviews certain types of projects such as signage, fences, and minor exterior improvements through the Building Permit process. Historic District Commission reviews specific types of construction projects and demolition requests in order to grant the Architectural Review Certificate to the project. In instances such as Site Development Plans where the proposed project also requires Planning Commission review, the Historic District Commission makes a recommendation on the Architectural Review Certificate which is forwarded to the Planning Commission. (See *Zoning Ordinance*, Article 10 Section 3.)

## HISTORIC PRESERVATION: DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY AND HISTORIC RESOURCES

The growth and development activity in the City is faced with the challenge of balancing preservation as related to building, history, and culture with the development activity of a modern society. Certain types of development activity on properties within the designated local Historic District Zone (H) are subject to a design review process known as the Architectural Review Certification. This design review process is part of the regulatory authority established in the *Zoning Ordinance*. The earliest land use codes of the City dating to the 1960's recognized the special character of the oldest sections of the City and sought to protect it.

Most of the regulations associated with the preservation and/or protection of historic resources focus on consideration of an area's character. The character of an area includes elements like architectural style, building form, siting and placement, presentation of the streetscape, and landscaping. The concept of land use focuses more on the location of the development and the type of uses that occur together or in close proximity. Also, the elements of density, lot coverage (paved versus open land), infrastructure, a mix of uses, a diversity of uses, open space, and public space are related to land use. The choices made related to these character elements and land use have an economic impact ranging from jobs created/retained to construction costs, income, wealth, taxation, housing affordability, quality of life, and tourism opportunities.

Development activity within the area of the Historic District and even other areas of the City has the potential to impact historic resources. Within the current City boundaries, development activity may range from the adaptive re-use of an existing building to infill of a vacant property to the development of a large tract of land. Also, as the City continues to annex land, the consideration of the historical importance of these lands may need to focus on historic resources such as agricultural landscapes (and buildings), archaeology, and even early to mid-twentieth century buildings.

With the existing regulations and current design review process in the City of Dover's Historic District Zone, several concerns have been expressed including how to clarify the process, how to encourage reuse of existing buildings, how to encourage appropriate architecture for new buildings on infill sites, the interaction with Downtown revitalization efforts, and material selection. Contemporary planning concepts assist with preservation efforts. An emphasis on neighborhood/area planning can address character, the importance of building form, and urban design principles as key concepts. Other approaches include new standards for construction and rehabilitation, a focus on smarter growth by mixing uses, sustainability, utilization of existing infrastructure, various approaches to affordable housing, and form-based codes.

Another issue that has arisen in recent years relating to revitalization and redevelopment of Loockerman Street is the role of the Historic District Zone (H) on Loockerman Street. The need to revisit the *Design Standards and Guidelines of the City of Dover Historic District Zone*, and specifically to address how the guidelines apply to special areas and approaches to modern materials and technology. Historic District Commission members, other elected officials, and some members of the public have expressed a concern that Historic Preservation should play a

more prominent role in the area encompassing and immediately surrounding The Green than along the Loockerman Street commercial corridor. Comments noted that the standards and guidelines should appropriately differentiate between the two areas. Some feedback received indicated that the Loockerman Street corridor should be removed from the Historic District Zone (H) entirely. However, to preserve the overall character of the area, differing treatment within the Guidelines is a more appropriate approach to this issue.

## **HISTORIC PRESERVATION: PROGRAMS AND GROUPS**

Several entities are involved in the preservation of historic and cultural resources in the City of Dover. These include local, state and federal governmental agencies as well as private and not-for-profit organizations. Some of the major agencies and organizations are identified and described below.

### **Dover Historic District Commission**

The Historic District Commission was established in 1993 by the *Zoning Ordinance* (Article 10 §3) to create and maintain district zone guidelines and review proposed developments and projects within the local Historic District Zone. The Historic District Commission consists of five appointed City residents who have “a special interest, experience or knowledge in history, architecture, or historic preservation” with other qualifications related to profession, District residents, or business representatives. The types of projects reviewed for Architectural Review Certification range from exterior renovations to new development projects for multi-story buildings. In the period from 1998-2018, the Historic District Commission reviewed sixty-three (63) applications. Some of the large projects include the Dover Public Library, Loockerman Way Plaza and North Street Improvements. Other projects reviewed include a variety of parking lots, smaller building additions, signage, and building renovation projects. In addition, the Commission advises City officials on all matters regarding historic preservation in the City and acts as a local government liaison when meeting with outside officials about historic preservation matters.

### **State Agencies**

The Delaware Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs focuses on historic resources through historical research, stewardship, management of historic properties, interpretation, and public education. The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) is a part of this state agency which conducts statewide and local historic preservation activities. The SHPO provides informational assistance to property owners and local governments pursuing preservation activities. The SHPO also manages the Certified Local Government (CLG) and Historic Preservation Tax Credit programs and reviews federally assisted projects for their effects on historic properties. In addition, the SHPO facilitates nominations of properties to the National Register of Historic Places and maintains information about surveyed cultural resources statewide. As part of their goals to provide information on historic resources, they maintain CHRIS (Cultural and Historic Resource Information System), a web-based interactive map. The agency also just completed Delaware’s Historic Preservation Plan 2018-2022 entitled *Partners in Preservation: Planning for the Future*.

The Office of State Planning Coordination recognizes preservation as a component of the planning process associated with land use planning, conservation, economic growth, and redevelopment activities. Its involvement includes the Preliminary Land Use Services (PLUS) review process and the Downtown Development District program.

Several other state agencies contribute to preservation efforts by supporting local community redevelopment initiatives. The Delaware Office of Management and Budget provides monetary and informational assistance. The Division of Facilities Management, within the department, manages a number of state-owned historic buildings within Dover. The Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT) administers recognition programs and grant funding opportunities, such as the Delaware Byways program and Transportation Enhancement program. The Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC), in addition to having offices within adaptively used historic buildings, plays a role in park programming, in conservation programs associated with the St. Jones River adjacent to Downtown, and other cultural resource management and planning. Other divisions and agencies contribute to land protection activities as part of the Open Space Program and federal and state wildlife areas.

The Delaware Department of Agriculture (DDA) assists in administering the Delaware Agricultural Lands Preservation program. The program includes land enrolled in ten-year Agricultural Preservation Districts and land permanently-protected through the Purchase of Development Rights. Many of these properties include historic dwellings and agricultural outbuildings, as well as archaeological sites. There are two farms within the City limits protected through the Purchase of Development Rights (Agricultural Easements) program of the Agricultural Lands Preservation program: one on the north side of Route 8 at the City's western boundary and the second along Long Point Road on the east side of the City. See Map 5-3.

#### **First State Heritage Park at Dover**

The First State Heritage Park at Dover (FSHP) is a State park initiative established in 2004 that focuses the historic resources of Dover in a non-traditional approach to a park. The concept creates Delaware's first urban "park without boundaries" linking together a series of historic and cultural sites. It is a partnership of state agencies under the leadership of Delaware State Parks in addition to the City and a variety of private entities (non-profits and churches). The First State Heritage Park at Dover instituted "First Saturdays" to coordinate programming and interpretation at local museums and participated in the development and installation of signage, wayfinding and information features such as maps, banners, and waysides. The FSHP also focuses on the promotion of heritage tourism with innovative opportunities to learn about Dover's history through costumed interpreters, hands-on children's activities, and a variety of walking tours including the popular "cemetery lantern tours." The FSHP program is actively involved in the preservation, restoration, and research of the one-story frame building located at 43 The Green, known as the John Bell House.

#### **Federal Agencies**

The U.S. Department of the Interior administers most federal government programs and assistance. The National Park Service, part of the Department of the Interior, maintains the National Register of Historic Places and the Heritage Preservation Services program, and oversees the CLG

(Certified Local Government) program. These programs provide recognition, monetary assistance and tax incentives for rehabilitation projects of certified historic properties. The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation administers the federal regulations for implementing Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 as well as other programs such as the Preserve America program. Section 106 requires federal agencies to consider the effects of projects (that they carry out, approve or fund) on historic projects.

#### **First State National Historical Park**

In 2013, The Green in Dover was designated as part of the First State National Monument which consists of the Woodlawn Property along the Brandywine Creek and the New Castle Courthouse Complex of the New Castle Green and the Old Sheriff’s House. In 2015, these properties along with other sites, such as the John Dickinson Plantation just east of Dover, became the First State National Historical Park. The Green is owned by the City of Dover as parkland and agreements (covenants) were established with the National Park Service as a result of the its designation as a National Historical Park.

#### **Other Organizations**

##### **Downtown Dover Partnership**

The Downtown Dover Partnership formed in 2008 combining the Downtown Dover Development Corporation, the Dover Parking Authority, and Main Street Dover. From its Bylaws, the purpose of the Downtown Dover Partnership is “to promote the public welfare of the residents of the City of Dover, Delaware by promoting and furthering in any way, the development of the economic, cultural, and historic resources of the downtown area of the City of Dover and to provide for the residents to the extent that the common good and general welfare of the community is served.” This purpose statement also lists the following goals: to improve the opportunities for job creation, to broaden the tax base through the development of the commercial and residential potential of the Central Dover area, and to maintain and restore the historic, architectural and community qualities of the downtown area consistent with the goals of the National Main Street Program.

The Downtown Dover Partnership continues to provide grants for historic properties through the Facade Improvement Grant Program. The Downtown Delaware program, within the Department of State’s Division of Small Business, provides technical assistance to the Downtown Dover Partnership.

##### **Friends of Old Dover**

The Friends of Old Dover (previously also known as the Dover Historical Society) is a local non-profit group that promotes preservation of properties with historical significance in Dover and Kent County, Delaware. The group encourages the preservation and restoration of documents and other memorabilia of historical, biographical, or genealogical significance. The Friends of Old Dover educates citizens on Dover’s historical heritage by conducting Dover Days activities, celebrations, memorial observations, educational programs and tours, and preservation awards.

##### **Preservation Delaware, Inc.**

Preservation Delaware, Inc. (PDI) is a statewide not-for-profit organization dedicated to preserving historically and architecturally significant resources in the state. PDI provides information to

Delaware local governments and individual property owners seeking to preserve or rehabilitate historic structures. Its counterpart at the national level, the National Trust for Historic Preservation provides leadership, education and advocacy to save America's diverse historic places and revitalize communities.

## HISTORIC PRESERVATION: AVAILABLE PROGRAMS, INCENTIVES, AND RESOURCES

Several assistance and certification programs are available to local governments and private property owners pursuing historic and cultural resource preservation activities. There are other approaches such as easements, covenants, and Transfer of Development Rights which may be ways to assist in preservation activities as well. Four of the main programs and incentives are described below.

### **Certified Local Government Program**

In 1980, an amendment to the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 established the Certified Local Government (CLG) program to involve local governments in national preservation efforts. Most states, including Delaware, created programs extending CLG status to local communities with a local historic preservation district and a historic preservation commission. The CLG program provides intensive protection to designated areas and eligibility for federal Historic Preservation Funds. A Historic Preservation Fund grant from this program assisted in the development of this Chapter. In addition, localities participating in the CLG program may participate in the National Register nomination process for historic properties and are strongly considered for training and technical assistance from the SHPO. The City of Dover was designated a Certified Local Government in 2015.

### **Byways/Scenic and Historic Highways Program**

Established and administered by the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT), the Delaware Byways (Scenic and Historic Highways) program protects and promotes historically significant corridors in Delaware through awareness and recognition. The program involves a nomination process and the creation of a corridor management plan. After receiving an official designation, the sponsor must create and implement a corridor management plan that includes a vision, goal statements, an inventory of resources, a promotion and support plan, and a short-term action plan. Designated corridors are eligible for grants through the Federal Highway Administration for the creation and implementation of the plan. An area designated a Byway (Scenic and Historic Highway) is promoted through State agencies, municipalities, and various tourism related entities through marketing and promotion. The Byways are a public destination with opportunities for historic tourism and historic preservation activities. The Delaware Bayshore Byway (located east of Dover) and the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Byway (passes through Dover) have received this designation. See Map 9-3 for location of the Byways.

## **Tax Credit Programs**

Tax credit and incentive programs for historic preservation are available at the City, county, state, and federal level for certified historic properties in Dover. The City of Dover Tax Credit Program is administered by the Dover Historic District Commission and applies to exterior rehabilitations to properties within the local historic district or properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The City program provides a tax credit amounting to 50% of the cost for approved preservation, restoration, or rehabilitation project to the exterior architectural facades. The project must cost a minimum of \$1,200. The credit is provided in equal amounts over the period of ten years with a maximum credit of \$600 per year. The City’s program has had somewhat limited participation.

The Tax Credit Program for Historic Properties in Kent County offers a county tax credit for historic properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places based on preservation, rehabilitation, and/or restoration projects involving exterior rehabilitations to the architectural facades of buildings. The credit is applied to county property taxes and is similar in requirements to the City program; however, the Kent County program is under-utilized.

The Delaware State Historic Preservation Tax Credit Program applies to rehabilitations to those properties individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places, those located within a National Register Historic District and certified as contributing to the historical significance of that district, or those located within a local historic district and deemed eligible for National Register listing. The rehabilitation project must be certified by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and have “qualified” expenditures exceeding \$5,000. The tax credit ranges from 20-40% of the qualified expenditures and may be claimed after the SHPO issues a certificate of completion for the project. This program can be used to encourage historic preservation and revitalization activities. A recent update to the program includes an earmark for qualifying properties also located in a Downtown Development District.

The U.S. Department of the Interior, in partnership with the U.S. Department of the Treasury and the Internal Revenue Service, administers a federal tax credit program for rehabilitation projects on historic properties. The 20% program applies to improvements to those properties either listed on the National Register of Historic Places or properties within a National Register Historic District that have obtained “Certified Historic Structure” status through the SHPO. The rehabilitation project must be deemed a “certified rehabilitation” to qualify for the tax credit program. The SHPO reviews these applications first then forwards them to the National Park Service. The program provides a tax credit of 20% of the total project cost and is applicable to all properties except owner-occupied residences. The 20% credit may only be claimed after the National Park Service issues a certification of the completed work and requires that the owner retain the property for a minimum of five years from the completion of the project. The State and Federal Tax Credit programs have contributed to some successful rehabilitation projects in Dover; however, the programs seem to be underutilized in Dover as compared to other cities like Wilmington.

## **Incentive Programs**

The *Dover Code of Ordinances* also establishes other development activity incentives for the Downtown Redevelopment Target Area. These City Incentives range from tax abatement to

reduction in permit fees and impact fees depending on project criteria. Also, as part of the Downtown Development District program there are other incentives and rebate programs available at the County and State levels. The Downtown Development District Rebate program offers an incentive that can be utilized to encourage rehabilitation of historic properties by offering a 20% rebate of qualified capital investments. Other federal level incentives are the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit program, Community Development Block Grant funds, and other programs administered by HUD.

## CULTURAL AND OTHER RESOURCES

The City of Dover not only possesses a number of historically significant structures, but also is home to several unique cultural resources. As the capital of the state, Dover hosts many institutions that illustrate and exemplify the cultural and historic character of both the City itself and the State of Delaware as a whole. A few of these cultural and other resources are identified and described below.

### **Museums and Cultural Institutions**

Due to its own unique and rich history and its role as a state capital, the City of Dover hosts several historical and cultural museums and institutions. In Dover, the Division of Historic and Cultural Affairs administers the following state-owned museums which are accredited by the American Alliance of Museums.

- The Old State House Museum
- Johnson Victrola Museum

Other museums and cultural institutions located in the City include:

- Air Mobility Command Museum (on the grounds of the Dover Air Force Base)
- Delaware Agricultural Museum and Village
- Delaware Public Archives (Hall of Records)
- Delaware State Police Museum and Education Center
- Delaware State University: Art Gallery
- Delaware State University Education and Humanities Theatre
- Dover Art League
- Dover International Speedway
- Legislative Hall
- Schwartz Center for the Arts (currently closed)
- Sewell C. Biggs Museum of American Art
- Various sculptures and memorials

### **Festivals, Celebrations, and Special Events**

In addition to typical holiday celebrations and parades that are common to cities across the region and the country, Dover hosts several festivals and celebrations that are distinctly unique to the City. These include:

- **African American Heritage Festival** – A Citywide event recognizing the important role of African American heritage in Dover.
- **Amish County Bike Tour** - Each September over 1,500 cyclists start this tour at Legislative Mall area in Downtown Dover. The tour consisting of varying mile loops winds through the Amish countryside southwest of Dover.
- **Arts, Cultural and Heritage (ArCH) Field Days** - ArCH Field Days for fourth grade students are held on The Green in spring. The event managed by the First State Heritage Park in collaboration with the National Park Service and other agencies and organization reaches hundreds of students, teachers, and chaperones.
- **Arts on The Green** – A Spring and Summer music and entertainment series that brings family-style entertainment to Dover each week. The event is held on The Green.
- **Dover Air Force Base Community Appreciation Days and Air Show Events** – The Dover Air Force Base hosts open houses and air show events.
- **Dover Comic Con** – This family-friendly, indoor-outdoor pop-culture festival held each August is led by the Dover Public Library with other partner groups. It features vendors, artists & artisans, authors, a cosplay competition, fan groups, pop-culture cars, food trucks and panel discussions.
- **Dover Days** – A celebration of the historical heritage of Dover, held the first weekend of May in the City’s historic district each year.
- **Dover Mile** – One of many races and walk-a-thons that travel through the historic district. This one mile run and walk event sponsored by the Colonial Rotary Club of Dover is held in June celebrating Flag Day.
- **Firefly Music Festival** - Dover International Speedway hosts the Firefly Music Festival on its grounds known as The Woodlands located east of State Route 1. This multi-day music festival brings artists in a variety of music genres and offers camping to its attendees.
- **Governor’s Festivals at Woodburn** – The Governor’s mansion hosts seasonal events each year including a Fall Festival, Easter Egg Hunt and holiday events each December.
- **July 4<sup>th</sup> Celebration** – Legislative Hall provides a scenic backdrop for this annual celebration and fireworks display.
- **NASCAR Races**– Dover International Speedway currently hosts two major stock car (and truck) racing event weekends each year.
- **Parades** – Many parades travel the streets of Downtown Dover associated with holidays, school and special events. One example is the St. Patrick’s Day Parade sponsored by Downtown Dover Partnership.

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# HISTORIC PRESERVATION

## **Goal 1: Preserve and Protect Historic Resources**

Preserve and provide better protection for historic resources and landscapes including individual properties and historic districts to maintain community character, quality of life, and their continued use.

### **Recommendation 1: Identification and Designation of the Dover Historic District Zone**

- Identify and study properties and areas for potential future local Historic District designation either as individual structures or as Historic District areas.
- Evaluate properties of interest and concentrated areas of historic resources for local Historic District designation.
- Evaluate for local Historic District designation those areas currently listed in and/or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.
- Evaluate proposed annexation areas for historic resources to address needs for preservation and protection.

### **Recommendation 2: Stewardship of Historic Resources**

- Encourage stewardship activities by public and private owners of historic resources to ensure the long-term care, protection, preservation, and continued existence of these resources.
- Encourage appropriate stewardship of historic resources in City building projects and infrastructure improvements located within designated historic districts or areas.
- Continue stewardship of The Green per the Preservation & Conservation Easement established with its designation as a National Monument/National Historical Park.
- Develop strategies within disaster planning and disaster response plans that consider historic resources.

### **Recommendation 3: Evaluation of Design Standards and Guidelines**

- Evaluate and update the “*Design Standards and Guidelines for the City of Dover Historic District Zone.*” This document was originally developed and adopted in 1992.
- Evaluate and consider the standards and guidelines regarding the levels of protection for The Green and the Loockerman Street historic contexts.
- Evaluate and consider the use of modern materials and technologies in the standards and guidelines.

### **Recommendation 4: Architectural Review Certification Process**

- Refine the regulatory process and procedure for Architectural Review Certification for properties located within the designated local Historic District Zone (H).

- Offer education opportunities to the Historic District Commission, staff and the general public on the Architectural Review Certification process.
- Evaluate process of requests for demolition and the identification of “demolition by neglect” properties for code revisions and education opportunities.

**Recommendation 5: Evaluate Impact of Development Activity on Historic Resources**

- Explore other strategies, activities, and incentive programs to assist in the preservation and protection of historic resources in order to balance the needs of preservation and revitalization.
- Develop and/or improve incentives and ordinances that encourage the use of historic structures and maintain historic integrity.
- Encourage use of flexible building codes when rehabilitation of existing historic buildings is proposed.
- Focus planning initiatives on Downtown Dover to strengthen Loockerman Street and adjoining areas while maintaining the balance of preservation and development activity.
- Ensure Community Development Block Grant Program activities complete the Section 106 Review process.

**Recommendation 6: Support of Historic Resources and Landscapes**

- Support consideration of historic resources and landscapes in development activities from infill projects to land annexation.
- Continue to identify, assist, and review the nominations of eligible properties to the National Register of Historic Places.
- Explore opportunities to amend or provide updated information to existing National Register nominations to meet current standards.
- Explore opportunities to conduct and/or update the Delaware Cultural Resource Survey for properties located within City limits.
- Ensure preservation efforts reflect the diversity of the community as reflected in the City’s history, architecture, and culture.
- Recommend completion of a Self-Assessment for the Historic District Commission to identify other strategic planning needs.

**Goal 2: Provide and Promote Incentives for Preservation Activities**

Provide and promote incentives for public and private preservation activities and the protection of residential and non-residential historic properties including incentives to encourage continual use, on-going maintenance of such properties, and appropriate in-fill project design.

**Recommendation 7: Tax Credit Program for Historic Properties**

- Continue the City’s Tax Credit Program for Historic Properties and promote awareness of the program.
- Promote awareness of other Tax Credit Programs offered including State and Federal programs.

**Recommendation 8: Increase Participation in Resource-Bearing Programs**

- Continue participation in the Certified Local Government (CLG) program of the National Park Service with a focus on increasing Historic District Commission training and evaluating staff needs.
- Engage in promotion and implementation of corridor management efforts within the Delaware Byways Program that support historic preservation, promote tourism, and visitation for Downtown Dover.

**Goal 3: Increase Public Information on Historic Resources**

Increase and promote dissemination of information on preservation activities, the value and significance of historic resources, and historic and cultural heritage tourism opportunities to the public and elected/appointed officials.

**Recommendation 9: Public Outreach and Education**

- Initiate educational programs on historic and cultural resources for the general public and elected/appointed officials to increase awareness and understanding.
- Develop and/or update written and digital materials (brochures, process guides, web-based postings, GIS mapping, etc.) on such topics as the local Historic District Zone, historic resources, the Historic District Commission, the Architectural Review Certification process, and the City's Tax Credit Program for Historic Properties.
- Conduct workshop training with the Historic District Commission and Planning Commission on preservation topics and the Architectural Review Certification process.
- Identify and implement methods of on-going communication with historic property owners and interested groups.

**Goal 4: Collaborate with Diverse Groups and Governments**

Partner and collaborate with special interest groups and with municipal, state and federal government agencies regarding preservation activities, cultural activities and heritage tourism.

**Recommendation 10: Seek Assistance and Support of Interest Groups**

- Continue to coordinate with and assist government agencies/officials and preservation interest groups. Examples of these groups and agencies include the City Council, Planning Commission, Historic District Commission, the Division of Historical & Cultural Affairs (State Historic Preservation Office), the First State Heritage Park at Dover, and the First State National Historical Park (National Park Service).
- Coordinate with preservation interest groups such as Downtown Dover Partnership, Preservation Delaware, Friends of Old Dover, and others.
- Seek to educate other community-based organizations on preservation activities.
- Build relationships with the historic preservation programs and other related programs at Delaware Technical & Community College, Delaware State University, Wesley College, and the University of Delaware.



FINAL DRAFT – 12.3.2019

# Chapter 7

## PUBLIC UTILITIES and INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN

### PUBLIC UTILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Water, wastewater, and energy and their infrastructure play important roles in keeping the public healthy. Water quality requirements like source protection and chlorination exist to prevent contamination of our water supplies and ensure its quality for drinking and other uses. Energy powers our homes, workplaces, schools, hospitals and other critical facilities keeping us safe and healthy. However, certain energy sources (i.e. fossil fuels, coal) also contribute significantly to air pollution and other environmental impacts that have a negative impact on public health.

The City of Dover is a full-service utility provider offering electric, water and wastewater services within and beyond the City limits. Additionally, the City owns and manages a storm sewer system that collects and conveys stormwater runoff from City streets to surface waters or stormwater management facilities.

### WATER UTILITY

The City of Dover's water system began operations in 1882 with an initial system of 13,000 linear feet of pipe and one well. Since its inception, the water utility has grown to include more than 226 miles of pipe and twenty-one (21) wells. Like other areas of Delaware south of the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal, the City of Dover relies entirely on groundwater for its water supply. The City is a regional water supplier, supplying water to customers within and beyond the City limits. The City's system includes interconnection with neighboring systems as well. Currently, the City's water utility includes approximately 13,000 metered connections. In addition to the metered connections, the City's water system provides fire protection citywide through a system of fire hydrants. The water system operates as an enterprise fund with operation, maintenance and capital costs supported through user fees.

The City of Dover's water system is supplied by 15 deep wells and 6 shallow wells drawing potable water from three aquifers. The deep wells draw from the Cheswold aquifer and Piney Point aquifer, while the shallow wells draw from the Columbia aquifer. These wells draw an average of 4.7 million gallons of water each day. During summer months, water usage has peaked as high as 9 million gallons per day. The Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC) has permitted the City to draw as many as 11.043 million gallons of water per day from

these aquifers. If it can be demonstrated that the City needs in excess of this amount, the permitted volume may be increased in the future. Currently, the system has the capacity to draw as much as 15.33 million gallons a day if the City's permit through DNREC were modified to permit this allocation.

Water systems in Delaware are subject to franchises or CPCN areas (Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity) granted by the Public Service Commission. The City's service area includes the City of Dover boundaries as well as unincorporated areas south of Dover including Rodney Village, Kent Acres, Capitol Park, Wolf Creek and areas to the east of Dover along White Oak Road and Fox Road. To the north, we have an interconnection with Tidewater Utilities that in turn serves the former Reichhold Chemical facility, as well as Carlisle Village, Winding Ridge and Planters Woods. An additional interconnection with Tidewater Utilities is located on Scarborough Road, east of Wilmington University. An interconnection with Tidewater Utilities to the south provides fire suppression service to the area south of Highview Avenue.

The area north of Dover is within a Tidewater Utilities franchise territory. Areas to the east and west of Dover are principally un-franchised. Areas to the south of Dover are either un-franchised areas or served by the Camden Wyoming Sewer & Water Authority and Tidewater Utilities.

In 2001, the City began to continuously chlorinate its water supply because there were multi-year violations of the Total Coliform Rule; and the State issued an administrative order requiring the City to continuously chlorinate the water system. The addition of chlorine to the water system, while beneficial to the overall supply and public health, has caused rust inside the unlined cast iron pipe system to discolor the water; therefore, causing "brown water" in various areas of the City. The problem of brown water is not constant and varies depending on water flows and other factors. The City has developed a strategy for addressing the brown water issues, which includes systematic flushing of water mains, installation of contact chambers at well locations, and replacement and/or lining of older, undersized, unlined cast iron piping. The flushing of water lines has been incorporated into the regular maintenance operations of the Department of Public Works. The installation of contact chambers at all existing and newly constructed deep well locations has been completed. Contact chambers will be included as part of the design for any future deep well to be added to the system. Replacement and/ or lining of water lines are reflected in the City's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

As noted in Chapter 5: Natural Resources, the City of Dover sought to protect the quality and quantity of water supply in the City and the surrounding region by adopting a Source Water Protection Overlay Zone in 2007-2008 within the *Zoning Ordinance*. The Ordinance restricts incompatible land uses and limits impervious cover in excellent recharge areas and wellhead protection areas. The City has implemented the Ordinance through the development review process for applications that require Planning Commission approval. Refer to Map 5-2 in Chapter 5 for further detail.

The City also developed a Water System Plan in 2006 to update the hydraulic model, review demand and production data, and identify future capital projects for distribution and production facilities to meet projected needs.

## Water Systems Expansions and Improvements

Since the *2008 Comprehensive Plan*, the City of Dover has done much to further improve and expand water systems. This includes installing a new Piney Point Well, replacing a Cheswold well, and adding almost 12 miles of water lines throughout the City. Additionally, since 2008 the City of Dover has also replaced almost 7 miles of water lines.

There are a number of ongoing programs and projects needed to maintain and expand the water system. These include general distribution upgrades, wellhead redevelopment, meter reading technology upgrades, and water tank painting. The Capital Investment Plan for the water system is summarized in Table 7-1.

**Table 7-1: Water System Improvements**

| Proposed Improvement                                  | Proposed Year |
|---|---------------|
| <b>Production &amp; Storage Facility Improvements</b> |               |
| Water Treatment Plant Improvements                    | 2020          |
| Wellhead Redevelopment Program                        | 2020-2024     |
| Water Quality Improvements                            | 2020-2024     |
| Future Well Installation                              | 2021-2022     |
| 1.0 MG Elevated Water Storage Tank                    | 2021-23       |

Source: *City of Dover Department of Public Works, 2019*

As the City annexes land, its water service territory will expand to encompass annexed lands. In some cases, this will require negotiations with other water providers if this area is within their franchises. As land is developed and redeveloped within the City, the developer is responsible for connecting to water service and expanding the water system including any necessary capacity upgrades at their expense. All system expansions and upgrades are reviewed and approved by City Public Works Engineering staff to City standards. Most of the improvements are dedicated to the City for ownership and maintenance upon completion of the construction. In addition, the City implemented a Water Impact Fee in 2008 to help support the capital improvements necessary for the system to support future development and expansion.

## WASTEWATER SYSTEM

The City of Dover owns and operates a wastewater collection and transmission (sanitary sewer) system. The City collects wastewater and transmits it to facilities owned and operated by Kent County. Once transmitted to the Kent County system, wastewater is ultimately treated at the Kent County Regional Resource Recovery Facility in Frederica and discharged into the Murderkill River. The wastewater system operates as an enterprise fund with operation, maintenance, and capital costs supported through user fees. Users pay a fee to the City of Dover for collection and transmission of wastewater as well as a pass-through fee to Kent County, collected by the City of Dover, for treatment of wastewater.

The City's 192-mile sanitary sewer system collects approximately 2.1 billion gallons of liquid waste from residential, commercial and institutional land uses annually. Forty-four (44) pumping stations transport the waste to the Kent County's main line transmission system. While the sanitary

sewer serves the majority of the City, there are a few isolated properties that still have on-site septic systems. The current service territory includes most of the area within the incorporated boundaries and un-incorporated areas including Hunters Point, Rodney Village and areas along White Oak Road. Kent County operates sewer districts to the south, east and north of Dover. There is no service to the west.

Due to the topography of the area, a relatively large portion of the City’s sewer system requires pumping stations and force mains to transmit wastewater to County collection points. These stations are both publicly and privately owned. The primary County main running through Dover (mostly beneath US Route 13) is a large trunk line with evenly spaced pumping stations. Kent County has also installed a Central Bypass line on the eastern side of the City to help reduce the load on the primary main. Kent County is in the process of completing a second Central Bypass line in the northern portion of the City; this line is located west of US Route 13.

### **Sanitary Sewer System Expansions and Improvements**

The City developed a Wastewater Master Plan Update in 2009. This document included a modeling update to include GIS mapping of the entire wastewater collection and transmission system, evaluation of available capacities, and development of future CIP projects.

Since the *2008 Comprehensive Plan*, the City of Dover has done much to further improve and expand the wastewater system. This includes the addition of over 8 miles of wastewater lines, replacing over 1 mile of wastewater lines, and relining many of the existing lines throughout the City. There are a number of ongoing programs needed to maintain the sewer system. These include inflow and infiltration removal as well as pumping station upgrades that include pump and motor replacements, electrical upgrades, water seal systems and wet well rehabilitation, and pump house rehabilitations. Additionally, there are planned gravity sewer upgrades to the Tar Ditch Interceptor and in the Lepore Pump Station basin. The Capital Investment Plan for the wastewater system summarized in Table 7-2.

**Table 7-2: Sanitary Sewer System Improvements**

| <b>Proposed Improvement</b>                       | <b>Proposed Year</b> |
|---|----------------------|
| <b>Pump Station &amp; Force Main Improvements</b> |                      |
| Puncheon Run Pump Station Improvements            | 2020                 |
| US 13 East Pump Station #7 Repairs                | 2020                 |
| College Road Pump Station Replacement             | 2020-23              |
| Turnberry Pump Station Replacement                | 2021-24              |
| Heatherfield Pump Station Replacement             | 2022-23, 25          |
| Cedar Chase Pump Station Replacement              | 2023-24, 26          |
| Laurel Drive Pump Station Replacement             | 2024-25, 27          |
| <b>Collection System Upgrades</b>                 |                      |
| Tar Ditch Interceptor                             | 2020                 |
| Inflow/Infiltration Removal                       | 2020-24              |
| Lepore Road Sanitary Sewer Upgrade                | 2021, 2023           |

Source: City of Dover Department of Public Works, 2019

As the City annexes land, its wastewater service territory will expand to encompass annexed lands. As land is developed within the City, the developer is responsible for expanding the City's sewer system including any necessary capacity upgrades at their expense. All system expansion and upgrades are reviewed and approved by City Public Works Engineering staff to City (and County) standards. Many of these improvements are ultimately dedicated to the City. In addition, the City and Kent County charge a Wastewater Impact fee to help support the improvements necessary to the system to support development and expansion.

## ELECTRIC UTILITY

The City of Dover is a major electric provider in the region, providing electric service to more than 24,000 customers. The City's electric service territory extends significantly beyond the City boundary into unincorporated areas of Kent County, encompassing seventy-five (75) square miles. The Electric System owned by the City primarily consists of production plant, transmission plant, distribution plant, and general plant facilities.

Dover, as all municipalities in Delaware, is a member of DEMEC (Delaware Municipal Electric Corporation). DEMEC is an organization that manages power purchases, regulatory activities and other administrative functions for the municipalities as well as legislative support for laws and ordinances.

The City owns two power plants, the McKee Run Generating Station (McKee Run) and VanSant Generating Station (VanSant). McKee Run consists of one steam turbine generating unit with a total capacity of 102 megawatts (MW). The City will retire the McKee Run Generation Station effective May 31, 2021. VanSant is a 40 MW simple-cycle combustion turbine unit. The City has a total of fifteen (15) substations.

North American Energy Services (NAES) Corporation operates the generating plants. The agreement between the City and NAES Corporation has been in effect since July 1, 2006. Effective July 1, 2011 and renewed in July 2019, the City entered into an Energy Management Agreement with The Energy Authority, Inc. (TEA) to assist the City with its energy procurement, energy sale, purchase of fuels, establishment and management of risk policies, and the development and management of hedging protocols and related energy procurement challenges. Headquartered in Jacksonville, Florida, TEA is a non-profit energy manager owned by seven public utility systems operating across the nation. Currently, all power is purchased through a combination of long-term hedges and the Day-Ahead market. Energy produced by the City of Dover power plants are sold into the Day-Ahead market at market prices and are settled at real time process, which cover the cost of production plus reasonable profit. In 2018, the City of Dover generated approximately 2% of its annual kWh consumption.

The City's electric system supplies electricity to a service area of 75 square miles, serves 24,058 customers of which 20,445 are residential, as of FY 2018. The transmission system interconnects with the Delmarva Utility's regional transmission system at the 230 kV to 69 kV Cartanza Substation which has a redundant capacity of 300 MW; in 2017 the system peak was 165 MW. The distribution facilities include 179 miles of overhead lines with 43 miles being transmission

and 136 miles being distribution. The system also includes 291 miles of underground lines with all but 0.12 miles being distribution.

Four of the Electric Department’s major customers take service off the 69-kV transmission system. These customers include the Dover Air Force Base, KraftHeinz, Proctor & Gamble, and NRG Energy Center (NRG). NRG is an exempt wholesale generator that sells power that must be transmitted through the City’s transmission system to third party purchasers. When the NRG plant is not operational, the Electric Division provides power for the plant site.

The Electric Department has one contract for providing transmission service through the Electric System. As mentioned above, the Electric Department provides transmission service to NRG for the output of its 16 MW electric generator.

### **Electric System Expansions and Improvements**

As with other utilities, the City regularly maintains and improves its electric distribution and generation system. Since 2010, over \$71 million has been spent operating, maintaining, and improving the transmission and distribution system, and over \$67 million has been spent operating, maintaining, and improving the generation units. Table 7-3 shows a list of improvements that are planned or underway.

**Table 7-3: Electric System Capital Improvements**

| <b>Substation Improvements</b>                       |            |
|--|------------|
| Substation Component Upgrades                        | 2020-2022  |
| Substation Battery Upgrades                          | 2020       |
| Dover AFB, Danner Farm, Lebanon Consolidation        | 2021       |
| College Road Substation Consolidation                | 2020       |
| <b>Transmission System Upgrades</b>                  |            |
| Transmission Maintenance Program                     | 2020-2024  |
| <b>Distribution System Upgrades</b>                  |            |
| Fault Indicators                                     | 2020       |
| Roadway Light LED Conversion                         | 2020, 2021 |
| Ted Harvey Distribution Upgrade                      | 2020       |
| Advanced Metering Infrastructure                     | 2020-2024  |
| Cell Wireless Small Pole Modifications               | 2020-2022  |
| Crossarm/Cutout Replacement                          | 2020       |
| Distribution Capacitors and Controls                 | 2020, 2021 |
| <b>Generation / Production Facility Improvements</b> |            |
| VanSant Component Replacements                       | 2020, 2021 |
| McKee Run Unit 3 Auxiliary System Components         | 2020, 2021 |
| McKee Run Station Dismantlement                      | 2021-2023  |

Source: City of Dover Electric Department, 2019

## STORMWATER SYSTEM

The City of Dover is served by a stormwater system that primarily includes 145 miles of storm sewer pipe and 35,713 catch basins, as well as a variety of surface features, such as ditches and swales. This system aids in controlling and transporting excess stormwater runoff that is unable to infiltrate into the ground. The collected stormwater is discharged to local water courses via 16,390 different outfalls. Even though the City's storm sewer system is robust, it can only handle so much runoff. Excess stormwater is a direct effect of urbanization.

Urbanization can dramatically alter the existing local hydrologic cycles. Natural landscapes that intercept and absorb rainfall are replaced with severely compacted grades and impervious surfaces converting precipitation into stormwater runoff. Starting in the 1990's (when the State began regulating stormwater runoff) housing developments and commercial/industrial entities were required to construct stormwater management facilities to improve the quality of stormwater runoff and manage the timing of discharge to waterways. This not only improves the quality of stormwater discharges, but it also prevents flooding in areas downstream of discharge points.

The State Stormwater Regulations attempted to alleviate the impacts of runoff associated with the effects of urbanization. However, a number of older developments were built prior to modern stormwater management controls. Much of the stormwater runoff from urban and industrial areas typically contain general types of pollutants (heavy metals, pesticides, herbicides, and synthetic organic compounds such as fuels, waste oils, solvents, lubricant, and grease). Runoff can also contain high levels of contaminants such as sediment, bacteria, and nutrients. Polluted stormwater is a major contributor to poor water quality and can have damaging effects on human health and the environment. In response to these issues, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) developed the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination Systems (NPDES).

The Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC) is the delegated authority by the EPA to issue NPDES permits to municipalities within Delaware. Dover is considered a "Small MS4" with a population less than 100,000 which classifies Dover as a Phase II NPDES Permit. Under Dover's Phase II Permit, we are required to obtain a permit for the discharge of stormwater and to develop/ implement a Stormwater Management Program (SWMP).

The SWMP is to focus on six minimum control measures: Public Education and Outreach on Stormwater Impacts, Public Participation/Involvement, Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination, Construction Site Stormwater Runoff Control, Post-Construction Stormwater Management, and Pollution Prevention/Good Housekeeping for Municipal Operations. For each measure, Best Management Practices (BMPs), measurable goals, and timeframes for implementation are to be provided. Other elements of the Plan include annual updates to the City's storm sewer map (as needed), implementing and enforcing ordinances/regulatory mechanisms, and employee training. The SWMP is to be designed to reduce the discharge of pollutants to the "maximum extent practicable," protect water quality, and satisfy the water quality requirements of the Clean Water Act.

The City's first permit term began in 2003 and expired in August 2008 but was administratively extended by DNREC until a new permit is issued. As of 2018 no new permit has been issued by

DNREC. The City’s NPDES permit is managed through the Department of Public Works but compliance with the conditions of the permit requires interdepartmental communication along with support from City Council and the community.

The current system of stormwater management calls for managing stormwater in a piecemeal fashion, where each development is responsible for designing and building stormwater management structures according to the State and City’s standards. Once a project is complete and infrastructure is inspected, certain infrastructure is dedicated to the City and other infrastructure remains private. For example, stormwater ponds in residential areas owned by homeowner associations (HOAs) are not typically dedicated to the City for maintenance. Stormwater ponds owned privately by an HOA may qualify for the Kent Conservation District’s Stormwater Management District program through Kent County. The Stormwater Management District provides an HOA with a cost-effective way to manage their privately-owned pond. As of 2019, the City of Dover has four HOAs participating with the Kent Conservation District’s Stormwater Management District program; these are Four Seasons, Fox Hall West, Hidden Creek, and Maple Glen.

City stormwater infrastructure related to City maintained streets and City properties require maintenance as well. Due to increased municipal costs for maintenance on stormwater infrastructure, the State encouraged the creation of a Stormwater Utility that would function for each municipality’s needs. A Stormwater Utility would function similar to other utilities, where property owners would be assessed a fee, likely based on area of impervious cover, to properly plan, construct, manage and maintain stormwater infrastructure. The City conducted a Stormwater Utility Feasibility Study in 2016 to determine how a stormwater utility would function and the fee structures that would be needed to properly implement such a concept. Since the 2016 Feasibility Study, implementing a Stormwater Utility is the subject of ongoing review by the City’s Department of Public Works and the City Council.

**Table 7-4: Stormwater System Improvement**

|  |                 |
|--|-----------------|
| Mirror Lake Drainage Basin Improvements          | 2020-2022       |
| East Lake Garden Drainage Basin Improvements     | 2020-2022       |
| West Street Flooding Improvements                | 2020-2021, 2023 |
| Bradford Street Drainage Basin Improvements      | 2021            |
| Persimmon Park Place Drainage Improvements       | 2021            |
| West Street Flooding Improvements                | 2021-2024       |
| Water Street Flooding Improvements               | 2022-2023, 2025 |
| The Greens of Dover/ Lamplighter Lane Stormwater | 2023-2024, 2026 |
| Lynnhaven Drive Flooding Improvements            | 2024-2025, 2027 |

Source: City of Dover Department of Public Works, 2019

## PLANNING FOR UTILITIES

The City of Dover as a service provider to both residents of the City and County has a responsibility to prepare for future issues and challenges to the utility infrastructure. Providing adequate services requires that maintenance of the physical infrastructure be regularly addressed, and that the City must be responsive to changes and pressure upon its systems.

### **Water System**

The most recent version of the City of Dover’s Water System Management Plan identifies some key issues which the City must address due to their relevance to growth management within service areas of the City.

Perhaps the most vital issue regarding both the direction of growth in the City and utility service is the identification of future service areas. Both municipal development and annexation are reliant upon the availability of services for water and sewer. The physical extension of piping around and to the extent of the City boundary is an easily identifiable issue. However, development both on the edge of the City boundary and in the Downtown core requires careful consideration of water flow and availability.

One such item for consideration is that there is concern for over-pumping of the Columbia aquifer. A 2018 report by the Delaware Geological Survey (DGS) studied the City of Dover’s Long Point Road Wellfield (LPRW) and the numerous irrigation systems which pump water from the shallow Columbia aquifer. The researchers identified two main concerns caused by over pumping. The first is the increased risk for saltwater intrusion into the aquifer from saline tidal creeks and marshes. The second was the rate at which groundwater flows horizontally through an aquifer and decreases well yields.

Planning for Downtown re-development must ensure that the new challenges encountered by the City, such as the push towards taller buildings in the Downtown (five stories and/or higher), are met with utility services which are capable of addressing those needs. In a similar manner, the Water System Plan identifies industrial use of water resources as experiencing zero growth as it trends away from traditional manufacturing. However, in the event that a large industrial operation was proposed to locate within the City careful attention must be paid to the new potential demands on the water system.

Improvements to the distribution system for water within the City’s Water Utility were also specifically identified in the Water System Plan. These improvements include expansion of piping to adequately address demand over time and a scheduled replacement of the older portions of the City’s infrastructure, especially where unlined cast-iron pipes are still in use. These actions were identified as important because they increase the availability of service over time and would address some of the current concerns over “brown water.”

### **Managing Inflow and Infiltration**

Inflow of stormwater and infiltration of groundwater into the City’s wastewater collection and transmission system has become an issue as the City’s sewer infrastructure ages. Cracks in the sanitary sewer pipes allow for both stormwater and groundwater to infiltrate. Additionally, in older

areas of the City, many sump pump systems and rain gutters discharge directly to the sanitary sewer system. This additional flow places significant stress on Kent County's wastewater treatment system by increasing the City's flow to the wastewater treatment plant. It also costs the rate payers within the City of Dover in that the City must pay for all wastewater that is transmitted to the County for treatment, regardless of its source.

In response to the issues of inflow and infiltration of stormwater and groundwater into the City's sanitary sewer system, the City has developed a plan to identify sources of inflow and infiltration and to remove these sources from the system which includes replacing and/or relining aging sewer mains.

### **Electricity and Energy Consumption**

The City of Dover is seeking to recognize a number of Green Energy Goals to reduce overall consumption where possible to better utilize existing capacity. Currently, there are several solar energy projects that have been authorized in the City's service area including 337 residential solar installations with a capacity of 3.58 MW and 27 commercial installations with a capacity of 1.98 MW. A number of geothermal units have also been authorized by staff. The City is in the process of evaluating a number of alternative proposals for long-term power generation.

## UTILITIES

### **Goal 1: Proactively Maintain Existing Infrastructure and Expand Infrastructure When Beneficial**

Continue to place highest priority on maintaining existing utilities and community infrastructure, so that reliable service can continue to be provided to the existing community, and in the best interest of the community's health and well-being. This includes the City's Water, Wastewater (Sewer) and Electric Utilities which help maintain the daily functioning of the City.

#### **Recommendation 1: Update Utility Plans Regularly**

- Dover water, sewer and electric will have their long-range plans updated every ten to fifteen years and integrated into a Consolidated Utility Plan for the City of Dover.
  - Planned update to the Water Utility Plan by 2021, as it was last updated in 2006.
  - Planned update to the Wastewater Utility Plan by 2021, as it was last updated in 2009.
  - Planned update to the Electric Utility Plan by 2026, as it was last updated in 2016.
  - Planned update to the Stormwater Utility Plan in 10-year increments following implementation by City Council.

#### **Recommendation 2: Continue to Seek Mutually Beneficial Interconnections with Utility Systems**

- Analyze the ability of the City to sell water to Tidewater Utilities, the Camden-Wyoming Sewer and Water Authority and other neighboring water providers, for both domestic and fire protection use, within the current infrastructure capacity and allocation permit limits. Conversely, analyze the ability of neighboring water providers, in terms of both capacity and allocation, to allow the City to draw water in times of need.
- Continue to work with Kent County with which the City's wastewater system is interconnected to treat the City's wastewater at the Kent County Regional Resource Recovery Facility in Frederica.
- Continue to work with the City's power supply and generation partners in managing the City's energy production, as well as maintaining connections with the regional transmission and distribution system.

#### **Recommendation 3: Implement a Plan to Identify and Remove Sources of Inflow and Infiltration**

- Prepare projects to reline or replace old sewer mains to reduce and/or eliminate inflow and infiltration.

- Work with property owners to remove catch basin, sump pump and other illicit connections to the sanitary sewer system that have been identified by field investigations or smoke testing.

**Recommendation 4: Prepare and Implement Utility Systems Service Plans for future Annexation Areas**

- Study identified areas of potential future annexation into the City and prepare utility service plans to provide all essential City utilities and community services.

**Recommendation 5: Prepare a Long-term Strategy to Implement Capital Improvements that will be Most Impactful to the City and its Residents**

- Continue to identify key areas of Improvement for the City’s Water, Wastewater (Sewer), and Electric Utility Systems and layout a long-term strategy to implement projects to improve them.

**Goal 2: Enhance Infrastructure to Meet Community Needs**

Enhance public utilities and infrastructure where studies indicate that community services standards are not being met.

**Recommendation 6: Continue to Implement Plans to Improve Water Quality**

- Continue the commitment to implementing the water system improvements that will improve the water quality concerns and resolve “brown water” issues.
- Continue to implement necessary improvements at City’s Water Treatment Plant and associated water system infrastructure.

**Recommendation 7: Continue to Implement Plans to Improve Wastewater Systems**

- Continue to implement the City’s long-term Capital Improvements Plan by investing in wastewater system facilities like new Pump Stations, Force Mains and Collection Systems.

**Recommendation 8: Identify and Pursue Options for Long-term, Reliable, Cost Competitive, and Environmentally Prudent Electricity for our Customers**

- Identify ways the City of Dover Electric Department can improve management of Electric infrastructure including long-term supply and capacity.
- Continue to implement the City’s long-term Capital Improvements Plan with things like Substation Improvements, Transmission System Upgrades, Distribution System Upgrades, and Generation/Production Facility Improvements.
- Continue to implement Green Energy Goals including utilizing energy sources like Solar. This will help reduce overall consumption where possible, allowing us to more efficiently utilize existing capacity.

**Recommendation 9: Ensure the City has the Infrastructure and Capacity to Accommodate Evolving Technologies**

- Ensure that the City has the capacity to accommodate the demand for new technologies like at-home and public charging stations and to anticipate the growing use of new modes

of transportation like electric cars. This should be done in a manner that mitigates the impact on the electric distribution system.

- Ensure that the City has a plan/policy in place to address and accommodate the infrastructure needed for new communication technology like 5G telecommunications.

### **Goal 3: Meet or Exceed the State and Federal Requirements of the NPDES Permit and Stormwater Management**

Continue efforts to be recognized for excellent service and exceeding the requirements as a Stormwater Management Provider.

#### **Recommendation 10: Implement a Stormwater Utility within the City of Dover**

- Implement a Stormwater Utility within the City to dedicate necessary funds to maintain the stormwater infrastructure. Implementation should be done in accordance with the findings of the feasibility study for the implementation of a Stormwater Utility.
- Identify and implement necessary Capital Improvements for Stormwater Management infrastructure systems owned and maintained by the City.

#### **Recommendation 11: Encourage Use of Green Technologies for Stormwater Management in Development Projects**

- Coordinate with City Engineering staff, Kent Conservation District, and the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control to determine the appropriate changes to City codes and processes. This should be with the aim to require stormwater management practices that mimic natural conditions for new development.

### **Goal 4: Continue to Strive for Excellent Service**

Exceed requirements and expectations wherever possible to ensure our Utility Customers continue to experience high quality service and to be an example of excellence to other service providers.

#### **Recommendation 12: Obtain Accreditation with the American Public Works Association**

- Continue efforts by the City of Dover Department of Public Works to obtain accreditation from the APWA (American Public Works Association) to be officially recognized as an Agency of high standards and professionalism.

#### **Recommendation 13: Continue to Engage with the Public and Customers**

- Continue efforts to engage with the public and customers through electronic and print media, community meetings, and other methods to share information on the processes of utilities systems and major projects.



FINAL DRAFT – 12.3.2019

# Chapter 8

# COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES PLAN

## COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES

### INTRODUCTION

Municipalities exist in large part to provide a range of services to their residents. The variety and quality of these services greatly impact on the quality of life within the community, giving it identity, influencing growth patterns, promoting economic vitality, and fostering pride in the community as a place to live, work, recreate and do business. The City of Dover is a full-service municipality providing a wide array of services to its residents including but not limited to:

- Public Safety: Police, Fire (volunteer fire fighters, full-time dispatchers), Ambulance (contracted), Fire Marshal, Planning, Construction Inspections and Code Enforcement
- Recreation: Parks, Recreation and Sports Programming, and Arts Council
- Library
- Community Services: Grounds Maintenance & Beautification, Solid Waste Collection, Street and Drainage Maintenance
- Support Services: including city management, financial management, customer services, property assessment, central services, information technology, human resources, and City Clerk functions.

Dover prides itself on a tradition of “Community excellence through quality service.”

### CITY DEPARTMENTS AND OTHER SERVICES

The City of Dover maintains a work force of approximately 376 full-time and 90 part time employees. The City-Operating budget in Fiscal Year 2019-2020 for its General Fund, Electric Fund, and Water and Wastewater Funds is approximately \$148 million.

The following sections give a more detailed description of the services and facilities that the City of Dover provides to its residents. A discussion of the City’s utility system is detailed in Chapter 7 – Public Utilities and Infrastructure Plan.

### **City of Dover Planning, Inspections, and Code Enforcement**

The City employs a professional planning staff with a range of expertise and backgrounds. All development activity is reviewed by the Planning Department. Planning Staff is responsible for Site Plan and Subdivision Plan review, land use and zoning interpretation, long range planning, and zoning enforcement among other responsibilities.

The Planning Department also provides support to the Board of Adjustment, Planning Commission, Historic District Commission, and City Council on issues related to planning and development. The Staff also leads the Development Advisory Community. As staff to these Boards and Commissions, the Planning Staff fields zoning and code compliance inquiries, conducts meetings with developers and design professionals, manages the application filing and review process, completes plan review, writes reports on each application, and presents information in public forums. The City’s Planning Staff is available to assist citizens in a variety of ways including zoning verification, guidance through the development process, and explanations of the restrictions and requirements of the City’s *Zoning Ordinance* and *Land Subdivision Regulations*.

The review of plans for development and construction projects fall under the auspices of the Planning Department. Notable development projects from the past ten years are the new Dover High School, Dover Public Library, subdivision and development of four (4) lots in the Garrison Oak Business and Technology Center, and redevelopment of the former Walmart, Kmart and former Playtex manufacturing site on the Route 13 corridor. These were guided through the development review process by City Staff. The total number of development applications per year has remained somewhat steady since 2009 with an average rate of 80 applications per year. This compares with an average rate of 123 applications per year for the previous 2003-2008 comprehensive planning period. The 2008-2018 period corresponds with a more stable economic climate than that seen in the construction boom leading up to 2008. Chapter 2 – Patterns of Change discusses this activity in more detail.

**Table 8-1: Application Summary for 2009-2018**

|                                     | <b>2009</b> | <b>2010</b> | <b>2011</b> | <b>2012</b> | <b>2013</b> | <b>2014</b> | <b>2015</b> | <b>2016</b> | <b>2017</b> | <b>2018</b> |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| <b>Total Number of Applications</b> | 85          | 97          | 74          | 79          | 91          | 74          | 67          | 83          | 76          | 54          |

Source: City of Dover Department of Planning

The City also employs a staff of professional engineers in the Department of Public Works and Electric Department who serve a variety of planning and engineering responsibilities relating to infrastructure and utility systems. City engineers are responsible for reviewing and approving key aspects of development such as utilities, City roadway construction and implementation, and life-safety concerns.

The Department of Inspections provides several services to residents and property owners within the City including issuance of construction Permits, performance of Inspections, issuance of Certificates of Occupancy, and Business Licensing. The City maintains responsibility for all permits and inspections related to construction including Building, Sign, Plumbing, Mechanical, and Fire Protection permits. All new construction within the City of Dover is inspected by the City's Building Inspectors. During the timeframe of 2008-2018, City Inspectors were involved in over 46,000 separate inspections. The Department of Inspections ensures that building and construction safety within the City maintains a high degree of accountability and professionalism through maintaining certifications through the International Code Council and by maintaining a strong relationship with the development community. The City has adopted the 2009 versions of the International Code Council (ICC) Codes for building, residential, plumbing, and mechanical codes; and it is preparing to adopt the 2018 ICC versions in early 2020.

The City of Dover also provides a code enforcement and property inspections service. Code Enforcement Inspectors are available to address complaints and issues regarding code violations and property maintenance concerns. These Code Enforcement Inspectors also pro-actively work to ensure that the land and buildings across Dover are adequately and properly maintained in accordance with City Codes. The City is considering adopting the 2018 International Property Maintenance Code. In addition to inspecting property exteriors, Code Enforcement Staff inspect rental dwelling units to ensure that they meet current code standards as part of the Rental Dwelling Licensing Program.

### **City of Dover Fire Marshal's Office**

The City of Dover maintains its own jurisdictional Fire Marshal's Office. This Office is responsible for, but not limited to the following within the City of Dover limits: annual fire and life safety inspections; reviewing fire alarm systems, fire suppression systems, hood, and hood suppression systems permits; conducting acceptance tests on fire alarm systems, fire suppression systems, hood, and hood suppression systems; and performing Certificate of Occupancy inspections. This office is also responsible for issuing Notice of Violations for code related issues and conducting Site Plan and building plan review. The City of Dover Fire Marshal is also a member of the City's Development Advisory Committee and provides comments on development applications regarding the adequacy of their fire protection and life safety elements. The City of Dover Fire Marshal's Office follows the *Dover Code of Ordinances*, Delaware State Fire Prevention Regulations, and NFPA (National Fire Protection Association) in regard to the minimum fire and life safety standards.

Fire Marshal responsibilities also include conducting fire investigations, determining and documenting origin and cause of fire, writing reports, and testifying in court as required.

The City Fire Marshal's Office takes a major role in special events management in the City. For example, this includes NASCAR events, the Firefly Music Festival, and annual fireworks events. The Office works in conjunction with other agencies to ensure that all Fire and Life Safety items

are in place and adhered to for the citizens, staff, and attendees of the events to have a safe and enjoyable experience.

### **Emergency Management Planning**

The City of Dover employs an Emergency Management Coordinator within the City Manager's Office. The role of the Emergency Management Coordinator is to serve as the City's liaison on emergency management/preparedness issues. This position coordinates and conducts training programs and emergency operations drills, assists departments with emergency and mitigation plans, manages occasional grants, and administers the submittal process for Federal and State reimbursement claims for the City's costs during emergency operations. The Coordinator also maintains the City's Emergency Operations Plan.

The City of Dover Emergency Operations Plan (DEOP) provides a basis for preparing for and executing emergency operations to prevent, minimize, prepare for, respond to, and recover from injury or damage that may be caused by natural or technological disasters or enemy attack. The City government must ensure the continuity of government operations during such disaster situations. This plan pre-determines, to the extent possible, actions and interactions to be taken by the City government and cooperating agencies to prevent and minimize disasters. These actions include reduction of the vulnerability of its citizens to disasters, protection of life and property of citizens residing in Dover as well as visitors to the City, quick and effective response to disaster occurrences and the implementation of timely recovery actions.

While the DEOP outlines specific steps for the City to take during an emergency, coordination with other local governments as well as the State and Federal governments is also needed during emergencies. To accomplish this the Emergency Management Coordinator works to maintain City compliance with the National Incident Management System (NIMS). NIMS is a national standard published by the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) which provides guidance for coordinated emergency response across all levels of government. All staff who would participate in a disaster response or recovery scenario are trained using the NIMS standard. Some of the other governmental and private agencies who also participate in coordinated emergency response include the Delaware Emergency Management Agency (DEMA), Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC), Dover Fire Department, and Kent County Public Safety Department.

### **City of Dover Parks and Recreation**

The Parks & Recreation Department provides a comprehensive recreational program to meet the needs of all citizens along with a citywide park system. Programming includes special events such as the Spring/Summer Performing Arts Series, Dover Days, the Capital Holiday Celebration, and Youth in Government Day Programming. The City also Organizes athletic programs and leagues which encompass softball, basketball, soccer, volleyball, tennis, wrestling, field hockey, track and field, cross-country, and football. In addition, the Department provides fitness programs, bus trips, after school programs, summer camps, and special interest & enrichment courses to meet the needs of all ages of citizens.

The City operates twenty-six City parks, ranging from passive planted areas to community playgrounds to larger anchor and regional parks. A full listing of City Parks and their amenities can be found in Table 8-2.

### **Anchor Parks**

The three largest parks in the City are Schutte Park, Silver Lake Park, and Dover Park. These anchor parks serve residents from throughout the City and the region.

Schutte Park functions as a regional athletic center home to multi-purpose fields used for soccer, field hockey, and girls' lacrosse; lighted softball fields; and the Dover Little League Park, which is leased and managed by the Dover Little League. Schutte Park is also home to the John W. Pitts Recreation Center, the City's indoor recreation center that opened in 2008. The Pitts Center includes a gymnasium and multi-purpose room. This park and the John W. Pitts Recreation Center serve as the hub for the City's recreation programming. The administrative offices for the Parks & Recreation Department are also located in Schutte Park.

Silver Lake Park is a major recreation area for Dover and Central Delaware. Silver Lake provides both passive and active recreational activities for all ages. Activities include fishing, waterskiing, and boating on the lake. Most of Silver Lake Parkland area is located below the dam, along the St. Jones River and is accessed from Washington Street and Kings Highway. This area of the park is a hub of activity for families, joggers, walkers, and many others. The Park includes a multi-use path that now connects with the Capital City Trail, a trail system that begins along Park Drive and continues to the intersection of U.S. Route 13/DuPont Highway and Public Safety Boulevard. Many regional walking and running events begin and end at Silver Lake Park bringing in visitors from beyond Dover.

Dover Park is located on White Oak Road between U.S. Route 13/DuPont Highway and State Route 1. The Park, while largely wooded, includes a softball field, a playground, pavilions, basketball courts, tennis courts, disc golf, and a multi-purpose field. The outdoor amenities at the park are well-utilized, but park patrons have raised concerns about safety, especially in heavily vegetated areas and under-lit areas within the park. The Parks & Recreation Department has recently acted to address these concerns with a new vegetation management strategy for the Park.

### **Planning for Parks**

The *2008 Comprehensive Plan* recommended that an Open Space and Park Master Plan be developed for the City's entire park system. Though such a unified plan has not been developed as of 2019, several other planning initiatives have been completed. Chief among these was the *2015 Recreation Needs Assessment* which used a combination of surveys and workshops for public engagement to assess park users and City residents' priorities for their parks.

The Assessment utilized data derived from the *2013 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan* (SCORP) which included a random telephone survey to assess recreation participation patterns and identify needs statewide, for five regions and for municipalities such as Dover (Dover is part of Region 3). The City's data focused principally on the use of the City's park system and needs specific to it, while the SCORP data viewed in combination with Dover's

survey data helped to develop a more comprehensive picture of recreation participation patterns and needs. While now dated, the SCORP data indicated that 61% of Dover respondents felt that outdoor recreation is very important to them personally. Sixty-one percent also indicated that they participated in outdoor recreation for fitness purposes and seventy percent indicated they would choose outdoor recreation facilities that are close to where they live.

The aim of the Assessment was to guide capital investments within City parks to ensure they meet the long-term needs of these constituents. Among other recommendations, the Assessment recommended specific improvements to the City's anchor parks that should be master planned. It also recommended future development and implementation of additional improvement plans for neighborhood parks.

Following up on the *Recreation Needs Assessment*, starting in 2016 the City began developing Master Plans specific to the anchor parks. The first of these was for Schutte Park, developed between January 2016 and February 2017. This Master Plan laid out a design for improvements previously recommended by the *Needs Assessment*. Improvements include new walking trails, additional multi-purpose fields, and other amenities intended to take advantage of unused park acreage that had been added to the Park in 2004. The second of these Master Plans was for Dover Park, developed between April and August 2018. This Master Plan likewise laid out a design for previously recommended improvements, but also aimed to address the safety issues identified by the community as a serious obstacle to their enjoyment of the park. A third Master Plan for Silver Lake Park was also recommended by the *Needs Assessment* but has yet to be begun.

The Parks & Recreation Department has identified several trends in park usage and operation that are key to future planning efforts. First, the Department has very limited resources to acquire new parkland, make large investments in parks, or take on additional maintenance tasks. This can be mitigated somewhat by hiring new staff and spacing capital investments over time, but it still means any future recommendations for expanding the park system should be conservative. Second, the Department has found that the amenities at many neighborhood parks are not enough to attract many visitors. This is less because of the amenities themselves and more because of the lack of organized activities surrounding them. Future park planning should account for the Department's growing success attracting more visitors through improved programming at City parks rather than through improved amenities.

**Table 8-2: City of Dover Parks and Facilities**

| City of Dover<br>Parks & Facilities                                |         | Pavilions | Picnic Tables | Grills | Parking Lots | Playground<br>Equipment Ages 2-5 | Playground<br>Equipment Ages 5-12 | Swings | Passive Area | Walking/Jogging Path | Fitness Course | Cultural / Historical | Disc Golf Course | Horseshoe Pits | Shuffleboard Courts | Basketball Courts | Softball Fields | Multipurpose Fields | Tennis Courts | Pickle Ball Courts | Recreation Centers | Boating/<br>Boat Ramp | Fishing |
|--|---------|-----------|---------------|--------|--------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------|--------------|----------------------|----------------|-----------------------|------------------|----------------|---------------------|-------------------|-----------------|---------------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|---------|
| Park Name  | Acreage |           |               |        |              |                                  |                                   |        |              |                      |                |                       |                  |                |                     |                   |                 |                     |               |                    |                    |                       |         |
| <b>City Hall Plaza</b><br>15 E Lookerman St.                       | 0.2     |           |               |        |              |                                  |                                   |        | ◆            |                      |                |                       |                  |                |                     |                   |                 |                     |               |                    |                    |                       |         |
| <b>Constitution Park</b><br>State & North Streets                  | 0.2     |           |               |        |              |                                  |                                   |        |              |                      |                | ◆                     |                  |                |                     |                   |                 |                     |               |                    |                    |                       |         |
| <b>Continental Park</b><br>Independence Blvd.                      | 2.95    |           |               |        |              |                                  |                                   |        | ◆            |                      |                |                       |                  |                |                     |                   |                 |                     |               |                    |                    |                       |         |
| <b>Crossgates Park</b><br>Blue Beach Rd.                           | 5.66    |           |               |        |              |                                  |                                   |        | ◆            |                      |                |                       |                  |                |                     |                   |                 |                     |               |                    |                    |                       |         |
| <b>Dover &amp; New St Park</b><br>Dover & New Streets              | 4.42    |           |               |        |              | ◆                                | ◆                                 | ◆      | ◆            |                      |                |                       |                  |                |                     | ◆                 | ◆               |                     |               |                    |                    |                       |         |
| <b>Dover Park</b><br>1210 White Oak Rd.                            | 28.2    | ◆         | ◆             |        | ◆            | ◆                                | ◆                                 | ◆      | ◆            |                      |                |                       | ◆                | ◆              | ◆                   | ◆                 | ◆               | ◆                   | ◆             | ◆                  |                    |                       |         |
| <b>Division &amp; Kirkwood Park</b><br>Division & Kirkwood Streets | 0.76    |           |               |        |              | ◆                                | ◆                                 |        |              |                      |                |                       |                  |                |                     | ◆                 |                 |                     |               |                    |                    |                       |         |
| <b>Hamlet Park</b><br>Old Forge Dr.                                | 11.5    |           |               |        |              | ◆                                |                                   | ◆      | ◆            |                      |                |                       |                  |                |                     |                   |                 |                     |               |                    |                    |                       |         |
| <b>Heatherfield East</b><br>Heatherfield Way                       | 1.15    |           |               |        |              |                                  |                                   |        | ◆            |                      |                |                       |                  |                |                     |                   |                 |                     |               |                    |                    |                       |         |
| <b>Kirkwood &amp; Mary Park</b><br>Kirkwood & Mary Streets         | 0.15    |           |               |        |              | ◆                                | ◆                                 | ◆      |              |                      |                |                       |                  |                |                     |                   |                 |                     |               |                    |                    |                       |         |
| <b>Mallard Pond Park</b><br>Mallard Pond                           | 6.07    |           |               | ◆      |              | ◆                                | ◆                                 |        | ◆            | ◆                    |                |                       |                  |                |                     |                   |                 |                     |               |                    |                    |                       |         |
| <b>Mayfair Park</b><br>Alder Rd.                                   | 2.6     |           |               |        |              |                                  |                                   |        |              |                      |                |                       |                  |                |                     |                   | ◆               | ◆                   |               |                    |                    |                       |         |
| <b>Memorial Park</b><br>Park Dr.                                   | 4.6     |           |               |        |              |                                  |                                   |        | ◆            |                      |                | ◆                     |                  |                |                     |                   |                 |                     |               |                    |                    |                       |         |
| <b>Millcreek Park</b><br>Millcreek Dr.                             | 1.864   |           |               |        |              |                                  | ◆                                 |        | ◆            |                      |                |                       |                  |                |                     |                   |                 |                     |               |                    |                    |                       |         |
| <b>Orville Myers Park</b><br>State & Division Streets              | 0.20476 |           |               |        |              |                                  |                                   |        | ◆            |                      |                |                       |                  |                |                     |                   |                 |                     |               |                    |                    |                       |         |
| <b>Paul's Property</b><br>St Jones River Greenway                  | 14.2    |           |               |        |              |                                  |                                   |        | ◆            |                      |                |                       |                  |                |                     |                   |                 |                     |               |                    |                    |                       |         |
| <b>Richardson Park</b><br>Walker Rd. & State St.                   | 1       |           |               |        |              |                                  |                                   |        | ◆            |                      |                |                       |                  |                |                     |                   |                 |                     |               |                    |                    |                       | ◆       |
| <b>Saulsbury Park</b><br>Salisbury Rd.                             | 2.7     |           |               |        |              |                                  |                                   |        | ◆            |                      |                |                       |                  |                |                     |                   |                 |                     |               |                    |                    |                       |         |

**FINAL DRAFT – 12.3.2019**  
**Chapter 8 Community Services and Facilities**  
**Dover Comprehensive Plan 2019**

|  |       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |   |  |  |  |  |   |   |   |  |   |   |   |
|--|-------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|--|---|--|--|--|--|---|---|---|--|---|---|---|
| <b>Schutte Park</b><br>Hazeletville Rd. & Electric Ave.        | 71    | ◆ | ◆ |   | ◆ | ◆ | ◆ |   |   | ◆ |  |   |  |  |  |  | ◆ | ◆ |   |  | ◆ |   |   |
| <b>Silver Lake Recreation Area</b><br>Kings Hwy/Washington St. | 182   | ◆ | ◆ | ◆ | ◆ | ◆ | ◆ | ◆ | ◆ | ◆ |  |   |  |  |  |  |   |   |   |  |   | ◆ | ◆ |
| <b>The Green</b><br>South State St.                            | 0.7   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | ◆ |   |  | ◆ |  |  |  |  |   |   |   |  |   |   |   |
| <b>Turner Drive Park</b><br>Turner Dr.                         | 1.004 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | ◆ |   |  |   |  |  |  |  |   |   |   |  |   |   |   |
| <b>Westfield Park</b><br>Sweetgum Dr.                          | 1.4   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | ◆ |   |  |   |  |  |  |  |   |   |   |  |   |   |   |
| <b>Westwind Meadows</b><br>Westview Meadows                    | 0.62  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | ◆ |   |  |   |  |  |  |  |   |   |   |  |   |   |   |
| <b>Williams Park</b><br>Nimitz Rd.                             | 8.88  |   |   |   | ◆ |   | ◆ | ◆ | ◆ |   |  |   |  |  |  |  | ◆ | ◆ | ◆ |  |   |   |   |
| <b>Woodbrook</b><br>Westview Terrace                           | 8.6   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | ◆ |   |  |   |  |  |  |  |   |   |   |  |   |   |   |

Source: City of Dover, Department of Parks and Recreation

## **Dover Public Library**

The Dover Public Library is a cultural hub and provides an essential service to City residents and residents of Central Delaware. In its role as an Anchor Library for Kent County, services are extended throughout the State. The Library is centrally located on Loockerman Plaza in Downtown Dover. The state-of-the-art facility was opened in 2012. At 46,500 square feet, the LEED Gold certified facility offers services on three floors.

Because it is an Anchor Library, professionally trained librarians serve in each department and in all management positions. In the Anchor role, librarians provide reference support, electronic reference services, collection management assistance, and cataloging expertise to the public and other libraries around the County. Librarians play an active role in the Delaware Library Association, providing leadership statewide, and collaborate with all statewide library initiatives with the Delaware Division of Libraries.

The Library's materials collections focus primarily on popular materials and reference materials which are unavailable from other sources. In addition to lending books, electronic and audio books, music CD's, movies, games, and a variety of different multi-format kits are circulated. The Dover Public Library also offers computers and wireless service for public use.

In 2009, the Library partnered with the Delaware Economic Development Office to establish a Job Center with walk-in service for people seeking employment. Walk-in services for employment continue to be offered and are supplemented by support for small business and entrepreneurial development.

The Library opened a Media Lab with support from the Delaware Division of Libraries in 2014. In 2018, the Media Lab was transitioned into a Maker Space providing equipment, software, tools, and space for exploration, learning and experimentation. With the focus on Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education in schools, the Library has created several STEM programs to reinforce the formal school learning with informal learning at the Library.

In 2017, the Library opened a U.S. Passport Acceptance Facility. In its first year of operation this office assisted 844 persons with Passport-related questions and processed 689 Passport applications.

A priority for the Library is the provision of cultural and enrichment programming for people at all stages of life. The Staff works diligently to provide a balanced calendar of programs for all people to assist life-wide learning, cultural enrichment, inspire a love of the arts, and interest in science and technology.

The Library's long-standing "In Harmony..." concert series was expanded in 2012 into a monthly event on the First Friday. The "Celebrate the Arts" series was born in 2017 with an emphasis on the craft of the variety of art genres. Family events are held on the Second Friday and the Last Friday offers a screening of a newly released film or documentary.

Libraries believe that the ability to read is fundamental to a successful life. To this end, the Library encourages reading for enjoyment and learning. Traditional story times for young people are

offered; and book groups for Tweens, Teens, and Adults are offered. Central Delaware suffers from a high rate of illiteracy. 13% of residents in central Delaware read at a third-grade reading level or lower. The Library partners with Literacy Delaware to offer one-on-one tutoring to adults who cannot read and those for whom English is a second language.

In 2018, the Delaware Division of Libraries launched a library card campaign to encourage all young people around the state to become library card holders and active library users. The First Card (ages birth-6 years) and the Kids Card (ages 6-12 years) campaigns were launched by Delaware's First Lady, Tracey Quillen Carney.

One of the challenges library staff has encountered is the changing nature of demographics, culture and family life. These changes present barriers for some people when they want to use library services. Because of this, the Library has set a goal of taking library services outside the library itself and providing them in City neighborhoods. The Library has begun to take its services to local day care centers and assisted living/nursing homes. In the context of the high level of illiteracy in our community, this outreach service becomes even more critical for our community and its health.

With limited staffing and resources, the Library has engaged in partner-building. These partners bring expertise, creativity, resources, and assistance to Library services. Among these partners are the City of Dover's Parks & Recreation Department, the Biggs Museum of American Art, the Delaware Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs, the First State Heritage Park, the Delaware Division of Libraries, the YMCA, Delaware State Parks, NCALL, and others. The Library is actively engaged with local schools and is always present at open houses and other events. The Library also continuously searches for new partnership opportunities.

### **Solid Waste Management**

The Sanitation Division of the City's Department of Public Works (DPW) has responsibility for the collection and transport of municipal solid waste. It is responsible for the collection and transport of approximately 10,600 tons per year of refuse from more than 9,900 residential and 650 commercial customers. Aside from standard collection, the City's Sanitation Division also provides services for the collection of hand trash, yard waste, household bulk trash, and yard waste bulk trash; and, through a contractor, a curbside recycling program to all customers. The cost is included in the current monthly rate.

Before 2010, City residents opted into Dover's curbside recycling program. In 2008, the program had only a 15-20% participation rate. However, this changed in 2010 with the passage of Delaware's Universal Recycling Law, which requires all waste haulers (including public ones) who provide residential trash collection service to also provide recycling collection service. Accordingly, the City began to provide recycling bins to 100% of customers at that time. In 2019, all City customers continue to be served by the City's recycling service.

There are several challenges to solid waste management in Dover. As the City has grown, it has seen construction of many large commercial and industrial businesses whose waste disposal needs the Sanitation Division is ill-equipped to handle. This has been addressed by the DPW requiring new businesses with waste disposal needs above a certain threshold to contract their own private waste and recycling hauling services. The City's *Zoning Ordinance* accordingly contains standards

for private trash collection locations in terms of the number of dumpsters that must be provided and the design of dumpster enclosures. However, not all business locations can feasibly attain these standards, especially in the Downtown area where there is limited room for both dumpsters and collection trucks. In the Downtown, the Sanitation Division provides two contractor serviced, community dumpsters on Minor Street, one for refuse and one for recycling. It also still picks up by hand, trash bags left in front of businesses along Loockerman Street, The Green and State Street. A comprehensive waste management solution for the City's Downtown will be critical in the future as new tenants fill out the vacant storefronts.

### **City of Dover Grounds Maintenance and Beautification**

The City of Dover Department of Public Works - Grounds Division employs dedicated staff. This Staff is responsible for the care of lawn and turf in the City maintained parks and on other City owned property and for the protection and maintenance of street trees. Grounds Division oversees the care of all City owned land and works in conjunction with other departments to ensure that the various trees and plantings do not conflict with other City construction or projects. The Grounds Division is also responsible for the City's beautification program which includes the seasonal planting of flower beds throughout the City.

The Grounds Division is responsible for the following tasks:

- Mowing over 378 acres of turf in parks, around City buildings, and on other City-owned property.
- Providing maintenance for 2,265 street trees in City right-of-way and 1,458 trees on other City properties.
- Maintaining 65 flower beds throughout the City.
- Removing snow from 12.48 miles of sidewalks on City property.
- Decorating trees on Loockerman Street and The Plaza, and other City properties for the holiday season.
- Providing herbicide spraying for weed control on City property and within some areas of State right-of-way through maintenance agreements.
- Edging sidewalks and curbs on City properties.
- Controlling vegetation in 20 miles of alleys.
- Advises the Development Advisory Committee (DAC) with technical expertise on Landscape Plans.
- Assisting both the Electric and Department of Public Works with yard repairs.

## **PUBLIC SAFETY**

### **Police**

The Dover Police Department has an authorized strength of 101 officers, 12 cadets, and 33 civilians and provides a variety of services to citizens. The Department is organized into an Administrative Division and an Operations Division. The Administrative Division provides a variety of services to the Department as a whole, while the Operations Division is further divided

into a Patrol unit of four platoons, a Special Enforcement unit, and a Criminal Investigations unit. Sections of the Criminal Investigations unit are dedicated to drugs, vice, and organized crime; street crimes; sex offenders; and other specialties. Special Enforcement meanwhile includes sections such as parking enforcement, animal control, and police cadets.

Special Enforcement also includes services such as Community Policing, the Police Athletic League, and the Juvenile Section and School Resource Officers. The Community Policing section splits its time between community policing duties and quality of life enforcement issues. The Community Policing section works to address crimes that affect the overall quality of life of the community by meeting on a regular basis with apartment managers, neighborhood watch groups, and other civic associations. They are responsible for teaching citizens how to set up neighborhood watch programs. The Police Athletic League is a juvenile crime prevention program that uses mentoring, educational, athletic and recreational activities to create trust and understanding between law enforcement and youth. Past events have included an annual “Day in their Boots” day teaching youth the challenges of being a first responder and an annual Football Combine. Finally, the Juvenile Section has placed two School Resource Officers, one in Central Middle School and one in Dover High School, where they participate in events throughout the year. The Juvenile Section also runs the Gang Resistance Education and Training (GREAT) program.

The Police Department has a Strategic Plan for the years 2018 to 2021 that outlines departmental goals. These goals include continued reduction of violent crime, focused enforcement for the opioid epidemic, the community policing initiative, and an emphasis on recruitment, retention, and diversity. The City can support the goals of the Police Department by supporting its staffing goals and supporting better cross-departmental communication.

## **Fire**

The City of Dover maintains a close relationship with the Dover Fire Department (also known as Robbins Hose Company). The Fire Department is a volunteer force; however, the fire dispatchers work for the City of Dover. The Fire Department operates two fire stations with a total of 18 vehicles and apparatus including two ladder trucks, seven other fire engines, a rescue vehicle, and two command cars. The Fire Department serves nearly the entire City of Dover as well as some locations beyond the City boundary. The strong relationship between the City and the Fire Department ensures that the quality of fire protection services remains high.

The Fire Department maintains a relationship with the Dover community to help it with departmental operations and to promote fire safety. Every October during Fire Prevention Week the Department goes to local schools throughout Dover to put on demonstrations, teach students how to safely use fire-starting devices, and teach students how to react in case of a fire emergency. The Department also trains volunteer personnel in the areas of fire suppression, fire prevention, rescue methods, and public education. The Department provides free smoke detectors as well.

The Fire Department’s primary long-term goal is to continue providing professional fire service to the citizens of Dover. To this end, the Department aims to keep training volunteer fire fighters, to keep seeking contributions from the City to cover replacement expenses for emergency fire apparatus, and to maintain a 10-year fire apparatus replacement schedule. The City can support

the goals of the Fire Department by helping it meet its equipment needs and by maintaining strong communication between the Fire Department, the Fire Marshal, and other City emergency services.

## **Ambulance**

The Basic Life Support (BLS) Ambulance Service for the City is a contracted service. The City of Dover is currently under contract with St. Francis Healthcare for ambulance services within the City as of April 2019. The contracts are for three years per contract period. The service provides for two ambulances on duty for 24 hours per day, seven days per week, with two emergency medical technicians per ambulance. The BLS ambulance service has back-up support from the Kent County Department of Public Safety.

The Kent County Division of Emergency Communications is located at the Kent County Emergency Services Building at Public Safety Headquarters in Dover, Delaware. The center also houses the Kent County location of the Delaware State Police Communications Section (KENTCOM) as well as one of the Delaware Department of Natural Resources (DNREC) Local Emergency Planning Committees for hazardous waste emergencies.

## **EDUCATION**

A wide variety of educational institutions at all levels of learning are located in Dover. From the over 50 daycare establishments providing preschool and before/after school care, to the local public, private, and charter K-12 schools, to the four institutions of higher learning that have established themselves in the City, options for both care and education of children and adults are abundant.

The City's *Zoning Ordinance* identifies the establishment of child day care services and facilities as "a necessary public objective" and so allows them to locate in any zone in the City. There are three kinds of child day care facilities that may be established in Dover: family day care homes, which may serve up to six children; large family day care homes, which may serve up to twelve children; and day care centers, which may serve thirteen children or more. Large family day care homes and day care centers require a Conditional Use Permit from the Planning Commission. 2018 saw an unusual uptick in applications for day care Conditional Use Permits, having four separate applications when all other years since 2008 had at most one or two. In 2017, the City recognized the need for day care facilities for adults, and so established a new set of zoning regulations to permit them, similar but not identical to the regulations for child day care facilities (*Zoning Ordinance*, Article 5 Section 22).

Although not a City function, education is an important community service. Dover has two public school districts within its boundaries providing K-12 education: the Capital School District and Caesar Rodney School District. Six elementary schools, two middle schools, one high school, and two public special needs schools are all located in Dover within the Capital School District. Caesar Rodney School District also has one elementary school within the boundaries of Dover. There are four private schools in the City, each associated with a religious institution, as well as two charter

schools. An expanding student body led to the new Dover High School being completed at the former Carey Farm site on Route 8 (Forrest Avenue) in 2014. The old Dover High School site near Walker Road has been tentatively identified as a possible site for two new middle schools. Overall enrollment numbers for the Capital School District in Fall 2018 show approximately 6,519 students.

For higher education, Dover is home to four different institutions. The largest of these is Delaware State University (DSU), which occupies a 356-acre campus on North DuPont Highway. As of 2018, it had 4,872 students. DSU makes regular improvements to its facilities. The most significant of which over the past eight years are a 27,000 square foot research building completed in 2015 and a 190,000 square foot, 620-bed Residence Hall constructed in 2019. DSU offers degrees in 42 undergraduate fields of study as well as 16 master's degree programs and five doctoral degree programs.

Delaware Technical & Community College operates a 112-acre facility known as the Terry Campus on North DuPont Highway. As of 2018 the Terry Campus had an enrollment of 4,496 students. The College offers comprehensive educational opportunities including career, general, developmental, and transfer education, as well as workforce training, lifelong learning, and youth programs.

Wilmington University operates two locations in Dover, one on North DuPont Highway and one at the Dover Air Force Base. An estimated 1,843 students take classes at the DuPont Highway location and an estimated 410 students take classes at the Dover Air Force Base. Wilmington University is notable for its programs supporting both traditional college students and working adults; in particular, 44% of its overall student body is enrolled in online learning courses.

Wesley College, the smallest of the four institutions, is also the only one located in Downtown Dover, just two blocks from Loockerman Street. The 50-acre main campus supports approximately 1,500 students. The City and Wesley College have engaged in various ways over the years, most recently with the City turning over the former Dover Public Library building to Wesley to use for their Occupational Therapy program. Wesley College covers more than 30 areas of study in arts and sciences, business, health sciences, education, and fine arts.

The colleges and universities in the City every year train a large educated labor force, but there has been some concern about the retention rate of these students after graduation. Many students move away after getting their degree instead of seeking jobs locally. Retaining more graduates will require ensuring there are employment opportunities available and engaging with students to support the idea that Dover is a desirable place to live.

## **HEALTH CARE**

While not a service provided by the City of Dover, the health care services are an integral component of the City and vital to the City's continued growth.

The City is home to the Bayhealth Medical Center, part of central and southern Delaware’s largest health care system. It includes facilities in Dover, Milford and Smyrna, and numerous satellite and freestanding facilities and employed physician’s practices encompassing a variety of specialties. Bayhealth’s contribution as a major employer is discussed further in Chapter 10 – Economic Development.

The growth of the health sector has also led to numerous other facilities being established in the City over the past ten years. In September 2008, the Eden Hill Medical Center building opened as the largest non-hospital medical center in the State. Eden Hill Medical Center houses offices for several different medical specialties, surgical centers, and a walk-in care facility. 2017 saw a major expansion of the Eden Hill campus with the opening of the Center at Eden Hill, a facility designed to serve patients needing physical rehabilitation or complex nursing care. The offices of Nemours DuPont Pediatrics were also established in 2017 in the Neighborhood Commercial District of the Eden Hill Farm TND. Other notable stand-alone facilities include Dover Behavioral Health expansion; the Post-Acute Medical Rehabilitation Hospital of Dover completed in 2018 located on McKee Road; and Enterprise Plaza within the Enterprise Business Park which contains several facilities opened in 2018 including First State Orthopedics and ATI Physical Therapy.

FINAL DRAFT

## COMMUNITY SERVICES & FACILITIES

### **Goal 1: Provide and Maintain Quality City Services**

The City should provide and maintain quality public services for all residents, properties, and visitors within Dover.

#### **Recommendation 1: Maintain Responsive and Effective Emergency Services**

- Evaluate the levels of City Services as they pertain to police, fire, and emergency response times. Service levels should be maintained or exceed their current status as Dover grows in population and land size.
- Support the Police Department's goals and strategies for improving public safety.
- Support the Police Department's public outreach to the Dover community.
- Support the Fire Department's activities aimed at improving fire safety including education and training efforts.
- Ensure that the City's contracted ambulance service can meet the service demands.

#### **Recommendation 2: Maintain Responsive and Effective Customer Service**

- Continue to build a robust online presence for the City focusing on outreach related to City initiatives, education on City ordinances, and promoting Dover as a desirable place to live, work, and play.
- Improve the City's online customer service functions so that more types of applications, payments, and inquiries can be made through the City's website.
- Improve coordination of customer service functions across City departments.

#### **Recommendation 3: Improve Access to and Maintain City Library Services**

- Support efforts by the Library to bring their services out of the Library building and to underserved populations such as children and the elderly. Services can be provided at locations such as parks, daycares, after-school programs, and nursing homes among others.
- Evaluate additional methods to improve access to the Library building itself particularly for underserved populations.
- Ensure existing services and facilities at the Dover Public Library building are maintained and expanded to support the number of daily visitors it encounters.

### **Goal 2: Invest in City Owned Resources**

The City should work to ensure the protection, preservation and growth of its own resources. Physical facilities should be maintained and be upgraded where possible. Natural, historic, and cultural resources should be protected and preserved.

**Recommendation 4: Invest in City Services and Facilities**

- Assess all City buildings to determine if they are adequately able to support City staff and day-to-day operations in the City. Create plans for improving these buildings or moving to new ones if they are found to be inadequate.
- Design and locate new City buildings and facilities so they act as anchors for redevelopment by providing needed amenities. Amenities helpful for redevelopment include parks and other community-accessible space, green infrastructure, parking, and pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities.
- Evaluate ways the City’s vehicle fleet might benefit from new technologies such as alternative fuels and AI-driver assist, as well as the needed infrastructure to support these technologies (i.e. charging stations). Vehicles at the end of their lifecycle should be evaluated to compare with vehicles that take advantage of new technologies.
- Implement the City’s Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) Project to support the business processes of the City through improved access and management of City data.

**Recommendation 5: Protect and Preserve Natural, Historic, and Cultural Resources**

- Encourage appropriate stewardship of natural, historic, and cultural resources in City construction projects and other activities that may impact these resources.
- Continue to support native tree planting and landscaping programs through the Development Advisory Committee and Department of Public Works.
- Continue to support long term vegetation maintenance on City-owned and other public properties especially those maintained by the Parks & Recreation Department.
- Continue to support historic and cultural events and projects in the City. Assist by providing technical aid and support staff that ensures the viability and continuation of those activities.

**Goal 3: Provide a System of Interconnected Open Space Areas and Recreational Opportunities**

Provide a walkable open space network which links the community to facilities, schools, libraries, and travel paths.

**Recommendation 6: Develop an Open Space, Parks & Recreation Master Plan**

- Identify within the Open Space, Parks & Recreation Master Plan a variety of park and recreation facilities citywide suitable to the interests of different demographic groups.
- Identify within the Master Plan ways to meet the open space and recreational needs of the City’s Downtown. A plan of action for implementation should also be included.
- Implement improved water-based facilities and other non-traditional recreation activities as part of any Open Space, Parks & Recreation Master Plan.
- Conduct an updated Parks & Recreation Needs Assessment as part of the master planning effort or as a separate initiative if necessary.

**Recommendation 7: Plan for Individual Parks and Greenways**

- As funding allows, implement the completed Master Plans for Schutte Park and Dover Park.
- Develop a Master Plan for Silver Lake Park (See also discussion of sea level rise in Chapter 5).
- Develop Master Plans for the City’s neighborhood parks as necessary, when there is a need for long-term strategizing of a park’s resources and facilities at a level of detail that cannot be covered by the Park Master Plan.
- Encourage efforts to preserve natural greenway and stream corridors, such as those along the St. Jones River, the Fork Branch, the Little River, and the Puncheon Run. Where possible, use these corridors as usable passive open space to connect more active recreation areas.

**Recommendation 8: Maintain and Improve City Park Facilities and Recreation Programs**

- Maintain a system of comprehensive park maintenance addressing equipment, infrastructure, and vegetation.
- Continue to perform playground safety inspections to ensure that playgrounds meet safety standards.
- Continue to implement a playground replacement schedule as a part of the City’s Capital Improvement Program.
- Maintain and expand recreational programs in parks citywide to meet the needs of a diverse population.

**Recommendation 9: Obtain Effective Contributions to the Park System from the Private Sector**

- Evaluate the process and responsibilities for maintaining active recreation areas and common open space within residential developments.
- Evaluate the City’s requirements for providing active recreation areas for new residential developments. Determine if new private recreation areas should still be developed in most cases, or if the City should focus on having developers contribute to Dover’s public Parkland Reserve Fund.

**Goal 4: Prepare Effectively for Disasters**

The City must be prepared to face and quickly address potential disasters both natural and man-made.

**Recommendation 10: Maintain a Level of Preparedness for Disasters**

- Prepare and maintain the Dover Emergency Operations Plan (DEOP).
- Continue to comply with the National Incident Management System (NIMS) through participating in appropriate staff training and holding drills to prepare for potential disasters. Increase the staff training and education available to ensure all essential staff are trained.

- Conduct post-event assessments and prepare After Action Reports (AAR) to evaluate response protocols, identify areas for improvement, and assess effectiveness of disaster preparedness plans.

**Recommendation 11: Address Potential Natural and Man-Made Disasters**

- Continue to evaluate the City’s role in large special events management including its role in NASCAR events, the Firefly Music Festival, and other large events, festivals, parades, etc.
- Maintain strong intergovernmental relationships with County and State agencies as they pertain to coordinating action before, during, and after special events and emergency situations.
- Continuously update and implement the City’s Emergency Operations Plan (DEOP) to meet the challenges posed by increasingly severe weather events, terrorist threats, and other contemporary emergencies. Ensure appropriate City staff are educated on the plan’s proper implementation.
- Evaluate the design of City-owned buildings to identify opportunities for improving their security and disaster-readiness.

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# Chapter 9

# TRANSPORTATION PLAN

## TRANSPORTATION

Transportation issues are often discussed only in terms of the transportation system itself, i.e. in terms of miles of streets and roads, functional classification and capacity, modal options, traffic volumes and congestion, and related issues. However, there are broader considerations in transportation that relate to quality of life, the economy, and community development as well.

One way to look at these perspectives simultaneously is to examine transportation as an investment issue. Transportation improvements must be invested in but are also themselves investments in the community. They facilitate travel and the movement of goods and services. Their type, capacity, and design also influence the pattern and distribution of various land uses in the community. This chapter of the Comprehensive Plan will examine the impact of Dover’s transportation system on its community and land use and discuss how investing in transportation can help the City meet its goals for them.

## THE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

### **Regulatory Framework**

The transportation system of the City of Dover is regulated principally by three major organizations: the City itself, the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT), and the Dover/Kent County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO).

The City of Dover owns and maintains approximately 111 miles of streets and alleys throughout the City limits. Most of these streets and alleys are residential in nature and include enclosed drainage systems as well as curbs and sidewalks. The City’s role in maintaining and regulating streets is discussed in more detail in the “City Government Role in the Transportation System” section of this Chapter. Map 9-1 identifies the streets maintained by the City; the alley network is not shown on the map.

There are an additional 60 miles of roads within the City limits that are maintained by the State of Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT). These streets, unlike the city-maintained neighborhood streets, are typically commercial in nature and move the highest amounts of traffic within the City. DelDOT controls and plans for access to these main roads coordinating with the

City through the Development Advisory Committee to ensure new developments are designed with safe entrances and exits. New entrances and exits from State roads in Dover differ considerably from old ones, as DelDOT's standards have changed over time. DelDOT works to maintain the overall health of the roadway system by designing and constructing its own upgrades to State roads where necessary. Map 9-1 shows the roads maintained by the State.

The Dover/Kent County MPO was established in 1992 in response to authorization from the Federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA). ISTEA was the first federal transportation authorization that presented an intermodal approach to planning, requiring collaborative planning and fiscal considerations. Prior to this authorization, transportation investment decisions had less local input from cities like Dover and planning efforts could result in planned projects which exceeded available financial resources. ISTEA brought the City of Dover to the table in transportation planning through the creation of the MPO, where the Mayor, the City Planning Staff, and its citizens continue to support its comprehensive, cooperative, and continuing decision-making process.

Intermodal, collaborative, and fiscally constrained planning continued with the transportation authorizations which superseded ISTEA: the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) in 1998; the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) in 2005; and Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (MAP-21) in 2012. The current authorization, the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST), was signed into law in 2015 and extends through 2020.

The Dover/Kent County MPO developed its long-range transportation plan, the *Metropolitan Transportation Plan* in 2016 and the plan was adopted by the MPO Council in 2017. This plan must be updated at least every five years. With the MPO anticipating adopting a new plan in 2021, with much of the work is to occur in 2020. The City of Dover is a leading member of the Dover/Kent County MPO with the Mayor currently serving as the chair of the MPO Council, a member of the City Planning staff and a member of the City Department of Public Works serving on the Technical Advisory Council (TAC), and three City of Dover citizens appointed to the Public Advisory Committee (PAC) by the Mayor.

This Chapter is informed by the 2040 *Metropolitan Transportation Plan*, adopted in 2017, which itself is built off the long-range transportation plans adopted by the MPO in 1996, 2001, 2004 (interim plan), 2005, 2009, and 2013. The MTP is influenced by the planning development process outlined in 23 *US Code* 134 (Comprehensive, Cooperative, and Continuing), and the Metropolitan Transportation Planning factors first included in transportation planning under ISTEA in 1991, shown in Table 9-1. The MPO summarized these factors for their 2017 MTP with their goals summarized to (1) Move People Safely and Efficiently, (2) Strengthen Communities, and (3) Promote Economic Development. These goals were also informed by state, county, and municipal plans including the City of Dover's *2008 Comprehensive Plan*.

**Table 9-1: Planning Factors for Transportation Planning**

|   |
|---|
| Support the economic vitality, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity  |
| Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users  |
| Increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users  |
| Increase the accessibility and mobility of people and for freight   |
| Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns |
| Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight   |
| Promote efficient system management and operation   |
| Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system  |
| Improve the resiliency and reliability of the transportation system and reduce or mitigate stormwater impacts of surface transportation   |
| Enhance travel and tourism  |

Source: 23 US Code 134 – Metropolitan Transportation Planning

## PATTERNS OF TRAVEL

City residents’ and visitors’ use of various modes of transportation drives State and local investment in the transportation system by influencing the types, location, and design of new pieces of the system. In principle the more a mode is used, the greater the investment should be in the infrastructure type supporting that mode. Because of this, investment remains greatest in the City’s road system to serve auto travel. Other types must receive investment as well, both to provide people with alternative transportation choices and to avoid overreliance on one mode. As patterns of travel in the City change, so must the allocation of investment. With good planning, change can be anticipated, and investment used to prepare the system for new patterns of travel accordingly.

### Auto Travel

Automobiles have dominated the way people travel in Dover for decades. Many factors both local and regional have led to this dependence on automobiles including development patterns, employment trends, population growth and demographics, income trends, and policies affecting how transportation funds are allocated. Specifically, the following trends are noted based on 2013-2017 American Community Survey (ACS) data for Dover:

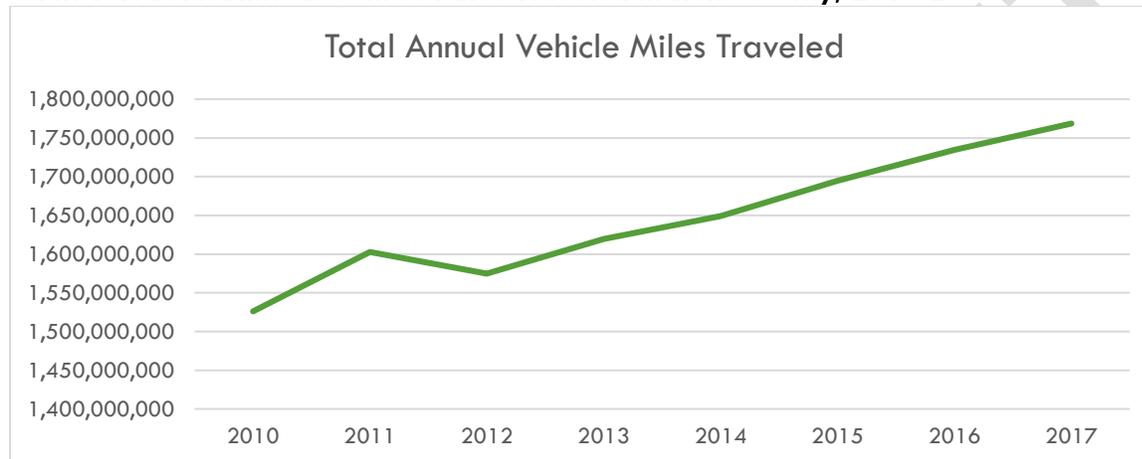
- Most workers (over 82%) continue to drive alone.
- Few workers choose to walk (3.5%), bicycle (1.2%), or carpool (11.4%).
- Few workers (1.6%) are choosing public transportation for their commute.
- According to the 2013-2017 Comparative Housing Characteristics (Table CP04), 12.0% of Dover households do not own a car, 37.2% own one vehicle, 35.9% have two vehicles available, and 14.9% have three or more vehicles available. These numbers may be slightly

skewed however because over 12% of Dover’s population resides in group quarters where vehicle availability might be higher than that expected in more traditional households.

- Nevertheless, car ownership rates have remained relatively steady for the past decade.

Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) is a key measure of roadway use. Overall, the statewide VMT increased by 15.9% between 2010 and 2017. Chart 9-1 depicts the change in VMT more specifically in Kent County.

**Chart 9-1: Total Annual Vehicle Miles Traveled in Kent County, 2010-2017**



Source: Delaware Department of Transportation

The survey conducted for the *2019 Comprehensive Plan* asked Dover residents and frequent visitors about their experience with select roads in the City. When asked whether they thought Route 8 and Route 15 were adequate to handle the daily traffic present on the road, survey respondents were split with 50% saying they agreed or strongly agreed and 43% saying they disagreed or strongly disagreed. The balance between these two sides is likely to tip toward dissatisfaction in the future should there be greater auto travel on these roads in the future, without corresponding investments to improve them. Other similar thoroughfares in the City are likely to face the same problem.

Survey respondents were also asked about their experience with maintenance of City-owned streets. Here again they were split with 50% agreeing or strongly agreeing that neighborhood streets are maintained well and 40% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing. While auto travel on individual neighborhood streets in the City does not change significantly over time, more of them continue to be built. The maintenance budget for the City’s street system must continue to increase accordingly to maintain the current standard of service.

The current dominance of auto travel is likely to change over the coming decades with the advent of self-driving cars and other related transportation technologies and trends. At this point, it is difficult to predict whether the change will be positive or negative for Dover. On the one hand, the number of cars on the roads could expand by a large amount as people find it easier to drive long distances to Dover and the mode opens to people who previously could not or would not drive, such as younger teenagers and older seniors. On the other hand, the technology could cause actual

automobile ownership to decrease in turn decreasing the amount of infrastructure needed for parked cars. A fuller discussion of this issue is included in the “Emerging Trends Affecting Land Use and Development” section of this chapter.

## Truck Travel

The dominant means of transporting goods in Dover, as in all of Delaware and the United States, is trucking. Trucks move over 80% of manufactured goods to and from Delaware each year.

In Kent County, US Route 13, Bay Road, and State Route 1 are major regional truck routes. In Dover, industrial areas on the west side of the City are served by McKee Road/Saulsbury Road, a designated truck route. This route connects northward to State Route 1 and in 2017 was also extended south of the City through the opening of the POW-MIA Parkway (previously known as the West Dover Connector). This roadway offers improved truck connections from the west side of Dover to areas south of the City and on the Delmarva Peninsula. In contrast to the well-connected west side, industries on the City’s east side are constrained in terms of future development in part because of their relative lack of connections to the regional truck routes. Industries in southeast Dover can connect to Bay Road and State Route 1 via Horsepond Road and Lafferty Lane, but these are more rural roads than the ones serving the industries on the west side of Dover. The City-developed Garrison Oak Business and Technical Center, which was developed after the construction of State Route 1, lacks nearby on-ramps or off-ramps to State Route 1 despite being right next to it. Investments in connections to the regional routes are needed for the east side industries to develop more.

## Public Transit

Public transit (DART) in Dover and Kent County is provided by the Delaware Transit Corporation (DTC). The Dover Transit Center at S. Queen Street and W. Water Street is the hub of the eleven county routes. From here, routes local to Dover reach as far north as DelTech; as far south as the Camden Walmart; as far east as Tudor Plaza and the Dover Air Force Base; and as far west as Kenton Road. The routes link the Transit Center with points of interest such as the Gateway West Shopping Center and the Enterprise Business Park, State Street and the Gateway South Shopping Center, the Capital Complex and the Blue Hen Corporate Center, Towne Point and Persimmon Park Place, and Luther Towers and the Dover Mall.

Two routes serve areas adjacent to Dover. One route travels from the Camden Walmart south to Harrington, while another travels to Cheswold and Smyrna. There are also four intercounty routes that serve Dover connecting the City with Wilmington, Newark, Milford, Georgetown, Lewes and Rehoboth Beach (summer only). DART provides electronic and hard copy route maps to assist travelers using its system.

The Dover Transit Center was constructed in 2010 to replace the Water Street Transfer Center, formerly located on W. Water Street between S. State Street and S. Governors Avenue. The new, much larger facility can accommodate 14 buses at once and features a canopy to shelter waiting passengers. The Transit Center has enabled the expansion of the bus system in Kent County over the past ten years. In addition, it was envisioned as having an economic development role providing stimulus for mixed-use development in the surrounding neighborhood. Because of this it became the focus of the 2011 *Dover Transit Center Neighborhood Plan and Design Book* which

laid out design standards for development in the area. New development has not been forthcoming, however.

A mixed-use building was originally planned as part of the Dover Transit Center site. Left unconstructed largely due to economic conditions and limited other development nearby, the Transit Center has also been left without a Greyhound ticket facility which was to occupy part of the building. Because of this Dover's Greyhound stop remains at a 7-Eleven on N. DuPont Highway. An easier connection between local buses and private intercity/interstate buses remains a priority for the City, which means encouraging renewed negotiations between DTC and Greyhound to find a way to provide private bus service and tickets at the Dover Transit Center.

Ridership on public buses was higher in 2018 than it was in 2008; however, the trends have been towards decreased ridership. Ridership peaked in 2013 with 953,861 rides that year across DART's Kent County routes and Intercounty routes. It has since decreased 30.8% to 659,843 rides in the year of 2018. This decrease comes even as DART has kept its buses on the road longer (more revenue hours) and driven then farther (more revenue miles) as shown in Table 9-2. Rides per mile and rides per hour have also decreased by significant amounts on both the Kent County and the Intercounty routes.

DART First State continually adjusts its service in response to customer feedback and observed demand. Lower ridership since 2013 has caused DART to close Route 100 and Route 103 and roll back weekend and evening service on other routes. However, it has also expanded service where the demand has been demonstrated. For instance, in 2017 DART improved Route 106 to better connect the Dover Air Force Base to points of interest along DuPont Highway. The City supports DART's efforts to develop a "right-fit" for the region, especially where such efforts bring more neighborhoods into the bus system's service area and make travel times using buses more competitive with different travel modes.

DART also operates the DART First State Paratransit Service, an origin to destination, curb to curb, public transportation service for people with disabilities who are unable to use DART's fixed route bus system or trains. Paratransit service is a fee based, shared ride service operating with accessible vehicles.

**Table 9-2: Transit Operating Statistics for DART South District, 2008-2018**

| <b>Ridership</b>         |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |
|--------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
|                          | <b>2008</b> | <b>2009</b> | <b>2010</b> | <b>2011</b> | <b>2012</b> | <b>2013</b> | <b>2014</b> | <b>2015</b> | <b>2016</b> | <b>2017</b> | <b>2018</b> |
| <b>Total Kent County</b> | 409,942     | 468,517     | 525,829     | 622,694     | 670,637     | 662,233     | 626,155     | 595,584     | 530,500     | 481,332     | 474,526     |
| <b>Total Intercounty</b> | 200,448     | 223,675     | 222,815     | 254,371     | 277,674     | 291,628     | 298,851     | 259,316     | 204,318     | 176,448     | 185,317     |
| <b>Total</b>             | 610,390     | 692,192     | 748,644     | 877,065     | 948,311     | 953,861     | 925,006     | 854,900     | 734,818     | 657,780     | 659,843     |
| <b>Revenue Miles</b>     |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |
|                          | <b>2008</b> | <b>2009</b> | <b>2010</b> | <b>2011</b> | <b>2012</b> | <b>2013</b> | <b>2014</b> | <b>2015</b> | <b>2016</b> | <b>2017</b> | <b>2018</b> |
| <b>Total Kent County</b> | 393,573     | 435,175     | 537,989     | 639,800     | 659,273     | 647,146     | 726,387     | 882,737     | 859,698     | 946,235     | 980,926     |
| <b>Total Intercounty</b> | 544,424     | 583,372     | 679,107     | 740,941     | 751,248     | 752,987     | 752,519     | 757,854     | 755,448     | 830,871     | 967,923     |
| <b>Total</b>             | 937,997     | 1,018,547   | 1,217,096   | 1,380,741   | 1,410,521   | 1,400,132   | 1,478,906   | 1,640,590   | 1,615,146   | 1,777,106   | 1,948,849   |
| <b>Revenue Hours</b>     |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |
|                          | <b>2008</b> | <b>2009</b> | <b>2010</b> | <b>2011</b> | <b>2012</b> | <b>2013</b> | <b>2014</b> | <b>2015</b> | <b>2016</b> | <b>2017</b> | <b>2018</b> |
| <b>Total Kent County</b> | 34,501      | 36,444      | 41,486      | 45,876      | 46,133      | 45,469      | 51,042      | 59,262      | 57,277      | 60,511      | 60,095      |
| <b>Total Intercounty</b> | 20,654      | 21,783      | 22,580      | 23,679      | 24,101      | 24,216      | 24,257      | 24,347      | 24,150      | 27,346      | 31,731      |
| <b>Total</b>             | 55,155      | 58,227      | 64,065      | 69,554      | 70,235      | 69,685      | 75,299      | 83,610      | 81,427      | 87,857      | 91,827      |
| <b>Rides per Mile</b>    |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |
|                          | <b>2008</b> | <b>2009</b> | <b>2010</b> | <b>2011</b> | <b>2012</b> | <b>2013</b> | <b>2014</b> | <b>2015</b> | <b>2016</b> | <b>2017</b> | <b>2018</b> |
| <b>Kent County</b>       | 1.04        | 1.08        | 0.98        | 0.97        | 1.02        | 1.02        | 0.86        | 0.67        | 0.62        | 0.51        | 0.48        |
| <b>Intercounty</b>       | 0.37        | 0.38        | 0.33        | 0.34        | 0.37        | 0.39        | 0.40        | 0.34        | 0.27        | 0.21        | 0.19        |
| <b>Rides per Hour</b>    |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |
|                          | <b>2008</b> | <b>2009</b> | <b>2010</b> | <b>2011</b> | <b>2012</b> | <b>2013</b> | <b>2014</b> | <b>2015</b> | <b>2016</b> | <b>2017</b> | <b>2018</b> |
| <b>Kent County</b>       | 11.88       | 12.86       | 12.67       | 13.57       | 14.54       | 14.56       | 12.27       | 10.05       | 9.26        | 7.95        | 7.90        |
| <b>Intercounty</b>       | 9.71        | 10.27       | 9.87        | 10.74       | 11.52       | 12.04       | 12.32       | 10.65       | 8.46        | 6.45        | 5.84        |

Source: Delaware Transit Corporation

## Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

Several different types of facilities accommodate bicycling and walking as travel modes within the City. Separated (i.e. outside the curb) bicycle facilities include roadside multi-use trails as well as greenways with their own separate rights-of-ways. Non-separated (i.e. inside the curb) bicycle facilities include bike lanes, paved shoulders, and marked bike routes. Pedestrians are accommodated principally via the City’s sidewalk network, though they can also use the roadside multi-use trails and greenways. In general, the City’s pedestrian and bicycle network has become better-connected since 2008, due to gradual implementation of the City’s 2015 *City of Dover Bicycle Plan* and 2015 *City of Dover Pedestrian Plan*, as well as Kent County’s *Regional Bicycle Plan*, which was updated in 2017. Implementation has come about through the efforts of DelDOT, the MPO, Dover’s Bicycle-Pedestrian Subcommittee, and City agencies.

Not all areas of the City enjoy equal access to the network and some parts of the network are usable only by pedestrians and bicyclists comfortable with high levels of traffic stress. Traffic stress is a rough measure of how safe or unsafe a route is due to vehicle traffic along the route. It principally is used to evaluate bicycle networks but also applies to pedestrians who may use the same routes. In a traffic stress analysis, areas are assigned a level between 1 and 4 with the safety levels as follows:

**Table 9-3: Traffic Stress Analysis**

|   |
|---|
| Level 1: Safe for children to use, usually completely separated from traffic.   |
| Level 2: Tolerated by most mainstream adult populations of cyclists, roads with low volume and low speed motor vehicle traffic. |
| Level 3: Tolerated by riders who are enthused and confident, road has heavy traffic with separated bicycle facility.            |
| Level 4: Only tolerated by strong and fearless riders, cyclists must interact with high volumes or speeds of auto traffic.      |

Source: Dover/Kent County MPO 2017 *Regional Bicycle Plan*

In Dover, only a few select places are Level 1 such as the multi-use paths within City parks. Most neighborhood streets are Level 2 due to their low traffic volumes. The main roads are Level 3 or Level 4, depending on whether there is a separated bicycle facility or not.

Use of the Traffic Stress Analysis system has greatly improved State and local ability to target investments in bicycle and pedestrian improvements, so they improve the safety of the network and encourage more people to use it. For instance, US Route 13 has bike lanes, but they are rarely used because high-speed traffic sharing the road makes them unsafe for most riders. Because of this DelDOT is gradually improving Route 13 to have multi-use paths or sidewalks along both sides of the road. Improvements can also be targeted to unsafe intersections that separate otherwise safe areas; for instance, a crossing over a major road that separates two neighborhoods.

The City is due for an update to its Bicycle Plan and Pedestrian Plan in 2020. Planning for the future of the bicycle and pedestrian network should be focused primarily on connecting in underserved neighborhoods as well as improving the network’s safety through reduction in traffic

stress wherever possible. A secondary focus should be on improving the design of the network to accommodate more possible users. Use of the network is expected to increase as more Dover residents choose to forgo the expense of owning a car or recognize the health benefits of walking and biking. Further, the kinds of possible users are also increasing, as skateboarders, roller-bladders, joggers, and even electric scooter riders of all ages are all possible users of the network. The City's intersections are particularly weak points of the network in terms of design, because they have not been redesigned to prioritize the safety of different kinds of crossers over the movement of automobile traffic.

## Rail Transportation

The Delmarva Central Railroad (DCR) operates 188 miles of rail line in Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia including the rail line passing through Dover. This line roughly parallels the US Route 13 roadway corridor. In Dover it extends from near the Millcreek subdivision and DelTech southeast to Downtown and then southwest along New Burton Road. The rail lines operated by the DCR are tributary lines with Dover lying along the main trunk. This trunk terminates in Porter, Delaware, near Bear and Red Lion, where there is a rail interchange between DCR's line and a rail corridor operated by Norfolk-Southern. From here freight can travel throughout the Northeast Corridor and many destinations in the northeastern United States.

Inter-modal transfer centers, switching yards, and similar facilities greatly increase the feasibility of rail transport. In Dover, a switching yard services the Kraft-Heinz Foods plant and Proctor & Gamble Paper plant on the west side of Dover. In this same area along New Burton Road, the Delmarva Central Railroad often stores and switches cars for its general operation.

Several planning efforts dedicated to rail service have been conducted by the State and the Dover/Kent MPO since 2008. These include the *2011 Delaware State Rail Plan*, the *2015 Delmarva Freight Plan*, and the *2018 Kent County Rail/Freight Zoning Study*. Several recommendations have come out of these plans which are specific to Dover. For instance, the *2015 Delmarva Freight Plan* recommends various road upgrades to assist with "last-mile" distribution of goods, an air cargo ramp at the Dover Air Force Base, and a potential Dover Area Freight Management Study.

The *2018 Kent County Rail/Freight Zoning Study* recommends keeping parcels adjacent to the railroad in industrial zoning classifications, in order to allow for potential new industrial uses that load directly onto the rail line (similar to the way Kraft-Heinz and Proctor & Gamble do now). Keeping these parcels in industrial zoning also reduces the likelihood of noise and safety concerns that may come from developing them with residential or commercial uses. Supporting these plans' recommendations will bolster the viability of freight rail service in Kent County and throughout Delmarva.

At present, passenger rail service is not offered to Dover; the nearest rail connections are in Wilmington and Newark. The future of rail travel in Delaware has been discussed in various capacities throughout the past three decades. The City of Dover remains committed to exploring the possibility of passenger rail service to Dover and is committed towards pursuing passenger rail service once it becomes a viable alternative.

## Aviation

The primary aviation facility in Kent County is Dover Air Force Base (DAFB), which permits limited public service at the adjacent Civil Air Terminal. In addition to the facilities at the DAFB, there are 19 other airports and other air facilities in Kent County: 6 open to the public and the remaining 13 reserved for private use. The public air facilities include the Chandelle Estates Airport near Dover, the helicopter landing pad at DelDOT headquarters in Dover, the Delaware Airpark in Cheswold, the Chorman Airport in Farmington, the Smyrna Airport in Smyrna, and the Jenkins Airport in Wyoming.

### Civil Air Terminal

The Civil Air Terminal (CAT) is located at the end of Horsepond Road adjacent to the Dover Air Force Base. It is operated by the Delaware River and Bay Authority. The Civil Air Terminal's current primary use is for private commuter travel.

As discussed in Chapter 10 – Economic Development, the CAT is a key economic asset and expansion of its existing services would increase its contribution to the City and region.

## CITY GOVERNMENT ROLE IN THE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

### Public Works Maintenance

The City has an annual capital maintenance program that rehabilitates various road sections based on pavement rating conditions. The maintenance programs include improvements to deteriorated curbs, sidewalks and pavement sections. The annual investment in these improvements ranges from \$900,000 to \$1.8 million depending upon available funding. In addition, the City through the Department of Public Works (DPW) provides staff, equipment and materials to provide general maintenance for these road sections such as street sweeping, catch basin cleaning, hot mix patching, signage, leaf collection and other maintenance services. As developments have moved forward to completion and infrastructure has been dedicated to the City, this mileage has grown over time. Table 9-4 shows the increase in City street mileage between 2013 and 2018. The growth from 104.73 miles to 110.93 miles represents a 5.92% increase in total mileage over the past five years. As additional infrastructure to the City of Dover, the street mileage will continue to increase over time. The City estimates that approximately twenty miles of streets are under construction within new subdivisions that have not been dedicated to public maintenance as of 2018.

**Table 9-4: Certified Street Mileage: City of Dover, 2013 - 2018**

| 2013         | 2014         | 2015         | 2016         | 2017         | 2018         |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| 104.73 miles | 105.14 miles | 108.44 miles | 108.66 miles | 109.59 miles | 110.93 miles |

Source: City of Dover Department of Public Works

Dover has an active program to maintain City streets and to repave streets as they deteriorate over time. The City's Street Program is funded through the City's General Fund budget, as well as through legislator commitments of Community Transportation Fund dollars. The following

subdivisions (Table 9-5) are in various phases of construction and will add mileage to City owned and maintained streets inventory when completed.

**Table 9-5: 2018 Current Subdivision in Active Construction and Street Miles**

| Subdivision                             | Miles to be added |
|---|-------------------|
| Clearview Meadows PND                   | 2.11              |
| Patriot Village                         | 0.94              |
| Nottingham Meadows                      | 0.33              |
| Eden Hill Farm TND Residential District | 5.61              |
| Eden Hill Farm TND POMF District        | 0.16              |
| Chestnut Grove Farms                    | 1.03              |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                            | <b>10.18</b>      |

Source: City of Dover Department of Public Works

### Planning with Street Classifications

The roadways in the City range in character from six-lane highways to local streets. The City Planning Office through the Comprehensive Plan maintains a functional classification system which classifies roadways based on the degree to which they limit access. The functional classes are listed below and are based on the Federal Highway Administration’s (FHWA) Functional Classification guidelines. The City’s classifications systems differ somewhat from those used by DelDOT, which are also based on the FHWA guidelines. This is because DelDOT uses the classifications to plan for traffic flow while the Planning Office uses the classifications in tandem with zoning to regulate certain aspects of site design. For instance, the classification of a street affects the size and types of signs that can be installed on adjacent properties. Map 9-2 shows the City’s Street Functional Classifications and are further listed and described as follows.

#### Urban Principal Arterial System

In every urban environment, there exists a system of streets and highways that can be identified as unusually significant to the area in which it lies in terms of the nature and composition of travel it serves. This system is not restricted to controlled access routes. In order to preserve the identification of controlled access facilities, the principal arterial system is stratified as follows: (1) Interstate, (2) other freeways and expressways, and (3) other principal arterials (with no control of access). For principal arterials, the concept of service to abutting land should be subordinate to the provision of travel service to major traffic movements.

Dover’s Principal Arterials are State Route 1, US Route 13 and Bay Road. It is noted that Dover’s *Zoning Ordinance* does not treat parcels adjacent to State Route 1 as having street frontage on that road; such parcels must take access from and be oriented towards another road within the City.

### **Urban Minor Arterial Street System**

The minor arterial street system includes all arterials not classified as principal and contains facilities that place more emphasis on land access than the higher system. These facilities also offer a lower level of traffic mobility. Such facilities may carry local bus routes and provide intra-community continuity, but ideally should not penetrate identifiable neighborhoods.

The Minor Arterials in Dover are:

- State Street, from Walker Road north to US Route 13 and from Wyoming Avenue south to the southern City limits
- Governors Avenue, from Division Street to the southern City limits
- POW-MIA Parkway/McKee Road/Saulsbury Road/Scarborough Road
- Walker Road
- College Road
- DE Route 8/Division Street/North Little Creek Road (including all alternate names)
- Kenton Road, from College Road to DE Route 8
- Webbs Lane
- Loockerman Street
- Leipsic Road
- New Burton Road
- North Street/Hazletville Road
- White Oak Road

### **Urban Collector Street System**

The collector street system provides land access service and traffic circulation within residential neighborhoods, commercial and industrial areas. Collector streets may penetrate residential neighborhoods, distributing trips from the arterials through the area to the ultimate destination. The collector street also collects traffic from local streets in residential neighborhoods and channels it into the arterial system.

The Collectors in Dover are:

- South Little Creek Road
- Independence Boulevard
- Babb Drive
- John Hunn Brown Road
- Beiser Boulevard
- Dover High Drive
- Crawford Carroll Avenue
- Blue Hen Boulevard

### **Urban Local Street System**

The local street system comprises all facilities not on one of the higher systems. It serves primarily to provide direct access to abutting land and access to the higher order systems. It offers the lowest level of mobility and usually contains no bus routes. Most streets on the urban local streets systems

are City streets and maintained by the City of Dover. A street within Dover is considered to be a local street if it is not on any of the three lists above.

### **Scenic and Historic Byways**

In 2000 the State adopted legislation to develop the Delaware Scenic and Historic Highways Program. The Program, now rebranded as the Delaware Byways Program designates certain road systems to “enhance, recreational, cultural and archeological resources, encourage development through tourism, and educate residents and visitors on the history, culture and natural beauty “of the State (72 Del. Laws, c.444 and Del. Laws, c.367). Six byways have been designated in the State. One of these byways, the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Byway (described further in Chapter 6), begins in Maryland, passes through Kent County and traverses Dover with a key location at The Green before ending at the Delaware-Pennsylvania line north of Wilmington. Another Byway, the Delaware Bayshore Byway, travels along the coast following Route 9 just east of Dover. It offers views of coastal ecosystems of the Delaware River and Bay Estuary. See Map 9-3 for Byways and Trails.

## **ASSESSING FUTURE TRANSPORTATION NEEDS**

### **Travel Demand Analysis**

To develop travel demand forecasts that would identify transportation system deficiencies, it is necessary to generate traffic volumes to represent existing conditions as well as future conditions with no change in the roadway network (2040 no-build). The 2040 no-build condition assumes completion of projects currently under construction in 2018 and that the projects proposed in the MPO’s Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and Metropolitan Transportation Plan not currently under construction will not be completed.

The traffic volumes used to understand 2040 no-build conditions were calculated using DelDOT’s statewide Travel Demand Model. This model applies data regarding land use, roadway conditions, vehicular travel patterns, automobile ownership, as well as the location and population of Traffic Analysis Zones (TAZ). The DelDOT model uses a five-step process to model travel. These steps include the following:

- Trip generation – how many trips are going and coming from each TAZ
- Trip distribution – how many trips are going from one specific TAZ and to another
- Mode split – how are people traveling between TAZs (Car, Transit, Bicycle, Walk)
- Assignment – what route is being taken from one TAZ to another
- Feedback – under congested conditions is there a faster route from one TAZ to another

Numerous inputs beyond those listed here are used to successfully model future traffic conditions. Population and employment data are estimated statewide by the Delaware Population Consortium, a group to which the City of Dover belongs and supports with data indicative of development and redevelopment trends in the City. Population and employment numbers are then assigned to Travel Analysis Zones by the Dover/Kent County MPO Data and Demographics Subcommittee. Land use data, such as parcel information, is collected from land use agencies like the City of Dover. Information on road conditions and vehicular travel patterns are collected by DelDOT’s Division

of Planning; and information on automobile ownership comes from DelDOT’s Division of Motor Vehicles. The model is not a constant but is continuously updated as new data becomes available.

The 2040 no-build scenario provides what would be a bleak picture of transportation were Dover and the Dover/Kent County MPO not working toward improving local transportation systems. Map 9-4 shows road segments predicted to be failing (a Level of Service of D, E, and F) if none of the projects proposed by the MPO in the Metropolitan Transportation Plan are constructed. Nearly all the major roads in Dover would be considered deficient; Route 8 west of Saulsbury Road and Route 13 south of Roosevelt Avenue would be particularly hard-hit.

The Dover/Kent County MPO works with DelDOT annually to develop its TIP, ensuring the inclusion of Dover and Kent County projects in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), the first four years of DelDOT’s Capital Transportation Program. The projects included in these programs are discussed in the “Completed and Planned Projects” section of this chapter.

### **Transportation Improvement District**

The US Route 13 and Bay Road corridors are dominated by highway commercial development. For the most part, the Land Development Plan of the *2019 Comprehensive Plan* proposes to continue US Route 13 and Bay Road as the major commercial corridor in Central Delaware.

Few vacant developable parcels exist within this area. However, potential exists for the redevelopment of older retail stores and strip shopping centers. The *2019 Comprehensive Plan* encourages the renovation and adaptive reuse of older structures within the highway corridor as means of restoring property value, preventing blight and demolition by neglect, and enhancing the overall image of the highway environment. In some cases, the demolition of older structures may be beneficial, and should be supported to enable redevelopment to occur within the corridor.

The constraints of the existing transportation infrastructure along these corridors have created significant challenges to redevelopment along Route 13 and Bay Road. To support the goals of the Transportation Plan and support the redevelopment of underutilized properties along the Route 13 and Bay Road Corridors, the City intends to continue work with the Delaware Department of Transportation and the Dover/Kent County MPO to develop a Transportation Improvement District (TID) for the corridors and to complete an associated Land Use and Transportation Plan.

The first step towards creating a TID came in Fall 2014 with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the City, DelDOT, and the Dover/Kent County MPO. This MOU, also called the “Agreement Regarding Dover US Route 13/Bay Road Corridor Transportation Improvement District” had the following purposes:

- 1) Establish the geographic boundaries of the TID, including a Participant Boundary and a Facilities Boundary.
- 2) Set a Target Horizon Year for forecasts of land use, population and employment.
- 3) Establish a set of Service Standards for conditions in the TID in the Target Horizon Year.
- 4) Lay out the responsibilities of the City and DelDOT regarding a Land Use and Transportation Plan (LUTP) for the TID.
- 5) Initiate a TID Capital Transportation Program (TID-CTP) based on the LUTP.
- 6) Establish which developments may be excluded from participation in the TID program

- 7) Establish an Infrastructure Fee Program.
- 8) Establish a Monitoring Program.

Between 2014 and 2019, work on the TID did not progress past the signing of the MOU. Because a LUTP was not developed, the TID-CTP also could not be initiated, at which point the Infrastructure Fee Program and the Monitoring Program could not be implemented. As an implementation item for the *2019 Comprehensive Plan*, the City intends to resume work on the TID, starting with the necessary research for a LUTP.

In addition, per the terms of the MOU the City of Dover must evaluate the need to update several parts of the TID Agreement when updating its Comprehensive Plan. These include the TID boundaries, the Target Horizon Year, and the Service Standards. The LUTP would also need to be evaluated if one already existed.

The TID facilities boundary, surrounding a greater area than the participant boundary, is set based on roads users associated with parcels in the participant boundary. The TID boundaries therefore should be reevaluated with the opening of the POW/MIA Parkway since the 2015 agreement was entered, as this is a significant facility that likely changed travel patterns in the City.

The Target Horizon Year should be updated from 2035 to 2040, to reflect the delay in the project's implementation. The Service Standards do not need to be updated.

If DelDOT and the Dover/Kent County MPO agree that these are the necessary updates, they may be put into an updated "Agreement Regarding Dover US Route 13/Bay Road Corridor Transportation Improvement District."

### **Emerging Trends Affecting Land Use and Development**

The next ten years may see significant changes in the way people travel, the vehicles they use, and the services they require, and how those goods and services are delivered. Emerging trends that need to be tracked and assessed include the increased availability of alternative fuel vehicles, trends toward healthier lifestyles that favor bicycling and walking, autonomous/self-driving vehicles, changes in shopping and the delivery of goods and services, and the continued extension of technology beyond the traditional workspace or service provider.

For example, increased use of electric vehicles will result in greater need for commercial refueling/charging stations, perhaps becoming an economic development driver. These trends raise considerations about home-based charging on both building design and safety and the operation and design of the electric distribution systems. Other alternative fueling options could raise safety and location concerns not now addressed in local ordinances. Continued develop of autonomous vehicles will require increased technology as part of the transportation infrastructure.

Demographics and healthy lifestyle trends are showing up in increased demand for "complete streets" and planning for multi-modal solutions involving bike lanes and multi-purpose pathways, where sidewalks alone might have previously sufficed.

The Internet makes work-at-home or less fixed business site options more attractive, potentially changing commuting patterns and the classification and uses of transportation systems. Likewise,

trends in online shopping are already changing the patterns of goods and mail deliveries in residential areas.

These and other changes will necessitate that planners understand and plan for future impacts on the transportation system and the patterns of land use that it serves.

## COMPLETED AND PLANNED PROJECTS

Since 2008 there have been a number of significant transportation improvements in Dover that have served to implement the Comprehensive Plan. Likewise, a number of studies have been completed that have furthered the goals of the Plan. These accomplishments are summarized in the “Completed Projects” section below.

### Completed Projects

The following improvements have been accomplished in Dover or for specific areas within the City since 2008:

- Constructed the new Dover Transit Center
- Constructed POW-MIA Parkway (formerly known as the West Dover Connector)
- Improved the intersection of West Street and North Street
- Reconstructed North Street east of the railroad
- Developed the *2015 Division Street/Forest Street Dover Capital Gateway Plan and Design Book*
- Implemented portions of the *Delaware Route 8 Concept Plan and Operations Study*
- Adopted the *2015 Bicycle Plan* and *2015 Pedestrian Plan*
- Installed sidewalks and pedestrian crossings along portions of Route 13
- Completed the key segments of the Senator Bikeway, Capital Trail and other bike and pedestrian plans
- Implemented sidewalk and pedestrian crossing (HAWK signal) on Forrest Avenue for Dover High School

### Prioritized Projects

Each year the City is requested to provide a list of transportation improvements to the Secretary of Transportation and the Dover/Kent County MPO that it wishes to see considered by these bodies in developing the DelDOT Project Prioritization Process and the MPO’s Transportation Improvement Program. Not all of the City’s recommendations are ultimately included in these documents nor do their priority necessarily match. In Fall 2019, the City of Dover City Council has prioritized the following projects for inclusion into the State of Delaware’s six-year Capital Transportation Program:

#### *Garrison Oak Connector Road*

Garrison Oak Business and Technology Center (GOBTC) is a 385-acre tract zoned IPM-2 (Industrial Park Manufacturing Zone – Business and Technology Center) and is the only site in

the City to be zoned as such. It has been identified by the City as an ideal location for large technology/green industry firms.

Dover City Council desires that DelDOT provide a direct access to State Route 1 via a connector road to White Oak Road. While the State discourages growth east of State Route 1, this tract is acknowledged by both the City of Dover and the State of Delaware as the only large-scale developable land east of State Route 1 in the City of Dover.

A June 2017 study of the project (the *Garrison Oak Traffic Study*), determined that constructing a connector road was not justified as of 2018, based on the current uses and development in the park. However, an Alignment Study to determine the feasibility and location of a future road connection is justified given current and potential development interests. The Park is an important economic development asset for the City and the County. Utilization of GOBTC is restricted by the lack of good access to State Route 1. As additional development occurs in the business park its priority for construction will be revised as appropriate.

*Kenton Road Corridor Upgrades/ Route 8 East/West Corridor Plan Improvements*

This Kenton Road Corridor project includes road improvements and sidewalks to improve traffic flow and bicycle/pedestrian safety. It is critical to improving the approach to the City from the northwest where new residential areas within and outside the City are being built. This segment also lacks sidewalks. The Route 8 Corridor Study identified several improvements along the Route 8 corridor that would improve safety, better manage access, reduce congestion and provide improved traffic flow. While improvements complementary to this corridor (POW-MIA Parkway and Senator Bikeway, for example) address north/south movements, continued development on the west side of the City impacts the capacity and operation of this roadway.

*College Road Corridor Upgrades (Kenton Road to McKee Road)*

This project includes road improvements and sidewalks in the heavily traveled College Road corridor. It is a key east-west linkage from northwest residential areas to commercial corridors and Delaware State University. Recent development in this area includes apartments and a rehabilitation hospital near the College Road/McKee Road intersection. Potential improvements in this project include new pavement sections, sidewalks, shoulders, a closed drainage system, bicycle lanes, lighting and other improvements.

*Loockerman Street/Forest Street Intersection*

This project is prioritized by the City to help spur redevelopment activities in the Downtown Development District while also improving traffic circulation and safety. It was identified as a needed improvement through the *Restoring Central Dover Study* and the *Westside Redevelopment Study* conducted in 2001. It is also complementary to the recommendations of the Capital Gateway Study addressing the Forest Street/Route 8 corridor. It would result in improved traffic circulation, a more pedestrian-friendly zone at the railroad crossings and create a new “gateway” into the Downtown.

*Sidewalks within the walk zone of the new Dover High School*

Critical gaps in the sidewalk system near Dover High School remain including along Mifflin Road and along Route 8 on the south side from Mifflin Road west. This project also addresses the continuation of the Senator Bikeway and the recommendations from the Capital Gateway Study.

The City is very concerned about public safety in this area and believes it deserves to be included in the CTP and funded at the earliest opportunity.

*Kings Highway/Route 13 Intersection Improvements*

The intersection of Kings Highway/White Oak Road and US Route 13 needs improvements to meet an acceptable level of service. Extensive new commercial development (Capital Station Shopping Center, Lidl grocery store, and other commercial facilities) are being constructed or are planned south of the intersection which will add traffic and access burdens on these roads. Because of the multi-use paths to be constructed along with this commercial development, pedestrian and bicyclist safety improvements will be needed as part of the intersection upgrade as well.

*Crawford Carroll Avenue Extension*

This project reflects the continuing growth of Delaware State University, commercial development in the area, and future development possibilities involving the Dover Mall and adjoining properties. The project was proposed to continue the improved right-of-way of Crawford Carroll Avenue from West Rustic Lane in a southerly direction to the site where HomeGoods and PetSmart are located and then connect to US Route 13 via a signalized intersection. It would provide access between the DSU Learning and Living Commons facility and the main campus as an alternate to using US 13. DelDOT has expressed concern about the feasibility of the original proposal; however, the City requests that service road connections on the west side of US 13 continue to be addressed even if the original design should not be achievable.

*West Street Improvements from North Street to the Transit Center*

This project is along the western edge of the Downtown Development District and would improve traffic flow, safety and access to the transit system serving the Downtown and the City. It would also provide an opportunity for multi-modal linkages to be improved. West Street has become an important connection for the DART transit service in the City but has not been improved to reflect the standards necessary to meet this use. Part of these improvements were achieved in 2018 with the completion of a multi-use path along the east side of West Street.

*US 13 Service Roads/Scarborough Road*

This project would create a service road parallel to US 13 from Leipsic Road to Scarborough Road, and a set of local access roads providing economic benefits to the Dover Mall and proposed adjacent commercial complexes. This project is part of the *US Route 13 Circulation Study*. The addition of service roads would decrease traffic on US 13/DuPont Highway by having more local traffic use the service roads instead. The project also reflects the corridor's continued growing role as a destination for commerce, employment, and community activities, and its lessened importance as a high-speed through travel route compared to State Route 1.

*US 13 Sidewalk Construction*

Construction of multi-use paths along US 13 continues to be a priority. Construction of sidewalks is required when properties are developed or redeveloped, but significant sections of the sidewalk system are either in deteriorated condition or missing. Examples include Public Safety Boulevard to the Puncheon Run Connector and White Oak Road to College Road. A 2019 sidewalk project being built by DelDOT will complete a sidewalk/path from Townsend Boulevard to Leipsic Road.

Route 8/Hazletville Road Connector

This is a north/south access road that was identified in the *Route 8 Concept Plan and Operations Study*. This connection will encourage economic development and provide transportation alternatives in this heavily traveled corridor. The connector road would incorporate the existing Dover High Drive and extend south on the west side of the Village of Cannon Mill.

FINAL DRAFT

# TRANSPORTATION

## **Goal 1: Preserve and Maintain the Existing Transportation System**

Guide development, control roadway access, and take active steps to preserve existing transportation system investments in order to maintain the existing transportation system and its capacity.

### **Recommendation 1: Maintain and Improve the Transportation System's Capacity by:**

- Upgrading existing roadway facilities, particularly corridor intersections
- Maintaining the City-owned street system
- Increasing transit (bus) service efficiency
- Improving opportunities for non-motorized travel such as biking and walking
- Supporting the return of passenger rail service
- Supporting opportunities to expand aviation facilities as well as access to these facilities
- Assessing and tracking trends that influence future transportation systems and land uses
- Proactively plan for the impact that new technologies such as alternative fuels, online goods and services delivery, and self-driving cars will have on lifestyles and travel.

## **Goal 2: Increase Coordination with Agencies**

Work with citizens, DelDOT, and the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to ensure that Dover's long and short-range transportation needs are addressed.

### **Recommendation 2: Leadership in the Dover/Kent County MPO**

- Continue to play an active role in the Dover/Kent County MPO.
- Continue to use the Dover/Kent County MPO as a forum for long-range transportation planning and interacting with DelDOT.
- Continue to coordinate development activities within the City of Dover with DelDOT through the Development Advisory Committee.

### **Recommendation 3: Promote Safe Routes Programs**

- Explore opportunities to designate Safe Routes to Schools, Safe Routes for Seniors and Safe Routes to Parks; and support programming efforts to encourage their use.
- Identify current Safe Routes programs and evaluate deficiencies.
- Conduct a community-engaged process to designate new Safe Routes and develop their programming.

## **Goal 3: Develop and Expand Alternate Modes of Transportation**

Expanding facilities and services for alternate modes of transportation such as walking, bicycling, taxi, rideshare, and transit services enhances mobility for residents, reduces the number of single-occupant vehicles, and reduces the need to own an automobile.

**Recommendation 4: Update and Implement the Bicycle & Pedestrian Transportation Plans**

- Review the bicycle and pedestrian transportation network to identify gaps and important segments needed to provide a continuous network.
- Prioritize connectivity between neighborhoods and community assets such as schools, neighborhood centers, healthcare facilities, and government facilities.
- Consider implementing the proposed bicycle network for the Downtown area included in the Plan4Health guidance document.
- Develop an Implementation Plan to complete the bicycle and pedestrian transportation network. The construction of the missing sidewalk and bike path segments can be accomplished utilizing a combination of private development activities, City funding through the CIP, and funding available through state and federal sources.
- Develop a maintenance plan for the network that builds on the Department of Public Works' ADA Transition Plan, DelDOT repair schedules, and other current efforts.
- Ensure vital pedestrian and bicycle amenities such as bike racks, seating, street lighting, street crossings, and bicycle parking are included in site plan reviews for new development and redevelopment projects.

**Recommendation 5: Expand and Improve Transit Service**

- In collaboration with the Delaware Transit Corporation, enhance transit connections between neighborhoods and employment centers, institutions, commercial areas, schools and recreational facilities. Neighborhoods with large transit-dependent populations such as retirement, nursing and group-living facilities as well as economically disadvantaged areas should be targeted.
- Support the addition of new transit stops.
- Augment new and existing transit stops with bicycle and pedestrian facilities, as well as shelters to protect riders from inclement weather.
- Advocate for more frequent and reliable transit service to attract and retain ridership.
- Support improved transit routes to the Capital Area from North/South and East/West.
- Encourage DTC to share the Dover Transit Center with private intercity buses.

**Goal 4: Create Recommendations and Policies for Roadways and Development**

City leadership should prioritize specific transportation projects that are important to the development of the City, whether that be through managing service to existing growth or encouraging further economic development. The importance of these projects must be clearly conveyed to the MPO and to DelDOT, so they can take the City's goals into account when setting their own priorities.

**Recommendation 6: Implement US Route 13 and Bay Road Corridor Improvements**

- Continue to work with DelDOT and the Dover/Kent County MPO to develop a Transportation Improvement District (TID) for the Route 13 and Bay Road Corridors in Dover. Evaluate the existing "Agreement Regarding Dover US 13/Bay Road Corridor

Transportation Improvement District” for necessary updates the TID boundaries, Target Horizon Year, and Service Standards.

- Evaluate the *2007 US Route 13 Circulation Study* to determine if an updated plan is needed.

**Recommendation 7: Develop and Implement Strategies for Addressing East/West Traffic**

- Encourage corridor improvements to Route 8 to improve traffic movement and multi-modal capacity.
- Work with DelDOT, property owners, and the Dover/Kent County MPO to implement the *2015 Dover Capital Gateway Plan and Design Book* and the *2008 Delaware Route 8 Concept Plan and Operations Study*.
- Evaluate the *2008 Delaware Route 8 Concept Plan and Operations Study* to determine if an updated plan is needed.

**Recommendation 8: Establish a means of access from the Garrison Oak Business and Technology Center to State Route 1**

- Evaluate potential options for building an access road which would allow access to Garrison Oak from State Route 1.
- Determine the costs necessary to build the access road to Garrison Oak.

**Recommendation 9: Miscellaneous Transportation Improvements**

- Support access management along minor arterials and collector roads to protect traffic capacity and preserve the character of existing neighborhoods.
- Support bicycle and pedestrian friendly design and the inclusion of pedestrian, bicycle, and public transit facilities in Subdivisions and Site Plan applications.
- Recognize and incorporate transportation planning strategies related to the Delaware Byways Program, especially the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Byway that traverses the City.
- Advocate for specific projects and studies to be placed in the Dover/Kent County MPO Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the DelDOT Capital Transportation Program (CTP).

FINAL DRAFT – 12.3.2019

# Chapter 10

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

# PLAN

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### INTRODUCTION

Economic development is one of the most important issues to be addressed by the City of Dover over the next 10 years. More than half of the population of Kent County lives in and around Dover. Dover is a city that hosts a diverse mixture of major commercial and manufacturing firms, in addition to large retail, hospitality, health care and public sectors. Regional development patterns and recent improvements in the area’s transportation infrastructure have increased the accessibility of Dover to and from larger urban markets north and west of the City. Consequently, the City can attract and benefit from new and developing economic sectors.

Like changes across the region, Dover and Kent County’s economy has evolved from one dominated by manufacturing to one that has become more focused on services, retail, health care and technology. Driven in part by long term demographic changes and by increasingly non-traditional concepts of work, shopping, transportation, and leisure, Dover and Kent County must understand and adapt to this phenomenon. In each of the City’s economic sectors, change is occurring and will continue to occur.

In retail, for example, traditional shopping centers and malls are evolving into “Town Centers” or “Lifestyle Centers” mimicking aspects of historic downtowns. These centers often include a mix of shopping, dining, office and residential uses. Meanwhile traditional downtowns are being reinvented and redeveloped as unique retail, professional and personal spaces. They are building on their historic assets and capturing a desire to shop locally while fostering relationships with business owners and enjoying a strong sense of place. Also occurring are the proliferation of e-commerce-based operations, the emergence of new retail formats (convenience stores selling gas, drive-through options for transactions, an increasing array of food and beverage options, home delivery of fresh and packaged foods, and growing numbers of specialty grocers). New forms of professional services, such as stand-alone walk-in/urgent care medical services, are rapidly changing where goods and services are located. Dover’s retail sector is growing in response to these and other factors. Work at home and “plug-in” mobile offices are also changing the nature of the workplace for many.

The once dominant business and manufacturing (goods producing) sector has also evolved across the region and locally. Once the driving force of most economies, this sector has slowly declined in terms of market dominance due to consolidations, spin-offs, downsizing, competition and other factors. Fortunately, Dover and Kent County have fared well in this fundamental transformation where recruitment, retention and expansion of traditional manufacturing employment is no longer the engine of economic activity. Manufacturing activity in Kent County accounted for about 4,700 jobs at 75 firms in 2017 and remains a critical part of the economy.

Health care and related businesses are today’s growth sectors. The delivery of medical services fosters the establishment of neighborhood-based medicine at one level and new, high technology specialty services and facilities at the other. Growth in this sector is driven by an aging population with greater health care needs, increased access to health care insurance, and the availability of high technology diagnosis and treatment. Dover’s economy is well poised to accommodate growth in this sector well into the future. According to the Delaware Department of Labor, the State anticipates a growth of 30% in projected new health related jobs in Kent County through 2024.

In 2016, the Delaware Business Roundtable recommended that higher education “must be a cornerstone of Delaware’s economic vitality” and that “Delaware must embrace and invest in higher education to become the long-term driving force of the State’s entrepreneur and innovation ecosystem.” Dover’s economy is inexorably tied to capturing the value of the higher education resources within its boundaries.

Driven by changing demography and fundamental changes in lifestyles, shopping, work and transportation, these and other economic realities will influence the health of Dover’s economy in the foreseeable future.

### **Economic Development Defined**

In order to better understand the intricacies of each of these economic development areas and issues, it is important to define “economic development” and understand its characteristics and need. The term “economic development” means different things to different people, hence it is important to define what is meant by the term.

For the purposes of the Comprehensive Plan, “economic development” will be defined as “*the planning, design and implementation of community efforts which influence where wealth is created, in order to strengthen an area’s economy by creating and retaining jobs and expanding the tax base.*” These community efforts are the core economic development activities of business attraction and economic diversification, business assistance and development, business retention and expansion, redevelopment of underutilized properties and identification of new opportunities, and various forms of collaboration and public-private partnerships.

## **UNDERSTANDING DOVER’S ECONOMIC STRUCTURE – PRIMARY SECTORS**

Six key sectors make up the City’s economy, including:

- **Manufacturing** – Dover is home to a number of manufacturing businesses operating several large facilities and contributing heavily to the City’s economic vitality. These industries include Kraft Heinz Foods, Proctor & Gamble, Edgewell Products Corporation, and others.
- **Government (Federal, State and County)** – As the State’s capital, and the County seat, Dover hosts many government offices which serve as major employers. The Dover Air Force Base plays an important role in both national defense and citywide economic diversity and growth. In addition, various federal agencies have offices in Dover.
- **Tourism** –The City’s proximity to three major metropolitan areas (Washington D.C., Baltimore and Philadelphia) makes it a perfect destination for short getaways or weekend trips. The City is considered a “drive-to market” with more than 46 million people living within a 250 miles radius as potential visitors (Texas A&M 2016 study commissioned by Kent County Tourism Corporation). This sector also includes Dover’s significant attractions in history, arts, music, gaming, and entertainment.
- **Business and Personal Services** – Composed of accounting and financial management, banking, legal services, real estate, and numerous personal and business services, this sector plays a prominent role in Dover.
- **Retail** – As a result of Dover’s diverse makeup, the retail sector provides goods and services to different populations in and around the City taking advantage of Dover’s widely varied economic environments. Dover has a unique opportunity to further promote its retailers and restaurants as a "tax free shopping and dining" destination. Visitor surveys note that shopping and dining are among the top reasons, they visit the area frequently.
- **Health Care** - Bayhealth has continued to improve its position as a regional healthcare provider. The broader medical community has also grown both numerically and in terms of the array of facilities and services provided. Health care is Dover’s #1 growth sector with little indication of a change in the future. Major facilities have been built at Eden Hill, along McKee Road, in the Enterprise Business Park, and elsewhere throughout the City.

## ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

Dover plays host to multiple economic environments that feed its economic growth and diversity. These unique economic locales include existing and planned resources within the central Downtown area, outlying industrial/office parks, the City’s commercial corridors, cultural and tourism institutions, and the government complexes.

### **Downtown Dover Redevelopment Target Area and the Downtown Development District (DDD)**

The Downtown Dover Redevelopment Target area of the City makes up a unique economic environment that is well suited to host a wide variety of neighborhood and community-based businesses. The area involved in this description includes portions of central Dover bounded by the St. Jones River on the east, Mary Street to the north, the area surrounding the railroad tracks to the west, and the Bayhealth Medical Center to the south (See Map 10-1).

In this area, five retail components have been identified including:

1. *Office Support* – In general, the firms in this category thrive through providing services to government employees, the legal and financial management sector, and other downtown workers and residents.
2. *Neighborhood Convenience* – This category includes stores selling food and other items meant to serve the residents of neighborhoods in and around the area.
3. *Entertainment* – Dover’s Downtown area includes several restaurants, taverns, museums, and facilities to support live theatre, music, and the arts.
4. *Specialty Products and Services* – This category includes stores that offer a broad selection and high level of service including bakeries, bridal shops, antiques, auto parts stores, arts and crafts shops, gifts and accessories, and real estate services.
5. *Fashion and Boutique* – Contained in this category are jewelry stores, boutique clothing shops, and hair and spa salons.

Office space in the Downtown area hosts government workers as well as private users including law firms, professional offices (accounting, architecture, engineering, and medical services), and banks. The private office firms in the Downtown area have enjoyed a long history of success; however, the growth in this sector of the Downtown economy has been limited by the enormous growth potential and benefits of office uses in outlying areas of the City. Because of Dover’s unique status as the State Capital, there is an opportunity for public agency leases to be used to leverage new development.

The unique character of businesses found in this Downtown area stems from the fact that most of the firms offer specialty products and services that are significantly different from those found in other areas of the City. In fact, the existence and success of other economic environments has been a precluding element in the development of larger merchandising firms in the Downtown area. Challenges such as the perception of inadequate parking, personal safety, underutilization and chronic vacancy, and street lighting have been cited as impediments to further economic vitality in the retail sector throughout Downtown Dover. Many merchants have voiced concern over the basic need for increased coordination between merchants in the Downtown community. Fortunately, these challenges are being cooperatively addressed through increased coordination by the City, the Downtown Dover Partnership, the Restoring Central Dover program and other stakeholders. Another effort targeting activity in this area is the Downtown Development District designation; see discussion later in this Chapter and Map 10-1 for its location.

### **Industrial, Commercial, Technology and Institutional Areas; Office Parks**

Firms located in Dover’s office parks, industrial parks, and manufacturing facilities account for the majority of the City’s employees and production. Some of the largest manufacturing firms in Dover include:

- Edgewell Personal Care Products (formerly Playtex/Energizer) is the City’s largest non-medical private employer employing more than 650 workers.

- The community's other large manufacturers are Kraft Heinz Foods, Proctor & Gamble, Hirsh Industries and Uzin Utz. These firms make a considerable economic contribution to the City's economy.
- According to the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce there are 28 firms with more than 100 employees (2018 CDCC Member List). Collectively these 28 firms employ over 14,700 in the Dover area.

The City currently hosts hundreds of acres of developable and redevelopable land ready for industrial, office, and manufacturing uses. These locations include Enterprise Business Park, Garrison Oak Business and Technology Center, areas along Horsepond Road/Lafferty Lane, the Kent County Aeropark, and others. In fact, the diverse location and size of the available land makes many of these areas suitable for and accommodating to firms with various specialties. The City has recognized the medical profession and its related fields, the hospitality/tourism industry, and firms in the warehousing, logistics and distribution sectors as beneficial to the general economy of the area. The placement of firms with these specialties in the currently unused and underutilized industrial spaces in Dover is a City objective to maximize the economic development potential of those spaces and would bring a high number of skilled and professional jobs to the City.

DNREC lists 13 Certified Brownfield Sites in Dover City limits, some of which might be opportunities for redevelopment or reuse for new or expanded economic development. According to DNREC, many Brownfield sites are hindered by commonly held perceptions of environmental contamination but cleaning up and reusing such sites protects the environment, reduces blight, and helps to create jobs. In Dover, some Brownfield sites such as the former Capital Scrap Yard (now home to NAPA Auto Parts and the Inter City Cultural League) and the former Playtex site (now home to the Capital Station Shopping Center) have become viable centers of commerce and culture. Such sites often in industrialized urban portions of the City generally have existing utilities, roads or other infrastructure making them particularly attractive for redevelopment. State funding is available to support investigation and cleanup sites contaminated with petroleum and hazardous substances.

In addition to these sites, a considerable amount of unused land has the potential to be devoted to industrial and manufacturing uses, existing outside of the designated office and industrial parks and within potential annexation areas (See the Land Development Plan Map in Chapter 12).

### **Commercial Corridors and Centers**

The City of Dover commercial sector serves a region extending north to Middletown, south to Milford and well into eastern Maryland. Retail activities are located on commercial parcels situated adjacent to the two major transportation arteries. The most prominent is the US Route 13 (DuPont Highway) commercial corridor, running north-south through the City. Along this corridor are Dover Mall, Dover Downs and Dover International Speedway, and several shopping complexes offering a wide variety of business establishments. The Dover Mall, a regional shopping center comprising dozens of individual commercial activities, brings many consumers into Dover from around the region. Dover Downs Hotel & Casino and the Dover International Speedway with its auto racetrack for NASCAR events and a horse track, in addition to hosting the annual Firefly Music Festival, bring a significant number of visitors and tourism dollars into Dover

and the State of Delaware In addition to these major commercial firms, several larger retail establishments make their home along the US Route 13 commercial corridor including Sam's Club, Home Goods, Best Buy, Burlington, Kohl's, Target, and other retail leaders, and auto dealerships. In addition, large-scale hardware and home improvement warehouse stores are represented including Lowe's and Home Depot. The corridor also hosts dozens of restaurants as well as a diverse mix of specialty businesses. Several older commercial sites are undergoing redevelopment into attractive groups of retail spaces indicating the fundamental strength of this corridor. The City supports these initiatives.

A second commercial corridor has become increasingly defined in Dover along Route 8 (Forest Street and Forrest Avenue) in the western section of the City. This commercial area hosts a mixture of shopping complexes, supermarkets, and neighborhood businesses that provide specialty services and products that draw consumers from the City and immediate area. Implementation of the Corridor Overlay Zone, a zoning overlay adopted in the early 1990s, has altered the appearance of the Route 8 commercial corridor by keeping the buildings closer to the road to maintain the small town, pedestrian accessible atmosphere, rather than the conventional commercial strip. Recent development along this corridor has included the new Dover High School and multi-family residential units.

In 2005, Eden Hill Farm was initiated as a Traditional Neighborhood Design (TND) consisting of a Residential District, a Professional Office, Medical & Financial district, and a Neighborhood Commercial District with a focus on emerging medical and retail sectors. The Eden Hill Farm TND is being developed in accordance with a General Overall Master Plan and Comprehensive Design Standards Manual (Pattern Book) to create a unique mixed neighborhood. The Eden Hill Medical Center opened to the public in fall 2008 and has experienced expansion with the adjacent Center at Eden Hill, a state-of-the art rehabilitation facility. Nearby, in the Neighborhood Commercial District is a medical office facility operated by Nemours DuPont Pediatrics. Construction of the first housing units in the residential portion of Eden Hill also began in Fall 2008 and currently consists of 83 duplexes and townhouses. The economic downturn in 2008 stalled much of the residential and commercial construction, and recovery has been slow, but interest in both commercial and residential uses has now resumed.

### **Garrison Oak Technical Park (now Garrison Oak Business and Technology Center)**

The Garrison Oak Tract was purchased by the City, with funding from the State, in 1999 and zoned as IPM-2 (Industrial Park Manufacturing Zone – Business and Technology Center). The site was funded through the State's FY 2000 Bond Bill, which included epilogue language specifying that the site be used as a "high technology industrial park." Its location on White Oak Road with potential access to State Route 1 has been identified by Dover and the State as a "potential location to promote economic activity."

Recently renamed as the Garrison Oak Business and Technology Center (GOBTC), this business park encompasses nearly 400 acres of land. Garrison Oak is an ideal location for large technological/green industry firms that require lot sizes of over 10 acres. The City has taken actions to make the site "shovel-ready" including the creation of a Subdivision Plan, road improvements within the site, and installation of infrastructure improvements to bring basic

utilities to the site parcels. It is estimated that, once developed, the site would generate approximately 1,900 permanent jobs. GOBTC is currently home to the Dover Sun Park (solar facility), Garrison Energy Center's 309-megawatt electric generation facility, Uzin Utz (flooring technology), and Advantech /Protective Services (a security systems provider).

## Civil Air Terminal and Kent County Aeropark

Two facilities adjacent to Dover Air Force Base offer an unusual opportunity to develop an aviation and aeronautics focused employment center. The Civil Air Terminal (CAT) is located within the City limits and directly abuts DAFB. The Kent County Aeropark lies just west of the CAT. DelDOT owns the existing CAT and leases it to the Delaware River and Bay Authority for operations. The operations are sanctioned and governed by a Joint Use Agreement with the United States Air Force (USAF); that agreement is in negotiations to extend it for another 50 years. At present, the primary use of the CAT is to service occasional civilian charter aircraft and NASCAR race related aircraft and passenger services for the twice-yearly races.

The existing Civil Air Terminal site consists of **twenty** acres including an 870 ft. x 325 ft. aircraft parking apron, a single taxiway connecting to the DAFB Taxiway B, and a 1,650+/- SF single story terminal with an accessory building, parking and fuel storage.

In the Kent County Aeropark, immediately next to the Civil Air Terminal, are 13.2 undeveloped acres of a larger 117 +/- acre business park owned and developed by Kent County. The CAT and the four undeveloped parcels of the KCAP together comprise 33.3 acres. These are proposed to be to be rezoned as part of a comprehensive rezoning process to Industrial Park Manufacturing Zone - IPM3 (Industrial Aviation and Aeronautics Center) for industrial uses associated with aviation and aeronautics. The combined site is part of a County-designated employment center and will be marketed for aircraft maintenance, repair and operations; cargo/distribution terminal; aviation training; recreational aircraft terminal; aircraft manufacturing and civilian air cargo carrier temporary parking. The site will be marketed as the Central Delaware Aviation Complex to reflect its new focus.

## CONTRIBUTING ECONOMIC COMPONENTS

### Tourism Industry

Since the *2003* and *2008 Comprehensive Plans*, the City has seen significant growth in the hotel sector with 22 hotels now within City limits. This sector is poised for continued growth due in part to the construction of the DE Turf, a multi-court field sports facility located south of Dover near Frederica which opened in 2017. DE Turf will bring considerable interest in accommodations, restaurants and other facilities to serve these visitors as it hosts numerous large tournaments. This contributes considerably to Dover's economic stability and identity.

Historic, cultural and natural resources such as the City's Historic District, parks, waterways and open space, and museums draw thousands of visitors yearly. The City continues to serve as a

central location in Delaware that draws tourist and tourism dollars from both the region and nation. Its best attributes include historical sites, NASCAR racing, tax-free shopping, nature (hunt/fish), food (restaurants), drink trips (wine/beer), and activities on water, museums, golfing, casinos /gambling, music festivals, cycling, birding, culture, and quaint villages to enjoy. Locations and institutions that contribute to this sector include:

- *Historic District* – The City of Dover has three historic districts listed on the National Register of Historic Places and one local historic district. Dover’s defined and well-maintained historic district with The Green as its focal point serves as a beautiful and rich example of nineteenth century residential and institutional architecture and community design. Both tourists and architectural experts visit this area for its informational value and its aesthetically pleasing environment.
- *First State Heritage Park* – Established as a State Park in 2004, this "park without boundaries" links historical and cultural sites in the City of Dover including Legislative Hall, the Delaware Public Archives, the Old State House, the John Bell House, the Johnson Victrola Museum, the Biggs Museum of American Art, and Woodburn. In addition to serving as important historic resources for the State, the State House and Archives are also home to countless informational resources for policymakers, legal experts, and historians across the nation.
- *National Historical Park* - Two locations within the Dover area, The Green and the nearby John Dickinson Plantation, are recognized among the seven sites that make up the **First State National Historical Park**.
- *Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Byway* – This State designated Byway runs through Downtown Dover and offers opportunities for promotion of ecotourism, historic tourism, events in the area, and historic preservation. Many local buildings and historic locations are known to have ties to “Underground Railroad.” Along with the nearby Delaware Bayshore Byway, these resources invite visitors to Dover helping to promote economic opportunities for local hotels, eateries, shopping and other facilities.
- *Museums* – Quite a few museums make their home in Dover, including the Delaware Agricultural Museum, the Delaware State Police Museum, the Air Mobility Command Museum at the Dover Air Force Base, the Johnson Victrola Museum, and others. These cultural centers draw tourists and students to Dover and bring attention to the City’s importance as a cultural center in the region.
- *Dover Downs and Dover International Speedway* – The Dover Downs Hotel & Casino opened in fall 2007 with an expanded hotel facility for a total of over 500 rooms, making it the largest hotel in the state. The video lottery and gaming facility at Dover Downs along with live entertainment and a variety of dining and retail opportunities, attract visitors to the area year-round. Dover International Speedway has a racing facility that holds harness horse racing and two National Association of Stock Car Auto Racing (NASCAR) events drawing many thousands of tourists and consumer dollars to Dover twice each year. The Speedway’s lands also host the Firefly Music Festival, the largest open field camping oriented festival in the country.

- *Schwartz Center* - The Schwartz Center for the Arts was originally constructed in 1904 and known as the Dover Opera House. It was later expanded into a movie theater in 1923 and closed in 1982. After extensive renovations, the Center opened again in 2001. In 2004, a partnership between Wesley College and Delaware State University formed to maximize usage and position the historic treasure as the premiere performing arts center south of Wilmington. The Center has been closed since 2017 while plans are under review to determine its future.

## Events, Festivals and Promotions

Every year numerous events are held around the City, ranging from fireworks on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July, Art Festivals, and a Capital Holiday Celebration to ethnic parades and events such as Dover Days, St. Patrick's Day Parade, the African American Festival and Dover Comic Con.

One of the more popular events in the City is the Firefly Music Festival that takes place in the Woodlands of Dover International Speedway, a 102-acre festival ground, over the span of three to four days. The festival has been taking place in Dover since 2012 and features renowned headliners like Paul McCartney and Bob Dylan as well as emerging artists. The City has welcomed up to 90,000 Firefly attendees to this event.

The City's oldest running festival is Dover Days, a festival that has existed in one form or another since 1933. It is held traditionally on The Green and Legislative Mall, two beautiful outdoor parks in the historic Downtown district. Traditional elements and new components bring in thousands of visitors each year with attendance reaching over 15,000. Dover Days is a celebration of the First State's Capital City and features a parade, maypole dancing, food court, re-enactors, walking tours, free entertainment, and more.

The African American Festival began in 1989 as a craft show and is established as a tradition in central Delaware. Steeped in the culture of Africa and America, this entertaining and historical event is viewed by many as the most dynamic event of the summer season in Dover. This event has grown tremendously over the years with an audience of more than 20,000 participants. Local entertainment includes gospel singing, marchers, steppers, jazz musicians, comedians, historians, and the Sankofa African Dancers and Drummers of Dover.

The Downtown Dover Partnership in conjunction with Destination Downtown Dover and other stakeholders supports its share of events as well. From the monthly First Friday music and street fairs to the Capital City Farmer's Market, regular craft beer festivals, and even the Capitol City Countdown (on New Year's Eve), the Downtown celebrates Dover's heritage and its local businesses.

## Public and Non-Profit Sectors

The City of Dover hosts major components of public sector employment that serve the State, the region and the nation. The institutions comprising this sector of employment and service include:

- *State Government* – As of 2018, the State of Delaware employs about 6,400 people in Dover, excluding employees at Delaware Technical & Community College and Delaware

State University. Major State executive agencies, the Delaware General Assembly (legislature), the State courts and related support offices, public education and others State institutions and many of their employees make their home in Dover and the surrounding area. State government is a significant component of the local economy although its employment has declined in recent years. It is forecasted to be a stable, but limited growth sector in the future.

- *County, regional and federal government* – Dover is the home of the Kent County Levy Court (Kent County’s governing body). It provides a range of services to residents outside the City including regional wastewater collection and treatment, trash collection, planning and inspections, property records and assessment, along with other services. The County government has assumed a leadership role in promoting economic development on behalf of all the jurisdictions in the county. In 2018, the County employed 286 employees located in the County Administration Building in the City. Other government employees include those working for regional agencies (Dover/Kent County MPO and Kent Conservation District, for example), federal employees (Social Security, USPS, USDA, US Fish & Wildlife Service, etc.) and the staffs of Delaware’s Congressional Offices. Both county and regional/federal employment are expected to remain stable with only modest growth during the planning period.
- *Bayhealth Medical Center* – As central and southern Delaware’s largest healthcare system, Bayhealth is comprised of Bayhealth Hospital (Dover), Bayhealth’s Southern Campus (Milford), and the freestanding Emergency Department in Smyrna as well as numerous satellite facilities and employed physician practices encompassing a variety of specialties. Bayhealth is an affiliate of Penn Medicine for Heart and Vascular, Cancer and Orthopedics services. Additionally, patients at Bayhealth Hospital, on the Kent Campus in Dover have access to an expanded Emergency Department, a special care nursery, a state-of the art Progressive Care Unit and the latest surgical technologies including robotic and minimally invasive procedures. Bayhealth has grown by more than 400 employees in the last four years, currently employing more than 3,700 employees and a medical staff of more than 400 physicians. In Fiscal Year 2017, Bayhealth recorded 94,223 emergency department visits and 18,760 patients admitted to beds (each being the highest amount in Bayhealth’s history), and 2,212 births.
- *Non-profits* – The non-profit sector in Dover is not easily documented or quantified but is a significant component of the local economy. Numerous such entities are involved in housing, social services, mental health, and a variety of other areas. A strong faith-based community and other organizations play an important and increasing role in improving the quality of life for less fortunate residents. Redevelopment initiatives throughout the City especially benefit from the contributions of these organizations such as NCALL and Central Delaware Habitat for Humanity. These operations typically are included in the overall business and professional services categories.

As the City grows, public and private services expand to meet its citizens’ needs. Since 2008, the State of Delaware has constructed a new Kent County Courthouse on the site of the former O’Brien County Office Building and renovated the former Haslett Armory on Martin Luther King, Jr.

Boulevard South to house the Office of Management and Budget, which includes the Office of State Planning Coordination.

Dover strengthened its Downtown area with construction of the new Dover Public Library adjacent to City Hall in 2012 (implementing one of the critical goals of the 2008 Plan). The new, larger multi-story facility provides much-needed space for expanded services. The new library is a catalyst in the revitalization of Downtown Dover (See also Chapter 8).

Other longer-range redevelopment and revitalization projects include planning for a parking solution to serve the Downtown, relocation of the existing Post Office into a new facility, and the future opportunities for a new City office complex. Infrastructure investments on the horizon are streetscape improvements in the Downtown, creation of pedestrian walkways linking parking and business uses, and planning for the reuse of the former library (recently transferred to Wesley College) and the City's Reed Street office building.

Ongoing planning includes future construction of a new Family Court Building and various street and utility improvements to address safety, drainage and access. The State's FY19 Bond Bill allocated funding for planning, design, architectural and engineering work for the Family Court Building and future allocations to Delaware State University and Delaware Technical & Community College for projects aimed at creating a significant number of high-quality, full-time jobs.

## Higher Education

The City of Dover is home to four (4) institutions of higher education including Delaware State University, Wesley College, Delaware Technical & Community College, and Wilmington University (formerly Wilmington College).

- *Delaware State University (DSU)* – The University was founded in 1891 as the State College for Colored Students and began as a land grant college for agriculture and mechanical arts. Recently celebrating its 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary, DSU has evolved into a fully accredited, comprehensive university with a 356-acre main campus located on US Route 13 in Dover and two satellite sites. DSU offers degrees in 42 undergraduate fields of study as well as 16 master's degree programs and five doctoral degree programs. The current student population of DSU is 4,872 (2018). Over the past eight years DSU has expanded its research portfolio and international partnerships. In the summer of 2015, the University established the Delaware Institute for Science and Technology with the completion of a 27,000 square foot research building originally housing the Optical Science Center for Applied Research which also now houses the Delaware Center for Neuroscience Research and the Office of Sponsored Programs.
- *Wesley College* – Wesley College was founded in 1873 to provide a two-year, value-centered education to students of all races and faiths. It conferred its first four-year degree in 1978. Graduate programs were added in the 1990s with advanced degrees currently awarded in several professions including business administration, criminal justice,

education, environmental science, nursing, occupational therapy, and sports leadership. Located within walking distance of historic Downtown Dover, Wesley College is Delaware's oldest private college and covers more than 30 areas of study in arts and sciences, business, health sciences, education, and fine arts. Around 1,500 students from 28 states and 18 counties attend Wesley and receive individualized learning with a student to faculty ratio of 15 to 1. Wesley's total workforce is nearly 600. The State's FY19 Bond Bill included funding for Wesley College to renovate the former Dover Library building to house occupational health and other programs.

- *Delaware Technical & Community College, Terry Campus (DTCC)* – Delaware Tech was created as the first community college in the state. The first campus opened in 1967 in Georgetown. In 1968, the northern campus in New Castle County opened and expanded to two campuses in 1974. The Terry Campus in Dover opened in 1972. Delaware Tech is a statewide, post-secondary education institution at the associate degree level, although the College offers one bachelor's degree (nursing). The College offers comprehensive educational opportunities including career, general, developmental, and transfer education, as well as workforce training, lifelong learning, and youth programs. Terry Campus' associate degree programs for building automation systems technicians, surgical technologists and paramedics are the only programs of their kind in the State. The current student enrollment of DTCC Terry Campus is 4,496 with 290 full time and 309 part time employees as of July 2018.
- *Wilmington University* – Wilmington University was founded in 1968 as Wilmington College. The institution was granted university status by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools in 2007. Wilmington University opened its first Dover campus at the Dover Air Force Base (DAFB) in 1974, then opened an additional campus in Dover in 1983. Due to unprecedented growth a larger campus was constructed at the current location at US Route 13 and Scarborough Road. Wilmington University offers undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral degree programs in seven different colleges: Arts and Sciences, Business, Education, Health Professions, Online and Experiential Learning, Social and Behavioral Science, and Technology. The current student enrollment is 1,843 at the Dover campus and 410 at the DAFB.

With a combined student population of almost 13,000 students and a large support staff and faculty, the colleges and universities in the City offer a vast pool of an educated labor force for the metropolitan area, as well as valuable resources for education, research and lifelong learning.

### **Dover Air Force Base**

The Dover Air Force Base (DAFB) is one of the largest employers in the City, second only to the State of Delaware, and is Delaware's fifth largest employer. Located on approximately 3,900 acres in southeastern Dover, it plays a major role in national security and provides a strong consumer base for the City of Dover. The Base's workforce (2017 data) consists of 6,400 military personnel (3,900 active duty, 1,500 reservists and 1,000 civilians). It also supports approximately 5,100 family members. With an estimated economic impact of over \$590 million (2018), DAFB provides employment and economic benefit to the surrounding community. The Base completed a \$102 million new runway construction project in 2017 to ensure that the Base will continue to be

a critical national defense facility and an important part of Dover’s future. Construction plans include a hanger large enough to fully enclose a C-5 or C-17, a new base school, dormitories, and other improvements. In 2017, DAFB celebrated its 75<sup>th</sup> year and the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United States Air Force. Its impact is also measured in visitors to the Base and the area; in August 2017 the Thunder Over Dover Open House and Airshow brought 75,000 visitors to the City.

The City protects the Base’s mission by restricting development in areas around the facility with the Airport Environs Overlay Zone (AEOZ). This zone restricts development that would conflict with the Base’s accident potential zones and requires noise protection for most new uses.

## DOVER’S ECONOMIC STRENGTHS AND AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

In the process of creating an economic development strategy plan for the City, previous and current studies were examined and the results of both a 2008 and a 2018 survey were analyzed. The chart below, prepared initially for the 2008 Plan, continues to reflect the Dover economy.

**Table 10-2: Dover Strengths and Areas of Improvement**

| <b>Dover’s Strengths</b>  | <b>Dover’s Areas for Improvement</b>  |
|---|---|
| Central location with easy access to metropolitan and resort areas    | Lack of high-paying jobs  |
| Favorable tax structure (no sales tax, low property taxes)            | Severe shortage of affordable housing   |
| Rural character with access to cultural attractions and open space    | Inability to attract diverse industries   |
| State and local government support of business                        | Insufficient transportation system including roads, public transit, and access to interstate    |
| Strong education base with four colleges and universities             | Inability to retain graduates/educated workforce  |
| Delaware State University as an emerging high-tech research incubator | Aging population  |
| Diverse population with low crime rate and a safe environment         | Lack of social/recreational activities for young professionals, singles, and mid-career couples |
| Family friendly   |   |

Source: CEDS Summary and Comprehensive Plan Community Survey of 2018

## PLANNING FOR DOVER’S ECONOMIC FUTURE

### Process of Understanding and Planning for Dover’s Economic Future

Through an array of techniques including working groups, public workshops, strategy meetings, and surveys undertaken as part of the 2008 planning process, the following categories were recognized as areas of economic importance and viability. These categorical findings were “tested”

and updated again through the Comprehensive Plan Survey completed in 2018 and various recent collaborative activities:

- Downtown Dover Revitalization
- Marketing Garrison Oak
- Addressing and designating priority Industrial/Commercial Zones
- Promoting Green Technology
- Improving infrastructure, attractions, and events to increase tourism
- Diversifying Dover’s economy by recruiting new industries that use a skilled work force in addition to adding to the current workforce
- Strategic marketing to position Dover as a meetings and leisure travel destination
- Retaining current employment base and assisting existing businesses and industry in become more successful
- Strengthening economic development partnerships.
- Improving general economic conditions (jobs, income, access, etc.)
- Promoting healthcare as a major component of the economy
- Recognizing the role of higher education to Dover’s economy
- Creation of more skilled labor and trade jobs
- Promoting tourism

Since 2008, several initiatives have been undertaken to strengthen Dover’s economy and focus on growth opportunities, both Downtown and throughout the community. These are described below.

### **Creation of the Downtown Dover Partnership (DDP)**

Following a 2006 study, a consolidated organization called the Downtown Dover Partnership, (DDP) was established. The Partnership provides stronger leadership and better coordination of activities related to downtown revitalization. Working closely with the City and other Downtown partners, the DDP has focused attention on safety, parking, aesthetics, marketing and reducing vacancy. The DDP’s mission statement reads: “Promote the public welfare of the residents of the City of Dover, Delaware by promoting and furthering in any way, the development of the economic, cultural, and historic resources of the downtown area of the City of Dover, and to provide for the residents, to the extent that the common good and general welfare of the community is served.” The Partnership’s goal is to improve the opportunities for job creation, broaden the tax base through the development of the commercial and residential potential of the Central Dover area, and to maintain and restore the historic architectural and community qualities of the Downtown area consistent with the goals of the National Main Street Program.

### **Restoring Central Dover Plan for the Downtown – 2013 (RCD Plan)**

The most thorough and recent planning initiative for the Downtown is represented by the 2013 *Restoring Central Dover Plan*. This comprehensive, community redevelopment effort was led by the National Council on Agricultural Life and Labor (NCALL) with strong support from the CenDel Foundation/Greater Kent Committee, the Dover Interfaith Mission for Housing, and the City of Dover. Intended to address the high-priority needs of low-income Central Dover residents with the goal of achieving long-term benefits by way of affordable housing, neighborhood safety and desirability, opportunities for economic growth, and essential services for children and

families, the RCD plan focused on incremental strategies founded on the idea that revitalization is about reinvesting in both people and place. Its goals were to: bring resources to support the needs of disadvantaged residents and families; revitalize Loockerman Street as a vibrant commercial corridor and asset to adjacent neighborhoods; coordinate efforts of the City, nonprofit organizations, churches and residents to make the most of resources; and assure informed funding decisions and secure resources for neighborhood investments.

The Plan is built on planning processes and studies over the prior decade and detailed analysis of existing condition. Numerous challenges were identified, including blighted properties, crime, high vacancy rates, and limited access to commercial services, low incomes and high levels of poverty. Plan recommendations fall into three major themes: building a strong community; promoting positive development (including blight removal and redevelopment); and integrating the public realm and infrastructure. The RCD Plan will be revised during 2019.

### **Designation of the Downtown Development District (DDD)**

In January 2015, the City was designated by Governor Markell as one of the State’s initial three Downtown Development Districts. The goals of the Downtown Development District program (DDD) include:

- Spur capital investments in commercial business districts and other neighborhoods
- Stimulate job growth and improve the commercial vitality of such districts and neighborhoods
- Help build a stable community of long-term residents by improving housing opportunities
- Assist municipalities in strengthening neighborhoods while harnessing the attraction that vibrant downtowns hold for talented people, innovative small businesses and residents from all walks of life.

In its application for designation, the City noted that “Dover’s downtown was once a thriving hub of activity, including bustling businesses and well-kept residences. Like many downtowns, suburbanization and the prominence of auto oriented strip malls ... have left the downtown underutilized and deteriorating. A number of factors have created impediments to ... downtown revitalization ...the deterioration of existing building stock ... deterioration of downtown neighborhoods due to neglected housing stock, low homeownership rates, and crime.”

The Downtown Development District, shown on Map 10-1, is a smaller more targeted portion of the Downtown where specific state, county, and local incentives are available to encourage redevelopment and revitalization. The DDD encompasses about 225 acres covering the core of the Downtown. Expansion of the DDD to 250 acres to include additional properties critical to the City’s goal of revitalization of the Downtown is permitted by State law.

The Downtown Development District designation carries with it various incentives designed to encourage development and redevelopment in qualified downtowns throughout Delaware. These incentives include rebates of up to 20% of the cost of improvements above certain eligibility thresholds. Rebates are available for most residential, commercial and industrial projects taking

place within the DDD designated area. The program is administered by the Delaware State Housing Authority and the Office of State Planning along with the City’s Planning Department, City, Downtown Dover Partnership, and Kent County incentives augment the State’s initiative.

The DDD Program is a very important part of the City’s downtown revitalization objectives. Through a cooperative effort of the City, the Downtown Dover Partnership (DDP) and others, as of October 2019, the DDD Program has provided incentives to projects worth almost \$14 million dollars for large and small project applications. From 2015 to 2018, four (4) large projects were completed totaling \$2.8 million in new/reinvestment while three (3) currently active projects with DDD reservations totaling \$6.8 million are underway. Large project approvals included multiple residential, mixed use and commercial applications.

From its inception through 2019, Dover also had 27 smaller projects approved for DDD incentives: 15 residential applications, 11 commercial applications and 1 mixed use project collectively worth over \$4.5 million in reinvestment in the Downtown.

A significant portion of Dover’s DDD program has addressed areas of blighted housing, the replacement of which furthers objectives of increased homeownership, bringing residents back into the Downtown, reducing crime and building neighborhood involvement. Extensive portions of blighted blocks have been redeveloped into attractive new housing. The DDD incentives have helped to close the gap between the cost of providing new housing and the affordability of properties to new owners. Small project rebates average \$20,000 and both NCALL and Central Delaware Habitat for Humanity acknowledge that these programs might not succeed in Central Dover without the incentives.

In addition to the State DDD incentives, the City also offers more limited waivers and other incentives. Since inception the City has awarded over \$126,000 in waivers of permit fees, impact fees, and business license charges. The DDD designation and the incentives provided have spurred renewed interest in the Downtown significantly augmenting the efforts to better market and promote Dover’s historic Downtown.

Both the City and the DDP are committed to the success of the DDD program and have designated individuals whose duties include working with prospects to identify redevelopment and reinvestment opportunities; identify possible incentives (including not only the DDD-specific incentives but also potential funding options associated with Opportunity Zone, Neighborhood Building Block Program and Historic Preservation Tax Credits as well); and collectively market the Downtown. Recent planning initiatives have also included studies of parking availability, assessment of the feasibility of a parking garage, Rounds 1 and 2 of “Unlock the Block” (a program aimed at linking potential entrepreneurs with owners of vacant or underutilized properties), and an ongoing Downtown marketing opportunity analysis.

## **Other Planning Initiatives for the Downtown**

### **West Side Studies**

The area known as the West Side is an area where economic development opportunities and challenges are numerous. Located immediately west of the central downtown core area it encompasses the land around portions of Loockerman Street, Kirkwood Street, West Street, Forrest Street and Clarence Street. It is bisected by the railroad corridor. The West Side consists

primarily of small-scale retail establishments as well as some light manufacturing firms. However, there have been long-standing issues of vacant storefronts, lands, and housing, environmental concerns and a lack of economic vitality in this area.

A 2000 study, *Strategic Development Plan for Dover's West Side*, sought to determine the vision for how the West Side of Dover's Downtown will be shaped and developed for the future. This strategic plan focused on the revitalization of the West Side area and reintegration of this area into the overall urban fabric of Downtown Dover.

A subsequent strategic plan for the development of the area surrounding Clarence Street was prepared in 2007. The plan calls for the extension of Clarence Street from North Street through to Forest Street. The area between the extension of Clarence Street and the railroad tracks would be developed as a mixed-use office area. More recent studies have focused on the Route 8 Corridor, the Loockerman and Forest Street area, and the Forest Street and Division Street Gateway. All these studies recommend streetscape and roadway improvements to create attractive gateways into the City, better manage traffic flow, implement bicycle and pedestrian improvements, and stimulate redevelopment. They need to be reviewed and implemented.

#### **Transit Center**

*Dover Transit Center Neighborhood Plan and Design Book (2011)* was completed in 2011 as the result of a charrette process. Building on the location for the new transit hub at Water Street and South Queen Street, this study incorporated much of the area analyzed in earlier Downtown and corridor plans with goals of improving gateway entrances, adding parking solutions, fostering new development around improved corridors for vehicular and pedestrian traffic, providing greater connectivity throughout the City, using the Transit Center as an anchor for mixed-use redevelopment, and promoting intermodal transportation. The Transit Center and related parking was constructed but little new development has occurred to date.

#### **Relevant Planning Studies for the US 13 Corridor and Citywide**

Several studies were done from 2003 to present (building on even earlier efforts) to examine transportation improvements in the US 13 corridor and elsewhere in the City (Route 8, West Dover Connector, etc.). While focused on connectivity and safety, the improvements recommended in these studies (2007 *US 13 Corridor Study*, 2010 *North Dover Service Road Study*, and 2017 *Garrison Oak Traffic Study*, and others) also contribute to improving the economic viability of the City, making it easier to access the community for goods and services, manufacturing, wholesale and distribution, and other purposes. These are part of the Transportation Plan component of the Comprehensive Plan in Chapter 9.

#### **Reaching Out – Securing Input from Stakeholders about Dover's Economy**

##### **2018 Citizen Input Survey**

As part of the comprehensive planning process, Staff developed a public input survey with questions relating to many of the topics addressed in the plan (See also Chapter 4 - Citizen Participation). The key responses to the questions relating to Economic Development include strong support for the following: increased coordination between the City and others involved in

economic development; greater involvement of the City’s institutions of higher education; creation of more skilled labor and trade jobs; promotion of the arts, recreation and other resources; attention to the revitalization of the west end of Loockerman Street; and continuation of current policies for Downtown revitalization.

But there was some concern that current efforts by the City and others regarding economic development have not been highly successful coupled with some disagreement with the notion of increased public investment in parking, government facilities and the Downtown streetscape. Crime, vacant buildings, homelessness and property maintenance in the Downtown topped the list of important, and unresolved issues to be addressed in the plan.

### **Symposium on Dover’s Economy**

On June 13, 2018 the City and Wilmington University convened a Symposium involving economic development and marketing representatives from Delaware State University, Delaware Technical & Community College, Wesley College, and Wilmington University, along with a representative from Goldey Beacom College to identify critical areas of ongoing collaboration. This symposium was primarily intended to recognize and start to build on the importance of higher education to the City. Although broadly focused, certain important themes emerged from this effort. These included:

- **Analytics** – The need for current comparative and trend data was apparent. This includes ongoing analyses of demographic and market trends and an understanding of the changes taking place and likely to occur in the local economy over time.
- **Jobs and Training** – Many of the jobs available today, especially in the technology fields, were not even being discussed ten years ago. Increasingly, we are faced with trying to identify job opportunities in the future that we don’t even know about now. Additionally, many future needs will be in highly skilled trades and services where current training programs may be lacking.
- **Community Involvement and Engagement** – The Symposium demonstrated that many elements of the community do not actively engage in efforts to improve the community. This is particularly important for college students who bring energy, fresh ideas, time and skills that should be directed to community services and outreach.
- **Connecting the Dots** – Looking at the involvement of college students and the institutions themselves, it was clear that bringing “uptown downtown” and vice versa is essential. Although Dover has many institutions of higher education and a significant population of resident and commuter students, the City does not portray a “college” environment and economy.
- **Looking at Non-traditional Urban Uses** – Urban agriculture opportunities are but one non-traditional activity that could have a place in Dover’s economy. A recent Health Impact Assessment conducted by the EPA for the DDP identifies opportunities to grow food and other crops in an urban hydroponic setting that could create jobs, improve food availability, and reuse a certified former Brownfield.

### **Housing Forum/Discussion**

As part of the background research, a meeting was held with the Kent County Association of Realtors and the Delaware Homebuilders Association to discuss the status of residential

construction and sales in Dover. This meeting identified that the residential market in Dover has not responded as quickly as the rest of the local economy. The City’s inventory of homes is less diverse than in the County in terms of style, options and prices; and that the market is constrained by lending (mortgage) policies making it difficult for buyers to secure suitable financing, especially for upper end residences. These factors are reflected in less diversity in offerings and limited new residential activity. (See also Chapter 11 - Housing).

### **Collaboration with Kent County on Economic Development**

Kent County adopted its *2018 Comprehensive Plan* on September 11, 2018. That plan establishes the following policy premise:

“To encourage a strong economy with sustainable economic growth and pursue a balanced economic development strategy that includes attracting new technology and other knowledge-based companies, to provide an influx of higher paying jobs that will keep the community competitive and help retain its young professionals and support the economic development and redevelopment goals of the towns.”

Key components of that policy include supporting economic development efforts of municipalities including downtown revitalization efforts, focusing economic development toward areas where infrastructure exists or is planned, bringing stakeholders together to work on opportunities, continuing the County investment in Downtown Development Districts, and avoiding land use decisions that compete with the municipalities.

The Kent County Plan supports promotion of opportunities through creation of business incubators, development of county-wide broadband, capitalizing on opportunities offered by the agricultural industry, better use of vacant/underutilized existing industrial and commercial spaces, shared marketing strategies, and improved analytics regarding business sector targets for the County.

One of the Kent County Plan objectives is ensuring that adequate land is available for new commercial and industrial development, especially areas with adequate infrastructure and access. The County Plan designates “Employment Centers” in key areas for creation of jobs – locations for offices of all types and light industrial development. The County Plan designates a 332-acre area adjacent to the existing Kent County Aeropark as a future Employment Center.

Most encouraging is the recent refocusing and reforming of the Kent Economic Partnership (KEP) to assume a leadership role in analyzing, forecasting and identifying economic development conditions and opportunities for the County and its municipalities.

### **2018 Preliminary Kent County Economic Development (KEP) Targets**

In conjunction with the Greater Kent Committee, a *Kent County Economic Analysis Study* (Rockport Analytics) was completed in September 2018. The Kent Economic Partnership analyses identified several target opportunities for the County. Many, if not most, of those are best suited for areas where infrastructure and services already exist. Hence these are excellent targets for Dover as well. The following opportunities were identified:

- **Business and Legal Services** – Dover/Kent County secures goods and services from outside the area in areas such computer design and programming, science and R&D services, employment and HR services, advertising and public relations, legal services, accounting and building related services. There is significant potential to capture demand in these areas to create well-paying jobs and support small business creation.
- **Distribution, Warehousing, Logistics** – Much of the distribution, warehousing and logistic (DWL) sector in the Dover/Kent County area is dominated by self-storage and agriculture, but Dover’s location and lower land costs could support DWL services to both local and regional markets.
- **Health Care** – Dover’s health care sector is a keystone of the local economy, but additional opportunities exist for practitioners, nursing, outpatient and community care, and diagnostic services. These high demand, well paid, skilled professional jobs are ideal targets for future growth in the City.
- **Education and Skills Development** – With its established and highly recognized system of universities and colleges, Dover is ideally suited to meet many of the professional education needs of the area. However, there is a need for significantly expanded technical and workforce skills training.
- **Quality of Life Services** – A well-balanced, vibrant community requires a vast array of goods and services that ensure sustained economic health. Among these are restaurants and catering services, retail goods and services (especially in clothing, sports, and grocery), arts/culture and recreation, and entertainment for all segments of the population.

## AREAS FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLANNING ACTIVITIES

As with any planning process, certain issues and areas require more detailed and through analysis than can be completed initially. The planning process has identified these economic development focus areas where master planning of the land area should be conducted.

Two large enclaves in the northern part of the City are noted in the Annexation Plan. One is a large (approximately 76 acre) enclave located along the railroad and fronting on Scarborough Road/McKee Road. The Annexation Plan/Potential Land Use Plan indicates that this area should be considered for Mixed Use including possible manufacturing and transportation uses where access to both rail and a major roadway network are easily accessible. This property, now in the County but surrounded by the City, has been identified as a priority area by the Kent Economic Partnership as well. Development interests have indicated that a future residential use would be appropriate. More research and planning are desirable to maximize the future use value of this unusual opportunity.

The second enclave area is a partially developed area outside of City limits, just east of US 13 near the Scarborough Road/ North Dover SR1 interchange. Adjacent to Wilmington University, and currently used for residential and limited commercial uses, the area should be investigated to

determine how it could be reused in the future. The campus of Wilmington University offers an opportunity for expansion of the University itself and perhaps a location for a specialized center for research, education, training and ancillary uses. Such a center could build on the presence of the University and the importance of collaboration with the other institutions of higher education in the City. Much of the University's 50+/- acres is available for appropriate Mixed Use.

Extensive areas affiliated with Dover Downs and Dover International Speedway are located to the east and south of these facilities on both sides of State Route 1. These lands are used primarily for limited events (NASCAR, Firefly) are shown in the plan in Commercial land use categories although that designation may not fit either present or longer-range opportunities and desires. It is recommended that the City and the involved parties undertake a master planning activity that looks at existing and possible uses, adequacy and appropriateness of current zoning, integration with various transportation improvement plans, and compatibility with future uses of adjacent areas. This area is designated on the Land Development Plan (Chapter 12 and Map 12-1) as an entertainment-focused Commercial land use to differentiate it from shopping center and other more traditional uses for which different Commercial land use classifications are being recommended.

The Downtown Dover Partnership owns several parcels throughout the Downtown core. Reuse proposals for some of them are being considered, but a group of parcels, as well as adjacent privately-owned properties, just west of the railroad at Forest Street offer potential for redevelopment. Redevelopment could consist of light manufacturing, wholesale and transport purposes or even non-traditional uses such as vertical farming/hydroponics. The vertical farming/hydroponics use was explored by the EPA on behalf of the City/DDP. A preliminary Health Impact Assessment was conducted to determine options for these former Brownfield locations. Sponsors and investors for redevelopment of this area are being explored jointly by the DDP and the City.

Industrially designated areas in the southeast portion of the City along Horsepond Road and Lafferty Lane including the Kent Aeropark and the County-identified future Employment Center area should be carefully planned to ensure adequate transportation and utility infrastructure, Air Environs Overlay Zone (AEOZ) compatibility, and that sound environmental controls are in place to maximize the potential of this key employment area. A master planning activity must ensure that it is well designed, properly developed and well marketed to the benefit of the owners, the City and the County.

These economic development opportunities and challenges are discussed from a land use development context in Chapter 12 - Land Development Plan and in Chapter 13 – Growth and Annexation Plan. Economic development and redevelopment are a City priority, both for the historic Downtown and for the commercial corridors and industrial sites throughout the City. The City anticipates that much of its likely economic growth will occur on existing, often underutilized sites where redevelopment and revitalization offer the opportunity to utilize existing infrastructure, improve access to jobs, and enhance the tax base. The goals and recommendations that follow reflect these opportunities.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### **Goal 1: Attract and Retain High-paying Quality Jobs by Targeting Business Sectors that are Best Suited for Dover and Kent County**

Successful economic development requires understanding the economic environment, determining opportunities and targets, developing a sound marketing and promotional strategy, and establishing the mechanisms necessary for business retention and recruitment.

#### **Recommendation 1: Define an Economic Development Vision and Strategies for the City to Create a Diversity of Businesses and Foster Development of a Broad Workforce**

- Identify locations and pursue opportunities for economic growth, working with economic development entities, community organizations, and other stakeholders to build on assessments of the City's and County's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, and on identified target industries.
- Build private-public partnerships (P3) to encourage coordination and foster investments among private, State, County and City stakeholders.
- Build on the resources available through the City's institutions of higher education for analytics, training and research and to link economic development opportunities and targets with workplace skills and professional training curricula.
- Support the development of workforce development programs, strategies and partnerships that increase training and employment opportunities for all residents.

#### **Recommendation 2: Promote Well-planned Commercial and Business Development and Redevelopment Complexes along Dover's Principal Corridors and in Commercial Centers**

- Recognize the value of Dover's local and regional commercial corridors.
- Value the tourism industry including promoting the City as the State Capital.
- Promote Dover as the central commercial location in the County and as a regional magnet for retail, commerce, entertainment and culture.

#### **Recommendation 3: Market Dover's Central Delaware Location for Business, Professional and Health Services, and for Manufacturing Locations and Facilities**

- Coordinate with other economic development entities and the private sector to share information to cooperatively market Dover's resources.

#### **Recommendation 4: Promote Opportunities to Create Aviation-based Business Opportunities Surrounding the Central Delaware Aviation Facility and in order to Capture the Economic Benefits of Dover Air Force Base (DAFB)**

- Promote the establishment of Joint Use Agreements and other opportunities to coordinate with DAFB.
- Work closely with Kent County to develop an aviation and aeronautics focused employment center near DAFB.

- Protect Dover Air Force Base (DAFB) from encroachment by preventing incompatible commercial and/or residential development east of State Route 1 and within the Airport Environs Overlay Zone (AEOZ).
- Complete comprehensive rezoning associated with the Industrial Park Manufacturing Zone: Aviation and Aeronautics Center (IPM3) zoning classification.

**Recommendation 5: Develop Effective Protocols for Business Attraction and Retention Activities**

- Designate a point of contact and specific processes for City interaction with prospects, including a coordinated marketing program with other public and private stakeholders.
- Maintain an active leadership position within organizations focused on job growth in Kent County.
- Ensure that the City is ready for economic development through streamlined regulatory processes, incentives, funding opportunities, and infrastructure investments, as appropriate.
- Enhance the City’s capacity to collect and assess economic conditions and trends, identify target businesses, and understand business location decisions.

**Goal 2: Encourage the Economic Revitalization and Integrity of Dover’s Downtown, including the Historic Core and the Traditional Community Surrounding It**

The heart of Dover is its historic downtown business district and the traditional community surrounding it. The successful revitalization of which depends on the participation of numerous stakeholders in an organized program of planning, coordination, information and engagement.

**Recommendation 6: Support the Downtown Dover Partnership and Restoring Central Dover Plan**

- Coordinate with and encourage efforts of the Downtown Dover Partnership and the Restoring Central Dover programs and support as appropriate the NCALL Real Estate Development Plan for Central Dover.
- Undertake and support new business creation initiatives such as the Kent County “Open for Business” program, the DDP’s “Unlock the Block” program, and the RCD program’s “Launcher” initiative.
- Encourage one-on-one consulting with business and property owners to discuss their concerns and needs and to identify service providers/incentives that can help address those needs.
- Work with businesses in the Downtown district to keep market driven hours, offer specialized products and services, properly maintain building space, enhance window displays, expand or contract current lines and services, expand existing business space, and open new shops.
- Create and publish “how to” brochures and other information for investors, prospective entrepreneurs, property owners and other business interests.

- Undertake a comprehensive planning and strategic process to address crime, vagrancy, loitering and vandalism through community policing, code and criminal enforcement and public awareness.
- Review and modify vacant building codes and procedures to incentivize reuse, reduce exemptions, and enforce penalties on chronic vacancy.

**Recommendation 7: Develop and Promote Incentives for Downtown Redevelopment**

- Evaluate and market a slate of incentives for redevelopment within the Downtown Redevelopment Target Area. Continue to add incentives that will encourage a balanced mix of uses with the intention of improving opportunities, correcting negative conditions and eliminating vacancies.

**Goal 3: Promote the Revitalization and Redevelopment of the Center City**

Critical to revitalizing the historic downtown is a commitment to the City's central core by fostering economic activity, developing linkages, enhancing community resources, promoting neighborhoods, providing authenticity, and creating opportunities that are complementary to the goals of the Restoring Central Dover and Downtown Development District Programs.

**Recommendation 8: Promote and Support Development and Redevelopment Efforts**

- Support a neighborhood redevelopment strategy along W. Division Street for the areas surrounding Governors Avenue, New Street, Queen Street, Kirkwood Street and West Street to include an identity, a variety of housing opportunities, neighborhood-scale businesses and continued increasingly successful blight removal efforts.
- Implement recommendations of prior studies and plans for the revitalization of the center city, such as the *Strategic Development Plan for the West Side*, the *Dover Transit Center Neighborhood Plan and Design Book*, and the *Division Street/Forest Street Dover Capital Gateway Plan and Design Book*.
- Link redevelopment activities along S. Governors Avenue, Water Street, Bank Lane and West Street with the Bayhealth Medical Center complex, the State Courts and other governmental and educational facilities in the area.
- Develop a Government/Civic Complex plan addressing the future needs of the City including City Hall and other City offices, government complex parking, recreation and open space, and the Mirror Lake/Loockerman Street gateway to the Downtown.
- Leverage positive investment from Delaware State Housing Authority, the Strong Neighborhood Housing Fund, the Neighborhood Building Block Fund, the Opportunity Zone Program, and other sources to assist with neighborhood redevelopment efforts.

**Recommendation 9: Promote and Support the Traditional Mixed-use Nature of the Downtown Area**

- Ensure that zoning district regulation in the Downtown promotes personal, professional and service-oriented businesses and alternative work-live and co-work opportunities.
- Create an Arts Co-op/ Arts & Entertainment designation for the Downtown area and recruit artists to live and work in the area.

**Goal 4: Ensure that Land Development, Zoning, Infrastructure and Other Development Requirements Encourage the Economic Development and Uses Desired**

Sound economic development and redevelopment is a balance between business opportunities and those regulations and processes designed to promote safe, well-designed, well-planned communities. The intent is to strike that balance between the proper exercise of public policy and a sustainable and viable economy.

**Recommendation 10: Review and Modify Regulations to ensure that Desired Uses Are Encouraged**

- Be flexible with contemporary zoning provisions that are responsive to emerging technologies and emerging business opportunities and activities, especially in the health care, arts and entertainment, and tourism sectors.
- Implement appropriate zoning and other provisions that support development and expansion of targeted businesses, ensure the appropriateness of uses within respective zones, promote sustainability, encourage balanced growth, promote small businesses and startups, and ensure responsiveness to emerging economic and societal trends.
- Update provisions addressing the growing variety and complexity of home occupations and accessory business activities in residential areas as the line defining traditional work evolves.
- Actively pursue development of ordinances, policies and strategies to address blight, vacancy, abandonment, environmental contamination, and underutilization of business sites and facilities throughout the City.

**Goal 5: Actively market the Garrison Oak Business and Technology Center (GOBTC)**

Garrison Oak Business and Technology Center (GOBTC) is a City-developed business-ready facility in the City well-suited for larger and technology focused enterprises to help balance the City's options for economic development and job creation. Capitalize on the GOBTC's broad appeal to a larger universe of potential business activities consistent with the original intent of the facility and with the IPM2 zoning district.

**Recommendation 11: Develop a Strategic Marketing Plan for Garrison Oak (GOBTC)**

- Work with the Kent Economic Partnership and the State to effectively market the Garrison Oak Business and Technology Center.
- Urge DelDOT and the Dover/Kent MPO to undertake planning and design for a dedicated connector from State Route 1 to the Center to improve access and marketability.
- Explore the potential of the Garrison Oak Business and Technology Center for designation as a foreign trade zone.

### **Goal 6: Pursue Economic Development Linked to Active Recreation**

Recreational pursuits, whether as a regular part of life, as a vocation, or a function of travel and tourism can be important contributors to the local economy.

#### **Recommendation 12: Promote Business Opportunities Linked with Dover's and Nearby Trails, Parks, Natural Areas and Public and Private Active Recreation Resources**

- Identify opportunities to use parks, trails, natural resources and commercial recreation facilities as catalysts for economic development.
- Evaluate and promote economic development strategies linked to natural resources such as forests, wetlands, beaches and wildlife areas for travel and tourism benefits.

### **Goal 7: Pursue Economic Development Linked to Improved Healthy Food Access**

Food is an essential component of health and a necessity of life. It is also one of the foundations of a local economy whether through growing, processing, marketing or consumption. Adequate access to food is a key element of a healthy quality of life, especially in urban and depressed areas.

#### **Recommendation 13: Encourage new ventures that expand healthy food options across Dover**

- Encourage access to food options such as corner markets, produce carts, food hubs, community gardens, farm stands, food trucks, and farmers markets, where appropriate.
- Support expanding healthy food availability through planning for food choices throughout the City.

FINAL DRAFT – 12.3.2019

# Chapter 11 HOUSING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN

## HOUSING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Dover’s development over the past ten years has experienced significant growth in the housing market. Delaware including the City of Dover is a very affordable place to live for owner-occupied housing compared to the surrounding states of Pennsylvania, Maryland, and New Jersey. This chapter will anticipate the effect of City services and housing needs within the City and market areas as well as goals and recommendations to provide quality safe and affordable housing for all income and age levels.

### HOUSING DEMOGRAPHICS

According to the Delaware Population Consortium, the projected total population of Dover in July 2019 is 38,058. This represents a 5.29% increase from the official 2010 Census figures for the City. According to the American Community Survey, Dover had 14,757 dwelling units in 2017 of which 13,427 were occupied. This represents a 2.8% increase in total units available from 2010 to 2017. Of the occupied units, 50.2% were owner-occupied and 49.8% were rental units which was a 1% increase in occupied rental units from 2010. The average mortgage cost increased by 1% to \$1,467 per month. The average rent increased 3.98% from \$965 in 2017 to \$1,005 in 2018. Table 11-1 compares the general housing characteristics of the City of Dover in 2010 to 2017. This table compiled from Census Data illustrates the housing unit type mixture in the City.

**Table 11-1: Housing Unit Mix, City of Dover, 2010 – 2017**

|                        | 2010          |             | 2017          |             |
|------------------------|---------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|
|                        | Units         | Percent     | Units         | Percent     |
| Single Family Detached | 6,968         | 50.1%       | 7,277         | 52.1%       |
| Single Family Attached | 2,410         | 17.3%       | 2,265         | 16.2%       |
| Multi-Family           | 4,527         | 32.6%       | 4,415         | 31.7%       |
| <b>TOTAL</b>           | <b>13,905</b> | <b>100%</b> | <b>13,957</b> | <b>100%</b> |

Source: US Census of 2010, American Community Survey 2013-2017

As evidenced in Table 11-1, new residential development from 2010 to 2017 has trended at the same mix of unit types. The most prevalent housing type in the City is still the single-family detached dwelling. In between the single-family detached dwelling units and the multi-family units (typically apartment units) falls the single-family attached dwellings made up of townhouse and duplex units.

The sales market in Dover for owner-occupied housing was strong with the increase in construction of single-family homes from 2010 to 2017. There is also an increase in homeownership in the Restoring Central Dover Area and the Downtown Development District area. The rental market in Dover remains steady with only a slight decrease in development of multi-family housing from 2010-2017. The City ensures that rental housing is following the Housing Code through its Rental Dwelling Permit Program, where Code Enforcement Officers conduct Annual Housing Inspections on rental dwellings units within the City.

### **Existing Land Use and Development Activity**

Since the *2008 Comprehensive Plan*, residential development within the City of Dover has been dominated by the approval of multi-family apartment projects. However, there is a decrease in the number of single family detached and single family attached housing units being approved. The focus is the build-out of previously approved residential developments. The tables below show the Site Plan and Subdivision Plan approvals for residential units and the residential housing starts (Permits) issued from 2008 to 2018.

Residential development fluctuated up and down from 2008–2018. Over a 11-year timeframe, 1,155 residential units were approved through the Planning Commission review process.

**Table 11-2: Residential Approvals by Year 2008 - 2018**

| <b>Year</b>                  | <b>2008</b> | <b>2009</b> | <b>2010</b> | <b>2011</b> | <b>2012</b> | <b>2013</b> | <b>2014</b> | <b>2015</b> | <b>2016</b> | <b>2017</b> | <b>2018</b> | <b>Total</b> |
|------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| Single-Family Detached units | 0           | 0           | 4           | 0           | 2           | 8           | 2           | 4           | 0           | 4           | 0           | 24           |
| Single-Family Attached units | 0           | 84          | 0           | 0           | 0           | 0           | 14          | 0           | 6           | 0           | 3           | 107          |
| Multi-Family units           | (216)       | (54)        | 0           | 144         | 243         | 125         | 24          | 317*        | 168*        | 3           | 0           | 1024         |
| <b>Totals</b>                | <b>0</b>    | <b>84</b>   | <b>4</b>    | <b>144</b>  | <b>245</b>  | <b>133</b>  | <b>40</b>   | <b>321</b>  | <b>174</b>  | <b>7</b>    | <b>3</b>    | <b>1155</b>  |

Source: City of Dover Department of Planning and Inspections, Annual Reports and Application Logs

\*Includes 77 units rebuilt at Walker Woods, \*317 units includes 77 unit increase proposed to Eden Hill Farm TND Residential, \*168 includes 100 units rebuilt at Liberty Court. (x) were proposed but never approved.

Construction of single-family detached homes decreased in numbers from 2008 to 2015; however, construction began to increase from 2016-2018. There was a steady decline in construction of single-family attached homes from 2008 through 2018 with a slight increase in the last three years. Multi-family unit construction fluctuated but saw a significant increase in the last three years.

There was a resurgence of built-out in previously approved subdivisions by developers during this span of time. Over an 11-year period, there were 1,724 residential housing units constructed.

**Table 11-3: Residential Housing Starts 2008 – 2018**

| Year                         | 2008       | 2009       | 2010      | 2011       | 2012      | 2013      | 2014       | 2015       | 2016       | 2017       | 2018       | Total        |
|------------------------------|------------|------------|-----------|------------|-----------|-----------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|--------------|
| Single Family Detached units | 64         | 33         | 39        | 17         | 15        | 32        | 28         | 41         | 91         | 100        | 123        | <b>583</b>   |
| Single Family Attached units | 60         | 49         | 36        | 31         | 22        | 18        | 16         | 19         | 32         | 36         | 46         | <b>365</b>   |
| Multi-Family units           | 120        | 42         | 12        | 72         | 0         | 0         | 144        | 46         | 126        | 172        | 42         | <b>776</b>   |
| <b>Totals units</b>          | <b>244</b> | <b>124</b> | <b>87</b> | <b>120</b> | <b>37</b> | <b>50</b> | <b>188</b> | <b>106</b> | <b>249</b> | <b>308</b> | <b>211</b> | <b>1,724</b> |

Source: City of Dover Department of Planning and Inspections Permit Data

Table 11-4 illustrates the breakdown of owner occupied vs. rental properties in the City. The American Community Survey provides estimates for intervening years between decennial census.

**Table 11-4: Rental vs. Owner Occupied Housing Status in Dover, 2006-2017**

|                        | 2006-2010 | Percent | 2013-2017 | Percent | Unit Increase or Decrease | % Increase or Decrease |
|------------------------|-----------|---------|-----------|---------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Vacant housing units   | 1,253     | 8.3%    | 1,330     | 9%      | 77                        | 7%                     |
| Occupied housing units | 13,046    | 88%     | 13,427    | 91%     | 381                       | 3%                     |
| Owner occupied         | 7,254     | 55.6%   | 6,747     | 50.2%   | -507                      | -7%                    |
| Renter occupied        | 5,792     | 44%     | 6,680     | 49.8%   | 888                       | 16%                    |
| Total Units            | 14,299    |         | 14,757    |         | 458                       | 3.2%                   |

Source: US Census 2010, American Community Survey (ACS) 2006-2010-2013-2017

There was an 7% increase in vacant housing units from 2006 to 2017. The City has been actively working over the past few years to reduce the number of vacant housing units through the Vacant

Buildings Program. One strategy focuses on demolition of the unit if the housing unit has been condemned by Code Enforcement and if declared a Dangerous Building. There was a 3% increase in occupied housing units and decrease in owner occupied units over the past 11 years that clearly demonstrates there is still a demand for all housing types. There was also a 16% increase in renter occupied units over the period which indicates there is a demand for additional rental housing.

Several existing subdivisions saw continued housing construction resulting in renewal of built out activity in the following subdivisions from 2008 to 2018. These developments include mixes of one family detached dwellings, duplexes, and townhouses. Activity includes dwellings in Nottingham Meadows, Clearview Meadows PND, Senators Lake, Seskinore, Village of Westover PND: Phase VI, Village of Cannon Mill PND, and Chestnut Grove Farms. Construction activity restarted in December 2017 on select lots in Patriot Village with a new builder taking over a long dormant subdivision. Most of these subdivisions are continuing with building construction with several subdivisions now complete.

In the last few years, construction activities increased at several multi-family residential projects for apartment units. Construction was completed for new apartment buildings at Leander Lakes Apartments south of Forrest Avenue/Route 8 and the Blue Hen Apartments: Phases 1 and 2 located east of Bay Road. Projects for redevelopment and renovation of units occurred at the following complexes: The Village of McKee Run (previously known as Walker Woods) and the buildings at the Preserve at Whatcoat (previously known as Whatcoat Village). Another major multi-family project involves the demolition of fourteen buildings and reconstruction of the residential units at Liberty Court Apartments at 1289 Walker Road. The project completed in 2019 resulted in a total of 100 apartment units and site improvements for fire protection and tree planting/landscaping. Several age targeted apartment projects that were completed include Tall Pines at 1655 and 1665 Kenton Road and The Arbors – Senior Garden Apartments at 1051 College Road. Construction of the final building (Apartment Building 4) was also completed at The Grande: Planned Neighborhood Design – Senior Citizen Housing Option.

There are plotted subdivisions that have yet to start construction. Stonebrook East PND and Stonebrook West PND were approved by Planning Commission in 2007. Proposed were 199 dwelling units that consists of single-family homes, townhomes and duplexes in Stonebrook West and 255 dwelling units consisting of townhouses and garden apartments in Stonebrook East. There are still plotted lots yet to be developed in Eden Hill Farms TND that includes single family detached homes, duplexes, townhouses, and multi-family buildings. Also, Somerset Park was approved by Planning Commission in 2005 as a Subdivision Plan to construct 14 single family detached homes. There is also future development possible for the Maidstone subdivision; it consists of six large lots approved in 2005 for an opportunity to construct a variety of mixed-use housing.

## ZONING PROVISIONS FOR HOUSING

The zoning provisions for housing are outlined in the *Zoning Ordinance* which is the primary legal tool regulating and restricting the following:

- The type of units permitted (use)
- Location, height, bulk and size of buildings
- Percentage of the lot which may be occupied (lot coverage)

- Size of yards, courts and other open spaces
- Minimum distances that buildings may be placed from streets and property lines (setbacks)

The *Zoning Ordinance* also includes a Zoning Map that identifies the number of zoning districts into which the City is divided and the status and usage of each district. Currently, the City has fourteen residential zones. The majority of the residential zones support single-family detached residences while others allow for a mix of housing styles and densities including single family attached homes such as duplexes and townhomes, apartments, and senior housing. The condominium format of ownership has been proposed for several projects. Also, certain commercial zones allow for residential units.

The Planned Neighborhood Design (PND) offers a mixture of residential housing types in a single development through a specialized review process (Conditional Use). This provides opportunities for residents to live in a planned neighborhood with reduced setbacks, smaller lots, alleys, porches, public meeting areas, parks for residents, and a variety of housing opportunities located in close proximity to each other. These neighborhoods are designed with pedestrians in mind along with multi-modal streets and sidewalks that also lessen the visual impact of garages and automobiles. Dwelling units within the PND are encouraged to be developed with a variety of architectural styles and layouts. The City is continuing to use the PND as the leading design style with more flexibility in varied housing stock and layouts. Examples of PND developments within the City include Clearview Meadow, Village of Cannon Mill, Lexington Glen, and Village of Westover. DoveView Senior Housing and Luther Village Senior Housing are examples of the PND: Senior Citizen Housing Option projects.

Another type of development zone within the City is the Traditional Neighborhood Design (TND) zoning district adopted in November 2004. TND includes a variety of housing styles with multiple density and land use types in a defined area. The variety of uses permits commercial establishments and civic buildings to be located within walking distance of private residences. A TND is served by a network of multi-modal paths, streets and lanes suitable for pedestrians and bicycles as well as vehicles. This provides residents the option of walking, biking or driving to places within their neighborhood. Eden Hill Farm TND on the south side of North Street is the first TND in the City. The Residential District of Eden Hill Farm TND consists of a plan for 665 dwelling units ranging from single family detached homes to duplex units, townhouses, and multi-family unit buildings. This residential area is linked with a grid network of streets, open space and park areas while being near the areas proposed for development in the Neighborhood Commercial District and Professional Office, Medical, and Financial District of the TND. To date, only 83 residential units (duplexes and townhouses) have been constructed. Over the years, there have been proposals for revisions to the Implementation Plan for the Residential District.

Manufactured housing is an affordable housing alternative for low income households. It is estimated that there are around 474 manufactured housing units which represents 3.2% of housing units in Dover according to the 2013-2017 American Community Survey data. There were three text amendments for revisions to the *Zoning Ordinance* related to manufactured housing in 2015, 2016 and 2018. In 2015, the zoning district name was changed from MHP (Mobile Home Park Zone) to MH (Manufactured Housing Zone). The definition of “mobile home,” “manufactured home,” and “modular home” were refined. The amendments also preclude manufactured homes from the definition of a one-family dwelling. In 2016, amendments updated the standards and

terminology related to manufactured homes and implemented standards for management and maintenance of land lease communities. In 2018, there were amendments that reorganized and clarified portions of the 2016 amendments related to manufactured homes with updates that include requirements for placing and licensing manufactured homes, standards for the management and maintenance of land lease communities, taxation, and code enforcement. Currently, there are seven manufactured home communities located within the City: Kings Cliff, Dover East, Riverside, Wild Meadows, M&S, the Susan Knoll property, and Persimmon Park Place.

Emergency Shelters and Transitional Housing are permitted uses within certain zoning districts in the City. This is currently only within the IO (Institutional and Office Zone). The definitions of these types of housing as defined in the *Zoning Ordinance* are given below:

*“Emergency shelter: A facility providing temporary housing to homeless or transient persons in a dormitory style setting; such facility may also provide or facilitate other social services including counseling and vocational training.”*

*“Transitional Housing: A residential facility developed in a one-family dwelling unit that is established to provide transition from homelessness to permanent housing, and generally integrated with other services and counseling programs to assist in the transition to self-sufficiency through acquisition of stable income and permanent housing.”*

There are presently two (2) emergency shelters in Dover: Dover Interfaith Mission for Housing and People’s Place II (formerly Whatcoat Shelter). There are several transitional housing units within the City that are single family homes and one facility, Walt Bagley Hall owned and operated by Dover Interfaith Mission for Housing. Homeless Providers are discouraged by the use the term “transitional housing” and are working towards amending the term to “supportive housing.”

## HOUSING NEEDS

Established in the Fair Housing Act of 1968, the law directs HUD and its program participants to affirmatively further Fair Housing. The City will strengthen its communities by taking specific steps to protect fair housing and toppling barriers to opportunity for all residents. The City of Dover strives to provide opportunities for quality housing variety and adequate housing opportunities for all economic levels, lifestyles, and ages for its residents. The City is committed to encouraging homeownership opportunities to all economic and age levels. To reach these objectives, the City’s Community Development Office prepared the *2015-2019 Consolidated Plan* to serve as the principal planning document for identifying the housing and community needs of the City’s residents. This document also serves as a requirement for the receipt of Federal funds allocated annually to each reporting jurisdiction. The *2020-2024 Consolidated Plan* will be completed and submitted to HUD in May 2020. The Consolidated Plan approach is additionally the means to meet application requirements for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Emergency Solutions Grants and other similar State and HUD funded programs. The *Consolidated Plan* strives to unify the real estate, homeowner and other stakeholders within the community in order to preserve the existing housing stock and provide safe and livable neighborhoods.

The City has many programs in place that provide homeownership opportunities to low-to-moderate income City residents as well as promote redevelopment of older neighborhoods. Through funding provided by the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) programs such as the Homeownership Assistance Program and Housing Rehabilitation Program provide safe and affordable housing to City residents.

During the community workshops held for the 2019 Comprehensive Plan, the majority of survey participants (48%) stated that there is a scarcity of adequate housing within the City. When asked to rate the desirability of housing types, a significant number of respondents ranked single family homes, townhouses/duplexes and apartment complexes as most desirable, with manufactured homes and high-rise apartments being the least desirable.

### **Affordable Housing Initiatives**

The City is working on several initiatives in conjunction with other agencies that will assist in providing affordable housing and reducing the risk of homelessness for low income persons. The City is one of the stakeholders in the Restoring Central Dover Initiative whose goal is to revitalize central Dover with the construction of affordable housing. Part of the initiative includes expanding the housing repair program to provide additional resources in the Downtown area for home repairs and to boost homeownership opportunities in this area by providing down payment assistance and funding for renovations to families who purchase properties in the designated area. Central Delaware Habitat for Humanity is the lead agency for the Strong Neighborhood Housing Fund which will acquire vacant or foreclosed properties in the target area and use CDBG funding to renovate the property to sell to families who are 60% and below the area median income in Dover. There are also several incentives available through the Downtown Dover Development District (DDD) designation. If a property is purchased within the Downtown Redevelopment Target Area, the transfer tax will be waived for owner-occupied first-time homebuyers and property taxes will be abated for owner occupied homes. There has been significant growth in the Downtown area with the construction of new homes built by Central Delaware Habitat for Humanity and NCALL through substantial rebates received from the DDD. The DDD Rebate can result in a 20% rebate of the capital investment in new affordable home construction. See Map 10-1 for location of the Downtown Development District and the Downtown Redevelopment Target Area.

From 2008-2014, Central Delaware Habitat for Humanity constructed two new affordable homes within the City and partnered with Diamond State Community Land Trust to renovate and sell four single family homes throughout the City. From 2015 -2019, Central Delaware Habitat for Humanity constructed and sold 18 affordable homes, with three more under contract, and purchased 8 vacant lots for future land use in the Restoring Central Dover (RCD) area. Impact fees were waived for these projects as part of the DDD Incentive. The buyers for these projects will also receive the DDD Incentives for tax abatement and the transfer tax. Three (3) other developers also purchased properties and land in the DDD and RCD area that will be constructed or renovated with affordable housing to be sold to low income residents. From 2017- 2019, four (4) properties were constructed by NCALL Research and sold in the DDD and RCD area. Additionally, there are four (4) homes under construction and two (2) under contract. NCALL also purchased 11 additional lots with plans to construct and sell three (3) homes in 2019. Six (6) affordable townhomes were constructed in the RCD area and three (3) single family homes were constructed by the Mautiste Investment Group. Milford Housing Development Corporation

constructed and sold two affordable single-family homes in 2018-2019. The DDD and RCD areas will continue to provide affordable housing over the next 3 to 5 years from the efforts of these organizations.

### **Low and Moderate-Income Housing**

The City of Dover has a higher concentration of families below poverty levels than both Kent County and the State. This is a function of historical developments and the tendency of lower-income individuals to congregate at urban centers where employment and services are more readily available. The City addresses poverty by encouraging subsidized housing, administering federal Community Development Block Grants (Dover received \$270,899 in CDBG funds in 2018), maintaining zoning ordinances friendly to a variety of housing types, working with nonprofit and governmental community development organizations, and administering state and local aid to families and individuals. In the City of Dover, HUD has designated those Census Block Groups which have greater than a 51% concentration of low- and moderate-income persons. The areas within the City limits are limited to Block Groups 405-01, 405-02, 407-02, 409-01, 410-02, 411-02, 413-01, 414-02 and 433-03. Map 11-1 reflects the Census Block Groups that are designated areas of low and moderate-income concentration.

Although affordability is an issue for all households, most affordable housing policies and programs target households at or below 80 percent of median family income (MFI). Below that threshold, an affordability analysis typically looks at groups including the extremely low-income (at or below 30 percent MFI), very low-income (between 30 and 50 percent MFI), and low-income (between 50 and 60 percent). Moderate-income households are those between 80 percent and 100 percent.

HUD determined 2018 Median Family Income for a family household of four persons in Kent County to be \$70,400. Using the HUD 2018 MFI for Kent County, Table 11-5 shows household income within each of the income ranges described above.

**Table 11-5: Low- and Moderate-Income Levels, HUD, April 2018**

| Income Type          | Description    | Family of 4 |             |
|----------------------|----------------|-------------|-------------|
|                      |                | From        | To          |
| Extremely low-income | 0-30% of MFI   | \$ 0        | < \$ 25,100 |
| Very Low-income      | 30-50% of MFI  | \$ 21,120   | < \$ 35,200 |
| Low-income           | 50-60% of MFI  | \$ 29,351   | < \$ 42,240 |
| Moderate-income      | 80-100% of MFI | \$ 60,850   | < \$ 76,100 |
| Median Income        | 100% of MFI    | \$ 70,400   |             |

Source: US Department of Housing and Urban Development

## Assisted Housing

The City endeavors to provide resources to subsidize housing for low and moderate-income families. Two agencies, the Dover Housing Authority (DHA) and the Delaware State Housing Authority (DSHA), share responsibility for providing subsidized public housing to the community. Table 11-6 provides the combined total of subsidized housing units with the City of Dover. A total of 1,948 subsidized units exist in the City of Dover for persons of low-income. In total, subsidized housing constitutes 15% of the City’s housing stock.

**Table 11-6: Subsidized Housing**

| Subsidized Housing Type | DSHA       | DHA        | Senior     | Total        |
|-------------------------|------------|------------|------------|--------------|
| Public Housing          | 250        | 286        | 60         | 596          |
| Housing Choice Voucher  | 210        | 169        | 0          | 379          |
| Tax Credit              | 505        | 77         | 391        | 973          |
| <b>Total</b>            | <b>965</b> | <b>532</b> | <b>451</b> | <b>1,948</b> |

Source: Dover Housing Authority and Delaware State Housing Authority

## Special Needs Housing

Persons who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and individuals with disabilities face diverse and critical housing needs often having extremely low incomes. These segments of the population face major affordability and accessibility challenges. The City recognizes the strain on individuals and the community where adequate affordable housing is not available to such persons.

There are currently three emergency homeless shelters in the Dover area. Shepherd’s Place Inc., though outside the municipal boundaries of Dover, operates a 20-bed facility. People’s Place II provides 46 beds. The Dover Interfaith Mission for Housing (DIMH) provides 36 beds and services only homeless men. All shelters allow stays of up to 30 days. In 2015, DIMH opened Walt Bagley Hall, a 32-bed Transitional Housing facility for men that were homeless or at risk of becoming homeless to become self-sufficient and live independently. The Salvation Army and the State of Delaware also have programs that house homeless individuals in motels. Ken Crest Inc. operates an 8-bed group-home on Walker Road for the disabled. The Delaware HIV Consortium and the Delaware State Housing Authority cooperate to provide tenant-based rental assistance in “family settings” to people with HIV/AIDS. In FY17, the program assisted 32 families. These special needs housing throughout the Dover area may receive funding from the City through CDBG grant funding to provide temporary shelter, food, and emergency care in times of need.

Code Purple was established in the fall of 2014 that provides shelter for homeless persons in Kent County when the temperature or wind chill drops below 32 degrees. When Code Purple is in effect, the homeless are guided to emergency shelters and participating churches within the City of Dover and throughout Kent County that provide warm beds.

## **Assisted Living Housing**

Housing for the elderly population has continued to grow within the last ten years with the expansion of new units. The City has many assisted living providers including Luther Towers, Luther Village, Dover Place, Westminster Village, Owens Manor, Silver Lake, State Street Assisted Living and Courtland Manor.

## **Senior Independent Living Facilities**

There are more senior independent living facilities that have been completed since 2008. Multi-family apartment units in this age restricted format include Tall Pines, The Grande (previously known as DoveView Senior Apartments), The Arbors, and Luther Village PND: SCHO that have been completed. Other senior targeted developments include Seskinore with 16 completed units and 2 under construction; and the Villages of Maple Dale with 4 townhouse units completed of the approved 84 units.

## **Student Housing**

Delaware State University (DSU) is one of two colleges that provides housing for students that prefer to live on-campus. In 2013, DSU converted the Dover Sheraton into a multi-use facility that includes student housing for a capacity of 265 students and the Early College High School Facility. A new Residence Hall completed for Fall 2019 has 620 beds that will assist in meeting the needs of the University's enrollment growth; it will reduce the number of dormitories to five on campus as it replaces two dormitories being demolished. Another on campus DSU housing option, University Village consist of four buildings with a total of 300 units completed in 2003. Off campus, the University Courtyard consists of seven buildings for a total of 114 apartment units. Many graduate and post-graduate students also choose to reside off-campus at various Dover and surrounding area housing. For the school year ending May 2019, approximately 1,168 students resided on-campus. The number will increase with the addition 620 beds with the New Residence Hall completed for the 2019-2020 school year.

Wesley College is the second of two colleges in the Dover area that provides housing for students. Seven buildings provide housing for undergraduate and graduate students and select faculty and staff. As of May 2019, there were 480 students that resided on campus. The housing options include Malmberg Hall and Zimmerman Hall constructed through partnerships with local developers in 2003.

Both Wilmington University and Delaware Technical and Community College-Terry Campus are "commuter campuses." Neither provides housing for its students; however, both do offer a listing of housing selections within the Dover area.

## **HOUSING STRATEGIES & RELATED PROGRAMS**

The City of Dover strives to develop a housing strategy that serves the entire population. This strategy is manifested in a multi-pronged approach. First, the City strives to provide a decent living environment for all income and age groups. As part of providing decent and safe

neighborhoods, the City provides programs and funds through its CDBG program to aid extremely low, very low, and low income and special needs persons. A portion of this strategy also applies to the moderate-and median-income individuals where barriers to affordable housing for working families prevent the private sector from providing housing in the middle price range. The second strategy focuses on livability and efforts to maintain housing stock and surrounding neighborhoods. The third portion of the strategy involves ordinance provisions for a variety of housing types and the design requirements for market rate housing in the City which developers are willing to produce. The fourth strategy involves a series of incentives and programs.

### **Strategy 1 - Affordable Housing Programs**

The Housing and Community Development Act of 1992 has authorized that Federal funds be allocated to the entitlement community, the City of Dover, to support Community Development activities within the boundaries of the City. The City prepares a five-year Consolidated Plan, which describes the goals and objectives based on the housing and special needs of low-and moderate-income persons. An Action Plan is prepared annually which maps the expenditures of Federal funds based on the goals and objectives of the Consolidated Plan. The Council Committee of the Whole; the Parks, Recreation and Community Enhancement Committee and City Council approve the plan annually which serves as the housing plan for the City of Dover. At the beginning of the Consolidated Plan year, sub-recipients submit applications for eligible projects within the City and are approved by the City Council Committee of the Whole as multi-year projects. The following programs were funded with CDBG funds as multi-year projects from 2013-2018:

**Housing Rehabilitation Assistance Program** – Annually, the City makes CDBG funds available to qualified homeowners in order to contract work necessary to rehabilitate homes and make emergency home repairs to homes found in violation of the City’s Housing Code. This project assists in preserving the existing housing stock in the City of Dover. These projects are managed by the Milford Housing Development Corporation.

**Homeownership Assistance Program** – The City of Dover homeownership program known as “Dover First Start” is intended to encourage homeownership in the City. The program assists low and moderate-income persons with down payment or settlement costs to purchase eligible properties in the City limits. Assistance is given up to \$20,000 to first time homebuyers and is a forgivable loan if the property is not sold within the first ten years.

**Dover Interfaith Mission for Housing (DIMH)** – The DIMH renovated a building on the west end of central Dover with CDBG funds in 2010 and opened a 36-bed shelter facility in September of that year. CDBG funds are also provided for the operations and maintenance cost of the shelter.

**Connections Community Support Program** – CDBG funds were used to provide Rapid Rehousing and Rental Assistance along with motel vouchers to address the homeless needs within the City of Dover. The program assisted renters with first month’s security deposit as well as up to three months’ rent. Funding was also provided to assist renters with utilities.

**Habitat for Humanity** – CDBG funds were provided to complete exterior renovations on owner occupied homes to families that are 80% or below the area median income in the Restoring Central Dover area.

Table 11-7 illustrates the CDBG Funds Allocations from Fiscal Year 2013 to Fiscal Year 2018 that are multi-year projects.

**Table 11-7: CDBG Funds Allocations 2013-2018**

| <b>CDBG Funded Programs</b>                          | <b>2013</b>      | <b>2014</b>      | <b>2015</b>      | <b>2016</b>      | <b>2017</b>      | <b>2018</b>      |
|--|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Homeownership Assistance Program (Dover First Start) | \$40,000*        | \$102,767        | \$60,000         | \$50,000         | \$70,000         | \$105,000        |
| Homeownership Rehabilitation Assistance Program      | \$32,658         | \$30,000         | \$52,892         | \$55,000         | \$25,986         | \$25,000         |
| Emergency Home Repair Program                        | \$40,000         | 0                | \$35,262         | \$25,000         | \$40,000         | \$39,719         |
| Habitat for Humanity                                 | 0                | 0                | \$40,000         | \$30,000         | \$21,245         | \$20,000         |
| Dover Interfaith Mission for the Homeless            | \$27,500         | \$27,500         | \$27,000         | \$22,000         | \$24,000         | \$22,000         |
| Connections Community Support Program                | 0                | 0                | \$7,391          | \$7,208          | \$3,000          | \$5,000          |
| NCALL Research                                       | \$6,034          | \$7,754          | 0                | 0                | 0                | 0                |
| Elizabeth W. Murphey School                          | \$32,658         | 0                | 0                | 0                | 0                | 0                |
| Peoples Place II                                     | 0                | 0                | \$6,726          | 0                | 0                | 0                |
| Program Administration                               | \$44,713         | \$47,005         | 0                | \$47,301         | \$46,058         | \$54,180         |
| <b>Total Allocated</b>                               | <b>\$223,563</b> | <b>\$235,026</b> | <b>\$229,271</b> | <b>\$236,509</b> | <b>\$230,289</b> | <b>\$270,899</b> |

Source: City of Dover, Community Development Block Grant Program

\*Named Dover First Start Assistance Program in FY2004

**Other Housing Assistance Efforts**

From 2009-2018 through the Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP), the City provided grant funding to Diamond State Community Land Trust, Dover Housing Authority, and Habitat for Humanity to purchase abandoned or foreclosed properties in the City to renovate and sell to qualifying families who meet the HUD income limits. NSP funding was also provided for settlement assistance for individuals to purchase foreclosed or abandoned properties in the City.

NCALL specializes in affordable housing development, education and lending. They also offer housing counseling to first-time homebuyers who purchase affordable housing in the City and throughout the State of Delaware. Housing counseling is a requirement for the Dover First Start Program. NCALL is also the lead agency for the Restoring Central Dover Initiative. They have also partnered with Central Delaware Habitat for Humanity and Milford Housing Development Corporation to construct affordable housing in the Central Downtown Dover area.

The City of Dover fully supports the Housing Alliance of Delaware challenge to end chronic homelessness. The City will continue to provide CDBG funding to agencies and organizations that service the homeless population. The City also accepted the Mayor’s Challenge to End Veterans Homelessness in Dover by December 2015. The City met its goal by housing 50 veterans by December 28, 2015.

Other housing efforts focus on existing ordinances and regulations. As part of the goals and recommendations of the 2019 *Comprehensive Plan*, Planning Staff will be working on amending some provisions of the Safe Communities Initiative that may be a violation of Fair Housing.

## **Strategy 2 - Livable Neighborhoods**

### **Code Enforcement**

The City of Dover has adopted the 2009 ICC International Property Maintenance Code (IPMC) as its Housing Code and has five full time Code Enforcement Officers dedicated to enforcing the provisions of the IPMC and other provisions of the *Dover Code*. The Officers work throughout the City but has at times concentrated efforts on the older neighborhoods such as west central Dover. Code Enforcement Staff routinely inspect rental dwelling units to ensure that they meet the requirements of the IPMC. Inspections typically include all exterior and interior structural members, heating, plumbing, and venting systems, space requirements, sanitary facilities and exterior property maintenance. This is part of the Rental Dwelling Permit Program. Building Codes and Fire Codes are enforced by the Building Inspectors and Fire Marshal’s Office. All residential Building Permits are inspected for compliance with the applicable codes for building and fire. The City is looking to adopt the 2018 IPMC and the applicable Building and Fire Codes in the near future.

### **Community Policing**

Police Officers and Police Cadets have been assigned to the Central Downtown area for foot and bike patrols, and vehicle patrol units in the area to reduce crime in the area. Community Policing efforts also focus on outreach activities to place officers in the communities citywide.

### **City Services**

All residential areas receive trash/recycling collection and water and sewer services for residents that reside in the City of Dover limits. (See Chapters 7 and 8).

### **Safe Communities Provisions**

On April 8, 2013, City Council adopted an ordinance implementing the Safe Communities program to help ensure that rental housing in Dover is not the source of criminal activity. The ordinance includes the following three components:

1. The City will provide training for landlords to help them manage their rental properties in a way that benefits the community.
2. Landlords and tenants are required to sign a lease addendum committing that the tenants, members of the tenant's household, guests, or others under the tenant's control will not participate in criminal activity on or within 500 feet of the leased premises. This addendum must be presented to the City when utility services are established in the tenant's name.

3. The ordinance also establishes the standard and process by which eviction of a tenant would be required, and the circumstances under which a Rental Dwelling Permit could be suspended if a landlord does not comply with the provisions of the ordinance.

The Safe Communities Provisions have been identified to be evaluated. Amendments to some of the provisions of the Safe Communities Initiative may be necessary to ensure there are no violations of fair housing.

### **Housing and Health**

Factors related to housing and health have significant impacts on health. The links between housing and health fall into three broad categories: the physical conditions of our homes; the conditions of the neighborhoods surrounding our home; and the affordability and other economic dimensions of housing. For instance, housing in disrepair can present a range of physical safety hazards, from shoddy wiring that is a fire hazard to leaks that create damp conditions and lead to mold growth. The materials from which our homes are constructed can also present health hazards including asbestos and lead paint. The neighborhoods we live in determine our access to resources that support health and opportunity like grocery stores, community gardens, healthcare facilities, recreation facilities, employment centers, and schools. Neighborhoods influence our safety and perception of safety. The amount we spend on housing is affected by if we are able to access financing for home loans and rental assistance. These issues also affect renters; like cause/no cause evictions and discriminatory leasing practices determine where we live and if we experience housing insecurity or homelessness and our economic and financial wellbeing.

## **Strategy 3 - Ordinance Provisions for Housing**

### **Alternative Housing Options**

For lower income families, manufactured housing and modular homes are an affordable housing option; most times these are more affordable than stick built homes. The *Zoning Ordinance* provisions for the City allow for manufactured housing in the Manufactured Housing Zone as a permitted use and units must meet the Manufactured Home Construction and Safety Standards of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) code as approved June 15, 1976. Modular housing is allowable in any residential zoning district if it's constructed to the standards for building and building regulations found in the *Dover Code of Ordinances*.

### **Mixed-Use**

There are several mixed-use buildings located in the Downtown area which is the primary area for buildings with a mix of non-residential and residential uses. This area consists of older historic and other buildings with commercial uses on the ground level and apartments above. This is another affordable housing option for low income persons who need housing. The most recent mixed use building constructed is the Bayard Plaza from 2013. The ground floor of the building has a pharmacy and the upper floors consist of 48 apartment units. The *Zoning Ordinance* allows a mixture of uses within building and on the same property in the zoning district.

### **Land Use Decisions**

In 2015, the *Zoning Ordinance* was amended to allow townhouse and duplex housing styles within the RG-1 (General Residence Zone) zoning district as a Conditional Use and to revise the bulk

standards for the RG-1 zone to be more consistent with the Downtown development patterns. Additionally, the Ordinance implemented infill standards for residential development of vacant lots within the developed areas.

### **Strategy 4 - Incentives Programs**

The City of Dover is currently working on several revitalization and housing initiatives in collaboration with other local housing providers that will assist in reducing the barriers to affordable housing. The following is an outline of Incentives available to promote affordable housing in the City of Dover within the Restoring Central Dover area and the Downtown Development District area. The Downtown Development District designation carries with it various incentives designed to encourage development and redevelopment in qualified downtown areas throughout Delaware. Rebates are available for most residential, commercial and industrial projects taking place within the DDD designated area. The Incentives are offered by the City, County or State.

#### **Incentives**

- Provide up to 20% cash rebate for qualifying construction projects (capped at \$1 million/property)
- A Transfer Tax Rebate of the buyer's portion of the real estate tax upon issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy
- Waiver of building, plumbing, mechanical and fire protection permit fees
- Waiver of City sewer and water impact fees
- 10-year abatement of property tax on the value of improvements
- Up to \$20,000 in down payment cost to purchase affordable housing
- Property tax abatement for first-time homebuyers who purchase property in the Redevelopment Target Area that occupy the home as their principal residence for four years
- Tax Credit Program for Historic Properties related to qualifying projects for exterior improvements.

# HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

## **Goal 1: Encourage Balanced Housing Opportunities for all Residents of the City**

Promote adequate, safe, and affordable housing for all residents in the City.

### **Recommendation 1: Encourage the Use of Mixed Housing Types**

- Evaluate the provisions of the Planned Neighborhood Design and the Senior Citizen Housing Option for residential development.
- Continue to encourage compact and diverse residential development throughout the City.
- Re-evaluate all residential zones development requirements and housing types in the City.
- Evaluate and update Codes to encourage compact and diverse development throughout the City.
- Amend the provisions in the *Zoning Ordinance* for the definition of “family” to remove undue restrictions for members of protected classes.

### **Recommendation 2: Explore the Feasibility of Allowing Alternative Housing Units Options**

- Develop zoning provisions to allow an accessory dwelling unit within one family residence zones for the use of family members.
- Develop zoning provisions for alternative housing options including group housing and transitional housing.

### **Recommendation 3: Encourage the Development of Affordable Housing**

- Work with housing providers and developers to construct affordable rental housing options throughout the City including assessible housing for persons with disabilities.
- Work with housing providers to provide affordable housing to low income residents.
- Continue to work with housing providers to end homelessness and increase the number of permanent supportive housing for the homeless.

### **Recommendation 4: Promote Residential Development within the City**

- Encourage mixed use of existing and new buildings.
- Encourage “in-fill” residential development.
- Encourage housing in the Downtown and other areas that are near transit and multi-modal routes, retail areas, employment and essential services.

## **Goal 2: Preserve Existing Housing Stock**

Preserve the existing variety types of housing in the City through the continuation of programs and initiatives available for housing.

**Recommendation 5: Encourage Property Owners to Maintain and Rehabilitate Existing Housing Stock**

- Continue to make emergency repairs and rehab homes with Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds.
- Continue to work with other housing agencies to eliminate severe housing conditions that constitute immediate health or safety hazards to the occupants.
- Continue to support the rehabilitation of owner-occupied homes with families who are low to moderate income.
- Support the adaptive mixed reuse of existing buildings throughout the City.

**Goal 3: Provide Safe and Healthy Livable Neighborhoods**

Continue to provide safe livable residential and commercial neighborhoods to improve the quality of life.

**Recommendation 6: Promote Safe and Livable Neighborhoods through Enforcement of City Codes**

- Continue to conduct housing inspections on rental housing to ensure the compliance with City Codes.
- Proactively enforce City Codes for property maintenance to improve community appearance for all residential units and adopt the 2018 International Property Maintenance Code.
- Enforce building and fire codes for all buildings in the City and evaluate updated ICC and NFPA Codes for adoption.
- Continue enforcement of floodplain regulations and associated construction codes.
- Evaluate and amend provisions in the “Safe Communities Initiative” that may be a violation to fair housing.
- Increase community policing efforts in the neighborhoods to reduce crime.
- Continue to improve and maintain infrastructure in established neighborhoods throughout the City.

**Recommendation 7: Articulate the Link between Housing and Health**

- Advocate for the development of complete neighborhoods and mixed-use developments.
- Collaborate with public health agencies, housing authorities, advocacy groups and others on matters concerning housing and health.
- Support programs that promote good quality housing such as collaboration on weatherization programs and on lead paint hazards programs.
- Support programs to address housing inequities and injustices such as collaborating with tenants’ alliances and promoting neighborhood initiatives to address hazards.

**Goal 4: Provide Homeownership Opportunities**

Provide homeownership opportunities throughout the City, especially within low and moderate-income neighborhoods.

**Recommendation 8: Promote Homeownership Incentives for Low to Moderate Income Households**

- Continue to support funding the Homeownership Assistance Program to provide down payment or settlement assistance up to \$20,000 to qualified homebuyers who purchase property in the City of Dover through the CDBG Program.
- Continue to support the provision of education regarding homeownership opportunities and responsibilities.
- Support the Diamond State Community Land Trust and explore opportunities to utilize the land trust model to expand homeownership.
- Continue to support the Restoring Central Dover Initiative and the Downtown Development District Incentives to increase homeownership in the Downtown area.
- Continue to implement the most current Community Development Consolidated Plan.

**Recommendation 9: Update the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Consolidated Plan and the Fair Housing Plan**

- Maintain updates to the Consolidated Plan as required by the CDBG Program.
- Update and adopt the 2020-2024 CDBG Consolidated Plan.
- Participate in the development and the adoption of the 2019 Fair Housing Plan.

FINAL DRAFT – 12.3.2019

# Chapter 12

# LAND DEVELOPMENT PLAN

## LAND DEVELOPMENT PLAN

### INTRODUCTION

Essential to the continued development of any community is the planning of its physical land use. Approaching our Land Development Plan from the framework of our rich and textured history, we want to approach Community Design in a way that embraces and enhances the diverse features of our urban fabric. From nature preserves to historic charm to commercial hustle to tranquil suburbs the Land Development Plan recognizes the unique features of and characteristics of Dover and seeks to improve upon them.

The Land Development Plan chapter and map series (Map 12-1) designate land uses for all areas of the City in accordance with the goals and policies of the *Comprehensive Plan*. The Land Development Plan is the basis for zoning within the City and within 18 months of the Plan's adoption, all zoning throughout the City must be consistent with the Land Development Plan. It is important in determining consistency with the Comprehensive Plan that the Land Development Plan text and Map be consulted as the text adds the context in which to consider the Map. Additionally, Table 12-1 is a matrix of which zoning classifications are consistent with which land use category (classifications). The text, matrix and Land Development Plan Map along with the zoning and use of surrounding parcels must be reviewed to evaluate the application.

In preparing the Land Development Plan, specifically the Land Development Plan Map, Planning Staff reviewed the City's existing land use patterns and current zoning and then developed a Land Development Plan to identify future land uses. This process involves macro level or "big picture" planning, with limited parcel-by-parcel analysis. Following adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, Planning Staff will begin the process of preparing the Comprehensive Rezoning, whereby properties are brought forward for rezoning to be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. This process will include a detailed parcel-by-parcel analysis of zoning and land use city-wide. It will also include a public notification process whereby affected property owners be notified in writing and public notice of hearing given. This Comprehensive Zoning Map amendment process is outlined in *Zoning Ordinance*, Article 10 Section 5.3. In performing this level of analysis and this level of public notification, corrections to the Land Development Plan may also be identified.

The land use category (classification) assigned to an area is not intended to supersede the zoning assigned to that area, but rather to help guide the designation of zoning district. In all cases, the requirements of a property's zoning determine what uses can take place on the property, as well as the required bulk standards.

## LAND DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

Several Land Development Principles underlie the goals and recommendations for the land uses discussed in the Land Development Plan. Ordinance revisions enacted to implement the Comprehensive Plan should support these principles. They include:

- Encourage infill and redevelopment.
- Encourage a mix of housing styles within new residential developments.
- Ensure that new development meets high standards for site design and architectural design.
- Provide appropriate areas for commercial development through master-planned business zones.
- Encourage and support redevelopment of the Downtown Redevelopment Target Area with a mix of residential, commercial and office uses.
- Ensure that environmental standards are enforced when reviewing construction projects.
- Enhance public utilities and infrastructure that will meet the needs of the community by providing quality community services.
- Develop and expand modes of transportation that will improve access to goods and services within the community.

Each individual land use category (classification) is discussed below.

## RESIDENTIAL LAND USES

Residential land uses are realized through a variety of housing types including single family detached houses, duplexes, townhouses, and apartments. Various zoning categories have been established to specify permitted housing types and to set maximum residential densities by zone. The Land Development Plan sets forth assumptions and goals for residential land uses as follows:

### **Assumptions: Residential Land Uses**

1. With the high cost of housing, it is essential to the economic well-being of the community to provide for a range of housing opportunities for all income levels and age groups.
2. A more efficient and effective interior circulation pattern within residential areas will provide improved traffic circulation, school bus access, service delivery access, emergency response

services access, and alternative access points. These elements can help foster a greater sense of community among residents while providing them with greater convenience.

3. A more efficient and effective residential development pattern can be achieved by encouraging the development of land closer to existing neighborhoods, making the delivery of police, fire, ambulance, sanitation, school transportation, sewer, water, and electric services easier and less expensive.
4. Proper separation of incompatible land uses through physical distance and buffering creates stronger neighborhoods.

### **Goals: Residential Land Uses**

To develop and maintain an adequate supply of housing of varying type, size, and densities that are aesthetically pleasing and located within neighborhoods designed or redesigned to promote convenience, conservation, and access to the greater community, but which are properly buffered through distance and landscaping from incompatible land uses.

### **Policies: Residential Land Uses**

- Allow flexibility in housing styles and types while regulating gross density within residential developments.
- Require linkage streets and sidewalks between adjoining residential subdivisions and street right-of way stubs to adjoining vacant developable land.
- Encourage the separation of residential areas from incompatible uses through buffering distances and the use of transitional zoning categories.
- Encourage high density residential development in infill areas that are near essential services, public transit, and employment opportunities.
- Permit limited compatible neighborhood commercial uses that support surrounding residences within residential areas.

### **Recommendations: Residential Land Uses**

The following is a summary description of the various residential densities permitted in Dover as reflected on the Land Development Plan.

#### **Recommendation for Residential Low Density**

Residential Low Density residential land uses involve a maximum gross density of four (4) dwelling units per acre. Usually expressed as homogeneous single-family developments, provisions are made via the *Zoning Ordinance* to permit variety in housing types through the Planned Neighborhood Design Option, provided density caps are maintained. Specific Residential Low Density Residential zoning districts include: R-20 (One Family Residence), R-15 (One Family Residence), R-10 (One Family Residence), R-8 (One Family Residence), and R-7 (One Family Residence). These are typically single family detached dwellings. Zoning districts allowing other housing styles may be appropriate on these parcels to allow the clustering of

development on one portion of these sites while maintaining the integrity of significant natural features elsewhere on the parcels, provided the voluntary density caps are maintained.

The Land Development Plan recommends that Residential Low Density residential uses be directed toward peripheral suburban/rural fringe areas and in locations with significant environmental constraints. Vacant tracts involving vast woodland areas, wetlands, and areas impacted by the regulatory 100-year floodplain have been designated for Residential Low Density residential uses where more intensive uses would be inappropriate. Residential Low Density residential uses are also recommended in areas immediately adjacent to existing Residential Low Density Residential neighborhoods for reasons of compatibility.

#### **West Dover Neighborhood: Residential Low Density**

The West Dover Neighborhood area includes that area of the City west of the railroad corridor. It encompasses a cluster of residential subdivisions throughout the area where there are a number of educational facilities: private school, elementary and middle schools and Dover High School. The key roadways of Route 8/Forrest Avenue and Kenton Road feed these residential areas. Along the Route 8, Saulsbury Road and McKee Road corridors, there are number of commercial uses in the area. Due to the high traffic volume in this area, the POW/MIA Parkway (also known as West Dover Connector) opened in September 2017 as an alternative route to the Route 13 South.

This area is predominately older low density residential developments such as Fox Hall, Fox Hall West, Maple Dale, Retreat, Woodmill, Heatherfield, Cranberry Run, Bicentennial Village, Hidden Oaks, and others. With the exception of some development in the southern portion of the area, these are established, stable and built-out communities where little change is expected. As is consistent across the City, future challenges will relate to ensuring the maintenance of their character with roadway improvements and sidewalk retrofits to avoid intrusive uses, increased traffic, and property and infrastructure maintenance.

#### **South Dover Neighborhood: Residential Low Density**

The southern area of the City is predominately Residential Low Density in the area between South State Street/Governors Avenue to the Railroad corridor. This includes the older neighborhoods of Sherwood, Woodbrook, Mayfair, and Crossgates. All of these are long established neighborhoods where little change is expected. Again, challenges include preservation of character and value, code enforcement, infrastructure maintenance, and change from owner occupied to rental.

### **Recommendation for Residential Medium Density**

Residential Medium Density land uses involve a maximum gross density of eight (8) dwelling units per acre. This type of development may include single family houses on smaller lots, duplexes, townhouses, and some apartments. Some Manufactured Home Park developments would also be considered Residential Medium Density. Medium density residential uses are permitted in the following zoning districts: R-8 (One Family Residence), R-7 (One Family Residence), RM-1 (Medium Density Residence), RM-2 (Medium Density Residence) planned to reflect the historic patterns and mix of land uses common to Dover's early development, RG-1 (General Residence), RG-2 (General Residence), RG-3 (Group Housing), RGO (General Residence and Office), and MH (Manufactured Housing).

The Land Development Plan recommends that Residential Medium Density uses be permitted near existing and planned service and employment centers and in locations well supported by transportation infrastructure and mass transit services. Areas identified as Medium Density Residential can be looked at as potential receiving areas under a transfer of development rights program. Areas in the northern portion of the City are appropriate for Residential Medium Density development.

**North Side Neighborhood: Residential Medium Density**

The northwestern residential area of City includes the area that is to the north of College Road. This area consists of primarily Medium Density Residential developments such as Emerald Point, The Meadows and Mill Creek. There are also plotted subdivisions that have yet to start construction. Maidstone, Stonebrook East PND, and Stonebrook West PND were approved by Planning Commission in 2005 and 2007 to construct a variety of mixed of housing types.

**White Oak Road Area: Residential Medium Density**

The Land Development Plan recommends that an area east of State Route 1 on White Oak Road be developed as Residential Medium Density. Bay Village who owns this property zoned RM-2 (Residential Medium Density) could potentially develop it in an environmentally sustainable manner to provide workforce quality housing. While previously there was concern that development of this area could be a “domino” leading to additional development of land east of State Route 1, the State’s purchase of development rights in the area has reduced this concern. Additionally, the site’s location across from Garrison Oak Business and Technology Center makes it a good location for workforce housing.

If there is residential development on the Lands of Bay Village, the City shall ensure that the development of the Bay Village site proceeds as a master planned community with transit access and bicycle and pedestrian amenities both within the site and connecting with Garrison Oak Business and Technology Center and other areas to the west. Additionally, the City must ensure that the viability of Garrison Oak Business and Technology Center is protected by requiring that the phasing and design of development on the site minimizes any potential conflicts between the residential and industrial uses and include buffering from the industrial area.

**West Side Neighborhood: Residential Medium Density**

Residential Medium Density development on the West Side tends to be located to the periphery of the area where both existing development, ongoing development and vacant lands are found. These areas are buffered by older residential areas and public/institutional uses but could be impacted by traffic and circulation concerns driven by commercial activities along the two major roadways, Route 8/Forest Avenue and McKee/Scarborough Road.

Existing mix of housing types such as in the Village of Westover PND and Village of Cannon Mill PND are nearing the end of construction in those developments. A newer development, Chestnut Grove Farms has started construction and will build a variety of single-family detached homes, duplexes, and townhouses.

### **East Dover Neighborhood: Residential Medium Density**

The East Dover Neighborhood essentially consists of developed in older established developments such as Towne Point, White Oak Farms, Baytree, Edgehill, and Schoolview. Recent development has occurred primarily along North and South Little Creek Roads. These developments such as Lexington Glen PND and Clearview Meadows PND have built-out with a mix of housing types that includes single family detached homes, duplexes and townhouses. The area includes the extensive highway and entertainment-based commercial zones as well as Garrison Oak Business and Technology Center and the Dover Air Force Base to the south. The East Dover Neighborhood area also includes agricultural lands and several areas of manufactured housing in the MH zone. There is potential for additional residential construction with Patriot Village and the potential development of Rojan Meadows (vicinity of Acorn Lane and North Little Creek Road). Challenges include maintaining the character and value of older developments, many of which have significant proportions of rental units, managing traffic issues, and minimizing conflicts between uses.

### **Recommendation for Residential High Density**

Residential High Density land uses involve a gross density of eight or more dwelling units per acre and may include high rise, mid-rise or garden apartments and townhouse developments. Duplexes and single-family homes are also permitted. The following zoning districts permit Residential High Density development: RG-1 (General Residence), RG-2 (General Residence), RG-3 (Group Housing), RG-4 (General Residence Multi-Story Apartments), RG-5 (General Residence Mid-Rise Apartments), RM-2 (Medium Density Residence), RGO (General Residence and Office), and MH (Manufactured Housing).

The Land Development Plan recommends that Residential High Density be dispersed throughout the City along arterial roadways in close proximity to other high-density residential uses, schools, neighborhood commercial areas, transit service, and other compatible non-residential land use areas. Residential High Density development is also appropriate in some areas of the Downtown, most of which are shown as Mixed Use on the Land Development Plan.

Although very few vacant developable acres have been designated for the Residential High-Density use, the housing types usually associated with higher density zones may be accommodated through the Planned Neighborhood Design option or the Traditional Neighborhood Design (TND) zone.

### **Residential High Density**

There is Residential High Density located throughout the City in older and new apartment complexes and in denser developments in Mixed Use areas. In the Downtown/Center City both multi-family units and closely placed single family houses on very small lots are found. The Downtown area is currently being revitalized through the Restoring Central Dover Initiative with the construction of new affordable housing and through the Downtown Development District Incentives which provides incentives for developers, homeowners, and property owners to complete construction and renovation projects. Since the completion of the *2008 Comprehensive Plan*, a 48-unit affordable housing apartment building (Bayard Plaza) was constructed downtown in 2013 with a pharmacy located on the ground floor of the building. There is RG-2 (General Residence Zone) apartment units located on the east, west, and north in the City, with a high

concentration of apartment units on the west side of the City. Primarily, residences located in the RG-3 (Group Housing Residential) are located on the west side of town with pockets located on the east side of town. On the west side of town, there is only one apartment complex in the RG-5 zoning district. Manufactured Housing (MH Zone) is primarily located on the east side of town. RGO (General Residence and Office) residences and offices line the South State Street corridor with a mixture of office buildings and older existing homes used as offices and residential. There are very little areas of C-1 (Neighborhood Commercial) located in Dover. There are pockets of areas located in C-1 on the east side of town along White Oak Road and Little Creek Road, and pockets located in Central Dover. Uses in the C-1 zone include residential areas and small-scale commercial retail and restaurants.

Other high-density development and redevelopment projects have primarily focused on apartment units. Leander Lakes Apartments and Blue Hen Apartments are complexes of market rate apartments. Also, during recent years, The Preserve at Whatcoat renovated apartments and added a new Clubhouse. Housing for seniors also saw considerable interest with over 200 units added city-wide in projects such as Luther Village PND: SCHO and The Grande PND: SCHO. The Arbors and Tall Pines, also apartment buildings built within the last five (5) years are market-targeted to seniors.

## MIXED USE AREAS

Dover is a community whose character is determined by its history, changes in its economic base, or by regional and national events. Resulting Mixed Use areas are characterized by a finely scaled mix of residential, commercial, civic, institutional, and occasionally industrial uses. Typically reflecting the long-term cycles of growth and change in the community, these traditional development patterns emerge where no single use category is predominant. These areas reflect close proximity of uses and structures, neighborhoods developed around walkability versus automobiles, varied architectural styles typically with grid-based street patterns, and an array of social and economic determinates. Mixed Use areas can reflect the historic pattern of development such as in Downtown Dover, an area where a mix of uses is driven by a primary set of uses such as around Bayhealth Hospital, or they can be an area where a new development should foster walkability and close interactions among activities and uses in a traditional neighborhood setting.

### Goals: Mixed Land Use

The overall goals for Mixed Use areas are:

1. Encourage creation of neighborhood centers.
2. Within the close-knit neighborhood fabric there are opportunities for the creation of urban centers. These centers should be established along major roadways and feature mixed use development, pedestrian-friendly public environments and opportunities for connection to future transit.
3. In order to encourage non-automobile access to the center, the activities should be clustered within a one-half mile radius (or 10-minute walk) and be located so as to draw upon residents from a number of surrounding neighborhoods.

4. Develop strategies that will encourage the creation of well-defined public street spaces and pedestrian-friendly village areas that encourage walking and bicycle use. This may include on-street and behind building parking, and the creation of build-to lines for new development.
5. Improve access that limits public access to open spaces areas such as pedestrian, bicycle, and transit networks to parks and natural areas.
6. Encourage the Mixed Use of residential and commercial uses in the Downtown area.

### **Recommendations for Mixed Use Areas**

The Land Development Plan sets forth recommendations for four distinct Mixed Use areas.

#### **Downtown Dover – Historic Core and Center City: Mixed Use Area**

Downtown Dover is the City’s primary Mixed Use area. The historic City center clustered around The Green dates back as early as the 1700s. It expands to also include the traditional City pattern of grid streets which developed during the 19th and early 20th centuries. As a result of its earlier development, Downtown Dover, like many other historic cities, includes a variety of intermingled land uses. The Downtown area, which includes the traditional Loockerman Street business district, is broadly bounded by Wesley College on the north, the railroad tracks on the west, Bayhealth-Kent General Hospital on the south, and St. Jones River on the east. It includes a street level mix of residential, commercial, office, cultural, and institutional uses.

Downtown Dover is the traditional and symbolic center of the community and is vitally important to the overall image and identity of the City. As the State’s office complex and other businesses and services make Downtown the largest area of employment in the City, Downtown Dover is vital to the economy. It is important to preserve the area as a safe, convenient, and aesthetically pleasing business environment. Downtown provides a unique and affordable commercial environment where locally owned businesses reflect the small-town nature of the community.

Downtown also provides a residential environment with a wide variety of housing types near commercial, cultural, education, and employment resources. The age of the buildings and infrastructure in the Downtown area requires special attention and incentives to assist in continual use and revitalization activities. Downtown lacks the vibrancy of years gone by and its revitalization will hinge on mixed land uses and developing a commercial niche. Removal of blighted conditions, rehabilitation and redevelopment of traditional residential areas, and reestablishment of neighborhood identity will be important components of the City’s strategies and initiatives.

The goal of the Land Development Plan is to enhance the role of Downtown Dover as a major employment, residential and commercial center as well as the symbolic and cultural heart of the community. Efforts should strive to recognize its unique heritage and historic resources and to provide for mixed use development allowing greatest variation of uses, Activities to reestablish the economic and social vitality of Downtown neighborhoods are encouraged.

### **Recommendations: Downtown Dover – Mixed Use**

- Master plan the Loockerman Street corridor.
- Enhance the Downtown area through economic development and historic preservation programs.
- Continue to support the preservation and adaptive reuse of buildings and infrastructure through public investments, property maintenance enforcement, housing grants, and financial incentives.
- Promote zoning districts and regulations that support the traditional mixed-use nature of the Downtown area.
- Support revitalization of Downtown residential neighborhoods.

### **Eden Hill Farm TND: Mixed Use Area**

Eden Hill Farm is the City's first Traditional Neighborhood Design (TND) development, planned to reflect the traditional scale and mix of uses common in Dover's history. Construction of this Mixed Use community is ongoing. Eden Hill Farm TND comprises 272 acres of land including a Professional Office/Medical/Financial District, Neighborhood Commercial District, Residential District, and open space areas. The overall Master Plan for the TND and Implementation Plans for each district are complete. The *Zoning Ordinance* in Article 3 Section 28 describes the purpose, intent and process associated with the TND. It will be important for the City to ensure that the intent of the Master Plan Comprehensive Design Standards Manual (Pattern Book) and Traditional Neighborhood Design concept remain in the forefront as the construction activity in each district occurs.

To date, each district has experienced construction activity and the areas are connected by Wemyss Road and Garrett House Circle. Buildings completed include a multi-tenant commercial building, Eden Hill Medical Center (multi-tenant office building focused on medical services), the Center at Eden Hill (a skilled nursing facility) and 83 residential units (townhouses and duplexes).

The goals for Eden Hill include continue to facilitate project development processes for construction in accordance with approved Master Plan Pattern Book and TND concept; support efforts to implement the road and walking trail connections linking Eden Hill Farm TND to the existing circulation network; encourage quality architecture within the development in accordance with the Pattern Book and intent of the TND Ordinance; and participate in the planning for the project's open space areas including the area of the historic farm complex, allees, and the southwest portion of the project near the Puncheon Run.

### **Recommendations: Eden Hill TND – Mixed Use**

- Preserve the intent of the Traditional Neighborhood Design concept even if market conditions require modification to the original plan.
- Strive for high levels of neighborhood design and preservation of the historic character of the Eden Hill Farm while achieving a mixed-use environment.
- Complete interconnection of Banning Street into the Residential District.

### **Bayhealth Medical Center Neighborhood Areas: Mixed Use**

Another sizable area south and west of Bayhealth Medical Center (Kent General Hospital) developed into a medical office environment has been designated as Mixed Use. This area includes portions of South Queen and South New Streets, the westerly side of South Governors Avenue from Water Street to Waples Avenue, and areas along the railroad. Much of this area is currently in office and service commercial use and also includes an automobile dealership, a State correctional facility and related businesses as well as the Spence's Bazaar property and a number of residential properties. With this Plan the Mixed Use area has been expanded to portions of S. Bradford Street and S. State Street.

This area will continue its steady evolution to more service and office uses as residential uses are converted to other uses, even though major medical facilities are being established at Eden Hill and west along Route 8 and Saulsbury Road. Spence's Bazaar will remain for the foreseeable future as will the State's Morris Correctional Facility. The Dover Post Office may relocate and anchor the upper west end of the area and hopefully trigger interest in the Transit Center Neighborhood Plan's commercial and office possibilities.

#### **Recommendation: Bayhealth Neighborhood Areas – Mixed Use**

- Refine zoning requirements to ensure compatibility among uses and to create flexibility to accommodate emerging concepts of workplace, residence, home occupations, and business types.

### **Leipscic Road Development Area: Mixed Use**

A large tract of land south of Leipscic Road and west of State Route 1 has been identified as a Mixed Use area for future development. This vacant area is owned by Dover International Speedway and is currently zoned RC (Recreational and Commercial Zone) and used for NASCAR and Firefly event camping and parking.

The identification of this area as Mixed Use reflects that Dover International Speedway is a major economic factor and landholder within the City of Dover, hosting two NASCAR event weekends annually as well as other events, such as harness racing and the Firefly Music Festival. The NASCAR races and the Festival will continue to draw visitors from the region who will utilize the campground and parking areas owned by Dover International Speedway, and who will seek access to a variety of goods and services during their visit. This area is unique in its proximity to the track facility and higher intensity commercial uses and residential areas. Also, important considerations include drainage systems/floodplain areas, the boundary with State Route 1, and transitions and buffers between uses.

#### **Recommendations: Leipscic Road Area – Mixed Use**

- As it develops in the future, this property is an ideal location and size for a master planned mixed use community. Its development should be approached accordingly rather than in an uncoordinated series of one-at-a-time projects.

- As one of the few large vacant tracts of land within the City of Dover, the City must be prepared to work with the landowner in the event that this area develops in the future.
- Opportunities exist for street network expansions, interconnections, service roads and bicycle and pedestrian systems.

## COMMERCIAL LAND USES

Historically and today Dover serves as a regional center for commerce and trade within the Delmarva Peninsula. Its character is defined by the ebb and flow of its dominance as a center of business throughout its long history. Today, an integrated transportation system consisting of arterial highways, freight rail service, and air transport provide for the efficient movement of goods to and from Dover in support of business development and activities. Within a hierarchy of intensities, the Land Development Plan designates a series of commercial land use categories: Commercial-Entertainment; Commercial – High Intensity; and Commercial – Low Intensity. New to this plan is a Commercial land use category specifically associated with large scale commercial entertainment activities reflecting this increasingly important aspect of Dover’s economy. More intensive regional commercial development is directed toward the US Route 13/DuPont Highway and Bay Road corridors close to existing highway commercial shopping center establishments. Route 8/Forrest Avenue, west of the railroad tracks, has also become a key commercial corridor within the City. Dover’s residential neighborhoods also create various local commercial needs. The Land Development Plan also identifies specific locations for the development of neighborhood retail and community shopping center uses within the suburban fringe.

### **Assumptions: Commercial Land Uses - In General**

1. Commercial uses fit within a hierarchy of intensities and uses with specific location and impact considerations to be reflected in the Plan and the *Zoning Ordinance*.
2. Dover will continue to be the dominant commercial center within the central Delmarva Peninsula region.
3. Ease of access to commercial establishments is highly desirable within urban environments.
4. Jobs and commerce in the retail, wholesale, and service sectors are an important part of Dover’s economic vitality.
5. Well-designed, aesthetically pleasing commercial centers and corridors contribute to the City’s overall image and the positive feeling of its residents.
6. Maintaining the viability of existing commercial areas including the historic central business district/downtown and encouraging their ongoing functionality is critical to Dover’s economic future.

### **Goal: Commercial Land Uses – in General**

Maintain and improve the City’s position as a regional commercial center while providing its citizens convenient access to needed goods and services through well-designed and spaced regional, community, and neighborhood commercial centers/opportunities.

## **Policies: Commercial Land Uses – in General**

1. Create flexible and contemporary commercial zoning provisions that reflect emerging trends in uses, facilities, shopping preferences, and consumer demographics to meet future needs.
2. Encourage the preservation and adaptive re-use of existing commercial buildings and properties in a manner consistent with the character of the area. Continue to refine the *Zoning Ordinance* and other codes to ensure that City ordinances do not discourage adaptive re-use of vacant commercial buildings, both in the historic downtown and in commercial corridors.
3. Limit the frequency of commercial site entrances along arterial roadways by promoting shared use entrances and cross-access easements among adjoining properties.
4. Periodically review the performance of commercial sign codes to determine their effectiveness and the codes' impact on the quality of commercial corridors while accommodating emerging concepts of commercial identity and brand.
5. Promote pedestrian and bicycle improvements and connecting pathways between existing and proposed neighborhood commercial sites and the residential areas they serve.
6. Encourage the establishment of transit amenities such as bus shelters and bicycle racks to accommodate alternative means of access to commercial centers.

The Land Development Plan recognizes a hierarchy of commercial uses and includes specific recommendations for each of the major Commercial areas in Dover which are explained below.

## **Commercial Entertainment Areas**

### **Recommendations: Commercial Entertainment**

Commercial entertainment and recreation are a major component of Dover's economy. Primarily focused around the activities at Dover Downs and Dover International Speedway, these uses draw large numbers of participants in peak periods and bring their unique requirements for accommodations, safety, transportation and public services. They are distinctly different from Commercial - High Intensity uses as found in a shopping center complex or a mall. As such, the Plan recognizes them as a category of Commercial land use.

The Plan recommends the designation of lands associated with the casino, hotel, racetrack, camping and music venues as Commercial Entertainment. Although many traditional commercial uses could be permitted, the intent is to focus on those uses involving large numbers of persons, with special considerations of impacts on other uses. This designation is principally focused on entertainment, indoor and outdoor recreation, sports, gaming, and similar uses where retail activities are secondary or ancillary to the primary purpose. Such areas would not principally be intended for shopping malls, commercial shopping centers, or other large-scale retail activities. Residential, institutional, and health care facilities would also be discouraged as primary uses in the Commercial Entertainment areas.

## **Commercial High Intensity Areas**

### **Recommendations: Commercial High Intensity Areas**

The Commercial High Intensity areas are focused on traditional shopping and retail centers accommodating the full spectrum of goods and services for regional and local needs.

### **Recommendations: US Route 13/DuPont Highway and Bay Road Corridors**

The US Route 13/DuPont Highway and Bay Road corridors are dominated by highway focused commercial development, as free-standing buildings, strip commercial centers, and formal shopping centers and mall spaces. For the most part, the Land Development Plan proposes to continue US Route 13/DuPont Highway and Bay Road as the major commercial corridors in Central Delaware.

Relatively few vacant developable parcels exist within this area. However, the redevelopment of older retail stores and strip shopping centers is occurring as these sites are repurposed for newer and different activities. The Comprehensive Plan encourages the renovation and adaptive reuse of older structures within the highway corridor as means of restoring property value, preventing blight and demolition by neglect, and enhancing the overall image of the highway environment. Other corridor improvements could include additional landscaping, tree planting, and multi-modal pathways and sidewalk systems. The demolition of older structures may be beneficial and should be supported.

### **Recommendations: Delaware Route 8 - Village Center**

The Delaware Route 8/Forrest Avenue/Forest Street corridor continues to be an area subject to ongoing commercial development pressure. It is a western gateway to the City offering travelers one of their first impressions of Dover. This area is subject to the Corridor Overlay Zone (COZ-1), which has ensured that the new development of this corridor does not mirror the highway-focused appearance of Route 13/DuPont Highway and Bay Road corridors.

The Land Development Plan recommends that Route 8, west of the railroad tracks to Mifflin Road, continue to develop as either commercial or professional offices, with opportunity to include residential apartments as well. With the requirements of the Corridor Overlay Zone as well as implementation of the *Route 8 Study* performed by the Dover/Kent County MPO, efforts to provide cross access easements and a potential service road will be an essential component to the further development of the corridor. The COZ-1 overlay promotes superior corridor development by assigning priority to pedestrians and bicyclists, reducing car-trips, promoting interconnections, increased landscaping, enhanced architectural and site design features, green technologies and other provisions. The creation of a major bicycle connection, the Senator Bikeway, serves the area and increases travel options along the corridor.

### **Commercial - Low Intensity Commercial Areas**

The Plan identifies areas for Commercial Low Intensity areas intended for predominately neighborhood commercial use to meet the convenience retail and service needs of existing and future residential areas. These uses can be accommodated in newly constructed purpose-built buildings, in renovated existing buildings, or as part of mixed-use redevelopment initiatives.

## GOVERNMENT AND INSTITUTIONAL LAND USES

As the capital city and County seat of government, Dover has an above average amount of land area dedicated to government use. The City of Dover has its facilities here as well (See Chapter 8 for more detailed discussion). The Delaware Legislature and all major departments of State Government except the Department of Agriculture are headquartered within the City limits. Dover is also home to the offices of the Kent County Levy Court and to numerous Federal agency offices.

All branches of the judiciary are represented in central Dover including the State Supreme Court, Delaware Court of Chancery, Kent County Superior Court, Delaware Family Court, and the Justice of the Peace Court.

As a central City, Dover is also the location of a growing medical services community with Bayhealth Medical Center (Kent General Hospital) at its center and with a growing array of services and facilities across a wide spectrum of health care specialties.

The City has experienced a prolonged period of growth and development, and numerous other institutions including colleges and public schools within the community have expanded and many others have plans for future expansion. Several charter and private schools are also located within the City.

### **Assumptions: Government and Institutional Land Uses**

1. As the State Capital and County Seat, Dover projects a prominent public image as a center of government.
2. Dover will continue to be the home of major institutions including hospitals and medical centers, places of learning, and agencies providing services to its citizens.
3. Employment in the government, education, and medical sectors will continue to play an important role in Dover's economic vitality.

### **Goal: Government and Institutional Land Uses**

Maintain and improve the City's position as a center of government, education, and medicine through support of existing institutions and encouraging well-designed campuses that are integrated into the community and have room to expand.

### **Policies: Government and Institutional Land Use**

1. Preserve and promote the long-term vitality of major institutions and governmental entities through appropriate zoning, providing protection from incompatible uses, and providing ample land for future expansion.
2. Promote alternative modes of access to government facilities and institutions by requiring pedestrian and bicycle amenities, and bus shelters. Ensure that these areas are visually appealing with appropriate landscaping.

3. In cooperation with the State of Delaware continue planning for the “Capital Complex” that would establish locations for State office expansion and public improvements in central Dover.
4. Participate in the “master planning” process for the development of strategies and vision plans for institutional facilities and campuses. Also encourage approval by the Planning Commission of Master Plans for multi-phased construction projects as outlined in the *Zoning Ordinance*.
5. Recognize the importance of higher education facilities, employees and students to the economy of Dover and their value as a college community,

### **Recommendations: Major Institutional and Governmental**

The Land Development Plan recommendations for major institutional and governmental uses are presented in the following paragraphs:

#### **Capitol Complex and Downtown Area**

The Land Development Plan recommends the continuance of Institutional uses within the State Capital Complex as the predominant land use. Very little vacant developable land exists within the Legislative Mall area. Construction of the Kent County Courthouse and the Dover Public Library (anchor library) adjacent to City Hall have been completed with plans underway to construct a new Family Court facility downtown. As this area continues to redevelop to meet the expanding space needs, parking will be an important consideration in the area. A Downtown parking structure is under consideration to address the parking concerns often raised as a limiting factor for Downtown revitalization. Planning continues to determine the long-term location of City of Dover offices; however, the City is committed to a location in the Downtown.

#### **Hospital Complex**

Bayhealth Medical Center (Kent General Hospital) is a major Institutional land use within the central area of Dover. The Land Development Plan designates the hospital proper and associated hospital properties including the South Street parking lot, Central Facilities Building, day surgery center, the Scull Mansion and hospital day care center for Institutional use.

The Land Development Plan also recommends inclusion of the Holy Cross Church and School complex in the Institutional use designation in recognition of the existing use of the premises and its adjacency to the hospital properties referenced above.

#### **Delaware State University, Delaware Technical & Community College and Wilmington University:**

Delaware State University (DSU), Delaware Technical & Community College - Terry Campus (DTCC), and Wilmington University – Dover Campus are all located within proximity of each other along US Route 13/DuPont Highway in north Dover. All have recently made improvements to their campuses or are in the process of making improvements. Delaware State University has just completed construction of a new 620 bed residential dormitory complex on its campus. The

Land Development Plan recommends that the lands of these educational facilities be designated for Institutional uses.

### **Wesley College Area**

The Land Development Plan supports the continuation of Wesley College as an important Institutional use within the central area and recognizes this campus as a significant contributor to the unique image and charm of the traditional urban neighborhoods north of the Downtown business district. Regular review of the campus master plan for Wesley College is highly recommended due to its location in a residential neighborhood, and to reflect Wesley's acquisition and planned conversion of the former Dover Library site to house new health-related programs and other functions. The Land Development Plan recommends that the campus and surrounding properties controlled by the College be designated for Institutional use and that these properties be zoned I-O (Institutional & Office).

### **Other Major Institutional Uses**

A number of the public school buildings and numerous places of worship may be situated within residential areas. Properties with these uses in residential zoning will not be rezoned to the IO (Institutional and Office) zone unless they are of a campus nature and such zoning would not have the potential to negatively impact the surrounding area. As such, the new Dover High School campus should be evaluated for rezoning from its residential zone of R-10 to IO. The former High School site (proposed for two new Middle Schools), the present Middle School and all of Dover's public elementary schools are designated and zoned for Institutional and Office uses

Other major institutional uses throughout the City include the Danner Campus, home of DelDOT, DMV and DART services; Dover YMCA; Modern Maturity Center; Dover Behavioral Health Center; and the Delaware Agricultural Museum and Village.

## **EMPLOYMENT CENTERS: OFFICE PARK AND INDUSTRIAL LAND USES**

To a large extent, Dover's character has been set by the historic location of key uses throughout the City, from the governmental complexes in the center, to rail dominate uses along the railroad right-of-way, to military uses at DAFB. Today, office parks and industrial land uses are areas partially or completely occupied by existing industrial and/or manufacturing uses. A large area of vacant developable land north of and adjoining Dover Air Force Base has been designated for industrial and manufacturing uses. Such uses are generally more compatible with military operations and seem to be less effected by noise associated with military overflights. Other areas for employment centers are adjacent to transportation routes (vehicle and rail). See Chapter 10 – Economic Development) for a more detailed discussion of Dover's economic opportunities.

### **Assumptions: Employment Centers**

1. The Dover community is fortunate to harbor several regional, national and international industry leaders within the City limits. Dover intends to accommodate the reasonable aspirations and expectations of its industrial and manufacturing community to support the vitality of these precious resources.

2. A healthy and well-rounded local economy will depend upon diversity in business and employment opportunities.
3. Opportunities exist to build on Dover’s regional proximity for warehousing and distribution and its access to DAFB for expansion of civilian air transportation and aviation related manufacturing, service and repair functions.

### **Goal: Employment Centers**

Create a more vibrant, growing economy with a broader range of job opportunities through collaborative efforts to market the region, identify potential targets, and respond to opportunities to foster an increase in office and industrial development in appropriate and designated areas.

### **Policies: Employment Centers**

1. Protect existing industrial, office park and manufacturing establishments from encroachment by incompatible land uses which could result in nuisance complaints, hazardous situations, and human conflict.
2. Provide sufficient land area for industrial purposes to enable the expansion of existing industries, the establishments of new facilities, and revitalization of underutilized older industrial sites.
3. Provide for a variety of office park and industrial development opportunities through the designation of areas for small, medium and large establishments within planned industrial parks.
4. Promote alternative modes of accessibility including pedestrian and bicycle facilities, bus shelters and transit stops, and provide incentives for car and van pooling of employees.
5. Create flexible and contemporary industrial zoning provisions that reflect emerging trends in uses, facilities, and business opportunities to meet future needs.

### **Recommendations: Employment Centers**

The City is committed to fostering a strong, vibrant, and balanced local economy built on existing and new business locations. This initiative requires close coordination with state and county economic development entities. It also requires continuous attention to the needs of existing businesses, efforts to promote a skilled workforce, a comprehensive marketing and promotional strategy, and land use and development regulations that are efficient and contemporary. The Comprehensive Plan designates areas throughout the City where job growth and opportunities are encouraged. Plan Chapter 10 – Economic Development lays out a set of goals and actions designed to reinforce this commitment.

### **Office Parks**

The Land Development Plan designates specific tracts of land of various sizes for Office and Office Park land uses. Office Park development involves an integrated development of office buildings with shared entrances, driveways and parking. The majority of uses permitted within an Office Park are generally weekday professional office uses involving very little or no activity at night or

on weekends. For this reason, the Office Park designation may be viewed as a transitional use category when situated between more intense commercial and industrial land uses and residential land uses. This designation usually involves the C-PO (Commercial/Professional Office Zone) zoning district.

These areas are located throughout the City with established office concentrations in the Enterprise Business Park, along Silver Lake Boulevard, on College Park Drive, along Old Rudnick Lane, the Northgate Center, and elsewhere. Scattered office uses are also located along Saulsbury/McKee Road and within designated “Mixed Use” areas in the Eden Hill Farm TND. Smaller scale areas for office parks are the Woodbrook complex on South Governors Avenue, office complexes along Walker Road, and areas along Route 8.

### **Large Scale Industry**

The Land Development Plan designates all existing major industrial facilities and associated vacant lands for Industrial use. These properties include the manufacturing facilities of Kraft Heinz Foods, Proctor & Gamble, Edgewell Personal Products, PPG Industries, General Metalcraft and others.

### **Industrial Parks**

Several planned industrial parks have been initiated since 1986 which offer industrial development potential. The Land Development Plan designates these sites for continued Industrial use. These sites include Kent County Aero Park/Air Cargo Terminal, Enterprise Business Park, College Business Park, and McKee Business Park. The City purchased and has developed the Garrison Oak Business and Technology Center (formerly the Garrison Oak Technical Park) in 1999-2000. It now houses a solar electric facility, an electric generating facility, a flooring products manufacturer, and a security firm with ten shovel ready lots remaining available.

Planning is underway to extend the Joint Use Agreement with Dover Air Force Base to allow expansion of the Kent County Aero Park into a regional facility. The Central Delaware Aviation Complex will facilitate aviation uses including air cargo, aircraft maintenance and repair, and related uses as part of a newly designated “Employment Center.”

## **DOVER AIR FORCE BASE**

Although Dover Air Force Base (DAFB) is within the City limits, as a land holding of the Federal government it is not subject to municipal regulation. In recognition of the strategic importance of DAFB with respect to the national interest, as well as the contributions of DAFB to the local economy and overall image of Dover, it is essential that the Comprehensive Plan support and protect the vital interests of Dover Air Force Base as an integral part of Dover.

A majority of the land area surrounding DAFB is within the City limits. Much of this land is impacted by noise associated with base operations and specific locations in close proximity to aircraft runways have been identified by the Department of Defense as accident potential zones. It is within these areas that Dover can play an important role in protecting the mission of DAFB by restricting development within these areas to uses that would be relatively compatible with

military operations. The Airport Environs Overlay Zone (AEOZ) was adopted in 2001 and revised in 2013 following an AICUZ (Air Compatibility Use Zone Study) from 2010.

By virtue of a Joint Use Agreement and a dedicated taxiway access to the base runway and air traffic control capabilities, a connection to the Base for civilian aircraft use is available. Operated by the Delaware River and Bay Authority on behalf of DelDOT and adjacent to the Kent County Aeropark, the Civil Air Terminal represents a significant resource for future development of aviation and aeronautic business opportunities.

### **Assumptions: Dover Air Force Base**

1. Dover Air Force Base influences the Dover community in many positive ways. Its benefits include positive economic impacts through employment and commerce. Skilled military personnel and their families from all over the country come to Dover and become an important part of our community. Dover residents also take great pride in the important role Dover Air Force Base plays in the defense of our nation and its peacekeeping and emergency relief efforts.
2. The connection to the Base for expansion of adjacent public and private air-related uses is an important, long-term opportunity for the City and Kent County.

### **Goal: Dover Air Force Base**

Create a favorable and compatible environment for Dover Air Force Base through a resolute commitment to provide all reasonable planning accommodations to protect the Base.

### **Policies: Dover Air Force Base**

1. Restrict land uses surrounding Dover Air Force Base to uses defined in the most current edition of the Air Installation Compatible Use Zone (AICUZ) document produced by the United States Department of Defense.
2. Require special noise attenuation measures to be incorporated within plans for the construction of new buildings in the vicinity of Dover Air Force Base.
3. Maintain the designated Airport Environs Overlay Zone (AEOZ) which includes the Accident Potential Zones and Noise Zones as defined by the Air Installation Compatible Use Zone (AICUZ) document. This ordinance sets forth regulations within the *Zoning Ordinance* governing land use and development within these areas (Article 3 Section 22). The boundaries of the AEOZ may be updated in the future to coincide with the most current edition of the AICUZ document.
4. Ensure cooperative planning to facilitate joint use activities in a manner that protects the Base operations while achieving associated economic benefits.

### **Recommendations: Dover Air Force Base**

The Land Development Plan reflects the existing limits of Dover Air Force Base for location purposes. No enlargement of the land use area associated with DAFB is proposed at this time. Areas immediately north of DAFB within the City limits have been designated for Industrial uses, focused on air cargo and other aviation-based uses. A few small pockets of existing residential

development exist north of DAFB along Horsepond Road and Lafferty Lane. The Land Development Plan shows this area as Industrial, primarily because the AEOZ (Airport Environs Overlay Zone) prohibits new residential uses in this area. The City will not rezone active residential properties until or unless the residential use ceases on that property. Portions of the adjacent industrial lands and other lands will be considered for rezoning to a newly established IPM3 (Industrial Park Manufacturing – Industrial Aviation and Aeronautics Center) zone as master planning for the area continues.

## **PUBLIC UTILITIES**

Public Utilities include such systems as clean water, electricity production, and stormwater management as well as the removal of waste products. This makes the infrastructure that supports these activities vital to the well-being of the people who live, work, and play in the City of Dover. Similarly, the Comprehensive Plan must reflect the importance of continuing efforts to keep the maintenance and improvement of our Public Utilities infrastructure as a vital component of our plans moving forward.

For the *2019 Comprehensive Plan*, the City of Dover has created a new land use category of “Public and Private Utilities” to show the importance of dedicated land to facilitate the needs of day-to-day life in Dover. This land use category will be used where existing utility infrastructure is the primary use activity on the property. There is also the Source Water Protection Overlay Zone which notes where in the City the soils facilitate better than average reabsorption of groundwater.

### **Assumptions: Public Utilities**

1. The City will continue to be responsible for water, wastewater, electric and stormwater system, owning, operating and maintaining them for the benefit of residents, customers and businesses.
2. The City will plan for present and future needs as the City grows, assessing costs among users and development interests as meets the best interests of the public
3. The City will consistently strive to achieve and maintain full compliance with State and other regulatory requirements.

### **Goal: Public Utilities**

Continue to maintain and improve/expand Dover’s Public Utilities in a manner that best facilitates the continued improvement in the quality of life for Dover’s residents. This will also better prepare the City of Dover for future expansion and growth.

### **Policies: Public Utilities**

1. Cooperate with other public and private providers to ensure system efficiency and capacity.
2. Actively assess emerging trends, technologies and regulatory schemes as these might impact the operation of the City’s utilities.

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## **Recommendations: Public Utilities**

The Land Development Plan reflects the existing locations of Public Utilities and private utility facilities. These encompass water, sewer, and electric system components such as water towers, pump stations, and electric substations. Examples of private utility facilities include the Dover Solar Park and the Garrison Energy Center. No enlargement of the land use area associated with Public Utilities is proposed at this time.

## **AGRICULTURAL LAND USES**

Just as was true in 2008, there are currently properties within the City limits that remain in active agricultural use. Some of these properties are zoned for residential or other uses and are being farmed for the time being until being converted to another land use. Other properties have the A (Agriculture Zone) which is a zone that specifically permits agricultural uses. Several properties in the Agriculture zone are also enrolled in Agricultural Preservation Programs with the State of Delaware Department of Agriculture, indicating that the owners intend to continue farming at least for the five to ten-year duration of the program and potentially for a longer time. The bulk of the land zoned Agriculture is located east of State Route 1, south of Dover Air Force Base, and along Route 8 in the western portion of the City adjacent to the Cranberry Run development.

### **Assumptions: Agricultural Land Uses**

1. Many agricultural land uses, particularly those lands which the owners have chosen to place in Agricultural Preservation Programs, are likely to continue as a long-term component in the City's land use mix. Agricultural lands in the State's program define and limit the City's growth, at least for as long as they are actively in the Preservation status.
2. Agricultural land uses are appropriate where they form logical transitions to larger tracts of farmland in the County, where they complement sensitive natural features, and where they can be economically viable while retaining open space in the City.
3. Higher density urban land uses, such as those anticipated in the City, are not always compatible with active agricultural operations. Consideration will have to be given to proper buffering and other measures to mitigate conflicts between agricultural and other land uses.
4. With growing support for farm fresh and "farm-to-table" programs, the nature of agriculture will continue to evolve. Specialty crops and new growing techniques will make agricultural activities in the urban area increasingly challenging from both land use and regulatory aspects.
5. Access to an adequate and varied food source is an increasingly significant issue for many urban Dover residents impacting on health and limiting economic growth.

### **Goal: Agricultural Land Uses**

The *2019 Comprehensive Plan* supports the continuation of existing active agricultural uses as a viable and important component of the Land Use and Open Space mix in Dover, especially where agricultural lands form logical transitions between developed areas in the City and rural,

agricultural areas in the County; and reflects the importance of food as an important component of the local economy.

### **Policies: Agricultural Land Uses**

1. Support efforts of property owners in appropriate areas who elect to enroll their properties in Agricultural Preservation Districts.
2. Evaluate the impact of new development applications on active farming operations, especially those that have been preserved through the Agricultural Preservation Program. Conversely, evaluate new agricultural zoning requests based on the potential impact of long-term farming activities on existing neighborhoods and planned or existing City infrastructure investments.
3. Collaborate with the County and the State regarding planning for agricultural preservation and open space protection on the periphery of the City.
4. Plan for the introduction of new forms of agricultural production and crops, especially involving enclosed production, and develop policies and regulatory options for such uses in non-agriculture zones.
5. Actively support community gardens, fresh markets, innovation in food processing and distribution, and opportunities for urban agriculture including reuse of former brownfield locations.

### **Recommendations: Agricultural Land Uses**

The Land Development Plan indicates the retention of active Agricultural land uses in three location within the City: south of Dover Air Force Base, areas east of State Route 1, and on Route 8. There are two farms where Purchase of Development Rights (Agriculture Easements) were placed as part of Agricultural Lands Preservation Program: on Route 8 west of Cranberry Run and on the west side of Long Point Road.

## **PARKS AND OPEN SPACE**

While much of this Plan considers the built environment in Dover, the undeveloped or natural environment is just as important. These undeveloped lands include all areas that are not formally constructed as places of human habitation and use. This can include open space areas within residential developments held in either private or public ownership. Another important type of non-urban area is environmentally sensitive land such as woodlands, wetlands, and floodplain areas. Finally, the City's Parks and Recreation Areas are developed and maintained to provide formal areas to participate in sports and simply enjoy being out of doors.

Public open space refers to park areas and nature preserves owned by the City, the State, or the Federal government. There are several types of Public Open areas represented in Dover.

### **Assumptions: Public Open Space**

1. Public parks are a desirable and necessary element of any community. Parks provide relief to the urban environment allowing residents to enjoy nature and participate in sports in close proximity to their homes.
2. Significant natural features should be preserved as public parks where these areas provide benefits to the public such as aesthetic enhancement of the community, passive or active recreation, and/or resource conservation.
3. Environmentally sensitive areas that are unsuitable for development because of environmental constraints or that have significant ecological benefits are also worthy of preserving in either public or private ownership. These are discussed further in Chapter 5 – Natural Resources and Environmental Protection.

### **Goal: Public Open Space**

Preserve and enhance the existing network of public parks and expand the public park system to meet the needs of the current and future population. Special consideration should be given to preserving natural features, such as Silver Lake and the St. Jones River, for public use and aesthetic enjoyment. Also, future and existing parks can be made more accessible via a citywide network of bicycle and pedestrian pathways.

### **Policies: Public Open Space**

1. Maintain and systematically improve existing parks and recreation areas to ensure that they are safe, attractive and meet the changing needs of the community over time.
2. Develop new active and passive open spaces in public ownership to serve the needs of the current and future population in accordance with Parks and Recreation Master Plans (as these are developed) and the *Bicycle Plan* and *Pedestrian Plan*.
3. Continue to promote civic open spaces and squares such as The Green and Legislative Mall as places for public events and community interaction.
4. Require the creation of new civic open spaces as a component of large institutional, commercial, or residential projects, where appropriate.

### **Recommendations: Public Open Space**

It will be necessary throughout the planning period to provide various types of Open Spaces for public use. Different segments of the population have different recreational needs, which can be met with a combination of active recreation areas, passive or “natural” parks, and formal greens and squares. The Land Development Plan designates Open Spaces throughout the City which may fall into three categories as described below.

Recreation areas are publicly owned and managed lands which contain playing fields, playground equipment, and other developed recreational equipment. These areas are designed for the public to participate in active recreation and fitness programs. Dover Park in east Dover, Schutte Park in west Dover, and Silver Lake Park in central Dover are the largest examples of this type of park in

the Dover park system. Numerous other recreational facilities are located throughout the City in smaller neighborhood settings and as part of educational facilities.

Passive open spaces are park areas that are designed to preserve the natural environment and provide the public with opportunities to enjoy nature in the midst of the City. These types of areas often include open fields, mature woodlands, and preserved waterfronts. Many park areas combine active and passive open spaces to serve a variety of users. Silver Lake Park is an example that contains both passive (woods, beach, St. Jones River) and active (boat ramp, play equipment) recreational features.

A third type of public open space is formal squares and greens that serve as places of public assembly in key locations. Local examples include The Green, which dates back to the 1700s, and Legislative Mall at the State Capital Complex. Institutional complexes also include areas of public open space. If additional public open space is designated or identified, then these areas may be identified for rezoning to the ROS zone.

## **PRIVATE OPEN SPACE**

Private open space is most often located within residential communities as a result of the set aside of these areas as part of the development process and the City's development requirements. These lands are frequently owned and maintained by private homeowners' associations or similar management organizations. Private open space may be improved to include playground equipment and playing fields to serve active recreational needs. Private open space may also consist of vacant fields, wooded areas, stormwater ponds, and floodplain areas which serve as passive recreation.

A purely recreational type of private open space comes in the form of private clubs. These include golf and country clubs, such as the Maple Dale Country Club. Other types of clubs, such as the YMCA, provide various recreational opportunities to their members.

### **Assumptions: Private Open Space**

1. Neighborhood parks and other recreation areas under the management of private homeowners' associations allow residents to have a sense of ownership of these areas and more freedom in terms of the type of park area desired.
2. Private clubs and organizations provide significant opportunities for the recreation of members.
3. Private open spaces must include areas suitable for active and passive uses not merely "left over" or marginally developable portions of the development.

### **Goal: Private Open Space**

Promote the construction of neighborhood parks and playgrounds within new residential developments and cooperate with the private sector and community homeowners' associations to help them meet their recreational needs including the creation of new private efforts that help meet the recreational needs of the community.

### **Policies: Private Open Space**

1. Continue, through provisions of the *Zoning Ordinance*, to ensure that new developments are provided with private recreational areas and open space commensurate with the size and nature of the development.
2. Develop creative ways to meet the City’s recreational needs, possibly through partnerships with the private sector, the State, or local community groups.

### **Recommendations: Private Open Space**

The Land Development Plan does not generally specify open space areas within large tracts of developable land. Their placement and size are dependent on individual design proposals and the needs of the particular community. In general, these areas should be centrally located and accessible to residents via sidewalks and pedestrian paths. Upon adoption of a development plan and their identification for open space, the land area may be considered for rezoning to ROS zone.

FINAL DRAFT

## LAND DEVELOPMENT PLAN MATRIX

The following is the Matrix of possible zoning categories in each of the land use categories included on the Land Development Plan Maps:

**Table 12-1 Land Use and Zoning Matrix**

| <b>Land Use Category</b>           | <b>Zoning District</b>   |
|------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Residential Low Density</b>     | R-20 (One Family Residence)<br>R-15 (One Family Residence)<br>R-10 (One Family Residence)<br>R-8 (One Family Residence)<br>R-7 (One Family Residence)<br>C-1 (Neighborhood Commercial)   |
| <b>Residential Medium Density</b>  | R-8 (One Family Residence)<br>R-7 (One Family Residence)<br>RM-1 (Medium Density Residence)<br>RM-2 (Medium Density Residence)<br>RG-1 (General Residence)<br>RG-2 (General Residence)<br>RG-3 (Group Housing)<br>RGO (General Residence and Office)<br>MH (Manufactured Housing)<br>C-1 (Neighborhood Commercial)         |
| <b>Residential High Density</b>    | RM-2 (Medium Density Residence)<br>RGO (General Residence and Office)<br>RG-1 (General Residence)<br>RG-2 (General Residence)<br>RG-3 (Group Housing)<br>RG-4 (General Residence – Multi-Story Apartments)<br>RG-5 (General Residence - Mid Rise Apartments)<br>MH (Manufactured Housing)<br>C-1 (Neighborhood Commercial) |
| <b>Commercial - Low Intensity</b>  | C-1 (Neighborhood Commercial)<br>C-1A (Limited Commercial)<br>C-2 (Central Commercial)<br>C-2A (Limited Central Commercial)<br>RGO (General Residence and Office)<br>CPO (Commercial and Professional Office)<br>IO (Institutional and Office)   |
| <b>Commercial – High Intensity</b> | C-2A (Limited Central Commercial)<br>C-3 (Service Commercial)<br>C-4 (Highway Commercial)<br>SC-1 (Shopping Center Commercial)<br>SC-2 (Shopping Center Commercial)<br>SC-3 (Shopping Center Commercial)<br>RC (Recreational and Commercial)<br>CPO (Commercial/Professional Office)<br>IO (Institutional and Office)      |

|                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Commercial – Entertainment</b>   | RC (Recreational and Commercial)<br>IO (Institutional and Office)  |
| <b>Mixed-Use</b>                    | C-2 (Central Commercial) (Downtown Redevelopment Target Area Only)<br>C-2A (Limited Central Commercial)<br>TND (Traditional Neighborhood Design)<br>C-1 (Neighborhood Commercial)<br>C-1A (Limited Commercial)<br>RGO (General Residence and Office) (Downtown Redevelopment Target Area Only)<br>R-8 (One Family Residence)<br>R-10 (One Family Residence)<br>RG-1 (General Residence)<br>RG-2 (General Residence)<br>RG-4 (General Resident - Multi-Story Apartments)<br>C-3 (Service Commercial)<br>CPO (Commercial and Professional Office)<br>IO (Institutional and Office) |
| <b>Industrial</b>                   | M (Manufacturing)<br>IPM (Industrial Park Manufacturing)<br>IPM-2 (Industrial Park Manufacturing – Business and Technology Center)<br>IPM-3 (Industrial Park Manufacturing - Industrial Aviation & Aeronautics)<br>C-3 (Service Commercial)  |
| <b>Public and Private Utilities</b> | IPM (Industrial Park Manufacturing)<br>IPM-2 (Industrial Park Manufacturing – Business and Technology Center)<br>IPM-3 (Industrial Park Manufacturing - Industrial Aviation & Aeronautics)<br>Any zone subject to conditions   |
| <b>Right-of-Way</b>                 | Street, Road and Alley Rights-of-way   |
| <b>Institutional</b>                | IO (Institutional and Office)<br>Institutional uses may be conditionally permitted in residential zones  |
| <b>Office and Office Parks</b>      | CPO (Commercial and Professional Office)<br>IO (Institutional and Office)<br>IPM (Industrial Park Manufacturing)<br>RGO (General Residence and Office)   |
| <b>Active Agriculture</b>           | A (Agricultural) Agricultural uses may also exist in other zones   |
| <b>Open Space</b>                   | ROS (Recreational and Open Space)<br>RC (Recreational and Commercial)  |

Source: Department of Planning and Inspections



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# Chapter 13

# GROWTH AND ANNEXATION

# PLAN

## GROWTH AND ANNEXATION PLAN

### GROWTH AND ANNEXATION BACKGROUND

Dover has a history of growth through annexation. One of the most outspoken advocates of annexation was the late Mayor Crawford Carroll (Mayor 1962-1976 and 1982-1988). Under his guidance and leadership, Dover’s land area grew from 8,267 acres in 1969 to 12,287 acres in 1971 through annexation. Mayor Carroll understood the wisdom of annexing lands surrounding the City that were under development pressure. Also during this period, the City had a policy of not providing services unless the property was annexed into the City. Over time, these lands developed into bustling commercial, industrial, institutional, and residential areas that provided Dover with the tax base needed to continue to offer the high-quality public services which are the trademark of the City.

Since Mayor Carroll’s time, the City has continued to grow through annexation at a somewhat more modest pace. By 1996, the City’s land area was approximately 14,400 acres, but between 1996 and 2003 only a few parcels consisting of approximately 59 acres were annexed. From 2003 to 2008, the City’s land base expanded more substantially by a total of 596 acres. There were several large areas of expansion during the 2003-2008 period, particularly the south side of State Route 8 west to Artis Drive, as well as the Bush Farm north of West Denney’s Road. Since 2008 the City has grown by about 270 additional acres. A number of the more recent annexations were enclaves (“holes”) that were mostly surrounded by other lands in the City. The largest land area annexed was the Dover International Speedway lands annexed in 2016. Today the City encompasses approximately 15,193 acres. See Map 2-1.

Dover is committed to rounding out the City’s boundary and filling in the holes as the priorities for annexation. Annexation of enclaves is important, as these “holes” within the City often benefit from City services and facilities without the opportunity to participate in the local government that provides those services or fulfilling the obligation to pay municipal taxes (which funds those services). Additionally, these enclaves often cause confusion to service providers including emergency services. It is often unclear in whose jurisdiction the parcels belong.

This plan represents an evaluation and restatement of Dover’s annexation policies. This includes a set of annexation objectives that are consistent with Delaware law, the *State Strategies for Policies and Spending*, and the plans of adjacent municipalities and Kent County. The following sections will discuss the above-mentioned plans, and how this Growth and Annexation Plan has been coordinated with them.

## **GENERAL POLICY STATEMENT**

Annexation is the systematic expansion of the City’s corporate boundaries into an unincorporated area. The process for annexation is detailed both in the City’s Charter and within Title 22, Chapter 1, Section 101, *Delaware Code*.

With annexation properties gain access to municipal services and property owners gain political voice within the City government that is providing them with City services and utilities. Without timely and properly planned annexations, developing local jurisdictions would be burdened with tax inequities, municipal service inefficiencies, political fragmentation, and disorderly growth patterns.

People residing adjacent a local boundary often enjoy many of the services of the municipality without providing monies to support the cost of the services such as local streets, parks, recreation programs, libraries, police and fire, as well as other essential services provided by incorporated jurisdictions. Some problems that result from the fragmentation of boundaries include the fact that cities and towns cannot properly plan or address orderly growth, transportation issues, or environmental issues including, but not limited to, pollution control, sewer districts, and water services.

### **Benefits of Annexation**

- Orderly Growth – Presents a true reflection of existing social, economic and cultural components of the local jurisdiction.
- Unified Community – Prevents fragmentation of government authority and duplication of services.
- Transportation Issues – Roads, sidewalks, mass transportation and bike paths are more easily addressed within an incorporated area.
- Unified Political Representation – Citizens may participate in the local government jurisdiction which is providing them with City services.
- Access to Full Range of Municipal Services – Properties that are annexed become eligible for the full range of City services provided by the municipality, such as street sweeping, trash removal, street lighting and the like.
- Consistent Economic Development - Ensures compatibility among uses and coordinated recruitment and retention initiatives.

## COORDINATION WITH RELEVANT PLANNING DOCUMENTS AND EFFORTS

### **Strategies for State Policies and Spending (2015)**

The 2015 *Strategies for State Policies and Spending* sets forth the State’s policy on land use and development. The *Strategies* document and associated maps (originally approved in 1999) were updated and approved on September 23, 2004 and reaffirmed by Governor Markell on April 14, 2016. The *Strategies for State Policies and Spending* identifies “Investment Levels” for land as Level 1 through Level 4, indicating the appropriateness of development. These levels differ from the Categories identified on Dover’s Potential Annexation Areas Map (Map 13-1).

One of the core principles guiding of the *Strategies* is to direct urban development to occur in and adjacent to existing towns and developed areas. From the *Strategies* document, the Investment Levels (shown on Map 14-1) designates most of the land within the City of Dover boundaries as Level 1, described as higher density development, a variety of transportation options, efficient use of existing public and private infrastructure, mixed uses, and a sense of place with a common identity. The State policy will be to encourage redevelopment and reinvestment along with providing services to the community. The Level 1 areas have the highest priority for State investment and spending. The *Strategies* indicate that the State will invest in infrastructure, public facilities, employment, and social services in these areas.

With the small exception of lands that have significant environmental or policy impediments to development, most of the balance of the land within the City is designated as Level 2. These Level 2 areas are described as less developed areas either near larger communities or as independent small towns and rural villages, but all with services. The State’s intent for properties within these Level 2 areas is to “...support and encourage a wide range of uses and densities, promote other transportation options, foster efficient use of public and private investments, and enhance community identity and integrity.”

There are few Level 3 areas within the City. They generally are the agricultural lands east of State Route 1 adjacent to the lands of Dover International Speedway. These lands in the City of Dover context are described as being “...adjacent to or intermingled with fast growing areas...” identified as Level 1 or 2. The State intends that while these lands may be developed, there are issues of timing, phasing, site characteristics or State agency programs that may make the development inappropriate in the short term. The investments encouraged by the State are for infrastructure once the Investment Levels 1 and 2 are substantially built out, or when the infrastructure or facilities are logical extensions of existing systems and deemed appropriate to serve a particular area.

There are no Level 4 areas within the City, but a portion of the potential Annexation Area is identified as such. Level 4 properties are identified as predominantly agricultural and agriculture related or natural areas, parks and preserves. As documented in *Strategies for State Policies and Spending Update 2015*, “It is the state’s intent to discourage additional urban and suburban development in Investment Level 4 areas unrelated to the area’s need.”

In looking at the City’s Growth and Annexation Plan, the areas identified for annexation during the ten-year horizon (Annexation Category 1 and 2) are largely consistent with the Level 1 and Level 2 areas and some Level 3 areas. The exceptions to this include the lands on the south side of South Little Creek Road east of Horsepond Road (the Employment Center area) which are shown as Levels 3 and 4.

Lands owned by Dover International Speedway (and immediately surrounding these lands), immediately north and south of Leipsic Road, were originally located within the Level 4 area; however, with State concurrence they were annexed into the City in 2016 and designated Level 2 and 3. Following that annexation, these lands (typically used for the Firefly Music Festival and other events) were the subject of the Dover International Speedway Parking & Event Area Master Plan (Application S-17-03).

A few parcels or areas are identified as “out-of-play” by the State. Some of these are natural areas like the waterways of the St. Jones, the Mudstone Branch, the Fork Branch Nature Preserve, and other parkland areas. Other areas include the two agricultural parcels whose owners have sold their development rights to the State, wetlands associated with the ROW for State Route 1, the ROW for the POW-MIA Parkway, and lands of the Dover Air Force Base. These are identified as “...not available for development or redevelopment.”

### **Kent County, DE Comprehensive Plan**

The City also reviewed the Growth Zone identified in the recently adopted *2018 Kent County Comprehensive Plan* in developing its Growth and Annexation Plan. Except for some lands to the west of the City in the vicinity of Route 8 and Artis Drive, lands identified within the City’s Growth and Annexation Plan (Category 1 and 2) are largely consistent with the Kent County Growth Zone. The *Kent County Comprehensive Plan* is supportive of growth in and around municipalities. The County Plan identifies areas north of DAFB and adjacent to the Kent County Aero Park as being part of a future “Employment Zone.” The City agrees with this designation and envisions their ultimate annexation into the City. Some of these lands are Levels 3 and 4 on the *State Strategies Map*. The City will continue to coordinate development efforts with Kent County in areas of mutual concern and will work with the County to ensure development along the shared boundary remains consistent.

### **Camden and Wyoming**

Camden and Wyoming are the only two municipalities that are close to or adjacent to the boundaries of the City of Dover.

The Town of Camden recently completed an update of their Comprehensive Plan, the adoption of which was expected in May 2019. With one small exception, the plan does not include any potential annexation areas that approach the Dover area. The annexations anticipated by Camden are primarily to the south and west of the town or are infill parcels or enclaves. While both Camden and Dover recognize Isaac Branch as the logical shared boundary between them, there is a parcel north of the Branch, east of U.S. Route 13 that is designated a future annexation area in Camden’s plan. This area is also included in Dover’s annexation boundary. It will be shown as an “Area of Concern” in both plans and any requests for annexation to either jurisdiction will be subject to review and coordination prior to consideration.

Wyoming’s most recent Plan was adopted amended and approved on November 13, 2011 and includes an annexation component. City of Dover Planning staff met with the Mayor and staff from Wyoming in April 2019 to discuss areas of common interest. The three areas of common interest in annexation are the lands south of Webbs Lane and east of New Burton Road, the Papen Farm east of Wyoming Mill Road, and the Papen Farm parcels west of Wyoming Mill Road. The City shows the Papen lands as an Area of Concern on Map 13-1: Potential Annexation Areas. Both Wyoming and Dover agree that the POW-MIA Parkway east of New Burton Road is an appropriate boundary with Dover on the north and Wyoming on the south.. The area north of the ROW in Dover is shown as a Category 2 area, while the area shown south of the ROW is identified as an Area of Concern (although these lands are committed to a Kent County recreation area and a scout camp and are unlikely to be further developed).

The City of Dover and the Town of Wyoming determined that both jurisdictions have a vested interest in the Papen Farms along Wyoming Mill Road. Both municipalities will continue to show these within their annexation areas. If, and when, a property owner requests annexation into either municipality, the municipality receiving the request will notify the other, at which time such municipality will have the opportunity to comment through the public process. The City of Dover continues to assert that Dover is in a stronger position to provide utilities, including water, sewer and electric, to these areas, along with the wide array of other City services including trash collection, street sweeping, planning support, inspection services, and code enforcement.

## ANNEXATION GOALS AND POLICIES

### **Purpose**

The purpose of having an Annexation Policy is to provide the City Council, Planning Commission, and City Staff a basis from which to make sound and consistent decisions regarding the growth of the City. The City of Dover supports annexation in support of the following goals:

- Direct urban development toward the City center where more efficient and effective provision of City services is provided.
- Direct urban development away from agricultural lands, environmentally sensitive areas, and natural open spaces existing at the City’s periphery.
- Avoid premature annexation of lands that could lead to development contrary to the goal of containing urban development within planned areas where the basic services of sewer, water, streets, waste management, police, fire, electricity, community facilities, schools, recreation and transportation can be provided without lowering the quality of services currently provided to the existing population.

## CITY OF DOVER 2019 ANNEXATION PLAN

### **Lands Considered for Annexation**

The City of Dover’s Growth and Annexation Plan is described in this Chapter and is graphically depicted on Map 13-1. The term “Growth and Annexation Plan” refers to both the text and the Maps, and in practice, neither should be considered or relied upon without referencing the other. Using the above goals as a framework, the City has identified three distinct areas of annexation potential for the City of Dover, identified as Category 1, 2, and 3. These categories are based on those developed in the *2003 Comprehensive Plan* and *2008 Comprehensive Plan*, but they have been refined to address current circumstances.

### **Category 1 – High Priority Annexation Areas**

The lands in Category 1 – High Priority Annexation Areas are show in dark green on Map 13-1. Lands in Category 1 are primarily enclaves of unincorporated territory mostly surrounded by the City of Dover. In all or most of these cases, the City provides these parcels with one or more essential service (sewer, water, police, fire, etc.). It is the intention of the City to annex these properties within the five-year planning period. The City will work with those interested in annexation and their neighbors, as well as incentivize annexation to residents of these areas. Because annexation often comes with City property taxes and costs associated with connecting to the City’s water and sewer systems, the City should make efforts to incentivize annexation within Category 1 areas.

#### **Category 1 Recommendations:**

- The City will explore incentives for property owners within these areas to annex into the City. Incentives may include phasing in of taxes, a limited tax abatement, and/or developing a payment plan for connection fees and impact fees to the City’s water and sewer system.
- The City will not extend sewer and/or water infrastructure to Category 1 areas unless the property owners annex into the City. In cases where there is an immediate need due to a failing septic system or another issue impacting the health, safety and welfare of the area residents, the City may connect the properties to utilities with the condition of annexation. This may be necessary, as the Annexation process can take up to three months. Exceptions to this annexation requirement may be made with the approval of the City Planner and City Manager, with documentation as to why annexation is not technically or legally feasible.
- In some instances, an annexation may be requested for other reasons (economic opportunity, access to roadways, regulatory convenience) and be approved where City services are not readily available and adequate private or on-site systems exist. With the approval of DNREC, the City may approve such annexations with the condition that connection will occur when services are available in the future.

## **Category 2 – Priority Annexation Areas (0 – 10 Years)**

These lands in Category 2 – Priority Annexation Areas are shown in yellow on Map 13-1. Lands in Category 2 are on the periphery of the City, and in many cases close gaps or holes in what would appear to be the orderly limits of the City. Many of these areas help to round out City boundaries. In some cases, owners of these parcels have expressed interest in annexation. In other cases, these parcels would provide for a logical extension of City services and utilities. It is the intention of the City to consider annexing these properties within the next ten years, as properties express interest.

The Category 1 and 2 lands represent the extent of the City’s annexation interest within the ten-year planning horizon. All Category 1 and 2 lands are consistent with the Kent County Comprehensive Plan. There are some areas where the City incorporated area already exists beyond the County’s designated “Growth Zone.” This occurs on the west and east sides of Dover.

Category 2 includes lands east of State Route 1 along Horsepond Road and S Little Creek Road designated in the *2018 Kent County Comprehensive Plan* as an “Employment Center.” This area, discussed in detail in Chapter 10 – Economic Development, will be annexed into the City and developed for aviation and aeronautics related industrial uses, building on the existing Civil Air Terminal and Kent County Aeropark.

Another area of land included in the Category 2 annexation area is land immediately adjacent to lands owned by Dover International Speedway that is located east of State Route 1, immediately north and south of Persimmon Tree Lane. Some of this land is used for temporary RV camping associated with NASCAR racing events and the Firefly Music Festival.

## **Category 3 – Areas to Be Considered for Long Term Annexation (5 to 10+ years)**

The Category 3 lands are shown in orange on Map 13-1. The Category 3 lands are generally adjacent to or near the City boundaries, but slightly beyond the parcels in Categories 1 and 2. Some of these lands are vacant. Some include existing developments that may or may not be already receiving City services at unincorporated rates. Category 3 areas include most of the existing developed or developing areas along Dover’s western boundary as well as the existing development south of the US 13 Corridor and north of Moore’s Lake. The City does not intend to annex these parcels within the five-year planning period, but rather believes it is important to begin planning for potential annexation over the long term.

Most of the Category 3 lands are consistent with the Kent County Comprehensive Plan. Some of the Category 3 lands are within Agricultural Preservation Districts. The City does not intend to annex these lands if they are in preservation; however, if they come out of the Agricultural Preservation Program and are proposed for development, the City would like to consider annexation.

## **Areas of Concern**

Map 13-1 identifies Areas of Concern as areas where the City has a vested interest in the future of the areas but does not intend to annex them during the planning horizon. Most notably, these include areas east of State Route 1 and areas west of Wyoming Mill Road. These lands are in

agricultural use and in most instances part of an agricultural land preservation program. However, should their agricultural preservation status change their potential development adjacent to the City's boundaries might raise issues of the efficient provision of services and infrastructure, transportation concerns, and protection of natural resources. If developed, the City would like to be notified by the Town of Wyoming or Kent County so that the City can work with the relevant jurisdiction to ensure that land planning includes interconnections with areas that may ultimately develop in the City of Dover.

## **CLASSIFICATION OF POTENTIAL ANNEXATION LANDS**

Map 13-2: Potential Land Use for Annexation Areas shows the City's position on the land use classifications appropriate for lands within the Category 1 and Category 2 Annexation Areas. The zoning classifications considered for each land use category (classification) are identified in Table 12-1: Land Use and Zoning Matrix.

Map 13-2 identifies following areas for Residential Medium Density land use category if annexed into the City: the Papen Farm east of Wyoming Mill Road, the Kesselring Farm south of Webbs Lane, the enclave area along Nixon Lane and Acorn Lane, and the area north of Denney's Road. The plan identifies areas to the west of the City including Fox Hall Drive, Mifflin Road, and the Artis Drive areas and the Rodney Village area as the Residential Low Density land use category. This designation is also recommended in the area east of State Route 1 along Fox Road (currently developed residential lots).

The map identifies the large enclave area north of the Dover Mall (which is currently a manufactured home park and other commercial and residential areas) as Mixed Use. If this area were to annex and redevelop, it is an ideal opportunity for a master-planned mixed-use community.

The large enclave area east of McKee Road and north of College Road has been identified as Mixed Use if annexed. This area is adjacent to other industrially zoned areas and is bisected by the railroad tracks but could support mixed residential and commercial uses as well. The area east of the railroad corridor is identified as Open Space and has recently become part of the Fork Branch Nature Preserve. There is a small enclave area along McKee Road north of College Road that has been identified as Office and Office Parks. Most of the remainder enclave areas that front on major road corridors have been designated as a Commercial land use category if annexed.

Areas adjacent to Dover International Speedway lands east of State Route 1 are identified reflecting their existing uses; this includes the categories of Residential Low Density, Industrial, and Agricultural.

The Category 3 and the Areas of Concern on the Potential Annexation Map (Map 13-1) do not have potential Land Use Categories identified on the associated Map 13-2. As such, if Annexation of lands in these areas is sought then a Comprehensive Plan Amendment would be required in order to designate Land Use prior to annexation. If specifically related to an area eligible for annexation (i.e. being contiguous to the City), then a Comprehensive Plan Amendment can be considered at any time.

## ZONING REVIEW FOR ANNEXATIONS

The review of zoning for each parcel proposed for annexation should reflect a consideration of the details that may not be accommodated in a citywide Plan. That review may include:

- Proposed zoning be in compliance with the land use category shown on Map 13-2 and used in conjunction with Table 12-1: Land Use and Zoning Matrix;
- Character and compatibility of the surrounding land uses and properties;
- Street type and capacity serving the property;
- Environmental concerns and conditions that may influence land use and zoning;
- Market concerns and conditions;
- Compatibility with the overall goals of the Comprehensive Plan.

Each annexation request will be evaluated based on these criteria.

## IMPLEMENTATION

The City of Dover has or will take the following steps to implement the Annexation Plan:

1. Adoption of the Growth and Annexation Chapter and Annexation Plan Maps 13-1 and 13-2.
2. Develop incentives for Annexation of lands within the Category 1 area, such as:
  - a. Developing a payment plan for utility connection charges and impact fees.
  - b. Abating City property taxes for a period or phasing in City property taxes over a period.
3. Initiate Owner-requested Annexations following the Adoption of the Annexation Plan.
4. Pro-actively seek Annexations where the interests of the City would be well served, including:
  - a. Annexing properties owned by the State or another governmental entity.
  - b. Areas where utility extensions are being considered.
  - c. Properties that serve to define municipal boundaries for efficient public services.
  - d. Areas being consolidated for economic development or redevelopment initiatives.

An Annexation policy would not effectively bring about the City's desired goal of directing urban development toward the City center and away from rural, valued agricultural and environmentally sensitive areas without coordination with Kent County Department of Planning Services Staff and zoning practices. Therefore, the City will work with the County to develop the required coordination.

## **Annexation Requirements as per the *Delaware Code* and City of Dover Charter:**

The current process for the City to annex properties is a multi-step process. Annexations must comply with the following requirements of the *Delaware Code* and the City of Dover Charter (Section 1.05).

1. All annexations must be consistent with the City's most recently adopted Comprehensive Plan. The area(s) being considered must be depicted as area(s) for future annexation on the adopted plan.
2. The City shall have the ability to annex a parcel only if and to the extent that such parcel is contiguous with existing municipal boundaries. Nothing herein shall be construed to allow rights of way, utility easements and waterways or like entities to be annexed in corridor fashion or to be utilized as a corridor route for annexation to gain contiguity.
3. The City shall prepare a Plan of Services indicating those services it expects to provide to the newly annexed area, how such services will be provided, and the fiscal and operating capabilities of the City to provide such services. The Plan of Services is to be submitted to the Office of State Planning Coordination for review.
4. At the time of annexation, the City shall by ordinance rezone the area being annexed to a City zoning classification consistent with the adopted Comprehensive Plan.
5. The City when proposing annexation must fully comply with the provisions of Chapter 1 of Title 22, *Delaware Code*. This includes demonstration that the City has notified all other affected jurisdictions, conducted a public hearing, and provided a comment period of at least 30 days before formal annexation. The City shall file with the State Office of Planning Coordination any written comments received concerning such proposed annexation together with any response(s) thereto.
6. Annexation requests are subject to an application process prescribed by the Planning Department and including such items as ownership, location of the property, address, dimensions, existing and proposed use and zoning, utility requirements, and other information.
7. The application for Annexation and Rezoning require consideration by the Planning Commission and City Council as set forth in the *Dover Code of Ordinances*, including a referendum (vote) of all owners of the property(s) if not all have petitioned for annexation.

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# Chapter 14

# INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION

## INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION

Intergovernmental coordination is essential to accomplish the goals identified through the planning process. The coordination of planning and other activities with those of nearby municipalities, Kent County, and the State of Delaware will have a direct impact on the well-being and quality of life for all residents living in or near Dover.

### COORDINATION WITH NEARBY MUNICIPALITIES

#### **Camden**

The Town of Camden adopted a new Comprehensive Plan in May 2019. The City and Town met in February 2019 to discuss shared boundaries and with one small exception agreed that Isaacs Branch should be the natural and logical boundary of each municipality. At issue was a small parcel of land north of Isaacs Branch that Camden desires to annex for economic development purposes should interest materialize. This area will be shown on both Annexation Plans as an Area of Concern. It was determined that Camden intends to annex and grow south of their current town limits. It is not anticipated that Camden and Dover will have any jurisdictional issues, at least not during this planning period except as noted. However, Dover and Camden officials committed to keep each other apprised of activities in either municipality that could influence the other.

#### **Cheswold**

City Staff met in November 2018 with the Town Administrator of the Town of Cheswold to discuss respective boundaries for the future growth of both municipalities. Both the City's proposed growth area and Cheswold's adopted future boundary acknowledge Fork Branch as natural and logical shared boundary. One area outside both boundaries but lying west of US Route 13 was identified as an area to bring to the County's attention to ensure its future development is adequately addressed.

#### **Little Creek**

The City Planner had a conversation with the Mayor of Little Creek to determine if there were any potential development issues or comprehensive plan concerns. The Town of Little Creek's Comprehensive Plan was certified by the State in 2006. Their Plan does not indicate annexation,

but rather an area of concern extending a one-mile radius around the Town. Dover’s annexation and future development plans do not encroach on this area of concern identified by the Town.

## **Wyoming**

The Town of Wyoming amended its Comprehensive Plan effective November 13, 2011. Dover Planning Staff met with the Mayor and Clerk of Wyoming on April 22, 2019 and discussed three areas where both communities have some interest in future annexation activities. The areas in question are the area south of Webbs Lane, just east of New Burton Road and north of Isaacs Branch; the Papen Farm that lies east of Wyoming Mill Road, south of Hidden Creek; and the other farm areas of the Papen family that lie west of Wyoming Mill Road. The City will need to work with the Town to determine which municipality should annex the property if the owners become interested in development. The Papen Farm east of Wyoming Mill Road and the Kesselring Farm and adjacent properties south of Webbs Lane are logical expansions of the City of Dover within the next five years. Dover has infrastructure proximate to these properties that would make these logical expansions of the City’s sewer, water and electric systems. For this area both jurisdictions agreed that the right-of-way of the POW-MIA Parkway east of New Burton Road and Isaacs Branch represent a logical boundary between the jurisdictions. The Papen properties west of Wyoming Mill Road have recently renewed their commitment to remain in agricultural preservation (until at least 2023) and would therefore not be likely expansions to Dover’s boundary within the ten-year planning horizon. Regardless, the City will need to coordinate with the Town of Wyoming when and if the properties become available for development to ensure that land planning occurs in a way that is beneficial to both jurisdictions. These are referenced as “Areas of Concern” in Chapter 13 – Growth and Annexation Plan.

## **COORDINATION WITH KENT COUNTY**

The City and Kent County coordinated their comprehensive planning processes in multiple ways. These include coordination during Kent County’s preparation and adoption of their *2018 Comprehensive Plan*; participation in working groups examining the future use of the Civil Air Terminal and Kent Aeropark, and the designation of the Employment Center surrounding those facilities; and through the ongoing economic development efforts of the Kent Economic Partnership. Additionally, a planning session was held March 15, 2019 with the County Administrator and the County Planning Director to review the City’s proposed Land Development Plan and Annexation Plan. The County and City Planning Staffs serve on numerous committees and task forces addressing issues of mutual concern including homelessness, blight, Downtown revitalization, transportation, and other topics.

## **COORDINATION WITH THE STATE OF DELAWARE**

The City of Dover has worked with the Office of State Planning Coordination throughout the process of preparing this Comprehensive Plan. The City Planning Staff has met with the Director of the Office of State Planning Coordination and the Circuit Rider Planner for Kent County on several occasions and has made every attempt to address agency concerns in different elements of the text. Early in the planning process the City reached out through the Preliminary Land Use Service (PLUS) process for a Pre-Update review of the *2008 Comprehensive Plan* to better assess

State interests and concerns to be addressed. Data layers from FIRSTMAP from certain state agencies notably the State Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC), Department of Transportation (DelDOT), the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), and the Dover/Kent County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) were used to prepare the plan maps for this Plan.

The *Strategies for State Policies and Spending* focused on the Dover area is found in Map 14-1. This map demonstrates that Dover is predominately in the Investment Level 1 and 2 areas where the State will focus infrastructure investments and direct growth. The City of Dover will continue to work with the State through the Office of State Planning Coordination on planning, growth management, and infrastructure issues.

The Planning Staff has also met with staff from DNREC, the Department of Transportation (DelDOT), Department of Agriculture, the Dover/Kent County MPO, the Delaware State Housing Authority, Division of Small Business Development, the Division of Facilities Management, and the Delaware Prosperity Partnership in development of the Comprehensive Plan. Their input has been reflected in the various chapters and associated maps.

The City submitted the Preliminary Draft (Release DRAFT 10.1.2019) of this Plan to the Preliminary Land Use Service (PLUS) of the Office of State Planning Coordination in October 2019 for review and comment from various State agencies.

## FUTURE AND ONGOING COORDINATION ACTIVITIES

The City of Dover recognizes the importance of ongoing coordination with other municipalities, Kent County, regional agencies, and State agencies to ensure that growth and development occur in an orderly fashion. The following is a summary of ongoing efforts to coordinate with other governmental agencies, as well as future opportunities for coordination.

### **Continue the Development Advisory Committee Process**

The City of Dover has a Development Advisory Committee (DAC) that is made up of both City agencies and State and regional agencies responsible for various aspects of the development review process. DelDOT and the Kent Conservation District are members of the Committee. This process ensures that development decisions within the City of Dover are well-coordinated with the appropriate regulatory agencies. Projects cannot receive final approval from the City until they have received approval from all other regulatory agencies. While DelDOT and the Kent Conservation District are the most active participants within the DAC process, DAC agendas with application descriptions are also sent to other agencies including the school districts (Capital School District and Caesar Rodney School District) and DNREC.

### **Continue to Be an Active Participant in the Dover/Kent County MPO**

The City is an active participant in the Dover/Kent County MPO (Metropolitan Planning Organization); both on the MPO Council and the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). Dover's Mayor is the current Chair of the MPO's Council. This position ensures that Dover is aware of the

larger region and the transportation issues that extend beyond the City. The MPO also participates in the City's Development Advisory Committee (DAC).

### **Continue to Participate in Transportation Studies Impacting the Dover Area**

The City has been an active participant in the various transportation studies in the Dover area. This is important in ensuring that the local expertise is present as transportation projects are planned and in incorporating the results of the various studies in the land use planning process at the local level. Efforts include developing a Transportation Improvement District (TID) for US 13/Bay Road, discussions regarding the CTP/MPO Long Range Plan, and ongoing assessment of east-west access matters (See Chapter 9 - Transportation for more information).

### **Continue to work with Kent Conservation District and DNREC on Implementation of Source Water Protection**

The City will continue to rely on Kent Conservation District and DNREC, as needed, to provide technical support and implementation of the Source Water Protection Overlay Zone as development projects come in for review. This also includes continued participation as part of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and working with FEMA on floodplain issues.

### **Continue to Be Active Members of Local and Regional Economic Development Entities**

The City serves on various boards and organizations engaged in future growth, quality of life, and job creation impacting the Dover Area. These include the Kent Economic Partnership, the Downtown Dover Partnership, the Greater Kent Committee, the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce, the State Division of Small Business, Development and Tourism, the Delaware Prosperity Partnership, Restoring Central Dover, Miss Utility, Delaware Municipal Electric Corporation (DEMEC), and others.

### **Continue Coordination with Dover Air Force Base**

The City routinely coordinates with Dover Air Force Base on many levels. The DAFB Community Planner participates in the Development Advisory Committee (DAC). Staff are involved in developing the Joint Use Agreement for the Civil Air Terminal. The City regularly works with the Base to ensure safe and adequate provision of water, sewer and electric services. The City recognizes an Air Installation Compatible Use Zone provision to minimize adverse land use actions. The City has assisted DAFB in completion of an Installation Complex Encroachment Management Action Plan (ICEMAP) and will also be working with DAFB on a joint land use study for the Base and its surrounding areas.

### **Look for Opportunities to Coordinate with State and Regional Agencies**

City Staff has established working partnerships with such State agencies as the Division of Public Health, DNREC, and the Delaware State Housing Authority to share information, provide and receive technical expertise, and eliminate potential for duplication of efforts and/or services. City

Staff and elected officials will continue to work with other local, regional and State agencies to develop new partnerships that can increase efficiency and improve service provision in Dover.

## **COORDINATION WITH PLANNING ACTIVITIES**

The Planning Staff will be involved along with the City Manager, Dover Police Department, Department of Public Works (DPW), the Electric Department, and other City entities in the planning activities of other agencies when they are addressing land use, transportation, infrastructure, economic development, or service delivery in and around the Dover area. In addition to participating in regional planning activities, the City will review and comment on draft comprehensive and/or development plans by neighboring jurisdictions to ensure coordination.

FINAL DRAFT



FINAL DRAFT – 12.3.2019

# CHAPTER 15

# IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

For a Comprehensive Plan to be effective in guiding the growth and improving quality of life within a city, it must identify specific actions and timeframes for implementation. This Chapter identifies the actions and projects necessary for implementation of the *2019 Comprehensive Plan*, as well as the process for amending the Plan.

The City's success in meeting the upcoming challenges will in large part be determined by the actions it takes in the coming years. While each chapter of the Comprehensive Plan includes a series of recommendations for the specific topic area, this Chapter focuses on the projects, studies, code amendments, and other activities necessary to implement the Comprehensive Plan. The actions are grouped by timeframe for accomplishment of the specific action item.

The City Manager, City Planner, and other Department Directors will be responsible for incorporating the various actions and projects into their annual work plans to ensure that projects and tasks are completed in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan. The Planning Office will report annually to City Council and to the Office of State Planning Coordination on the progress of implementation.

The following is a categorized list of the actions required to implement the *2019 Comprehensive Plan* such that its Goals and Recommendations are achieved during the ten-year planning period.

## IMMEDIATE ACTIONS - 2019

The two most important and time-sensitive actions that are required by *Delaware Code* are the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan and the Comprehensive Rezoning of all parcels that will now be inconsistent with the Land Development Plan.

### **Adoption of the Comprehensive Plan**

The first step in the implementation process of the Comprehensive Plan is the official adoption. The process for adopting a Comprehensive Plan is spelled out in State law (*Delaware Code*, Title 29, Section 9103). A proposed municipal comprehensive plan is submitted to the Office of State Planning Coordination which shall solicit the comments of state agencies and those of other potentially impacted jurisdictions. This is accomplished through the submission to Preliminary Land Use Service (PLUS). The Office shall follow the process and procedures set forth for the Preliminary Land Use Service (PLUS) and shall provide the municipality with a report:

1. Documenting the degree to which the municipality has incorporated the State’s goals, policies and strategies.
2. Listing findings, recommendations and objections, including adverse fiscal impacts
3. Identifying improvements, revisions or other actions desired to address and resolve inconsistencies.
4. Setting forth a timetable and process for negotiations to achieve consistency.

This Plan (Release DRAFT 10.1.2019) was submitted for PLUS Review on October 1, 2019 and the comment review letter (Report) dated November 8, 2019 was received. The PLUS review comments and any revisions to the plan will be considered by the City Staff prior to release of a Final Draft.

The City must also provide an opportunity for public review and comment and shall provide such review and the proposed Comprehensive Plan to the City Planning Commission and the City Council. The first step in the implementation process of the Comprehensive Plan is the official adoption by the Planning Commission and City Council as required under Delaware law. Both Planning Commission and City Council adopting the Plan affirms their common goal with respect to the future. This occurred on \_\_\_\_\_ DATE and \_\_\_\_\_ DATE respectively.

Upon adoption and satisfaction of the PLUS comments the Plan shall be submitted for certification by the Governor. This occurred on \_\_\_\_\_ DATE.

### **Comprehensive Rezoning/Zoning Map Revisions**

As a part of the Comprehensive Plan implementation process, the City’s Official Zoning Map must be evaluated for consistency with the Land Development Plan. Zoning changes necessary to implement the Land Development Plan will be evaluated immediately after the Plan is adopted. The Land Development Plan (Chapter 12 and Map 12-1) is the basis for zoning within the City. Within 18 months of the Comprehensive Plan’s adoption, all zoning throughout the City must be consistent with the Land Development Plan. This Comprehensive Rezoning project will involve review by the Planning Commission and City Council with opportunities for public input through public hearings before each body.

## **ONGOING ACTIVITIES**

Many implementation tasks are not tied to a specific study, project, or code change rather they are tasks that are addressed on a routine and continuing basis throughout the planning period. They may result in one or more specific actions as appropriate. These on-going activities are listed by topic area.

### **Natural Resources and Environment**

- Continue to support native tree planting and landscaping programs and tree/natural area maintenance through the Development Advisory Committee and the Department of Public Works.

- Share the FEMA floodplain maps and information which pertain to the City to ensure homeowners, businesses and developers have accurate information about flood risks through a variety of outreach methods i.e. workshops, website, etc.
- Continue to utilize the knowledge and expertise of the Silver Lake Commission as advocates for the Lake, advisors to the City Council on matters regarding the Lake, and as liaisons between the City, the public, and DNREC regarding Lake management issues.
- Continue public education, outreach, and participation/engagement measures for water quality and related activities identified in Dover’s Municipal Separate Stormwater System (MS4) program.

#### **Historic Preservation**

- Conduct Public Outreach and Education opportunities regarding Historic District programs.
- Continue participation as a CLG (Certified Local Government).
- Utilize knowledge and expertise of Historic District Commission focused on preservation and protection of historic resources.

#### **Utilities and Infrastructure**

- Educate the public on floodplain topics through outreach to homeowners and residents focusing on helping residents understand their flood risk and what they can do to mitigate flooding in the City.
- Continue enforcement of floodplain regulations and associated construction codes.
- Implement a plan to remove sources of inflow and infiltration in the City’s Wastewater Systems.
- Continue to implement Green Energy Goals to help improve the effectiveness and efficiency of our resource management systems, particularly with electricity.
- Proactively maintain and improve the City’s utility infrastructure (water, sewer, stormwater, and electric).

#### **Community Services and Operations**

- Evaluate the levels of City Services as they pertain to police, fire, and emergency response times. Service levels should be maintained or exceed their current status as Dover grows in population and land size.
- Continue to build a robust online presence for the City focusing on outreach related to City initiatives, education on City ordinances, and promoting Dover as a desirable place to live, work, and play.
- Ensure existing services and facilities at the Dover Public Library building are maintained and expanded to support the number of daily visitors it encounters.
- Improve the City’s online customer service functions so that more types of applications, payments, and inquiries can be made through the City’s website.
- Support the Police Department’s goals and strategies for improving public safety as outlined in the Police Strategic Plan.

### **Transportation**

- Encourage augmentation of new and existing transit stops with bicycle and pedestrian facilities, as well as shelters to protect riders from inclement weather.
- In collaboration with DART, enhance transit connections between neighborhoods and employment centers, institutions, commercial areas, schools, recreational facilities, and locations with large transit-dependent populations.
- Continue to play an active role in the Dover/Kent County MPO.
- Maintain the City-owned street and alley systems.
- Continue to coordinate development activities within the City of Dover with DelDOT through the Development Advisory Committee and other interactions.
- Continue implementation of the *Bicycle Plan* and the *Pedestrian Plan*.

### **Economic Development**

- Ensure that the City has the capability and resources to effectively market and promote itself by identifying points of contact, protocols, processes, and marketing strategies.
- Develop a package of promotional materials suitable for a variety of audiences and uses, including print media, social and web presence, and general distribution with a hierarchy of consistent messages and information.
- Routinely review commercial, industrial and related ordinance provisions to ensure that they remain contemporary and support changing concepts of work, shopping and living.
- Reassess Dover's (and Kent County's) economic strengths and opportunities through a comprehensive economic analysis and assessment.
- Support opportunities to expand aviation facilities as well as access to these facilities.

### **Housing**

- Continue to conduct housing inspections on rental housing to ensure the compliance with City Codes.
- Continue to work with other housing agencies to eliminate severe housing conditions that constitute immediate health or safety hazards to the occupants.
- Work with housing providers and developers to construct affordable rental housing options throughout the City including accessible housing for persons with disabilities.
- Continue to work with housing providers to end homelessness and increase the number of permanent supportive housing.
- Support programs to address housing inequities and injustices and promote neighborhood initiatives to address hazards.
- Update and adopt the 2020-2024 Community Development Block Grant Consolidated Plan.

### **Emergency Operations Planning**

- Continue to comply with the National Incident Management System (NIMS) through participating in appropriate staff training and holding drills to prepare for potential disasters.
- Increase the staff training and education available to ensure all essential staff are trained in NIMS and familiar with the Dover Emergency Operations Plan (DEOP).

### **Planning and Use of Lands and Buildings**

- Support the adaptive mixed reuse of existing buildings throughout the City.
- Continue to evaluate and adopt the latest versions of the Building Codes and Fire Codes
- Increase coordination with development community and design professionals on City's regulations

## **SHORT TERM IMPLEMENTATION (2019-2021)**

The following is a listing of projects, studies, code revisions, and other activities that will be initiated or focused on during the two years immediately following Comprehensive Plan adoption.

### **Projects**

#### **Projects - Transportation**

- Update the “Agreement Regarding Dover US 13/Bay Road Corridor Transportation Improvement District” to set boundaries, target horizon year, and service standards.
- Work with DelDOT and the Dover/Kent County MPO to develop a Transportation Improvement District for the Route 13/Bay Road Corridor in Dover.

#### **Projects – Economic Development**

- Implement a marketing plan for Garrison Oak Business and Technology Center including establishing a web presence, ensuring listing for economic development, improving signage, and site enhancement.

#### **Projects – Downtown Revitalization**

- Develop and implement a Downtown parking plan.
- Promote the vitality of the Downtown Development District by developing a shared vision for the Downtown strategically addressing crime, vacancy, and blight.
- Develop revised or new incentives.
- Implement a neighborhood development strategy for adjacent commercial and residential areas.

#### **Projects - Community Services and Operations**

- Develop and implement a government/civic complex plan addressing needed City government offices and facilities.
- Implement the City's Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) Project to support the business processes of the City through improved access and management of City data.

### **Studies**

#### **Studies – Natural Resources and Environment**

- Evaluate the City's requirements for providing active recreation areas for new residential developments.

### **Studies – Historic Preservation**

- Evaluate and update the *Design Standards and Guidelines for the Historic District Zone*.

### **Studies – Community Services and Operations**

- Evaluate the design of City-owned buildings to identify opportunities for improving their security and disaster-readiness.

### **Studies - Transportation**

- Identify current Safe Routes programs and evaluate deficiencies.

### **Studies – Economic Development**

- Evaluate potential access to the Garrison Oak Center from State Route 1.
- Participate in development of a Joint Land Use Study with Dover Air Force Base.

### **Studies – Housing**

- Participate in the development and adoption of the *2019 Fair Housing Plan*

## **Code Amendments**

### **Code Amendments – Natural Resources and Environment**

- Update and maintain the Source Water Protection Overlay Zone (SWPOZ) on the City’s Zoning Map to ensure it covers all lands identified for protection by DNREC’s Source Water Map as wells and excellent recharge areas.

### **Code Amendments – Transportation**

- Explore current ordinances and site plan requirements to better incorporate non-motorized elements into land development plans.

### **Code Amendments - Housing**

- Amend provisions in the *Zoning Ordinance* for the definition of “family” to remove undue restrictions for members of protected classes.
- Amend provisions in the Safe Communities Initiative that may be a violation to Fair Housing.

## **Other Activities**

### **Other Activities – Natural Resources and Environment**

- Implement a Stormwater Utility with the City to help fund the maintenance of stormwater infrastructure that improves water quality.
- Evaluate the process for referring development projects to the Silver Lake Commission to ensure they review all projects which may have significant impacts on Silver Lake.

**Other Activities – Community Services and Operations**

- Ensure that the City’s contracted Ambulance Service can meet the service demands placed on it.

**Other Activities – Transportation**

- Evaluate the *2008 Delaware Route 8 Study* and the *2007 US Route 13 Circulation Study* to determine if updated plans are needed.
- Advocate certain projects and studies to be placed in the Dover/Kent County MPO Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the DelDOT Capital Transportation Program (CTP). Each year the Dover City Council develops listing of prioritized projects.

**Other Activities – Housing**

- Update and adopt the 2020-2024 Community Development Block Grant Consolidated Plan.

**INTERMEDIATE TERM IMPLEMENTATION (2022 – 2025)**

The following is a listing of projects, studies, code revisions, and other activities that will be initiated two to five years following Comprehensive Plan adoption.

**Projects**

**Projects – Natural Resources and Environment**

- Develop an Open Space, Parks & Recreation Master Plan.
- Implement the completed Master Plans for Schutte Park and Dover Park.
- Develop a Master Plan for Silver Lake Park.

**Projects – Transportation**

- Conduct a community-engaged process to designate new Safe Routes and develop their programming.
- Update and Implement the *Bicycle Plan* and *Pedestrian Plan*.
- Work with DelDOT, property owners, and the Dover/Kent County MPO to implement the *Dover Capital Gateway Plan* and the *Delaware Route 8 Study*.

**Projects – Economic Development**

- Facilitate the establishment of the Central Delaware Aviation Center/aviation and aeronautics employment center through completion of the DAFB Joint Use Agreement and a master plan for development of the facility.

## Studies

### Studies – Natural Resources and Environment

- Work with DNREC to identify potential water quality improvement projects in major City water bodies such as Silver Lake.
- Conduct a “vulnerability assessment” of the City to determine which people and places within Dover are most at-risk from climate change pressures.

### Studies – Historic Preservation

- Evaluate appropriate areas for expansion of the Historic District (H) Zone.
- Evaluate areas listed or eligible to be listed on the National Register for Historic Places for inclusion within the City’s Historic District (H) Zone.

### Studies – Community Services and Operations

- Assess all City buildings to determine if they are adequately able to support City staff and day-to-day operations in the City. Create plans for improving these buildings or moving to new ones if they are found to be inadequate.

## Code Amendments

### Code Amendments – Natural Resources and Environment

- Improve water quality and floodwater absorption capacity in the City through code amendments addressing topics such as pervious paved surfaces, stormwater management areas, and hydric soils.
- Reduce air quality impacts and climate change impacts through code amendments which aim to improve access to alternative forms of transportation.

### Code Amendments – Historic Preservation

- Identify and study areas for local Historic District designation (H - Historic District Zone).
- Refine procedures for Architectural Review Certification process.

### Code Amendments - Housing

- Develop code amendments considering an alternative housing options for group, transitional, and supportive housing.

## Other Activities

### Other Activities - Transportation

- Encourage DART to share the Dover Transit Center with private intercity buses.

## LONG TERM IMPLEMENTATION (2025 AND BEYOND)

Long term projects are those tasks, that while important components of the Plan, will be undertaken later in the planning process. This may be a function of timing, resources, research and data requirements, and dependence on completion of preceding tasks. Some identified projects, studies and activities may be multi-phased initiatives or ongoing large projects.

### Projects

#### Projects – Community Services and Operations

- Implement a plan to remove sources of inflow and infiltration in the City’s Wastewater Systems.
- Obtain Accreditation with the American Public Works Association in recognition of high standards and professionalism.

### Studies

#### Studies – Natural Resources and Environment

- Proactively plan for the impact new technologies such as alternative fuels, online goods and services delivery, and self-driving cars will have on lifestyles and travel.

#### Studies – Utilities and Infrastructure

- Ensure that the City’s Utility Plans of the Department of Public Works and the Electric Department are kept up to date, noting that they need to be updated every 10-15 years.

#### Studies – Economic Development

- Address development opportunities for West Center City area including review and implementation of prior planning studies.

### Code Amendments

- Regularly review and revise the *Zoning Ordinance*, *Land Subdivision Regulations* and *Dover Code of Ordinances* to endure that they reflect current conditions and trends, are efficient to administer, and promote sound land use and development in the City.

### Other Activities

#### Other Activities – Natural Resources and Environment

- Improve the City’s Bicycle and Pedestrian networks in accordance with the recommendations of the *Bicycle Plan* and *Pedestrian Plan*.

#### Other Activities – Historic Preservation

- Complete a Self-Assessment for the Historic District Commission.

- Implement methods of on-going communication with historic property owners.

#### **Other Activities – Transportation**

- Support the return of passenger rail service.
- Identify new transportation needs and ensure the City has the infrastructure to accommodate evolving technologies.

#### **Other Activities - Housing**

- Collaborate with public health agencies, housing authorities, advocacy groups, and others on matters concerning housing and health.

## **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2029**

Planning is a process. It is not a product or a report. It is not done when this Comprehensive Plan is adopted and certified. During the 2019-2029 planning period, Staff will regularly track and monitor development activities, study and identify economic and demographic trends, and assess the implementation of the Plan's objectives. Through coordination with the Office of State Planning Coordination, the Dover/Kent County MPO, the Kent Economic Partnership, the Downtown Dover Partnership and other stakeholders, regular analysis of contemporary data (including the 2020 Census); and ongoing community input, the Staff will build the basis for the next Comprehensive Plan. The process to develop the next Comprehensive Plan document for 2029 will need to begin at least in the prior year to determine the plan preparer (Staff or Consultant), the format of plan, and the types of outreach activities.

## **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENTS**

The City may, from time to time, amend the Comprehensive Plan as circumstances unforeseen at this time arise that require such amendments. Any amendments to the Comprehensive Plan must be approved by City Council, by recommendation of the Planning Commission, and submitted to the Office of State Planning Commission for review before they become effective. Comprehensive Plan Amendments can fall into two categories: Minor Variations and Comprehensive Plan Amendment Requests.

Requests to amend the Comprehensive Plan may be initiated by Planning Staff, City Council, or applications from the general public. Upon receiving a request to amend the Comprehensive Plan, the City Planner will determine whether the request is considered a Minor Variation or a Comprehensive Plan Amendment Request.

### **Minor Variations**

Any application for Rezoning or Annexation that is inconsistent with the City of Dover's Comprehensive Plan, but where the non-conformity is of a minor, relatively insignificant nature

shall be considered a **Minor Variation**. A Rezoning shall be considered a Minor Variation from the Comprehensive Plan when the following conditions are met:

- a) The rezoning is of a unique circumstance and cannot set precedent for other lands in the vicinity of the rezoning; and
- b) The relative size of the rezoning or the variation from the land use recommended by the Comprehensive Plan is so minor that it would have no impact on the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan; and
- c) The proposed zoning is adjacent to or in the immediate vicinity of other similarly zoned lands and would not alter the pattern of development in the area.

When the City Planner determines that a request qualifies as a Minor Variation, he/she will submit the requested amendment to the Office of State Planning Coordination in writing including a map of the area with the Land Development Plan classifications and an explanation of how the proposal qualifies as a Minor Variation. If the Office of State Planning Coordination concurs with the City Planner, the application will be considered consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and processed according to the proper procedure for the Rezoning or Annexation request. If the Office of State Planning Coordination does not concur, then the application will be considered a Comprehensive Plan Amendment Request.

### Comprehensive Plan Amendment Requests

For those requests that may not be considered a Minor Variation, the applicant must file a **Comprehensive Plan Amendment Request**. As established in the Memorandum of Understanding for PLUS, the City has agreed to submit an Application (of the Comprehensive Plan Amendment Requests) for comments to the State Office of Planning Coordination’s Preliminary Land Use Services (PLUS) review process. In these cases, the City is the entity that must submit a request for PLUS review.

When the City Planner determines that a request is considered a Comprehensive Plan Amendment Request (not a Minor Variation), it will be subject to the following process. The City will submit Comprehensive Plan Amendment Requests for consideration through the PLUS Process in **January of each year**. Applications for Amendments to the Comprehensive Plan must be received by the City Planning Office by December 15<sup>th</sup>. The City will compile any requests received into one submission to the Office of State Planning Coordination, regardless of Planning Staff concurrence with the request. Comprehensive Plan Amendment Requests will be processed annually, in accordance with the schedule in Table 15-1.

**Table 15-1: Amendment Submission Schedule**

| Milestone                     | Date                                   |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Application Deadline          | December 15 <sup>th</sup>              |
| Submission to PLUS            | 1 <sup>st</sup> Working Day of January |
| PLUS Meeting                  | Late January                           |
| DAC Staff Meeting             | Late January/February                  |
| DAC Applicant Meeting         | February                               |
| Planning Commission Hearing   | February                               |
| City Council Hearing & Action | March                                  |

There are specific application forms and checklists for Comprehensive Plan Amendment Requests. Prior to submitting an application for Comprehensive Plan Amendment, an applicant must hold a Pre-Application meeting with Planning Staff. Submission materials for Comprehensive Plan Amendments will require the applicant to provide the following information (prepared by a design professional): a completed Comprehensive Plan Amendment Application, other appropriate application forms based on the request type, property information (drawing), an analysis of the surrounding land uses and zoning classifications, a statement on how the request is consistent with the goals of the Comprehensive Plan, and the fee associated with the application. For Rezoning and Annexation applications, all other requirements must be met for the submission.

It is noted that Comprehensive Plan Amendment Requests that are associated with a Request for Annexation of lands located in Annexation Category 3 and in Areas of Concern may be considered at any time and not held to the once-a-year filing requirement. A Plan Amendment is required to change the Annexation Category and to identify potential Land Use Category (classification for the property). However, they will still be subject to the Preliminary Land Use Service (PLUS) review process.

## CONCLUSION

The *2019 Comprehensive Plan* is the culmination of more than a year's effort, led by the Planning Office, in conjunction with other City Departments, the City Council, the Planning Commission, the Historic District Commission, and the citizens of Dover. This project has worked to define the future of Dover. Public input is at the heart of the goals, recommendations, and implementation actions of the Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan is intended to be a living document that will guide the actions of City government as it addresses the challenges of a growing City. The public input does not end with the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan; rather, the public is encouraged to stay involved in the implementation of the Plan to ensure that Dover continues to be a place where people want to live, work and play.