

Delaware City Comprehensive Plan

Adopted August
2022



"Historic Past, Bright Future"

Prepared By

This plan was prepared by Delaware City's Planning Commission with assistance from the University of Delaware Institute for Public Administration (IPA).

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December 13, 2022

The Honorable Paul H. Johnson, Sr.
Mayor, Delaware City
407 Clinton Street
Delaware City, DE 19706

RE: Certification of 2022 Delaware City Comprehensive Plan

Dear Mayor Johnson,

I am pleased to inform the City of Delaware City that the Comprehensive Plan for Delaware City, adopted August 15, 2022, is hereby certified.

The certification signifies that:

- (1) The submitted Comprehensive Plan complies with the requirements of Title 22, Section 702 of the Delaware Code.
- (2) The Office of State Planning Coordination has applied all aspects of the Comprehensive Plan review process, evaluated the components of the plan, and provided a recommendation regarding the status of the plan.
- (3) Delaware City will not enact any significant or substantive changes to the Comprehensive Plan adopted August 15, 2022.
- (4) Delaware City has worked with the State to incorporate comments before adopting the Comprehensive Plan.

Thank you for working with the State to complete this process and for the City's diligence to ensure the implementation of this Comprehensive Plan.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "John C. Carney".

John C. Carney
Governor, State of Delaware

"A Historic Past"



"A Bright Future"

CITY OF DELAWARE CITY

407 Clinton Street - P.O. Box 4159
Delaware City, Delaware 19706
302-834-4573

**CITY OF DELAWARE CITY
DELAWARE CITY, DELAWARE
Ordinance No. 22-0815-01**

**ORDINANCE TO ADOPT A NEW COMPREHENSIVE
PLAN PENDING CERTIFICATION BY THE GOVERNOR**

WHEREAS, pursuant to Article V, Section 5-02(A) of the City of Delaware City Charter ("Charter"), and pursuant to the "Powers of the City," outlined in Article II, §2-01 of the Charter, the Mayor and the City Council of the City of Delaware City ("City Council") possess the authority to adopt, amend, modify, or repeal the City of Delaware City Code ("Code"); and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and the City Council, in accordance with their collective authority, having commissioned the University of Delaware in association with the Delaware City Planning Commission and the City Manager, seek to amend Section 47-11 (Adoption of Comprehensive Plan) by updating and modifying the City's comprehensive plan as required by State law; and

NOW THEREFORE, making the express finding that the changes with the revised comprehensive plan enhance and perpetuate the City of Delaware City's cultural, social, economic, religious, political or architectural history, the Mayor and the City Council of the City of Delaware City hereby ordain and adopt the following Code changes and revisions, which adopt the Comprehensive Plan dated August 15, 2022:

Section 1. Section 47-11 of the Code is hereby amended by deleting the strikethrough language, and by adding the underlined language below, as follows:

The Comprehensive Plan dated August 2008²², a copy of which is attached hereto as ~~Appendix C~~ and made part of this Article, is hereby adopted pending certification by the Governor.

~~The Comprehensive Plan Update dated December, 2014, a copy of which is attached hereto as part of Appendix D and made part of this Article is hereby adopted and shall amend the 2008 Comprehensive Plan where applicable. The 2008 Comprehensive Plan remains attached as Appendix C and shall remain in full force and effect except as modified by the 2014 Comprehensive Plan Update. The changes set forth in the 2022 Comprehensive Plan Update will be in full force and effect upon affirmative vote of Mayor and Council, and certification by the Governor.~~

Section 2. Severability. The provisions of this Ordinance shall be severable. If any provisions of this Ordinance are found by any court of competent jurisdiction to be unconstitutional or void, the remaining provisions of this Ordinance shall remain valid, unless the court finds that the valid provisions of this Ordinance are so essentially and inseparably connected with, and so dependent upon, the unconstitutional or void provision that it cannot be presumed that City Council would have enacted the remaining valid provisions without the unconstitutional or void provision; or unless the court finds that the remaining valid provisions, standing alone, are incomplete and incapable of being executed in accordance with the City Council's intent.

Section 3. Effective Date. This Ordinance shall become effective immediately upon its adoption by City Council.

ADOPTED BY THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL, this 15 day of August, 2022.

ATTEST:

Gina Pincus
City Secretary

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

City Solicitor

Paul H. Young, Jr.
Mayor

Betty Boudt
Council Member


Council Member

Linda Price
Council Member

Elizabeth Koudys
Council Member

Michael M. Corio
Council Member

First Reading on 6/27/22.

Second Reading, Public Hearing, and Final Passage on 8/15/22.

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City, County, and State Officials

Delaware City

Mayor & Council

Paul H. Johnson, Sr., Mayor
Betty Barrett, Vice-Mayor
Elizabeth Konkus, Council Member
Linda Price, Council Member
William Daniel Saunders, Council Member
Michelle Cornish, Council Member

Planning Commission

Tim Dilliplane - Chair
Allan Williams
Dana Renoll
Tom Smith
Patricia Wilkinson
Michale Graci

City Staff

David Baylor, City Manager
Michael Henderson, Chief of Police
William J. Rhodunda, Jr., City Solicitor
Britney Loveland, Land Use Manager
Michelle Graham, Finance Manager

New Castle County

Matt Meyer, County Executive
Karen Hartley-Nagle, President, County Council
Bill Bell, County Council Member, District 12

Karen Peterson, Chairperson, County Planning Board

State of Delaware

John Carney, Governor, State of Delaware
Nicole Poore, Senator, 12th District
Valerie Longhurst, Representative, 15th District
David Edgell, AICP, State Planning Director

**A MUNICIPAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR
DELAWARE CITY, DELAWARE
August 2022**

Chapter 1. Background

1-1. The Authority to Plan

The City of Delaware City Comprehensive Plan is Delaware City's authoritative statement of land use policy. This plan brings Delaware City into compliance with Title 22 of the Delaware Code, Chapter 7, Section 702, which requires municipalities to prepare comprehensive plans to direct land use.

The plan is a legal document serving as a foundation for Delaware City's land use decisions and annexation policy. It also serves as a consolidated reference guide containing demographic, economic, environmental, and historical information about Delaware City.

Delaware law requires that municipalities engage in comprehensive planning to encourage "the most appropriate uses of the physical and fiscal resources of the municipality and the coordination of municipal growth, development, and infrastructure investment actions with those of other municipalities, counties, and the state...." This plan was written to comply with the requirements of a municipal comprehensive plan as described in the Delaware Code for towns with a population of less than 2,000. This document is Delaware City's Municipal Comprehensive Plan as required by state law. It is intended to cover a ten-year planning period and be reviewed at least every five years.

The Delaware Code states the following:

The municipal comprehensive plan for small communities with fewer than 2000 people is to be a "document in text and maps, containing, at a minimum, a municipal development strategy setting forth the jurisdiction's position on population and housing growth within the jurisdiction, expansion of its boundaries, development of adjacent areas, redevelopment potential, community character, and the general uses of land within the community, and critical community development and infrastructure issues." In addition, the city's comprehensive-planning process must demonstrate coordination with other municipalities, the county, and the state during plan preparation.

(22 *Del. C.* 1953, § 702; 49 Del. Laws, c. 415, § 1).

At least every five years a municipality shall review its adopted comprehensive plan to determine if its provisions are still relevant, given changing conditions in the municipality or in the surrounding areas. The adopted comprehensive plan shall be revised, updated, and amended as necessary, and re-adopted at least every ten years (22 *Del. C.* 1953, § 702; 49 Del. Laws, c. 415, § 1).

The Delaware City Charter states the following:

“The Mayor and Council shall adopt and update as required by state law, and may from time to time modify, a comprehensive development plan setting forth in graphic and textual form policies to govern the future physical development of the City...The City Manager shall propose a comprehensive plan, portions thereof, or proposed modifications thereto, to the Mayor and Council. The Mayor and Council shall refer such proposal to the Planning Commission, which shall, within a time specified by the Mayor and Council, prepare the plan and report its recommendations thereon. After receipt of the recommendations of the Planning Commission, the Mayor and Council shall hold a public hearing on the proposed comprehensive plan or modification thereof, and may thereafter adopt it by ordinance with or without amendment

(Article XI Planning, Sec.11-02 Comprehensive Plan Development).

1-2. The Planning Process

Reason for New Plan

Delaware City last updated its comprehensive plan in December 2015 with an amendment to the 2008 comprehensive plan. The 2014 amendment included the master plan for the future annexation of Fort DuPont. Since that time, Delaware City has commissioned planning projects on community parks, transportation, hazard mitigation, climate adaptation, and downtown development. The intent of this new update is to incorporate the pertinent findings of those planning projects, and refocus the vision for Delaware City's future.

Comprehensive-Planning Approach

The comprehensive-planning process involves establishing goals for the future of a community, analyzing current and projected conditions, and laying out steps that can be taken to help a community reach its goals. This plan has followed this general process. The public was given several opportunities to weigh in throughout the process. In August of 2018, a survey was distributed by the city to Delaware City residents and visitors. Using the community's input as a guide, Delaware City's Planning Commission and staff met regularly crafting goals, strategies and recommendations they felt were consistent with the community's priorities. The Institute of Public Administration at University of Delaware was consulted to update the city's maps. Intergovernmental coordination was also an important part of the comprehensive planning approach. A draft of the plan will be sent to the City of New Castle and the New Castle County Planning Office for input. A Pre-PLUS meeting was held with the State agency planners on March 28, 2018 followed by the PLUS meeting on November 20, 2019.

The plan was circulated to Council for comments. Councilpersons Saunders and Konkus provided feedback that has been considered and incorporated where appropriate.

1-3. An Overview of the Community

Location

Delaware City is located in the northern half of New Castle County, 17 miles from the semicircular Pennsylvania border. The City stretches for about two miles along the westerly bank of the Delaware River. The city is located 15 miles from Wilmington, 12 miles from Newark, 30 miles from Dover, 50 miles from Philadelphia, PA, and 55 miles from Baltimore, MD.

Delaware City's Heritage

Delaware City was first granted to Henry Ward in 1675; however, the City was settled in 1801 by John Newbold, who built the wharves that would become the entrance to the Chesapeake and Delaware (C&D) Canal. When it was determined in 1826 where the main entrance to the C&D Canal would be located, Newbold and his sons plotted the settlement, built ten houses, and gave it the name Delaware City. The establishment of the canal in the 1830s made Delaware City a commercial hub for fishing, farming, and shipping. Delaware City thrived from that time until the railroad was built in the 1840s. By providing faster and more direct service, the railroad proved too great a competitor for the canal, thereby taking away the city's primary economic base.

The economy of the city improved somewhat with the "peach boom," which was led by Major Philip Reybold in the 1840s to the 1880s. Fishing, particularly for sturgeon, also proved profitable for Delaware City until pollution destroyed the Delaware River in the 1930s. During the 19th century, small-scale industrial development kept Delaware City's economy reasonably strong. This industry included a blacksmith shop, carriage shop, grist mill, stamped-tin and iron manufacturer, as well as a mincemeat factory. It was not until 1954, when the Tidewater Oil Company Refinery (now Delaware City Refinery Inc.) was built, that heavy industry came to Delaware City.

Delaware City also has a rich military history, with two army forts located just outside its boundaries and one fort within its boundary. Fort Delaware was constructed on Pea Patch Island, across the Delaware River from Delaware City, in 1859 by the Army to protect Philadelphia and other important ports along the River. It served as one of the largest prisons for Confederate soldiers during the Civil War, housing as many as 12,595 captured southern soldiers, and was a garrison for 200 Union soldiers throughout the war. The fort is now a state park. Fort DuPont was annexed into the Delaware City's boundaries in 2016. Named for Rear Admiral Samuel Francis du Pont, the Fort was actively used as a military base from the Civil War through World War II. Fort DuPont was a base for Army engineer units until 1945 when it was abandoned by the Army and turned over to the state. Portions of the land were dedicated as a State Park in 1992, but has since been annexed by the City and is being redeveloped by the State of Delaware through the Fort DuPont Redevelopment and Preservation Corporation. More information can be found about the redevelopment of Fort DuPont in Section 2-10 Economic and Community Development.

1-4. Public Outreach

Public outreach remained a top priority throughout the completion of this plan. Efforts included tabling at local events, conducting a survey, and holding public meetings. All Planning Commission meetings were posted publicly and included time for public comment.

At the beginning of the planning process an online survey was opened from August 8, 2018 to October 16th. The survey was created using Qualtrics and advertised on the city's website, newsletter, on flyers at local businesses, and via postcard in residents' mailboxes. The survey received a 10% resident response rate. The major takeaways from the survey include:

- The most highly rated reasons for living or visiting the area was access to the retail and dining.
- The most desired new amenity would be a grocery store.
- While respondents were very satisfied with the walkability of the town, they are not satisfied with the condition of many of the sidewalks and roads.
- Respondents were very satisfied with the access to public transit, but dissatisfied with the availability of parking.
- 89% of survey respondents agreed that the city is a safe place to live and visit.
- The most used community amenity are the parks and recreation facilities, however the PAL was rated as not being used very frequently.

Additionally, the City tabled at both Delaware City Day and the Delaware City Fire Hall Safety and Community Day. Unfortunately, Delaware City Day was rained out. The community day at the Fire Hall took place on October 21st, 2018. Delaware City's table educated residents about the comprehensive planning process and the upcoming planning commission meetings. There was also an interactive activity where residents could vote which issues were most impacting Delaware City. Approximately 151 residents participated in the activity. Residents voted "property maintenance" as the most important issue, followed by "variety of businesses" and "condition of sidewalks".

1-5. Intergovernmental Coordination

One of the key elements required in the Municipal Development Strategy Checklist is Intergovernmental Coordination. This element describes the city's relationship with other government jurisdictions and state agencies and sets forth strategies for coordinating and improving these relationships.

The Pre-PLUS meeting was conducted on March 28, 2018. The State Planning office encouraged Delaware City to incorporate several studies, plans, and reports the City had completed or commissioned since the 2008 comprehensive plan. They also recommended the city address the additional elements of comprehensive plans for communities over 2000 persons because Delaware City will likely meet that threshold before the next plan update.

A draft version of the plan was sent to the New Castle County Department of Land Use on October 31st, 2019 and the County was also notified by a phone conversation on the same date that they would be receiving a copy of the plan for their review. The County responded via email on November 22nd, 2019 in order to notify the City that they had received the plan and were continuing to review it. Jeff Randol of the Fort DuPont Redevelopment Corporation was also sent a copy of the plan and notified by phone on October 31st, 2019 for comment.

The City reengaged New Castle County in 2021 regarding sewer capacity issues and a review of the Plan. After consulting with the Department of Public Works it was determined that there is not an existing Sewer Agreement with New Castle County. The City intends to follow-up the communication and seek a formal sewer agreement with the County. The latest revised version of the Plan was sent to Planner Matt Rogers on May 3, 2022. Certain correspondence described herein has been included in Appendix B.

The PLUS meeting was conducted on Wednesday November 20th, 2019 at the Office of State Planning Coordination and comments were received on Friday December 20th, 2019. The Office of State Planning Coordination provided final feedback on August 1, 2022.

The comments and recommendations from these various entities have been considered and incorporated into this plan update.

Chapter 2. Community Profile and Character

2-1. Local Government

This section highlights the city government officials, staff, boards, and commissions related to the comprehensive plan and its implementation. Delaware City has a council-manager form of government. The council is responsible for making laws while the city manager directs the city's daily operations. Boards and commissions, made up of appointed citizens, provide advice to the mayor and council.

Mayor and Council

Delaware City is a municipal corporation. Its officers consist of a Mayor and a five-member City Council. The Mayor and Council members serve two- year, staggered terms. In years ending with an odd-numbered digit, voters elect a Mayor and two Council members, and, in years ending with an even-numbered digit, voters elect three Council members. At the first meeting following an election, Council members elect a Vice-Mayor from among themselves. The Vice-Mayor serves as mayor should the mayor be unable to perform official duties.

Together, the Mayor and Council govern Delaware City. The Council is the city's legislative branch of government, whose primary responsibility is passing laws in the form of ordinances. After introduction and first reading, a proposed ordinance must be posted in public places for seven days prior to a public hearing. A public hearing can be held during a regular or special meeting of the Mayor and Council. The Council also must confirm mayoral appointments.

The Mayor is the city's ceremonial officer and presides at Council meetings. When the Council adopts an ordinance, it is referred to the Mayor. If the Mayor signs the ordinance or does not take any action on it within 15 days, it becomes law with penalties for violation. If the Mayor vetoes an ordinance, the Council may override the veto with a four-fifths majority. The Mayor is also responsible for appointing a City Manager, members of the Elections Board, members of the Board of Health, a City Solicitor, a City Treasurer, a City Secretary, Planning Commissioners, and members of ad hoc City Boards and Commissions, with the consent of Council. The role of the Mayor and Council in the comprehensive-plan process is to hold a public hearing on and adopt the plan document. In accordance with the city's charter, the Mayor and Council must request recommendations from the Planning Commission before taking action on the plan. The charter requires that, once adopted, the mayor and Council must use the plan as a guide for making future decisions. When acting on development ordinances or expenditures, the Mayor and Council must outline how such proposed ordinances or expenditures are in accordance with the comprehensive plan as well as seek recommendations from the Planning Commission.

City Manager

A professional City Manager directs the day-to-day administration of city matters. Appointed by the mayor and confirmed by the Council, the City Manager is the chief administrative officer of the city. The City Manager supervises the operations of all city departments, attends Council meetings, prepares annual budgets, advises the mayor and Council on financial matters, oversees public works operations, and collects taxes, fees, and other charges.

Planning Commission

The Planning Commission's duties include advising the Mayor and Council on zoning and land subdivision matters, the comprehensive plan, floodplain regulation, and the city's official map. The Commission consists of seven members who are appointed by the mayor and confirmed by the Council. Commissioners serve three-year terms. The Planning Commission's role in the formulation of a comprehensive plan and its implementation is to make recommendations to the mayor and Council. The city's charter specifies that the Mayor and Council hold a public hearing on a proposed comprehensive plan only after receiving recommendations from the Planning Commission. The charter goes on to say that proposed ordinances (especially zoning or subdivision amendments) or public capital expenditures, covering items related to the comprehensive plan, be referred to the Planning Commission for recommendations before the mayor and Council act on them.

City Hall

Delaware City's City Hall is located at 407 Clinton Street. The building houses offices for the city manager, an administrative assistant, city clerks, code enforcement officer, and the police chief, as well as a meeting room for the City Council and various commissions.

2-2. Demographics and Future Population

Note: In the 2000 census, every household answered the "short form" questions about occupants' genders, ages, races, etc. A large proportion of households received a "long-form" questionnaire containing the short-form questions plus additional questions regarding income, schooling, employment, marital status, etc. The 2010 Census did not include a long-form questionnaire. More or less equivalent information is now collected as part of the ongoing American Community Survey (ACS), which releases annual 1-year, 3-year and 5-year estimates for various geographic areas. ACS includes significant margins of error, especially for smaller populations. ACS will only be utilized in this report where 2010 Census data is not available.

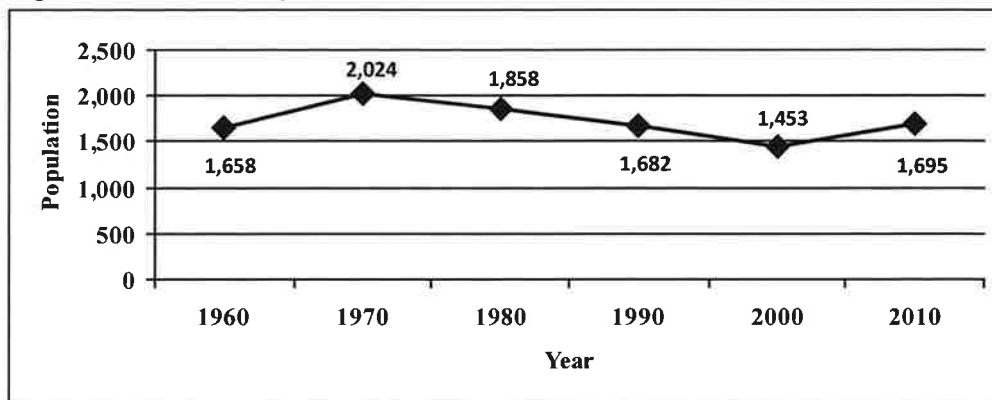
Population

This section presents information about Delaware City's population between 1960 and 2010, and compares the city's population trend with trends in New Castle County and the State of Delaware.

Residents

Chart 1 tracks the number of Delaware City residents from 1960 to 2010. The City experienced growth in the 1960s, with that trend reversing in the 1970s. The population of Delaware City began to grow again after 2000.

Figure 1. Delaware City Residents, 1950-2010



Source: 1960-2010 U.S. Census Data

Population projections for a municipality the size of Delaware City can be very problematic. When dealing with modest populations, the degree of accuracy with which future projections can be made are somewhat suspect and can vary greatly with a difference of only a percentage point or two. Chart 2 displays the Delaware Population Consortium's (DPC) 2017 Annual Population Projections Report for Delaware City 2015-2030. According to DPC, these estimates were calculated using data from the 2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. Chart 2 predicts the 2000 growth trend will continue. However, there are currently no population projections that factor in the 2016 annexation of Fort DuPont. The 2020 U.S. Census will need to be examined to correct the current population projections.

Figure 2. Delaware City Population Projections, 2015-2030

	2010	2020	2030	2040	2050
Delaware City	1,777	1,840	1,867	1,889	1,895

Source: Delaware Population Consortium 2017 Annual Population Projection Report

Table 1 compares the city's population growth with that of New Castle County and the State of Delaware. Between 1950 and 1960, New Castle County and Delaware each experienced a 40-percent increase in residents, while Delaware City's residents increased by only 21.6 percent. During the 1960s, Delaware City, the County, and the State grew at nearly the same rates. From the 1970s through 2000, Delaware City's number of residents declined significantly while the State and County showed steady growth. Delaware City saw their declining population trend end with the addition of approximately 242 residents by 2010.

Table 1. Residents of Delaware City, New Castle County, and Delaware, 1950-2010

Year	Delaware City		New Castle County		Delaware	
	Number	Change	Number	Change	Number	Change
1950	1,363		218,879		318,085	
1960	1,658	+21.6%	307,446	+40.5%	446,292	+40.3%
1970	2,024	+22.4%	385,856	+25.5%	548,104	+22.8%
1980	1,858	-8.2%	398,115	+3.2%	594,338	+8.4%
1990	1,682	-9.5%	441,946	+11.0%	666,168	+12.1%
2000	1,453	-13.6%	500,265	+13.2%	783,600	+17.6%
2010	1,695	+16.7%	538,479	+7.6%	897,934	+14.6%

Source: 1950-2010 U.S. Census Data

Households

Table 2 depicts changes in the number of households in Delaware City, New Castle County and Delaware. Households have increased steadily in the county and in the state. The period between 2000 and 2010 reversed the trend of housing decline by adding approximately 174 housing units.

Table 2. Households in Delaware City, New Castle County, and Delaware, 1960-2010

Year	Delaware City		New Castle County		Delaware	
	Number	Change	Number	Change	Number	Change
1960	na	Na	88,406		128,582	
1970	na	Na	115,744	+31.0%	164,804	+28.2%
1980	624	Na	138,944	+20.0%	207,081	+25.7%
1990	598	-4.0%	164,161	+18.1%	247,467	+19.5%
2000	567	-5.2%	188,935	+15.1%	298,736	+20.7%
2010	741	+30.7%	217,511	+15.1%	405,885	+35.9%

Source: 1960-2010 U.S. Census Data

Age Profile

Table 3 compares Delaware City's age profile with those of New Castle County and the State of Delaware. The city's age profile closely resembles those of the County and State. The city's median age is slightly higher.

Table 3. Age Profiles for Delaware City, New Castle County, and Delaware, 2010

Age	Delaware City		New Castle County		Delaware	
	Total	Percent	Total	Percent	Total	Percent
Under 5 years	99	5.8	33,249	6.2	55,886	6.2
5 to 9 years	113	6.7	34,123	6.3	56,486	6.3
10 to 14 years	102	6	35,040	6.5	56,848	6.3
15 to 19 years	104	6.1	40,966	7.6	64,583	7.2
20 to 24 years	92	5.4	40,457	7.5	62,867	7
25 to 29 years	84	5	36,305	6.7	57,603	6.4
30 to 34 years	125	7.4	34,439	6.4	53,814	6
35 to 39 years	111	6.5	35,105	6.5	55,329	6.2
40 to 44 years	117	6.9	38,193	7.1	60,758	6.8
45 to 49 years	131	7.7	41,558	7.7	67,556	7.5
50 to 54 years	141	8.3	40,429	7.5	65,998	7.3
55 to 59 years	147	8.7	33,990	6.3	57,816	6.4
60 to 64 years	104	6.1	28,403	5.3	53,113	5.9
65 to 69 years	74	4.4	20,644	3.8	41,809	4.7
70 to 74 years	61	3.6	14,851	2.8	30,644	3.4
75 to 79 years	44	2.6	12,105	2.2	23,885	2.7
80 to 84 years	29	1.7	9,426	1.8	17,195	1.9
85 to 89 years	9	0.5	6,118	1.1	10,513	1.2
90 years and over	8	0.5	3,078	0.6	5,231	0.6
Total	1,695		538,479		897,934	
Median Age	40.8		37.2		38.8	

Source: 2010 U.S. Census Data

Education

Table 4 compares high school and college graduation rates for Delaware City, New Castle County, and Delaware from the 2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates. As the table shows, 91 percent of Delaware City residents are high school graduates. Only 15 percent hold a bachelor's degree or higher in Delaware City, compared to over 30% in New Castle County and Delaware.

Table 4. Educational Attainment in Delaware City, New Castle, and Delaware, 2016

Jurisdiction	High School Graduate or Higher	Bachelor's Degree or Higher
Delaware City	91%	14.7%
New Castle County	90.5%	35.4%
Delaware	88.8%	30.5%

Source: 2016, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Economic Profile

This section profiles Delaware City's income sources and household character.

Income

Table 5 presents selected income information for Delaware City, New Castle County and Delaware. As shown in the table, Delaware City's median household income in 2016 was estimated at \$58,150. This was approximately \$8,000 lower than New Castle County and \$2,800 less than Delaware.

Table 5. Selected Income Data for Delaware City, New Castle County, and Delaware, 2016

Item	Delaware City	New Castle County	Delaware
Median household income	\$58,150	\$66,283	\$61,017
Households with wages and salary income	79%	80.1%	76.9%
Mean wage and salary income	\$63,415	\$88,802	\$80,508
Households with social security income	29.4%	28.8%	33.6%
Mean social security income	\$16,896	\$19,624	\$19,849
Households with retirement income	17.4%	19.9%	23.6%
Mean retirement income	\$18,112	\$25,522	\$26,617
Households with public assistance income	3.5%	2.1%	2.4%
Mean public assistance income	\$1,554	\$2,872	\$2,761
Households with Food Stamps/SNAP benefits	17.4%	11.7%	13%
Population below poverty level	8.3%	11.4%	12%
Families with children under 5 below poverty level	13.5%	8.5%	12.5%
Seniors below poverty level	5.1%	7.7%	7%

Source: 2016, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

2-3. Housing

Note: In the 2000 census, every household answered the "short form" questions about occupants' genders, ages, races, etc. A large proportion of households received a "long-form" questionnaire containing the short-form questions plus additional questions regarding income, schooling, employment, marital status, etc. The 2010 Census did not include a long-form questionnaire. More or less equivalent information is now collected as part of the ongoing American Community Survey (ACS), which releases annual 1-year, 3-year and 5-year estimates for various geographic areas. ACS includes significant margins of error, especially for smaller populations. ACS will only be utilized in this report where 2010 Census data is not available.

This section examines Delaware City's housing stock's supply, age, and affordability. The availability of land for new home construction is also addressed. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, 88.9% of the housing units in Delaware City are occupied. 70.7% are owner occupied and 29.3% are renter occupied.

Number of Dwelling Units

Table 6 compares changes in the number of dwelling units in Delaware City, New Castle County, and the state of Delaware. Between 1960 and 1970, the housing stock in Delaware City grew at a slower rate than that of New Castle County, but at a faster rate than the housing stock in the state. Between 1970 and 1980, all three jurisdictions increased their housing stock, but the rates of growth in the state and the county were higher than Delaware City's. Following the 1980s, Delaware City's housing stock decreased, while the county and state experienced significant increases in the number of dwelling units. However, between 2000 and 2010 Delaware City experienced twice as much growth as New Castle County and the state of Delaware.

Table 6. Dwelling Units in Delaware City, New Castle County and Delaware, 1960-2010

Year	Delaware City		New Castle County		Delaware	
	Number	Change	Number	Change	Number	Change
1960	510		94,688		143,725	
1970	572	+12.2%	120,704	+27.5%	180,233	+6.7%
1980	681	+19.1%	148,563	+32.1%	238,611	+23.9%
1990	658	-3.4%	173,560	+16.8%	289,919	+9.6%
2000	616	-6.4%	199,521	+15.0%	363,072	+25.2%
2010	741	+20.3%	217,511	+9.02%	405,885	+11.8%

Source: 1960-2010 U.S. Census Data

Age of Housing Stock

Table 7 compares the age of Delaware City's housing stock to those of New Castle County and Delaware. Delaware City's housing stock is considerably older than that of either the county or the state. Over half of the city's homes were built before 1969. It should be noted that the city boasts a National Register Historic District, with many structures dating back to the 19th Century. In fact, much of the older housing stock is part of, or contributes to, the district. The City views this nucleus as a positive, adding to the character of the community and serving as an attraction for visitors.

Table 7. Age of Housing Stock in Delaware City, New Castle County and Delaware, 2016

Year Structure Built	Delaware City	New Castle County	Delaware
Total housing units	764	220,459	417,927
Built 2014 or later	0.0%	0.3%	0.6%
Built 2010 to 2013	0.8%	1.7%	2.8%
Built 2000 to 2009	5.4%	11.1%	19.6%
Built 1990 to 1999	16.8%	14.1%	16.4%
Built 1980 to 1989	5.6%	13.4%	14.4%
Built 1970 to 1979	18.1%	12.6%	12.1%
Built 1960 to 1969	5.2%	14.0%	10.7%
Built 1950 to 1959	15.8%	14.8%	10.2%
Built 1940 to 1949	2.9%	6.7%	4.6%
Built 1939 or earlier	29.5%	11.4%	8.6%

Source: 2016, American Community Survey 5- Year Estimates

Housing Value

Table 8 compares Delaware City's 2016 housing value with housing values in New Castle County and the state of Delaware. The median value of Delaware City's housing was estimated at \$183,500 in 2016. This value is considerably lower than the \$244,300 median value in New Castle County and \$233,100 median value of housing units in the state. According to Table 8, 12.20% of Delaware City's owner-occupied units are worth less than \$50,000.

Table 8. Value of Owner-Occupied Units in Delaware City, New Castle County and Delaware, 2016

VALUE	Delaware City	New Castle County	Delaware
Owner Occupied Units	467	139,050	246,940
Less than \$50,000	12.2%	4.3%	6.5%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	2.4%	4.2%	5.2%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	12.0%	9.1%	9.9%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	37.0%	16.6%	17.3%
\$200,000 to \$299,999	27.2%	32.7%	30.6%
\$300,000 to \$499,999	4.7%	26.9%	23.7%
\$500,000 to \$999,999	4.5%	5.3%	5.6%
\$1,000,000 or more	0.0%	1.0%	1.2%
Median Value	\$183,500	\$244,300	\$233,100

Source: 2016, American Community Survey 5- Year Estimates

Housing Affordability

According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, “Families who pay more than 30 percent of their income for housing are considered cost burdened and may have difficulty affording necessities such as food, clothing, transportation and medical care”. Table 9 shows that 26% of Delaware City housing units with mortgages are housing cost burdened. Table 10 shows that over half of Delaware City rental units are considered a cost burden. New Castle County and the State present a greater housing cost burden to home owners, and slightly less of a cost burden to renters compared to Delaware City.

Table 9. Monthly Owner Costs As A Percentage of Household Income in Delaware City, New Castle County and Delaware, 2016

% of Household Income	Delaware City	New Castle County	Delaware
Less than 20.0 percent	46.40%	44.10%	42.40%
20.0 to 24.9 percent	21.10%	16.50%	16.20%
25.0 to 29.9 percent	6.60%	10.90%	10.80%
30.0 to 34.9 percent	12.20%	7.00%	7.50%
35.0 percent or more	13.80%	21.50%	23.10%
Housing Units with Mortgage	304	98,911	165,399

Source: 2016, American Community Survey 5- Year Estimates

Table 10. Gross Rent As Percentage of Household Income in Delaware City, New Castle County & Delaware, 2016

% of Household Income	Delaware City	New Castle County	Delaware
Less than 15.0 percent	4.90%	13.00%	12.60%
15.0 to 19.9 percent	16.20%	14.20%	13.80%
20.0 to 24.9 percent	16.70%	12.50%	12.40%
25.0 to 29.9 percent	9.30%	11.40%	11.80%
30.0 to 34.9 percent	19.10%	9.10%	9.30%
35.0 percent or more	33.80%	39.70%	40.20%
Occupied Units Paying Rent	204	59,173	93,259

Source: 2016, American Community Survey 5- Year Estimates

Housing Pipeline

Fort DuPont is currently undertaking a 10 year build plan. It's expected to feature seven districts: The Canal, The Theater, The Marina Village, The Barracks, The Quartermaster Place and The Mortar Bunker. With so many choices, the development company believes it will attract a diverse crowd of homeowners and renters. 77 units (carriage style homes and townhomes) in the Canal District and 15 units (single family/semidetached homes) on Officers Row have been approved by the city. The single-family houses are starting at \$350,000 in the Canal District for a minimum of 2,250 square feet. Rockwell Homes has already begun building 70 attached and detached houses there. Three former captains' quarters on Officers Row will be renovated and will see 11 new historically influenced single-family homes built nearby.

Starting prices for the lots will be \$115,000, with the minimum size of a home expected to be 3,000 square feet. The homes are expected to cost about \$600,000. Estimated real estate sale prices for residential properties will range from \$250,000-\$750,000. At prevailing interest rates, required down payments, and typical debt-to-income guidance, household income affordability calculations suggest a minimum of \$60,000 per year will be needed to qualify for anything within the FDC.

Statement on Population Growth

Population growth will be a primary focus for Delaware City in the near term in association with the active redevelopment of the Fort DuPont section of our city. As noted, our population figures are based on 2010 figures. This 10-year Comprehensive Plan update is therefore falling in a grey area of sorts for making population predictions. For this reason, Delaware City suggests it may be prudent to plan for an amendment to this section upon receipt of the 2020 census figures. Additionally, the amendment could address what would be approximately four years of the Fort DuPont redevelopment effort including its impacts on the overall community.

Goals and Strategies

1. Increase home ownership and property values through the rehabilitation and renovation of the existing housing stock.
 - Consider adopting a property tax abatement and/or waiver incentive program to encourage home ownership.
 - Improve the enforcement of the housing and property maintenance code.
 - Enhance the engagement between our planning and zoning, codes, and historic preservation programs, staff and committee members.
2. Encourage infill development in the historic downtown area that allows for upper floor(s) owner occupied residences.
 - Inventory the infill and redevelopment opportunities in the historic downtown area.
 - Identify site specific barriers to redevelopment in the inventory area.
 - Consider the preparation of a master plan for infill opportunities that sets forth a vision.
3. Increase employment opportunities in the City and in doing so increase the live where you work options.
 - Consider incubation spaces for startup businesses with shared office and utility options.
 - Provide network opportunities for these start-ups and available spaces to foster relationship and staying where they first bloomed.
 - Ensure that redevelopment provides varied levels of housing types to capture all needs.
 - Consider options that would permit businesses on the lower floor and residence above.
 - Support Fort DuPont development efforts if they are consistent with the pertinent guidelines for Delaware City.
 - Ensure adequate public transportation into and out of town for business support.

4. Consider strategies for more diverse housing types and affordable housing options.

2-4. Historic Preservation

Delaware City developed along a gridded street plan beginning at the time of the opening of the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal in 1829. Although early settlers envisioned a city competitive with Philadelphia, growth never reached the expected rate. Initial building in Delaware City occurred in the 1830s on small lots at the northeast ends of Washington and Clinton Streets. As the century progressed, new construction took place on larger lots to the southwest, away from the canal. Development had slowed by the early 20th century, since the railroad had become the dominant means of travel. The Delaware City Historic District reflects the City's development in a variety of buildings constructed from 1827 to 1933. A few early 19th-century buildings in the Federal style remain. A majority are of the Italianate and Greek Revival styles, popular in mid-century. Several Gothic Revival and Italianate buildings began appearing around 1870, followed by a scattering of Queen Anne-style buildings between 1880 and 1910. The newest buildings contributing to the historic district are bungalows dating from the 1920s and 1930s. Other buildings not of historic significance have since filled interspersed vacant lots. The building stock is composed primarily of frame residential buildings.

Map 6-Historic Resources portrays Delaware City's historic district. In 1983, the district was listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Authorized by the passage of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Register is America's official list of cultural resources worthy of preservation. Included on the National Register is the Eastern Lock of the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal. Located in Battery Park, this property is historically significant for its role in transportation and was named to the Register in 1975.

Delaware City's Historic District includes the area between the Delaware River and Route 9, and between Dragon Creek and the Delaware and Chesapeake Canals. Covering most of the gridded portion of town, the sixty-eight acre district is made up of 252 sites that include 232 major buildings, not counting outbuildings, and 24 vacant lots. Of the 232 buildings, 24 of them are not compatible with the definition of contributing structures; in other words, 90% of the buildings contribute to the significance of the District. In 2014, a "Field Guide to Delaware City Architecture" was produced by the University of Delaware Center for Historic Architecture & Design. The buildings in this Field Guide are organized chronologically from the oldest to more recent structures with a description and photograph for each. Delaware City is a Certified Local Government (CLG) and has been working on updating surveys within their Historic Districts with Historic Preservation Fund Grants. In 2019 Delaware City was designated as a Downtown Development District by Governor Carney. This designation should incentivize property owners to improve and maintain historic structures in accordance with State and local regulations.

A seven-member Historic Preservation Commission is charged with reviewing and administering historic preservation regulations and guidelines in Delaware City. The mayor, with advice and consent from the City Council, appoints commissioners. Commissioners serve three-year terms and are eligible for reappointment. The Commission reviews all alteration, construction, and demolition actions that affect historic properties and landmarks.

Map 6-Historic Resources also portrays the National Register Historic District of Fort DuPont. The 325-acre Historic Fort DuPont Complex, includes Fort DuPont State Park, Governor Bacon Health Center, and a complex of state-owned buildings and residences. The district contains a total of 101 resources. Of these, 79 resources contribute to the significance of the district as a military installation, constructed between 1870 and 1945; 20 noncontributing resources reflect additions to the district after 1945; and 2 archaeological sites remain unevaluated or have proven to be unrelated to the military activities. Fort DuPont contains a planned military landscape of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, consisting of the fort's defensive installations and the post built to support it. While the purpose and function of the fort changed several times between 1870 and 1945, key features of the military landscape survive intact. These include resources such as the batteries, parade ground, barracks and officers' housing, and hospitals. Thus, while the fort has sustained some significant loss of resources, the landscape and physical features that remain provide an excellent example of a military base from the late nineteenth or early twentieth century. A Fort DuPont Corporation Historic Preservation Committee, including a Historic Review Process, will be developed in the near future. It is important to note that there are also historic preservation incentives offered through the Downtown Development District program that the City and property owners can take advantage of.

Goals and Strategies

1. Promote revitalization through the preservation, restoration and adaptive reuse of structures that contribute to the City's historic character.
 - Encourage synergy between historic preservation efforts and economic revitalization by encouraging the adaptive reuse of historic structures for compatible commercial uses.
 - Foster engagement of the Historic Preservation Commission and the Delaware City community through open forums and events.
 - Provide training opportunity for members of the Historic Preservation Commission to better prepare and maintain awareness of trends, grants, etc.
 - Partner with the State Historic Preservation Office to identify properties and promote downtown revitalization efforts.
 - Support the pursuit of grants and tax incentives for owners of historic homes to make significant contributions to their preservation.
2. Support Fort DuPont's efforts to implement design guidelines and standards for new development, including those related to historic structures in that area of the city.
3. Proactively address the deterioration of historic properties that are being used as income producing rental properties.
 - Give the Delaware City HPC specific authority to place mandatory compliance with preservation statutes on all commercially utilized property, including those used as rental properties not located in the historic district.
 - Establish minimum compliance standards for conditions regarding all commercial properties located within the Delaware City Limits.

4. Include all historic properties (minimum of 50 years old) under the enforcement decree for the HPC regardless of location within the Delaware City Limits.
 - Endeavor to review and potentially pass an ordinance addressing the HPC's authority.
5. Consider establishing fines and penalties to be levied against banks holding properties within the City limits that are not being actively marketed at a price commensurate with similar properties adjusted for condition.
 - Stipulation that offers reflecting local market conditions cannot be refused.
 - Limit the amount of time banks can write off vacant properties within the City.
6. Seek opportunities to collaborate between local business owners, the Delaware City Main Street Organization, and the Planning Commission for the pursuit of renovation funding for historic city buildings.
 - Budget for startup help for businesses that locate in a historic building.
 - Research and visit towns that have been successful with an eye towards mimicking their efforts.
 - Consider supporting a part-time staff person within the Main Street Delaware City organization that can improve downtown revitalization efforts and grant funding.
7. Seek opportunities to take advantage of the designation of the Downtown Development District to rehabilitate historic structures. The DDD (i) encourages homeownership and home rehabilitation; (ii) encourages diversity of commercial retail and services through infill and redevelopment; (iii) streamlines the plan review and permitting process and reduces permit fees if a property is designated by the State as a DDD; (iv) enhances the City's overall appearance through physical improvements; (v) improves parking conditions; (vi) improves safety and sidewalks; and (vii) promotes revitalization through preservation and reuse of historic structures.

2-5. Community Services and Facilities

This section describes the governmental and community facilities serving the Delaware City community. These facilities include utilities such as water and sewage service, electricity, natural gas, and cable television. They also include solid-waste disposal, recycling, stormwater management, and public safety (i.e. police and fire protections and emergency medical services). Additional community services are schools, libraries, senior and youth services, health care, postal services, and places of worship.

Electricity

Delmarva Power provides electric service to Delaware City residents and businesses. Customers purchase electricity directly from the company. Delmarva routinely maintains and upgrades the entire system.

Natural Gas

Delmarva Power supplies natural gas to Delaware City. The utility company owns and maintains natural gas lines in the city.

Cable Television and Internet Services

Cable television services are provided by Atlantic Broadband and Verizon under franchises granted by the City. High speed internet services are available through Atlantic Broadband (cable) and Verizon FIOS (fiber optic).

Telephone

Phone service is provided primarily by Verizon. Cavalier Telephone also provides land line service. Newer phone service options include internet-based voice communication, known as VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol). There are several national providers and Atlantic Broadband cable offer VoIP phone service.

Solid-Waste Disposal and Recycling

Solid-waste disposal (weekly) and recycling pick up (bi-weekly) is provided by outside contractors selected through a competitive bidding process. These services are provided to all Delaware City residents. The City does not provide collection services for large commercial users. Businesses requiring a dumpster contract privately.

Police

Delaware City's Police Department is headquartered on the second floor of Town Hall. The department is staffed by a Chief of Police, and four Police Officers (two full-time and two part-time). It is planned to add two additional full time Police Officers. Until then, support from the New Castle County Police Department allows 24-hour Police Coverage in response to 911 calls. Police protection is financed entirely with local General Funds.

In addition to customary patrol duties, the Delaware City police are involved with the youth in our Community and provide internships for criminal-justice students from Delaware Technical & Community College and the University of Delaware. The criminal-justice internship is designed to give students practical police experience. The City of Delaware City hosts a Police Athletic League in its Community Center. As our force increases, increased involvement with PAL is anticipated.

Fire & Rescue

The Delaware City Volunteer Fire Company provides fire protection as well as emergency medical and ambulance services. The company also maintains a rescue boat. The fire company is located at 815 Fifth Street.

Paul H. Morrill, Jr. Community Center

The Delaware City Community Center is home to the Delaware City Library, Senior Center, Reedy Point Players community theatre group, and Police Athletic League (PAL). The Center is located at 250 Fifth Street (5th and Bayard).

Delaware City Library is open 6 days a week, 40 hours a week. The library has nine computers and three meeting rooms available for public use, as well as a collection of over 24,000 items available for checkout. The library offers a variety of programs for children, teens, and adults.

The Senior Center is open to all adults 50 and over with meetings twice a week. Activities include art classes, games, armchair aerobics and field trips. The closest county-administered senior-service facility is the C & D Senior Center, located in the Liberty Terrace Apartment Complex on Freedom Road.

Reedy Point Players is a non-profit 501(c)(3) certified community theatre group located and founded in 2001. Reedy Point Players deliver captivating performances, performing original and published works throughout each season. Their mission is “To present live theatre productions for the cultural education, entertainment, and inspiration of the community. To welcome and provide an avocational opportunity for all volunteers interested in the theatre arts to participate in the many activities of community theatre”.

The Police Athletic League of Delaware City prides itself on being an integral part of the lives of young people. Throughout the school year as well as the summer months PAL offers many different prevention programs designed to deter juvenile delinquency. Prevention programs address citizenship, self-esteem, substance abuse, and respect for law and order. Police presence and participation is meant to foster trust, good will, and positive relationships with local youth.

Schools

Delaware City is located in the Colonial School District, headquartered in the City of New Castle. The public school system is governed by a seven-member School Board. Colonial School Board members are elected for five-year terms.

Table 11 shows the schools that Delaware City students currently attend. Students in kindergarten through grade 5 attend Southern Elementary School. From there, students advance to Gunning Bedford School in Delaware City for grades 6-8, and high school students in grades 9 to 12 attend William Penn High School in New Castle. Area students also attend New Castle County Vocational-Technical District schools, including Hodgson, Delcastle, St. Georges, and Howard.

Table 11. Public Schools Serving Delaware City Students, 2018.

Grade Levels	School	Location
K to 5	Southern Elementary School	795 Cox Neck Road, New Castle
6 to 8	Gunning Bedford Middle School	801 Cox Neck Road, New Castle
9 to 12	William Penn High School	713 Basin Road, New Castle

Source: Delaware Department of Education, 2018

Health Care

Delaware City has one family care physician in town. There is no pharmacy or emergency facility. Health services are also provided by a variety of public and private hospitals and clinics throughout New Castle County. Christiana Care, which operates a primary-and-specialty-care center, is the largest acute-care facility in the area. Several other specialized hospitals serve New Castle County, including the Alfred I. duPont Hospital for Children (children's urgent care and orthopedics).

Postal Service

Delaware City is served by a United States Post Office located in the municipal center at 54 Clinton Street. There is no home mail delivery, but all residents are provided with a post office box. For that reason, the Post Office serves as a hub for the community and a prime location for sharing information.

Places of Worship

There are five places of worship in Delaware City. Table 12 lists their names and locations.

Table 12. Places of Worship in Delaware City

Place of Worship	Location
Christ Episcopal Church	222 Clinton Street
Ebenezer United Methodist Church	306 Clinton Street
Delaware City Presbyterian Church	138 Jefferson Street
St. Paul's Roman Catholic Church	209 Washington Street
Aenon Christian Fellowship Church	131 New Castle Ave
Purpose Ministries	150 Clinton Street
Mount Salem UAME Church	305 Fourth Street

Statement on Key Infrastructure and Community Development Issues

Delaware City has focused on flood mitigation infrastructure since its last Comprehensive Plan update. The Washington Street Flood Mitigation Project began its design efforts in 2013. However, aligning funding with the bids for the project took until late 2017 with the majority of the project being completed in 2018. Delaware City faced the threat of flooding from intense rainfall combined with high tidal surge. With the assistance of Verdantas Engineering the planning, design, funding acquisition, permitting and construction review of an interdependent stormwater system improvements for the City's flood mitigation project was successfully completed. The project included replacing and extending an existing stormwater outfall, underground piping conveyance and storage improvements and an 18,000 gpm stormwater pumping station to mitigate chronic flooding. The City now maintains a robust, automated collection and pumping system to mitigate flooding in its downtown historic area.

This improvement built a pumping station at the corner of Washington and Harbor Streets to mitigate ongoing flooding along Washington Street. A new outfall pipe was also installed as part of the flood mitigation and prevention project. Temporary on demand pumps were removed, and a new underground piping and water containment system was implemented at a cost to the City in the amount of \$1,847,758.45.

At this cost, a great deal of commitment from the Mayor and Council and the community was necessary to accomplish this much needed project, including raising taxes to fund the payback of a state revolving loan. The project also received FEMA and New Castle Conservation District Grant Funding which covered approximately one half of the total cost. Through this project, the downtown area will benefit from a more attractive appearance on a regular basis while being equipped to better manage periods of excessive high tides and storm events so that roadways, stores, and homes are not flooded.

Community Development is an area of engagement the city is beginning to focus on more actively. Two major initiatives are the redevelopment of the Historic Fort DuPont property and the City's designation as a Downtown Development District, in 2019, should also help with efforts to revitalize older portions of the City.

The redevelopment of the Fort DuPont property, to date, has included the construction in the Canal District and Officer's Row sections, as well as the approval of the RV Park on the Grassdale Property, along with isolated building renovations elsewhere on the property. It is expected that plans will be submitted for the Marina District in the near future, which pursuant to the Master Plan, is to include, residential, commercial uses, and a marina.

On August 19, 2019, Governor John Carney presented Delaware City with the designation of being named a Downtown Development District (DDD) City. To date, \$31.6 million in DDD rebate funding has leveraged \$597 million in private investment in eight designated downtown districts in 3 counties. The Plan strives to revitalize the downtown as a regional hub for ecotourism and history-based tourism. A successful DDD designation, and the accompanying incentives, will act as a tool to leverage private investments to help revitalize the downtown. City Manager David Baylor will be the District Administrator overlooking the entire program. He can be reach at Town Hall, 407 Clinton Street, 302-834-4573.

The Plan (1) encourages homeownership and home rehabilitation; (2) encourages diversity of commercial retail and services through infill and redevelopment; (3) streamlines the Plan review and permitting process and reduces permit fees if a property is designated by the State as a DDD; (4) enhances the City's overall appearance through physical improvements; (5) improves parking conditions; (6) Improve safety and improve sidewalks; and (7) promote revitalization through preservation and reuse of historic structures.

As a means of achieving the vision of the DDD plan, Delaware City has incentives to those who qualify with the State as a DDD. The incentives are: (1) Property Tax Abatement on Rehabilitation Projects that increase the assessed value of the property by 50%; (2) Tax Abatement for DDD for Rental Properties that will now be Owner Occupied Properties; (3) The City's portion of the Real Estate Transfer Tax will be waived for a parcel in the DDD that is a rental property that will now be owner occupied; (4) Facade Improvement Revolving Loan Program will be reactivated; (5) Permit Fees will be reduced by 2% (For Building Permit Applications in the R-1, C-1L, C-2 or C-1M Zoning Districts located within the Downtown Development District (DDD), the permit fee will be the greater of \$100 or 2% of anticipated costs of the construction. For a building permit application in the C-1 zoning district within the DDD, the permit fee will be the greater of \$100 or 1.5% of the anticipated costs of construction); and (6) streamlined plan review and permitting process.

Goals and Strategies

1. Support the operation of a full time Police Department that is adequately staffed to provide the necessary community policing services to our community.
 - Ensure that appropriate funding levels are supported and included in operating budgets to recruit and retain professional and dedicated officers.
 - Report statistics of our policing efforts.
 - Provide for enough officers so that community needs can be met without excessive demands on officers.
2. Improve home values, the historic downtown, and the overall attractiveness of the community for families, young professionals, and retirees.
 - Endeavor to restart the Delaware City Walking Tour and market it to the broader community.
 - Ensure that adequate and diverse housing stock is available with access to public transportation and schools.
 - Improve efforts to address abandoned homes through strategic policies and programs.
 - Improve efforts to address property maintenance concerns by setting high standards and enforcing those standards.
 - Engage in more focused efforts to attract new businesses so that the historic downtown area can provide more basic needs and become a healthier community.
 - Invest in the upgrade of the downtown area to facilitate façade improvements.
 - Begin to better advertise the city's strong points and historical character such that more people are introduced to the community.
 - Work to identify and secure funding to put electric lines in the downtown area underground.
 - Increase beautification efforts including flags and flowers in planters around town.
 - Continue efforts to improve the City Park downtown.

2-6 Recreation and Open Space

Table 13 lists public park and recreation facilities in and near Delaware City. Many of these facilities are at city-owned parks and the public schools serving Delaware City. Together, they provide residents with playing fields, tot lots, courts, and picnic areas.

Table 13. Park and Recreation Areas Serving Delaware City, 2018

Park	Location	Acres	Facilities & Services
Community Center	Fifth and Bayard Streets	5	Gymnasium, athletic fields, senior activities, computers, leisure activities, counseling, skateboard ramps
Bubby Sadler Fields	Route 9	5.7	Little league fields
Battery Park	Clinton Street riverfront	2.1	Canal Promenade, festivals, gazebo
Delaware City Municipal Docks	Clinton and Canal Streets	0.0	Floating transient docks
Dragon Run Park	Off Route 9 at Dragon Run Road	6.0	Basketball court, softball, volleyball, horseshoes, playground, tot lot, picnic tables
Southern Elementary and Gunning Bedford Middle School	Cox Neck Road		Baseball, soccer, softball, track, football, tennis, multi-purpose gym, environmental lab
Everett Brown (7 th Street) Park	Seventh & Clinton Streets	2.1	Playground equipment and swings, basketball court, volleyball, picnic tables
Fort Delaware State Park	Pea Patch Island	616.7	Civil War era fortress, nature preserve, fishing, museum, Civil War reenactments, picnic tables
Fort DuPont	Off Route 9 south of Delaware City Branch Canal	325	Boat ramp, World War II era buildings, hiking, fishing, picnic tables, conference center, museum
Chesapeake and Delaware Canal Wildlife Area	Length of the C&D Canal, accessible off of Route 9	2,784	Fishing, hunting, hiking
Lums Pond State Park	Bear, between Routes 896 & 71	2,000	Swimming, boating, hunting, fishing, pavilions, biking/hiking/equestrian trails.

Sources: City of Delaware City, Division of Parks & Recreation, 2018

Trails

There are 14.3-mile continuous trail that includes the Michael N. Castle and Branch Canal Trails in Delaware and the Ben Cardin Trail in Maryland. The Castle and Cardin Trails run along the north bank of the C&D Canal and meet at the state line, while the Branch Canal Trail connects the Castle Trail to Delaware City's Canal front Promenade. The entire trail connects travelers to Delaware City and Chesapeake City, Md. The trail project was completed in January, 2017. Additional trails are contemplated in and around Ft. DuPont as part of the redevelopment. Most notably, a levy system is currently planned which will be incorporated into the larger trail system.

Goals and Strategies

1. Develop an all-weather connection to and from Fort DuPont and the historic downtown area.
 - Continue to communicate the high level of importance that a physical connection between the historic downtown and Fort DuPont is critical to the growth and success of both sides of the canal in the event that the Fifth Street Bridge does not provide a satisfactory connection.
 - Ensure that connection of the proposed levy at Ft. DuPont is open for biking, hiking, and walking, and endeavor to plan to tie the levy (when constructed) into the extensive existing trail system.
2. Develop a canoe and kayak launch access onto Dragon Run as the views and water fowl provides a unique and beautiful opportunity to attract people to our community for water recreation activities.
 - Identify prime locations (more visible the better) for launch sites and negotiate with property owners.
 - Identify if maintenance of the canal is necessary and develop a path forward to achieve it if necessary (look to communities that have been successful).
 - Promote the attraction within the state with the help of our state legislators so that funding assistance can be supported.
3. Develop Bike path trail head connections.
 - Identify locations for trail heads with information boards about downtown and the community.
 - Equip these areas to be well lit so that Delaware City stands out among trail heads.
4. Consider economically viable park expansion opportunities in order to continue providing quality recreation opportunities within Delaware City.
 - Support the development of the Grass Dale site south of Route 9 and Fort DuPont as a potential campground area with the ability to attract additional visitors to the area.
 - Consider acquiring or creating small "pocket park" areas throughout town in order to create additional public space for Delaware City's residents to enjoy.

5. Expand, support, and promote events happening in town to improve tourism.
 - Begin hosting 1st Friday celebrations each month or similar events.
 - Consider a 2nd Flea market weekend in the Fall.
 - Help promote the Ghost tours and other programs aligned with them (music, etc).
 - Develop an art alliance center in town.
 - Improve the municipal harbor area and facility so people will more readily use it and advertise it – need to plan to dredge the area.
 - Promote the ability to come to Delaware City from New Jersey – Fort Mott to Fort Delaware.
 - Promote tour groups.
 - Ensure that the Fort DuPont Marina when developed will add to the attractiveness of the existing marina and the historic downtown area.
 - Inquire with Bike Delaware about a Delaware City Report Card so that the city can identify areas that need improvement.
 - Consider promoting an open air artists weekend.

2-7. Water, Wastewater, and Stormwater Management

Water System

The water supply and distribution system is owned by the City of Delaware City and is currently operated under contract by Artesian Water Co. Artesian currently provides meter reading, billing, treatment plant operation, and repair services. Water rates are set annually by Mayor & Council. Delaware City's water supply comes from two (720' and 737') wells located in the Potomac Aquifer. Water is stored in an elevated tank located on city property at Fifth and Washington Streets.

Artesian Water Resources Corporation has completed its purchase of the water assets utilized to service Delaware City. Prior to this, the Mayor and Council of Delaware City waived the City's right to develop the water utility within Fort Dupont (annexed into Delaware City in 2016) in association with costs of infrastructure improvements. The purchase by Artesian Water included an existing water treatment plant, a storage tank, water mains, and other equipment used to provide potable water and fire suppression services to the then current portions of Fort DuPont and surrounding properties. Artesian has intention to design, build and operate the water system that will include new water assets as well as improvements and upgrades to the existing water assets. The water system will be expanded to meet the needs of the originally planned 600-unit residential community (at time of purchase) as well as retail development, in addition to water service currently provided to the Governor Bacon Health Center and National Guard facilities.

There are currently no excellent ground water recharge areas within the existing boundaries of Delaware City. Excellent recharge areas are areas where precipitation easily infiltrates the ground, reaches, and replenishes the underground aquifers. However, the city has three wellhead protection areas. Since 1987, the University of Delaware has administered the Water Resource Protection Area (WRPA) Program for New Castle County. Delaware City's well head protection areas fall under this program. The purpose of the WRPA ordinance in the New Castle County Unified Development Code is to protect the quality and quantity of surface water and groundwater supplies. Delaware City's well head protection areas fall under this ordinance. Special note should be taken regarding Delaware City beginning processes to develop a Source Water Protection Plan for its two well head areas. This topic should be addressed in the near term and re-evaluation of the nature of an existing lease of property around well head #5 (Fifth Street) as well as well head #4 (Fourth Street) to ensure Delaware City meets current standards for limiting certain activities a minimum of 150' from well heads where feasible. It is noted, that historically speaking, the depth of Delaware City's wells at 720 and 737 feet deep is beneficial in regards to its source water protection.

At the time of this update Delaware City had been engaged in two phases of water utility evaluations. First and foremost, in the Spring of 2018, with the assistance of a consultant, the new City Manager completed and delivered a full state of the utility executive report to the Mayor and Council in Executive Session. The resulting delivery to then Delaware City Mayor and Council resulted in a 15% water rate increase effective July 1, 2018 and implemented the first full quarterly billing after that date of October through December 2018.

Furthermore, the water utility review involved the consideration of updating the systems water meters to allow for improved accuracy, remote meter reading, billing, and leak detection. Delaware City had previously been awarded a State of Delaware Revolving Drinking Water loan to accomplish this, however was unable to take advantage of the loan as a result of having

reached its debt limit with a State Revolving Loan associated with a storm water project already underway. This effort is being included in all options presented in the City's Request for Proposals.

Water Quality

In late 2002, DNREC and the Delaware Division of Water Resources published a source water assessment of the public water supply for the State. According to this report, referenced below, Delaware City's water supply, overall, has a low susceptibility to contamination primarily because the Potomac is a confined aquifer and the depth of the city's wells. The assessment for Delaware City was completed in 2002 and can be viewed at www.delawaresourcewater.org.

The City of Delaware City publishes an annual water quality report to all residents. This report includes data on inorganic contaminants, disinfection/disinfection by-product contaminants, iron, pH, alkalinity, chloride, sulfate, sodium, lead, and copper. The 2018 report showed safe levels of detected substances.

Sewage System

New Castle County provides sewage service to Delaware City homes and businesses. The County maintains sewer mains and laterals to the property line or edge of road. The lateral on private property and into the house is the property owner's responsibility. In 1961 the New Castle County Public Works Department took over the Delaware City Sewer System, establishing the Delaware City Sanitary Sewer District. At that time, the system was upgraded and a treatment plant was constructed at the Governor Bacon Health Center property to serve Delaware City and the St. Georges area. The capacity of this plant is 550,000 gallons per day (GPD) and it remains in the same location servicing Delaware City. The average flow of the plant in 2017 was 330,000 GPD. The 2017 flow from Fort DuPont was 31,000 GPD. It is estimated that the Fort DuPont development will result in an additional 110,000 GPD.

Stormwater Management

Delaware City created a Stormwater Prevention Ordinance in March, 2015. The City is a joint permittee with New Castle County, DE for a permit from the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES). Mandated by Congress under the Clean Water Act, the NPDES Stormwater Program is a national program for addressing the non-agricultural sources of stormwater discharges. Over land or via storm sewer systems, polluted runoff is discharged, often untreated, directly into local water bodies.

The City maintains an extensive drainage system within the public rights-of-way. The system is a combination of catch basins connected by pipes and open ditches or swales. Stormwater drains to the Delaware River, the Branch Canal, or to Dragon Run. Most of the outfalls to the river and the Branch Canal have tide gates which prevent flood waters from entering the town through the drainage system. A contractor for the City performs and records when routine maintenance of existing catch basins takes place (KCI). Additionally, typical activities include regular visual inspection and debris removal once a month and in advance to storm events. The City maintains approximately eight miles of streets. The streets are cleaned by mechanical sweeper at least twice a year under a contractual relationship. To minimize litter along roadways, trashcans and recycling receptacles are used in high traffic areas downtown and are regularly emptied by the City's contractor. Delaware City also monitors shoulders of roads for litter. Mutt Mitts are provided to the public for dog waste at Delaware City parks. Delaware City is a co-permittee for its MS4 efforts with New Castle County, Delaware. Recently the permittees submitted a Water

Quality Improvement Plan for the Dragon Run Creek watershed. Delaware City looks forward to cooperating on these improvements once the Plan has been approved.

In 2014, Delaware City began efforts to address flooding in its downtown, primarily on Washington Street. The City was initially awarded a FEMA Flood Mitigation Grant and funds from the New Castle Conservation District to design and construct these improvements. After an original bidding took place, there was an engineering firm change and the project was value engineered. Ultimately early 2018 the project was granted a third extension to its period of performance by FEMA and the project was awarded requiring additional funds secured by a State of Delaware Revolving loan which will be paid off by an increase to taxes also supported by the Delaware City Mayor and Council. The project began in the spring of 2018 and its expected completion date is March of 2019. The project is expected to eliminate long standing flooding at high tides and during storm events that has plagued the downtown for years. Early indications during construction have been positive in that there has already been a reduction in standing water in advance to the project's completion. Map 7-Floodplains identifies floodplain areas within Delaware City.

The project included the following:

- Removal of an existing check valve and outfall piping
- Installation of new HDPE outfall pipe with concrete anchor collars and new tide check valve
- Installation of new catch basins and piping along Washington Street
- Construction of a raised electrical platform and associated connections
- Purchase and installation of high-performance pumps, their conditioning and start up
- Street and paving improvements as associated with any disruption

Goals and Strategies

1. Maintain a safe and reliable supply of drinking water.
 - Establish a Capital Funding Reserve for planned out-year maintenance of the water system.
 - Evaluate water rates and operations on an annual basis.
 - Evaluate options for the water plant and determine what the most effective long term management solution may be for the facility.
2. Develop a source water protection ordinance and develop other similar programs.
 - Engage with the State office of drinking water, Delaware Rural Water and possibly an engineering firm to put the first Source Water Protection Plan in place.
 - Consider developing an impervious surface mitigation plan that requires the use of pervious paving materials in parking areas for all projects with 20% or more post development imperviousness and 50% in high density commercial developments as recommended by DNREC.
 - Consider requiring the calculation for impervious surfaces to include all paved surfaces (roads, parking lots, and sidewalks), rooftops, and open-water storm water management structures.
 - Consider excluding structural best management practices such as community wastewater treatment areas, open-water storm water treatment structures, and natural areas containing regulated wetlands from consideration as open space.

- Consider requiring the use of "green-technology" storm water management in lieu of open water storm water management ponds whenever practicable and consider promoting the use of any combination of approved best management practices to meet the required TMDL.
 - Consider promoting the use of any combination of approved Best Management Practices (BMPs) to meet the required TMDLs for the affected watershed(s) in and around the City.
3. Assure sufficient sewage-treatment capacity.
 - Review the sewer agreement with New Castle County to ensure the long term needs of the city are met.
 4. Attain the TMDL nutrient and bacteria reductions necessary for restoring water quality and beneficial uses (fishing, swimming, drinking water) to water of the Delaware River.
 - Improve stormwater drainage in identified problem areas.
 5. Prepare a formal all-inclusive flood mitigation plan for the entire City.

2-8. Environmental Protection and Natural Features

This section of the plan describes the natural environment of Delaware City. It includes information on geology, soils and slopes, topography, and water resources. The natural resources present in Delaware City and the surrounding region are of significant aesthetic, recreational, and potential economic value to regional residents. Delaware City seeks to preserve and protect these resources through the liberal preservation of open space in the form of a greenbelt surrounding the existing municipal boundary and through a philosophy of compact, contiguous development within, or very near the town's border. Map 5-Environmental Features identifies many important environmental features in the area including natural preserves, natural lands, public protected lands, well head protection areas, and wetlands.

Geology

Delaware City sits on the Wenonah Formation, the Mount Laurel-Navensink Formation, and the Redbank Formation. The composition of the various layers of earth is very fine and somewhat unstable. As referenced below, their composition makes them unsuitable, or only marginally suitable, for any engineering purposes. Delaware City forms a part of the Atlantic Coastal Plain Province, a geological formation which consists of beds of rock covered with a layer of gravel and ice-age sand.

Topography

Due to its location in the Atlantic Coastal Plain, Delaware City's terrain is flat. Delaware City's topography is in the 0.3-percent-slope category, which means that it is nearly level; no area in the city exceeds 50 feet above sea level. Delaware City's topography makes the land suitable for most types of rural and urban development. Delaware City is situated on, and surrounded by, both tidal and non-tidal wetlands. The majority of the city, particularly the outlying areas, is encompassed in FEMA's 100-year-flood plain. The core of the city is situated largely within the 500-year-flood plain.

Soils

The underlying soils in Delaware City are Matapeake-Sassafras, Tidal Marsh, and Sassafras-Fallsington-Matapeake associations. The Matapeake-Sassafras Association is found in most of Delaware City. Because of the city's close proximity to the Delaware River, much of the soil is composed of slightly plastic silty and clay soils, as well as tidal-marsh and poorly drained swampy soils. These types of soils limit both the density and types of development. In some cases, development is not possible.

Hydrology

Hydrology is the science that deals with water circulation and distribution. Delaware City is located in the Dragon Run Creek, Red Lion, and C&D Canal East Watersheds. Groundwater, which is abundant and of good quality, is the source of Delaware City's drinking water. Large portions of the city are composed of marine tidal plain, marine tidal-marsh deposits, and floodplains. Tidal marshes and floodplains limit development. Delaware City's tidal marsh and floodplain areas include Dragon Creek, Red Lion Creek, the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal, and in particular, the area along the Delaware River. Map 7-Floodplains identifies floodplain areas within Delaware City.

Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL)

The Clean Water Act and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Water Quality Planning and Management Regulations were developed to maintain the health of our nation's waters. They provide for the regulation of impaired waters that are not meeting their designated uses—those water uses identified in state water-quality standards that must be achieved and maintained as required under the Clean Water Act. When waters, or watersheds, do not meet the criteria for these uses, they are required to have a TMDL: a specified, maximum amount of pollution allowed to enter a water body and still permit said body to meet water-quality standards. DNREC has proposed TMDLs for both the Red Lion Creek and Dragon Run watersheds. The levels are reassessed every two years. The report can be reviewed at <http://www.dnrec.delaware.gov/swc/wa/pages/watershedassessmenttmdls.aspx> under regulations.

Climate Change and Hazard Mitigation

Delaware City participates in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) which is managed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Participation in the NFIP enables homeowners, business owners and renters to purchase federally backed flood insurance. Participating communities must adopt ordinances and enforce floodplain management regulations to reduce future flood damage.

Chapter 48 of the Delaware City Code provides those regulations and addresses activities in special flood hazard areas (SFHAs or 100-year flood areas). It was modeled after the State's Model Floodplain Ordinance and defines the duties of the Floodplain Administrator (City's contractor AECOM), mandates permits before any construction or other development activity can occur within the SFHAs, and provides requirements for permits which include the submittal of elevation certificates and floodproofing certificates. Chapter 48 also requires a "freeboard" or factor of safety as well as other elevation and floodproofing requirements. It also includes multiple references to FEMA technical bulletins.

The City also participates in the Community Rating System (CRS). The CRS is a voluntary incentive program that recognizes and encourages community floodplain management practices that exceed the minimum requirements of the NFIP. Delaware City is one of just 10 municipalities in Delaware that participates. In CRS communities, flood insurance premium rates are discounted to reflect the reduced flood risk resulting from the community's efforts. The City's current rating of 8 results in a 10% flood insurance premium reduction for properties within the SFHA and a 5% reduction for other properties.

In 2014, Delaware City worked with University of Delaware to create the *Delaware City Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Action Plan*. The following is an excerpt from that plan.

Delaware City, Delaware, is a coastal town with a geographical and historical bond to the Delaware River and Bay. As a result of its proximity to the River, Delaware City has weathered its share of storms and associated storm surge impacts, ultimately resulting in implementation of certain mitigation and adaptation measures. Additionally, Delaware City's geomorphology (that includes abundant wetlands and creeks) has led to flooding issues, as well as to efforts towards improving and reducing stormwater and drainage problems. As a result of its experiences, its landscape, and its proximity to a tidal body of water, Delaware City is well-poised to take advantage of an increasing understanding of natural hazard and climate change impacts. Increasing impacts from coastal storms, sea-level rise, and extreme precipitation events associated with climate change will likely exacerbate known hazards that Delaware City faces today. While these expected changes cannot be prevented, the effects of these events are dependent upon the choices and actions that Delaware City makes over the coming years.

The report found that flooding near Washington Street was of particular concern. In 2014, efforts began to address flooding in the downtown. Delaware City was awarded grants from Delaware Emergency Management Agency (DEMA) and The New Castle Conservation District. Securing the total funding amount for the project was challenging. However, after receiving extensions from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, full funding was secured and the project was completed. Now, storm water will be directed from Washington Street into the Delaware River via new piping along Washington Street using pumps and an improved outfall situation.

Map 8-Potential Sea Level Rise identifies areas that may be impacted by tides alone with projected sea level rise within Delaware City. However, this map does not factor in the more recent improvements intended to reduce the amount of flooding that may occur in the Fort DuPont area. These improvements include raising many of the residential areas out of the floodplain with fill, and multiple letters of map revision (LOMRs) have been approved by FEMA. A contemplated elevated recreational trail for hiking and biking that will tie into the Castle trail system may mitigate some flooding events but is not currently planned to become FEMA-certified.

The City intends to develop a Climate Change Action Plan that will demonstrate its commitment to generally adhere to the recommendations in Delaware's Climate Action Plan (Nov. 2021).

Goals and Strategies

1. Continue to improve, monitor, and evaluate flooding conditions in Delaware City.
 - Maintaining a recording and ranking system for all areas within Delaware City that experience frequent nuisance flooding.
 - Evaluate the impact of the Washington Street flood mitigation project completed in early 2019.
2. Enhance Delaware City's stormwater drainage capacity, and improve stormwater management planning.
 - Develop a capital plan and funding source for stormwater control and improvements.
 - Consider the benefits of a Storm Water utility to fund a storm water specific Capital program.
3. Build hazard mitigation and climate adaption needs into local planning and regulatory actions through the Delaware City Climate Action Plan.
4. Better awareness of flooding concerns among staff and council.
 - Establish a group of interested residents to support an ongoing mitigation program for Delaware City to explore needed sea wall maintenance, outfall maintenance plans, and sea level rise concerns.
 - Initiate educational programs to alert residents to community vulnerabilities and heighten awareness of current and future flood risk.
 - Work with the appropriate State and County agencies to create updated mapping layers that reflect potential sea level rise and flood hazards to all of Delaware City including the Fort DuPont area.
 - Endeavor to ensure that any new development is reasonably safe from future flood risks.
5. Minimize impact to the Dragon Run Natural Area.
6. Review and consider increasing standards in the Floodplain Ordinance.
7. Consider opportunities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
8. Look for opportunities to incorporate energy efficiency measures in building design and redevelopment.
9. Promote and inform the citizens of Delaware City about the free DNREC Winterization Assistance Program.
10. Consider including future flood risk in the development review process, using tools that include sea level rise inundation.
11. Consider proactive measures to avoid impacts from future sea level rise.
12. Consider greenhouse gas inventory assessment to identify other sources other than transportation which can be addressed in the local building/energy codes.

2-9. Transportation

This section outlines the transportation issues facing Delaware City. It includes streets and highways, bus transportation, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, rail services, byways, and airports.

Streets and Highways

Map 2-Transportation Network depicts the road network serving Delaware City and the surrounding area. DelDOT maintains Fifth Street (State Route 9) and Clinton Street southwest of the SR9 traffic light (Cox Neck Road). The City maintains all other roads in Delaware City. Fort Delaware, the Governor Bacon Health Center, Mike Castle Trail, and through traffic on SR9 generate most of the traffic in the city. Summer weekend traffic increases due to a significant volume of motorist through-traffic bound for the state's beaches and Dover Downs. Because Delaware City is located on a river and near marshy areas, there is a problem of unstable roadbeds. Flooding is also a problem that weakens a road's weight-bearing capacity, causing potholes and surface deterioration.

In 2018 the City took advantage of the paving taking place in association with the Flood Mitigation project to align additional street improvements at the same time to benefit from the contractor already being mobilized. Unit pricing was obtained for paving work on Washington and Clinton Streets- the streets they had received the most complaints about. The unit pricing was then matched against street bids from our two neighboring communities, the City of New Castle and Middletown, Delaware. The comparison of pricing demonstrated the contractor's unit pricing to be competitive and a paving project for a large portion of both streets was approved and implemented in the Fall and early winter 2018. This effort encompassed from 2nd Street to 4th Street on Washington and from 2nd Street to the Circle at Harbor St and the river on Clinton including new striping.

The City allocated additional funds for repaving in the winter of 2022. Planned for the summer of 2022, the project will involve repaving two blocks of Washington Street and one block of Front Street. Other components of the project include partial roadway widening, new or replacement curbs, and striping for more consistent parking.

The City has also engaged the Technology Transfer (T2) Center at the University of Delaware to assist it in developing a long-term pavement management program. The T2 Center conducted a pavement evaluation in 2013 which will be updated in 2022-2023.

Traffic Volume

Delaware City is not overly impacted internally by traffic volume unless an event is underway. Restrictions to travel on Route 1 or Route 13 does have an impact on our main roadway into and out of town, Fifth Street. In recent years, accidents, and bridge work has resulted in a steady flow of cut through traffic during rush hours. Peak volume trips as measured by DelDOT's 2018 vehicle volume counts show that Route 9 is the most heavily travelled road in town with over 5,500 trips per day on the segment north of Clinton Street. South of Clinton Street the volume decreases a great deal to just under 2,800 trips per day prior to the canal bridge and then to just over 1,200 trips per day south of the canal bridge. It is likely that as development of the Fort Dupont property continues that these counts will increase. At this time, various options have been proposed for the access to Fort DuPont. The Fort, DelDOT, Delaware City, the Army Corp and interested parties are participating in evaluation of the access options. The other major route into and out of town is Cox Neck Road, which extends from Rt 9 to Rt 13 from east to west. The inner most segment of this road in town sees just over 1,600 trips per day based on DelDOT's 2018 vehicle volume counts.

(https://deldot.gov/Publications/manuals/traffic_counts/pdfs/2018/2018NewCastleCounty.pdf?cache=1571079057247)

Bus Transportation

DART First State Route 25 provides service to Wrangle Hill Park & Ride, Delaware City DMV, Delaware City, Fort Delaware, Delaware City Refinery, Tybouts Corner Park & Ride, Llangollen/DuPont Hwy, Amazon.com, Airport Plaza, and Downtown Wilmington.

There are a variety of Park & Ride lots available to Delaware City residents in order to access additional destinations throughout the state. These are described in Table 14.

Table 14. Park & Ride Lots in the Delaware City Vicinity, 2018

Name	Location	Dist. From Delaware City
People's Plaza	SR 896 & U.S. Rt. 40 Glasgow	10 miles
Tybout's Corner	U.S. Rt. 13 & Hamburg Rd. New Castle	5 miles
SR 273 & 7	SR 273 & SR 7 Christiana, DE	11 miles
Wrangle Hill	DE 72 & US 13	4 miles
Christiana Mall	Christiana Mall Newark	12 miles

Source: DelDOT, 2018

Paratransit Service

Paratransit is a public transportation service that is offered in addition to regular fixed-route services. It provides door-to-door services exclusively for elderly and disabled persons. Typically, a paratransit customer must make a reservation in advance for specific pick-up and drop-off service.

The DART First State Paratransit, operated by DTC, provides service to persons 60 or older and those with physical or mental disabilities throughout Delaware. One guest may ride with each eligible customer. The State of Delaware also provides financial assistance to support additional paratransit services offered by private nonprofit agencies, local governments, social- service agencies, and taxicab companies. Pick-ups and drop-offs are arranged in response to requests for transportation. Riders are transported in small and medium-sized buses and vans equipped with wheelchair lift. Since our last update, DART has implemented bus service throughout the day to and from Delaware City. Efforts to add bus shelters are underway with DART in the Fall of 2018 with installation expected by early 2019.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Movement

Pedestrian and transit friendly design go beyond simply adding sidewalk and bus stops. They influence building placement, sidewalk connectivity and directness, and stop locations to major roadways as well. Having said that, sidewalks can be an important asset to a community by providing a pedestrian link within neighborhoods and between residential areas and commercial activities. In Delaware City, sidewalks are in place on most of Clinton Street, on parts of Washington Street, and in the Harbor Estates subdivision. Most residential back streets do not have sidewalks. Property owners are responsible for sidewalk maintenance. Many of the existing sidewalks in the core such as along Clinton Street are in need of repair. Consideration is being given to attempting to begin a 3 to 5 year sidewalk plan to address the worst areas though a group contract scenario that might provide residents with seed money that is paid back over time.

Delaware City boasts ready access to 14.3-miles of trail that includes the Michael N. Castle and Branch Canal Trails in Delaware and the Ben Cardin Trail in Maryland. The Castle and Cardin Trails run along the north bank of the C&D Canal and meet at the state line, while the Branch Canal Trail connects the Castle Trail to Delaware City's Canal front Promenade. The entire trail connects travelers to Delaware City and Chesapeake City, Md. The trail project was completed in January, 2017 and are bike and pedestrian friendly. Over the years since the opening of the Castle Trail Delaware City's bike traffic and use as a hub to begin rides has increased drastically. Additional efforts to develop Trail heads was a prime discussion of both the Downtown Development District Planning effort and a Council appointed committee that discussed parking and trail access. Efforts to address long term parking in prime spaces in the downtown by those who drive into town with their bike on their vehicle are believed to be necessary to provide the necessary turnover for downtown businesses.

Parking

At times, parking can be an issue in Delaware City. By and large, the municipality depends upon on-street parking and all of its parking is free. Though generally adequate, the parking supply is, at times, strained during the summer tourist season, acerbated by the above noted long term bike trail parkers. As the downtown increases the number of businesses additional parking will become necessary and prime spaces may need to be controlled in some manner. Delaware City launched a Parking Task Force in early 2018. The Task Force is seeking alternative trail head parking to mitigate congestion during peak hours at the Washington Street parking lot. The Task Force is also considering plans to expand the Washington Street parking lot, which would require negotiations with the Delaware City Refinery.

“Paper Streets”

Another transportation concern is a mapping issue. New Castle County’s property-tax map delineates a number of “paper streets”: mapped roadways that have never been built. In some areas, it appears that structures have been placed in mapped rights-of-way. Delaware City officials do not intend that these mapped streets be utilized for vehicular travel at this time. This plan recommends that city officials solicit public input concerning the future use of these streets. As part of the deliberations, city officials should consider retaining portions of these rights-of-way for pedestrian pathways, bikeways, open spaces, or a neighborhood park as well as abandoning them to adjacent property owners.

Table 15. “Paper Streets” Inventory, 2014

Street Name	Description
Henry St.	From Jefferson St. to Monroe St.
Henry St.	From Hamilton St. to Canal St.
Third St.	From Madison St. to Monroe St.
Jefferson St.	From Fourth St. to Fifth St.
Hamilton St.	From 510 Hamilton St. to Reybold Circle
Canal Street	From Front St. to Clinton St.

Rail

The closest passenger-rail service is currently in Wilmington. From there, Amtrak provides daily service to many major cities. In addition, DTC and the South Eastern Pennsylvania Transit Administration (SEPTA) provide daily commuter-rail service between Newark, Churchman’s Crossing, Wilmington, and Philadelphia along Amtrak’s Northeast Corridor. Passenger rail is being expanded into Newark with the development of the Newark Regional Transportation Center which broke ground in 2018.

Air

The closest commercial passenger service for Delaware City residents is either Philadelphia International Airport or Baltimore-Washington International Airport. The travel time to each is approximately 1-1.5 hours.

Byways

The Delaware Byways Program is a collaborative effort of Delaware’s citizens, local, state and federal government. During the 2000 legislative session, the General Assembly passed Senate Bill 320 authorizing DelDOT to develop what was then known as the Delaware Scenic and Historic Highways Program. The program has since been rebranded is now known as the Delaware Byways Program. There are two byways which feature Delaware City as a primary destination point. These byways offer a unique way for the City to showcase itself and to promote economic development, cultural heritage, and recreational opportunities within the City.

The Bayshore Byway is a scenic two-lane road that follows roads and views along the Delaware River and Bay Estuary. From New Castle to the beach resorts just outside Lewes, the byway corridor offers visitors and locals an intimate experience with the largest preserved coastal marshlands and historic river towns along the east coast. The byway covers much of the state geographically and is approximately 100 miles of travel depending on your route selection. Delaware City is featured in the “Best of Bayshore Byway: A Tour of Historic Architecture” guide book.

The Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Byway is approximately 95 miles long. This Byway provides the traveler with an alternative travel route through the state in a generally south to north orientation while giving opportunities to experience Delaware's Underground Railroad history through locations where this history happened. Delaware City is a featured destination of this byway.

Goals and Strategies

1. Provide safe and reliable circulation utilizing all transportation modes.
 - Continue to seek state improvements to SR 9 and SR 72 to ensure that those roadways remain passable in major flood events as evacuation routes.
 - Develop a coordinated plan to make Delaware City more bicycle and pedestrian-friendly, including a detailed assessment of the city's existing sidewalks and crosswalks in order to identify priority areas for improvements.
 - Develop a comprehensive corridor design for Washington Street and seek its designation as a safe entry into town for bicyclists.
 - Consider the establishment of bike routes on underutilized rights-of-way.
 - Encourage pedestrian and bicycle interconnections, and the presence of sidewalks and bike paths, in any new or adjacent development.
 - Consider modifying the municipal code to require that developers provide sidewalk, curb, drainage and parking infrastructure.
2. Improve bus transportation stops to include shelters.
 - Work with DART to install bus shelters in town.
3. Support and participate in the Delaware Bayshore Byway and Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Byway promotional efforts to further boost eco-tourism for economic development, cultural heritage, and recreational opportunities in Delaware City
4. Identify opportunities to expand parking in order to accommodate tourists and residents and support the town's businesses.
 - Identify specific sites for additional parking throughout the historic downtown area.
 - Ensure that parking signage is clear and effective throughout town, and consider developing a wayfinding system in order to better direct visitors.
 - Expand the parking lot area on the northern end of Washington Street.
 - Consider shared parking agreements among local businesses and institutional properties such as the City Hall or the PAL.
 - Consider creating a shuttle service to operate during peak days and times in order to utilize underused areas with access to free parking.

2-10. Economic and Community Development

For Delaware City, economic development means that future growth in town should be inclusive of the entire community and that the town's goals and vision are followed regardless of where new development occurs in town. This means that as the Ft Dupont area continues to develop and grow and new residents and businesses begin moving into the city, that these new members of the community are well connected to the historic town core and that growth benefits all parts of town. Delaware City will continue to work with the Fort Corporation Board to promote appropriate development that is consistent with the Historic Designation assigned to Fort DuPont. In addition, Delaware City will look for opportunities to coordinate with Fort DuPont for events to bring the residents of Delaware City proper with the residents of Fort DuPont. The town continues to be committed to both the long term health and development of the historic commercial area of town as well as the preservation of the character in the historic core. This historic business district has been a focal point for the community throughout the city's history. The historic district area's gridded street pattern makes this commercial area accessible, and free on-street parking is available.

Like many small towns, Delaware City's historic district businesses have struggled to compete with surrounding large scale retail developments as well as online shopping which has made competition even more fierce. However, Delaware City offers an "experience" for residents and visitors that most places simply cannot, which gives it a strategic advantage to some extent. Moving forward it will be important to not only utilize the new growth and attractiveness of the Ft DuPont area to bring people to the town, but also for the town to identify new potential areas of growth and development for the historic core of town in order to keep it vibrant and healthy.

Ecotourism is an area that the City may be able to focus on more in the future given its assets. Ecotourism is now defined by the International Ecotourism Society as "responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment, sustains the well-being of the local people, and involves interpretation and education". Education is meant to be inclusive of both staff and guests. Delaware City is located on the Delaware River and is surrounded by many unique natural areas. It also provides access to an extensive trail network that provides both residents and visitors great opportunity to explore the surrounding area. Delaware City should explore the possibility of economic growth through ecotourism in the future, potentially through community events celebrating its natural surroundings and history as a City on the River.

All areas within the city's Historic Downtown District currently fall under the purview of the Historic Preservation Committee. Some of its efforts include the following:

Fort DuPont Redevelopment and Preservation Corporation

The annexation of Historic Fort DuPont and the creation of the Fort DuPont Redevelopment and Preservation Corporation in 2016 increased the size of Delaware City by 300 acres, essentially doubling its size. Current plans for the historic fort property include the addition of approximately 80 new homes, retail shops, restaurants, apartments, a hotel and marina. New properties will come onto the tax roles for Delaware City. The restoration of historic properties on the site, including homes, barrack buildings, a theater, and mortar bunkers is currently underway and speaks to the strong interest in preservation that played a role in the corporation's birth and the States interest in maintaining its historic significance while fostering economic

development to help fund the effort. Active new home sales and engagement with development firms related to aquaponic farming, a brewery, entertainment venues and a marina village are ongoing and under the leadership of the Corporation's Executive Director and Board. The site has also become active in offering festival space having held the first *Fortify Music Festival* in the Fall of 2018 as well as numerous other events. Plans to modernize the old theater to accommodate live music, plays and movies are also in the discussion phase. The Marina Village is expected to crown the development with new reasons to visit, live and work in Delaware City in the next decade. A promenade walkway surrounding the site is planned as well as a connection bridge to and from Delaware City's historic downtown across the canal. Substantial completion is expected to take place by 2026.

In July, 2018 the Fort DuPont Redevelopment & Preservation Corporation released a feasibility and economic impact report for the Fort DuPont development. The report estimated that the 7-year projected economic value of ongoing Fort DuPont Complex (FDC) operations will reach over \$223 million. Three key sources of the Fort DuPont Complex (FDC) expected economic activity were identified and assessed separately: (1) FDC construction, (2) FDC real estate sales, and (3) the operating expenses of FDC commercial businesses. While construction impacts continue through 2023, it is 2018 when new real estate sales started. By 2020, many of the commercial developments are adding to the overall FDC impact via restaurant, retail, and opening of a unique Bunker Brewery. The economic impact peaks in 2021 when construction, real estate, and commercial revenues add together to help FDC reach its peak.

Further, the commercial activity anticipated for FDC is expected to support a combined total of approximately 856 jobs (annual full-time equivalents) per year in the local economy. Of the direct FDC jobs, 403 will be held in Accommodations and Food Service, 104 in Real Estate, 64 in retail trade and 59 in Arts & Entertainment. Meanwhile, it is expected that New Castle supply chain firms will employ an additional 122 workers on behalf of the FDC. And finally, the downstream spending of FDC workers' wages will support 99 more jobs.

Downtown Development District

The Delaware City Downtown Development District Plan was drafted in July, 2018 and approved by the State in August of 2019. With this plan and the State's designation, Delaware City will advance its vision of being an active, vibrant, and historic river port town with access to recreation, cultural heritage and eco-tourism opportunities. The purpose of Delaware City's District Plan is to set forth comprehensive economic and community development strategies and incentives that will stimulate and guide public and private investment towards ongoing revitalization and economic progress in the downtown. Developing this plan included collaboration with a diverse cross-section of City officials, residents, business owners, and stakeholders.

This District Plan was prepared in consideration of future submission to the State of Delaware for designation as a DDD. The State program is designed to promote healthy and vibrant downtowns as critical components of Delaware's economic well-being and quality of life. This designation enables the City to leverage state resources in order to spur capital investments and improve commercial vitality, stimulate job growth, while also attempting to improve housing opportunities. Selection as a DDD entitles private construction projects within the District boundary to receive grants to offset up to 20% of their real property investments. Investors who make qualified improvements to residential or commercial properties may also qualify for additional state and local development incentives.

Main Street Delaware City

Main Street Delaware City, Inc. (MSDC) is a private, non-profit volunteer organization devoted to the revitalization of Delaware City. Affiliated with the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Main Street Delaware City is committed to assisting residents, local merchants, and property owners in enhancing their property values, boosting their businesses, and promoting a healthy community where people want to live and do business. Main Street Delaware city has primarily been involved in offering special community events that draw visitors to the downtown including efforts to promote Small Business Saturday, Festival of Lights and Tree Lighting, River Town Rides event, Halloween Parade, and Christmas Parade. Additional efforts to engage downtown property owners and align vacant first floor properties with new business interests is warranted and should be explored more proactively. To that end, Main Street Delaware City participated in the 2017/2018 Downtown Development District Planning Effort noted below.

Goals and Strategies

1. Consider developing a marketing plan for Delaware City in order to better capitalize on the new development and future growth of the Ft. DuPont area.
2. Ensure that new development in the Fort DuPont area benefits the entire town.
3. Use new growth in the Fort DuPont area to better market the town as a whole and to benefit existing businesses as well.
4. Educate local elected officials, business owners, and developers on the benefits of the Downtown Development District and utilize the program to encourage economic growth.
5. Balance new commercial growth with the preservation of a small town atmosphere.
6. Maintain the character of the 5th Street corridor and ensure that traffic does not overwhelm the area.
7. Consider a program to utilize The Delaware Brownfields Marketplace by property owners and identifying new potential sites in Delaware City.

Chapter 3. Land Use and Annexation

3-1. Existing Land Use

Land Use Pattern

Map 4-Existing Land Use portrays the current development pattern for Delaware City and the surrounding area. This map shows how each property in the city was utilized in 2019. This section describes each land use. Map 4-Existing Land Use identifies the City's existing land use pattern. Map 11-Existing Zoning shows the current zoning map for Delaware City.

Agricultural

There are no agricultural parcels within the city.

Residential

Residential land uses in Delaware City include single-family detached homes, single-family attached homes, and multi-family dwelling units. A dwelling unit consists of at least one room with its own cooking, sleeping, and sanitary facilities. A majority of the parcels in Delaware City are designated for residential use.

Single-Family Detached Homes

A single-family home provides living quarters for one family and is not attached to any other home. It has a front, a rear, and two side yards and a door leading directly to the outside. Single-family detached homes comprise most of Delaware City's residential housing stock. They are found throughout the city.

Single-Family Attached Homes

An attached home is a single-family home that shares at least one wall with an adjacent home. Single-family attached homes take many forms. A semi-detached home, often called a duplex or a two-family home, is a single-family home that is attached to another home either vertically or horizontally, i.e., either side-by-side or one on top of another. Another type of attached home is a townhouse, which consists of at least three attached units in a row. Like a single-family detached home, each townhouse has a separate front and rear entrance to the outside. In Delaware City, attached homes are scattered throughout the older parts of city. It is not unusual to find a small group of semi-detached homes or three attached homes among single-family detached homes.

Single-Family Condominiums

The City has adopted code provisions allowing condominiums by special exception. Should the housing market in Delaware City strengthen and create growth pressures, condominiums could provide a less land-intensive option for home ownership.

Multi-Family Housing

Multi-family housing is located in a building containing three or more dwellings. Unlike a single-family home, which has an entrance leading directly to the outside, a multi-family home's entrance leads to a common stairway (e.g., a garden apartment development) or a common hall (e.g., a mid- or high-rise apartment building). Most of Delaware City's multi-family buildings are small, and they are found in and near the historic area.

Manufactured Homes

Delaware City's mobile homes are located in a mobile-home park located south of Fifth Street. The name mobile home was replaced by the term "manufactured home" with the passage of the Federal Manufactured Housing Construction and Safety Standards Act of 1974. A manufactured home is constructed, entirely or substantially, in a manufacturing plant for installation or assembly at a building site as opposed to a site-built home, which is constructed entirely at a building site. A manufactured home is built to the Manufactured Home Construction and Safety Standards (HUD Code) and displays a red certification label on the exterior of each transportable section. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) administers and enforces these standards, which became effective on June 15, 1976.

Manufactured homes are often confused with other types of factory-built housing, such as modular, panelized, prefabricated, and kit homes. The primary difference between manufactured and other factory-built homes is their construction standards. Manufactured homes must conform to the national standards of the HUD code, while other factory-built homes are subject to state and/or local building codes. As real estate prices in Delaware City are lower than those in most of the County, and given the prevalence of manufactured housing and multi-family homes, Delaware City affords its residents an ample supply of affordable housing.

Commercial

Commercial refers to retail sales and service business areas. Delaware City's commercial areas are situated in three locations. The most prominent commercial area is along the north side of Clinton Street between Front Street and the River. A second, smaller commercial area is located on both sides of Fifth Street between Canal and Jefferson Streets. The third commercial area consists of a marina that covers the area between Canal and Franklin Streets and between Third and Fourth Streets.

Mixed-Use

Mixed Use areas typically refer to areas where a mix of residential, commercial and institutional uses are existing or desirable. On a single property "mixed-use" typically refers to buildings with multiple land uses within the same building, but on larger properties such as the Ft Dupont area it can also mean a mix of different land uses on the same property or in the same general area. The Ft Dupont area is the only group of properties currently identified as mixed-use due to the variety of residential, commercial and institutional development both active and planned for that area.

Industrial

Industrial land uses include wholesale trade, storage, and contracting, as well as manufacturing and processing activities. The only industrial area within Delaware City's limits is the Delaware City Refinery port facility, which is located along the Delaware River to the north of the City.

Institutional

Institutional land uses include buildings owned by the city, county, state, or federal governments, schools, religious institutions, and facilities used by civic groups. As noted in the Government and Community Services & Facilities section, several government and community facilities are located in Delaware City.

Utilities

Utility land uses include facilities related to the provision of water and sewerage, electricity, gas, refuse disposal, or communications. There are two small areas of utility land use in Delaware City; one is located south of Fifth Street across from Washington Street, and the other is located at the corner of Fourth and Washington Streets.

Open Space and Recreation

Open space is land that is entirely undeveloped or almost entirely undeveloped and where no new development is either planned or desired. These areas are typically protected either by regulation or through conservation efforts. There are large open space areas in Delaware City that are part of the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal Wildlife Area and are owned by the state and federal government. Smaller pockets of open space and recreational area are scattered around the city.

Vacant Land

Vacant land refers to parcels that are either being developed or could be considered candidates for development. Open space which is protected from development, although often vacant, are not included. There are vacant parcels throughout the City. The largest is a 443-acre parcel on the north side of town owned by Delaware City Refinery Inc. However, floodplain, marsh, and wetlands may make substantial portions of this tract unsuitable for development and the town prefers for it to remain vacant. Delaware City's remaining vacant land is scattered around the city on various single parcels which do not comprise any significantly large vacant areas.

Surrounding Area

There is a mix of developed and undeveloped land surrounding Delaware City. The Delaware River forms Delaware City's eastern boundary. The area north of State Route 9 and west of the city is a chemical complex. The area south of SR 9 is primarily open space with some residential lots. On the west side of Clinton Street, south of SR 9, are several single family homes. Southeast of the City is Fort DuPont State Park, which houses the Governor Bacon Health Center. Much of the undeveloped land surrounding the city consists of wetlands, streams, or floodplains that cannot be developed.

Land Uses

Table 16 shows the number of parcels and square acreage of the existing land uses in Delaware City. Given the environmental constraints in and around the municipality, it is not surprising to see relatively large acreages of vacant lands. This is primarily represented by the Delaware City Refinery port facility, a small portion of which is used for industrial activity along the Delaware River. It is also interesting to note that commercial uses, in terms of acreage, are the third smallest use, a fact noted by survey respondents whom favored commercial growth over any other category.

Table 16. Breakdown of Existing Land Uses

Land Use	# of parcels	Acreage
Commercial	52	11.9
Institutional	23	38.4
Mixed Use	117	426.2
Open Space	5	95.1
Residential	789	166.1
Utilities	1	1.8
Vacant	13	434.8

Source: Planning Commission Field Survey, Fall 2018

3-2. Future Land Use and Annexation

Within the existing municipal boundaries, very few changes in land use are recommended. The City is generally happy with the existing mix of uses currently in town. Looking forward, the city would favor a continuation of its current development pattern with sensitivity given to its historically “small town” character. On the Ft Dupont property, it will be important that future development ties in with the rest of the Delaware City community and that the policies and goals set forth in this plan are taken into consideration as Ft Dupont continues to grow and develop. In the historic commercial core of town, primarily along the northern Clinton St corridor, the intent moving forward would be to allow the reuse or rehabilitation of existing structures to the fullest extent possible. In order not to significantly change the architectural character of this historic commercial core, the historic nature of the area should be taken into close consideration. Map 9-Future Land Use and Annexation identifies the City’s desired Future Land Use pattern.

The most substantive changes in the city’s plan are the proposed potential annexation of land to the west and south of the city, as well as the area adjacent to the Rt 9 bridge to the south. The City would also like to consider using land north of Washington St in order to expand an existing parking lot. The City is also interested in purchasing portions of the canal, which is already within City limits, from the Army Corps of Engineers. The City will consult with the Army Corp of Engineers before considering lands owned by the Army Corp. The City would also like to ensure that the land owned by the Delaware City refinery in the large parcel on the northern side of the City to remain primarily as vacant open space. Maps 9-Future Land Use and Annexation shows the City’s desired annexation areas, while Map 10-Future Land Use and Areas of Concern shows both potential annexation areas as well as a large “Area of Concern” around the City. The City recognizes that many lands in the potential annexation areas are environmentally constrained and these lands are primarily going to be preserved as open space. In regard to Tax Parcel Number 2208001234, owned by Delaware City, it shall be designated vacant unless a complete examination indicates it can be developed in part. The City has no current plans to annex lands, but will continue to monitor the feasibility of taking such action if warranted. At present, a de-facto greenbelt of agricultural and vacant lands surrounds the industrial complex, and it is the city’s intention to formalize this use with cooperation from the county and the refinery. The city hopes that this cooperation, also with the area’s identification as an area of concern, will lead to the formal establishment of a greenbelt to protect environmentally sensitive areas, as well as assuring itself a distinct boundary, or urban edge, regardless of the economic future of the refinery or the nation’s preference for oil as an energy source.

As discussed in the services section, the City is also concerned about its sewage-treatment capacity. Currently, all town flows are treated at the county plant just east of the existing municipal boundary. However, development west of town, primarily along Cox Neck Road, threatens to impinge upon capacity remaining for Delaware City residents. As such, the city has identified these parcels as areas of concern.

Position on Expansion of Boundaries and Development of Adjacent Land Areas

Delaware City would like to reserve the ability to potentially expand the city’s boundaries in identified areas. New development in these potential areas as well as adjacent land in County properties should be relatively consistent with the current development patterns in the city.

Goals and Strategies

1. Ensure that new development in the Fort Dupont area is aligned with Delaware City's long term interests as a small town.
2. Encourage the incorporation of new residents and businesses in the Fort DuPont area into the Delaware City community.
3. Maintain the character and design of current residential areas within Delaware City.
4. Support infill development throughout town where it is deemed appropriate and meets guidelines identified in this plan.
5. Review historic preservation standards for reviewing changes to historic properties and consider expanding the current historic district.
6. Seek opportunities to expand parking for both businesses and residents.
7. Support the preservation of open space both within existing City boundaries as well as areas near Delaware City but outside of existing boundaries.

Chapter 4. Summary of Goals and Strategies

This plan reflects a great deal of thought, time, and effort on the part of Delaware City's Planning Commission and city staff. Even so, in the long run, plans are judged by their impact on a community and their effective implementation. To that end, this chapter recounts the goals and strategies throughout this plan. These steps are organized by topic area.

4-1 Housing

1. Increase home ownership and property values through the rehabilitation and renovation of the existing housing stock.
 - Consider adopting a property tax abatement and/or waiver incentive program to encourage home ownership.
 - Improve the enforcement of the housing and property maintenance code.
 - Enhance the engagement between our planning and zoning, codes, and historic preservation programs, staff and committee members.
2. Encourage infill development in the historic downtown area that allows for upper floor(s) owner occupied residences.
 - Inventory the infill and redevelopment opportunities in the historic downtown area.
 - Identify site specific barriers to redevelopment in the inventory area.
 - Consider the preparation of a master plan for infill opportunities that sets forth a vision.
3. Increase employment opportunities in the City and in doing so increase the live where you work options.
 - Consider incubation spaces for startup businesses with shared office and utility options.
 - Provide network opportunities for these start-ups and available spaces to foster relationship and staying where they first bloomed.
 - Ensure that redevelopment provides varied levels of housing types to capture all needs.
 - Ensure adequate public transportation into and out of town for business support.

4-2 Historic Preservation

1. Promote revitalization through the preservation, restoration and adaptive reuse of structures that contribute to the City's historic character.
 - Encourage synergy between historic preservation efforts and economic revitalization by encouraging the adaptive reuse of historic structures for compatible commercial uses.
 - Foster engagement of the Historic Preservation Commission and the Delaware City community through open forums and events.
 - Provide Training opportunity for members of the Historic Preservation Commission to better prepare and maintain awareness of trends, grants, etc.
 - Partner with the State Historic Preservation Office to identify properties and promote downtown revitalization efforts.
 - Support the pursuit of grants and tax incentives for owners of historic homes to make significant contributions to their preservation.
 - Work with the state Historic Preservation Office to partner to achieve common goals and strategies.
2. Support Fort DuPont's efforts to implement design guidelines and standards for new development, including those related to historic structures in that area of the city.
3. Proactively address the deterioration of historic properties that are being used as income producing rental properties.
 - Give the Delaware City HPC specific authority to place mandatory compliance with preservation statutes on all commercially utilized property, including those used as rental properties not located in the historic district.
 - Establish minimum compliance standards for conditions regarding all commercial properties located within the Delaware City Limits.
4. Consider including all historic properties (minimum of 50 years old) under the enforcement decree for the HPC regardless of location within the Delaware City Limits.
 - Consider an ordinance revision upon recommendation of the HPC.
 - Coordinate with SHPO about any ordinance revision.
5. Consider establishing fines and penalties to be levied against banks holding properties within the City limits that are not being actively marketed at a price commensurate with similar properties adjusted for condition.
 - Stipulation that offers reflecting local market conditions cannot be refused.
 - Limit the amount of time banks can write off vacant properties within the City.
6. Seek opportunities to collaborate between local business owners, the Delaware City Main Street Organization, and the Planning Commission for the pursuit of renovation funding for historic city buildings.
 - Budget for startup help for businesses that locate in a historic building.
 - Research and visit towns that have been successful with an eye towards mimicking their efforts.
 - Consider supporting a part-time staff person within the Main Street Delaware City organization that can improve downtown revitalization efforts and grant funding.

4-3 Community Services and Facilities

1. Support the operation of a full time Police Department that is adequately staffed to provide the necessary community policing services to our community.
 - Ensure that appropriate funding levels are supported and included in operating budgets to recruit and retain professional and dedicated officers.
 - Report statistics of our policing efforts.
 - Provide for enough officers so that community needs can be met without excessive demands on officers.
 - Strive to improve the location of the police department so that it is positioned in a more strategic location to improve police presence.
2. Improve home values, the historic downtown, and the overall attractiveness of the community for families, young professionals, and retirees.
 - Restart the Delaware City Walking Tour and market it to the broader community.
 - Ensure that adequate and diverse housing stock is available with access to public transportation and schools.
 - Improve efforts to address abandoned homes through strategic policies and programs.
 - Improve efforts to address property maintenance concerns by setting high standards and enforcing those standards.
 - Engage in more focused efforts to attract new businesses so that the historic downtown area can provide more basic needs and become a healthier community.
 - Invest in the upgrade of the downtown area to facilitate façade improvements.
 - Begin to better advertise the city's strong points and historical character such that more people are introduced to the community.
 - Work to identify and secure funding to put electric lines in the downtown area underground.
 - Increase beautification efforts including flags and flowers in planters around town.

4-4 Recreation and Open Space

1. Develop an all-weather connection to and from Fort DuPont and the historic downtown area.
 - Continue to communicate the high level of importance that a physical connection between the historic downtown and Fort DuPont is critical to the growth and success of both sides of the canal.
2. Develop a canoe and kayak launch access onto Dragon Run as the views and waterfowl provides a unique and beautiful opportunity to attract people to our community for water recreation activities.
 - Identify prime locations (more visible the better) for launch sites and negotiate with property owners.
 - Identify if maintenance of the canal is necessary and develop a path forward to achieve it if necessary (look to communities that have been successful).
 - Promote the attraction within the state with the help of our state legislators so that funding assistance can be supported.

3. Develop Bike path trail head connections.
 - Identify locations for trail heads with information boards about downtown and the community.
 - Equip these areas to be well lit so that Delaware City stands out among trail heads.
4. Consider economically viable park expansion opportunities in order to continue providing quality recreation opportunities within Delaware City.
 - Support the development of the Grass Dale site south of Route 9 and Fort DuPont as a potential campground area with the ability to attract additional visitors to the area.
 - Consider acquiring or creating small “pocket park” areas throughout town in order to create additional public space for Delaware City’s residents to enjoy.
5. Expand, support, and promote events happening in town to improve tourism.
 - Begin hosting 1st Friday celebrations each month or similar events.
 - Consider a 2nd Flea market weekend in the Fall.
 - Help promote the Ghost tours and other programs aligned with them (music, etc).
 - Develop an art alliance center in town.
 - Improve the municipal harbor area and facility so people will more readily use it and advertise it – need to plan to dredge the area.
 - Promote the ability to come to Delaware City from New Jersey – Fort Mott to Fort Delaware.
 - Promote tour groups.
 - Ensure that the Fort DuPont Marina when developed will add to the attractiveness of the existing marina and the historic downtown area.
 - Inquire with Bike Delaware about a Delaware City Report Card so that the city can identify areas that need improvement.
 - Consider promoting an open air artists weekend.

4-5 Water, Wastewater, and Stormwater Management

1. Maintain a safe and reliable supply of drinking water.
 - Establish a Capital Funding Reserve for planned out-year maintenance of the water system.
 - Evaluate water rates and operations on an annual basis.
 - Evaluate options for the water plant and determine what the most effective long term management solution may be for the facility.
2. Develop a source water protection ordinance.
 - Engage with the State office of drinking water, Delaware Rural Water and possibly an engineering firm to put the first Source Water Protection Plan in place.
3. Assure sufficient sewage-treatment capacity.
 - Review the sewer agreement with New Castle County to ensure the long term needs of the city are met.

4. Complete the Water Utility review and RFP Process
 - Implement the approved course of action following completion of Water Utility Review efforts of 2017-2019 following recommendation to Mayor and Council.
5. Attain the TMDL nutrient and bacteria reductions necessary for restoring water quality and beneficial uses (fishing, swimming, drinking water) to water of the Delaware River.
 - Improve stormwater drainage in identified problem areas.

4-6 Environmental Protection and Natural Features

1. Continue to improve, monitor, and evaluate flooding conditions in Delaware City.
 - Create a recording and ranking system for all areas within Delaware City that experience frequent nuisance flooding.
 - Evaluate the impact of the Washington Street flood mitigation project completed in early 2019.
2. Enhance Delaware City's stormwater drainage capacity, and improve stormwater management planning.
 - Develop a capital plan and funding source for stormwater control and improvements.
 - Consider the benefits of a Storm Water utility to fund a storm water specific Capital program.
3. Build hazard mitigation and climate adaption needs into local planning and regulatory actions.
 - Better awareness of flooding concerns among staff and council.
 - Establish a group of interested residents to support an ongoing mitigation program for Delaware City to explore needed sea wall maintenance, outfall maintenance plans, and sea level rise concerns.
 - Initiate educational programs to alert residents to community vulnerabilities and heighten awareness of current and future flood risk.

4-7 Transportation

1. Provide safe and reliable circulation utilizing all transportation modes.
 - Continue to seek state improvements to SR 9 and SR 72 to ensure that those roadways remain passable in major flood events as evacuation routes.
 - Develop a coordinated plan to make Delaware City more bicycle and pedestrian-friendly, including a detailed assessment of the city's existing sidewalks and crosswalks in order to identify priority areas for improvements.
 - Develop a comprehensive corridor design for Washington Street and seek its designation as a safe entry into town for bicyclists.
 - Consider the establishment of bike routes on underutilized rights-of-way.
 - Encourage pedestrian and bicycle interconnections, and the presence of sidewalks and bike paths, in any new or adjacent development.
 - Consider modifying the municipal code to require that developers provide sidewalk, curb, drainage and parking infrastructure.
2. Improve bus transportation stops to include shelters.
 - Work with DART to install bus shelters in town.

3. Identify opportunities to expand parking in order to accommodate tourists and residents and support the town's businesses.
 - Identify specific sites for additional parking throughout the historic downtown area.
 - Ensure that parking signage is clear and effective throughout town, and consider developing a wayfinding system in order to better direct visitors.
 - Expand the parking lot area on the northern end of Washington Street.
 - Consider shared parking agreements among local businesses and institutional properties such as the City Hall or the PAL.
 - Consider creating a shuttle service to operate during peak days and times in order to utilize underused areas with access to free parking.

4-8 Economic Development

1. Consider developing a marketing plan for Delaware City in order to better capitalize on the new development and future growth of the Ft. DuPont area.
2. Ensure that new development in the Fort DuPont area benefits the entire town.
3. Use new growth in the Fort DuPont area to better market the town as a whole and to benefit existing businesses as well.
4. Educate local elected officials, business owners, and developers on the benefits of the Downtown Development District and utilize the program to encourage economic growth.
5. Balance new commercial growth with the preservation of a small-town atmosphere.

4-9 Future Land Use and Annexation

1. Ensure that new development in the Fort DuPont area is aligned with Delaware City's long term interests as a small town.
2. Encourage the incorporation of new residents and businesses in the Fort DuPont area into the Delaware City community.
3. Maintain the character and design of current residential areas within Delaware City.
4. Support infill development throughout town where it is deemed appropriate and meets guidelines identified in this plan.
5. Review historic preservation standards for reviewing changes to historic properties and consider expanding the current historic district.
6. Seek opportunities to expand parking for both businesses and residents.
7. Support the preservation of open space both within existing City boundaries as well as areas near Delaware City but outside of existing boundaries.
8. Endeavor to develop a plan for more diverse housing types in the City and consider developing a strategy for additional affordable housing.

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Appendix A: Maps

Map 1. Aerial View

Map 2. Roads and Boundaries

Map 3. State Investment Strategies

Map 4. Existing Land Use

Map 5. Environmental Features

Map 6. Historic District

Map 7. FEMA Floodplains

Map 8. Potential Sea Level Rise

Map 9. Future Land Use and Annexation

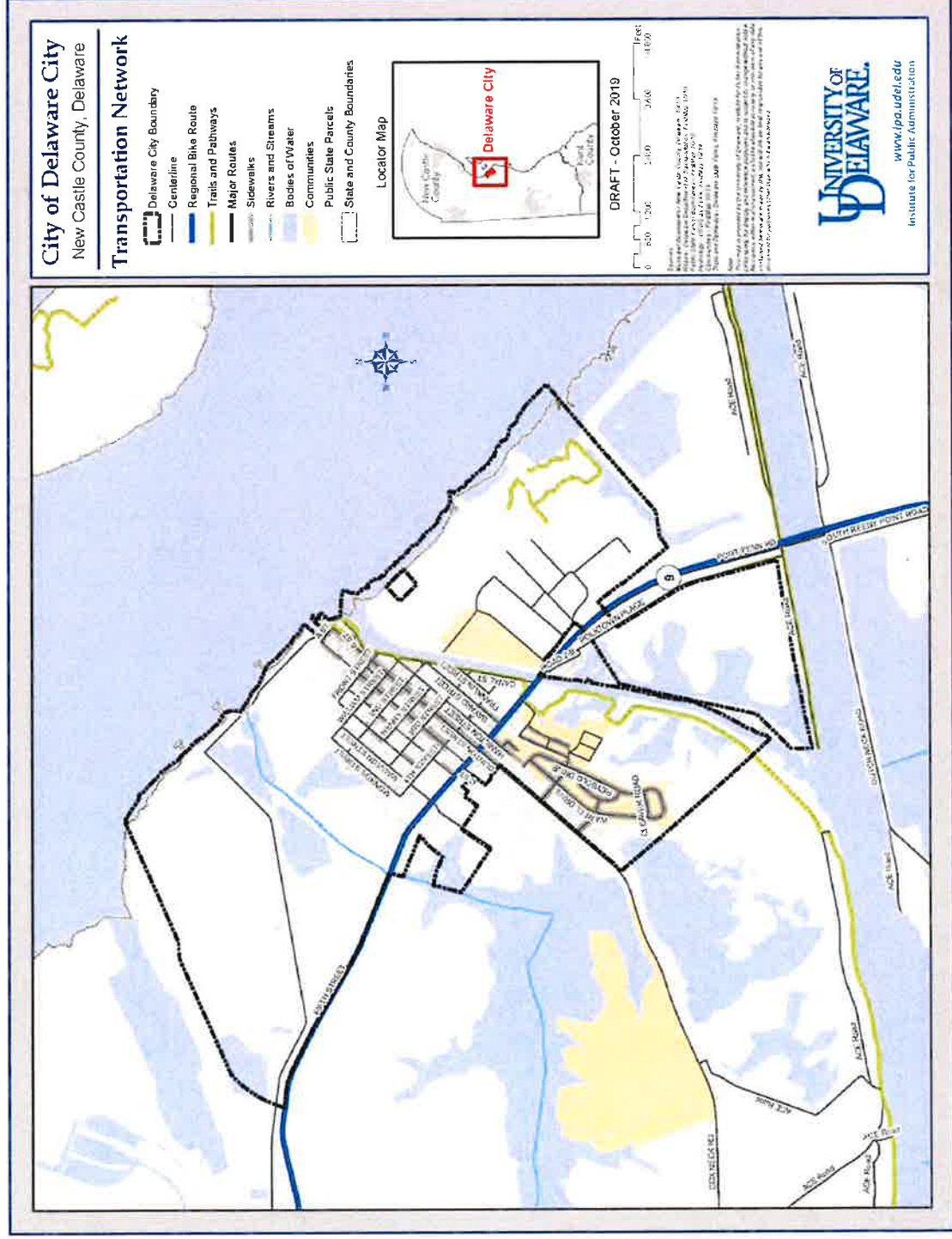
Map 10. Future Land Use and Areas of Concern

Map 11. Existing Zoning

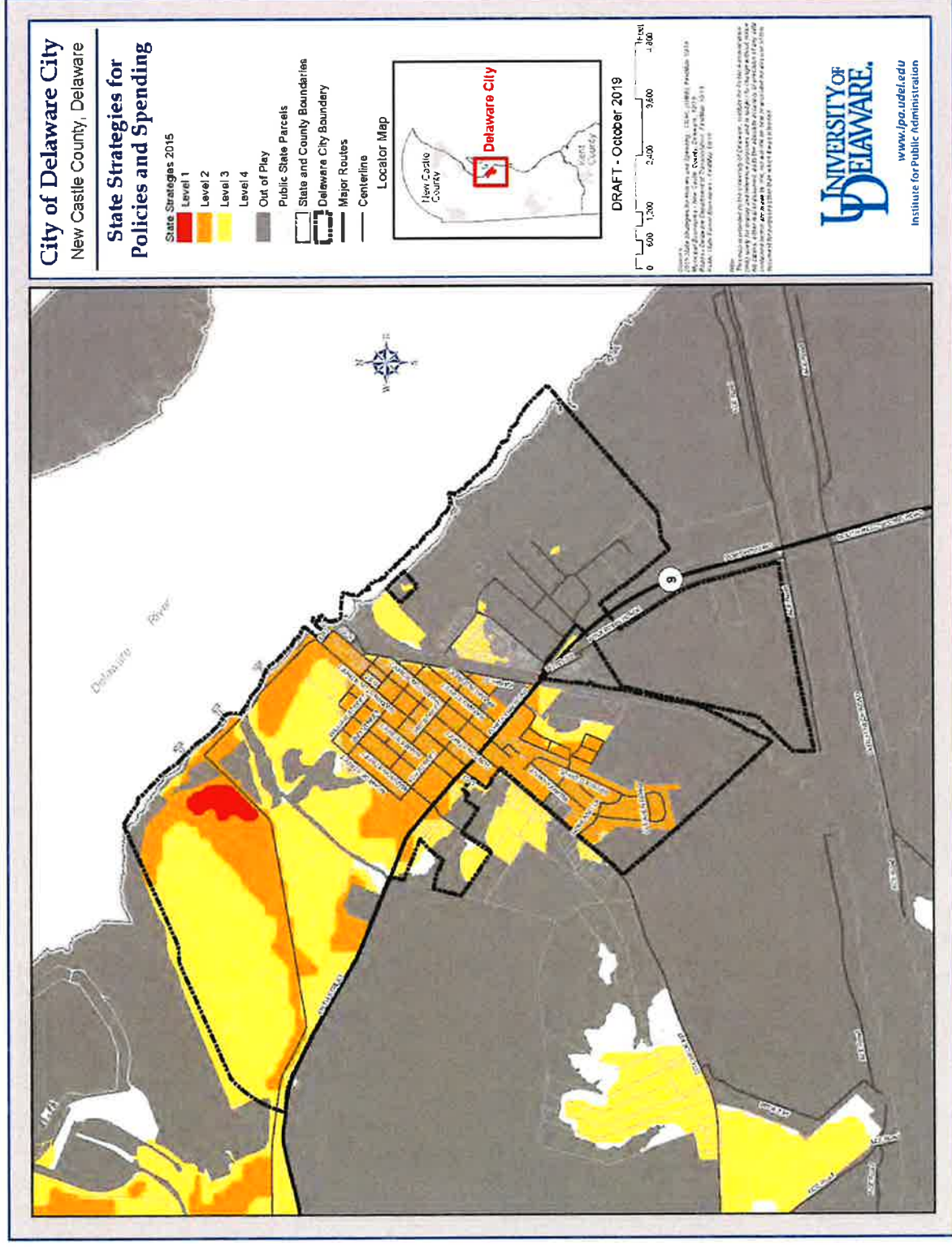
Map 1 - Aerial View



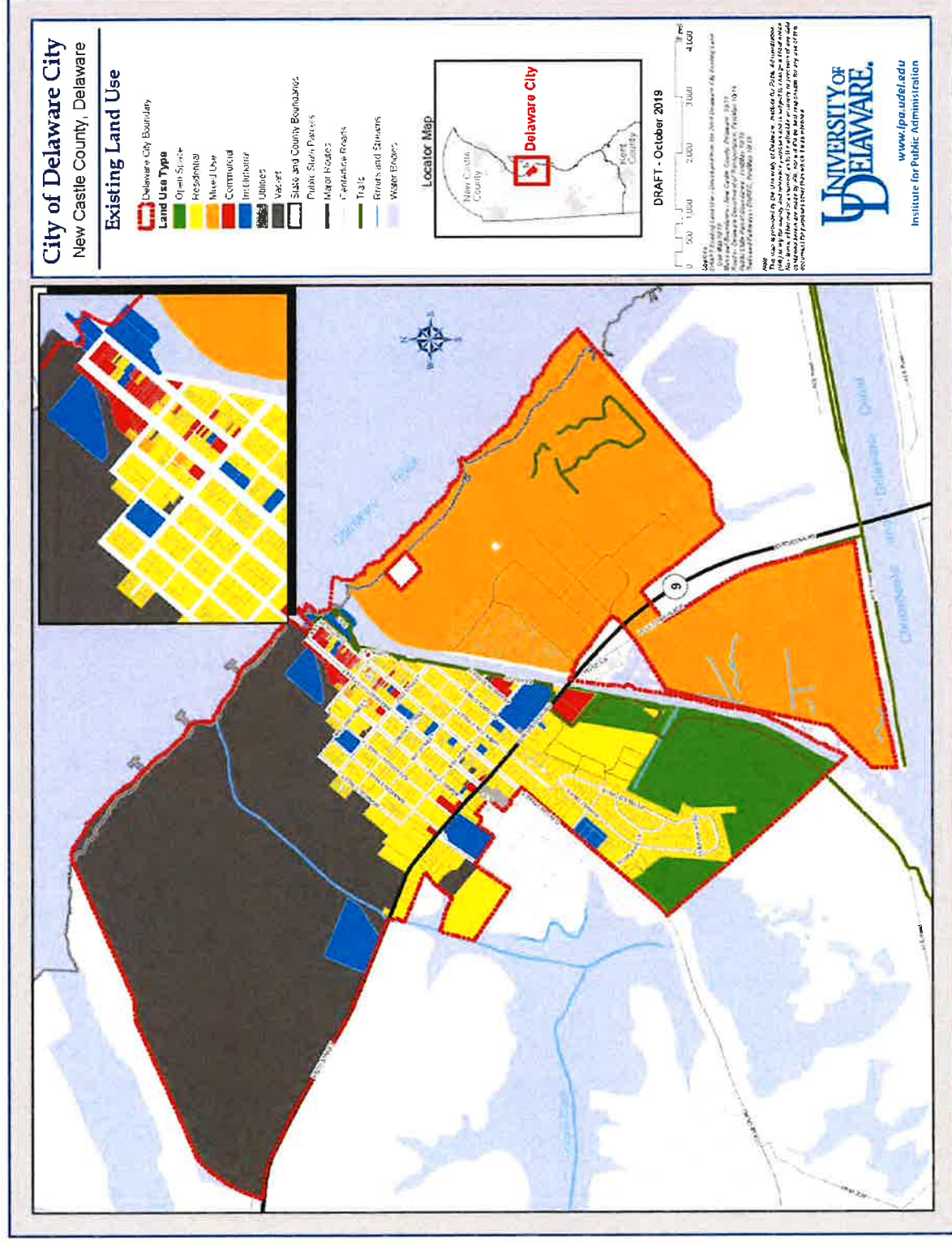
Map 2 – Transportation Network



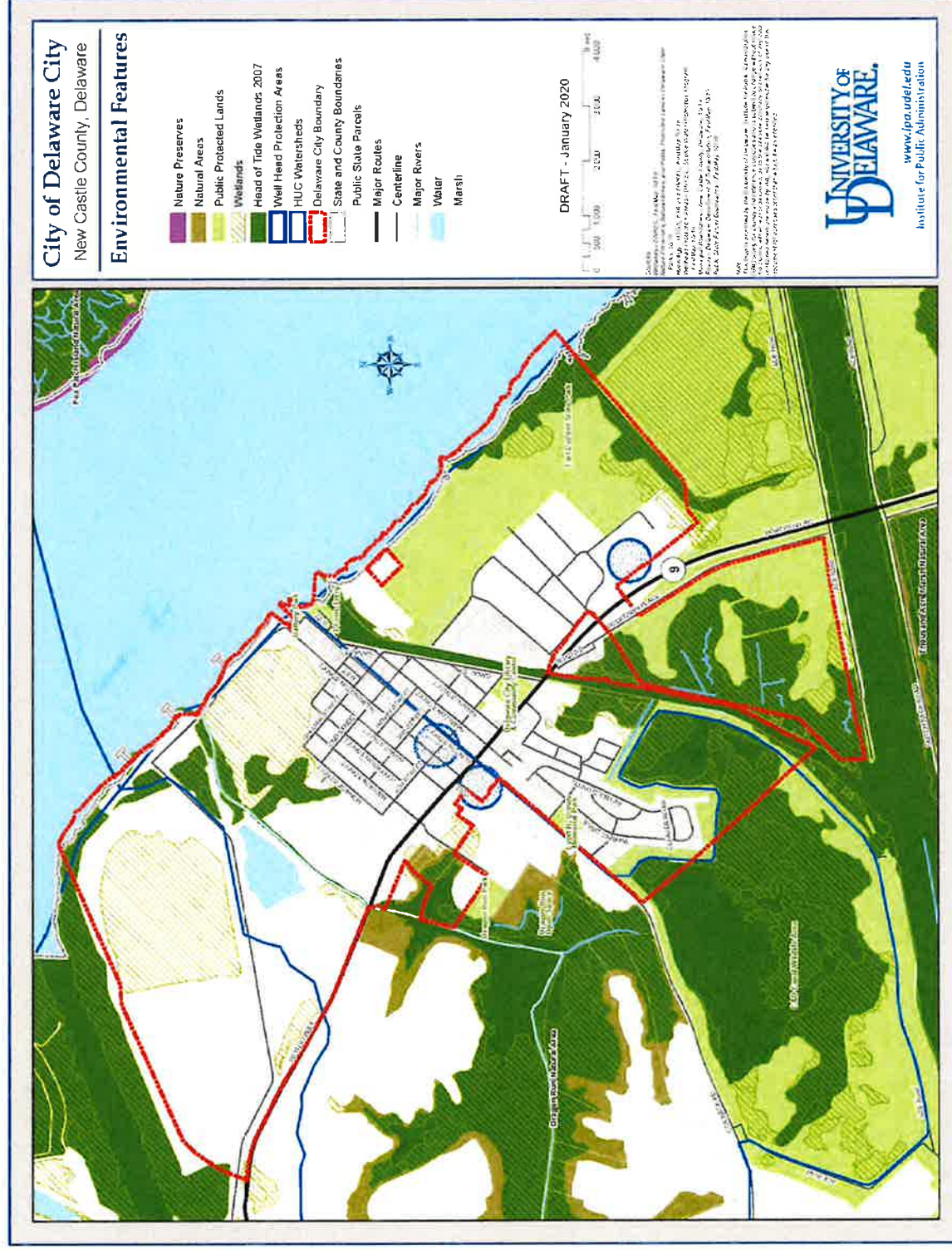
Map 3 – State Investment Strategies



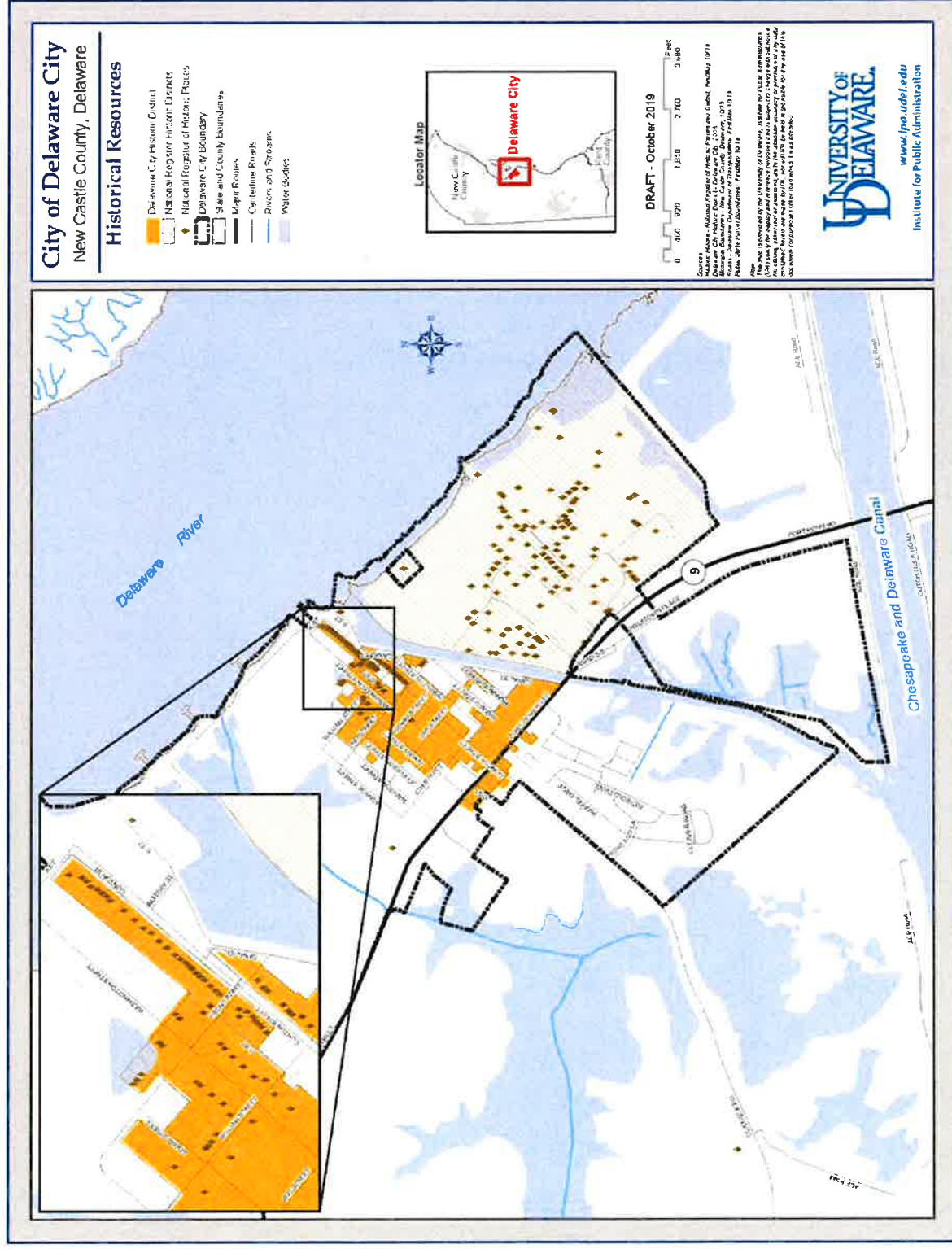
Map 4 – Existing Land Use



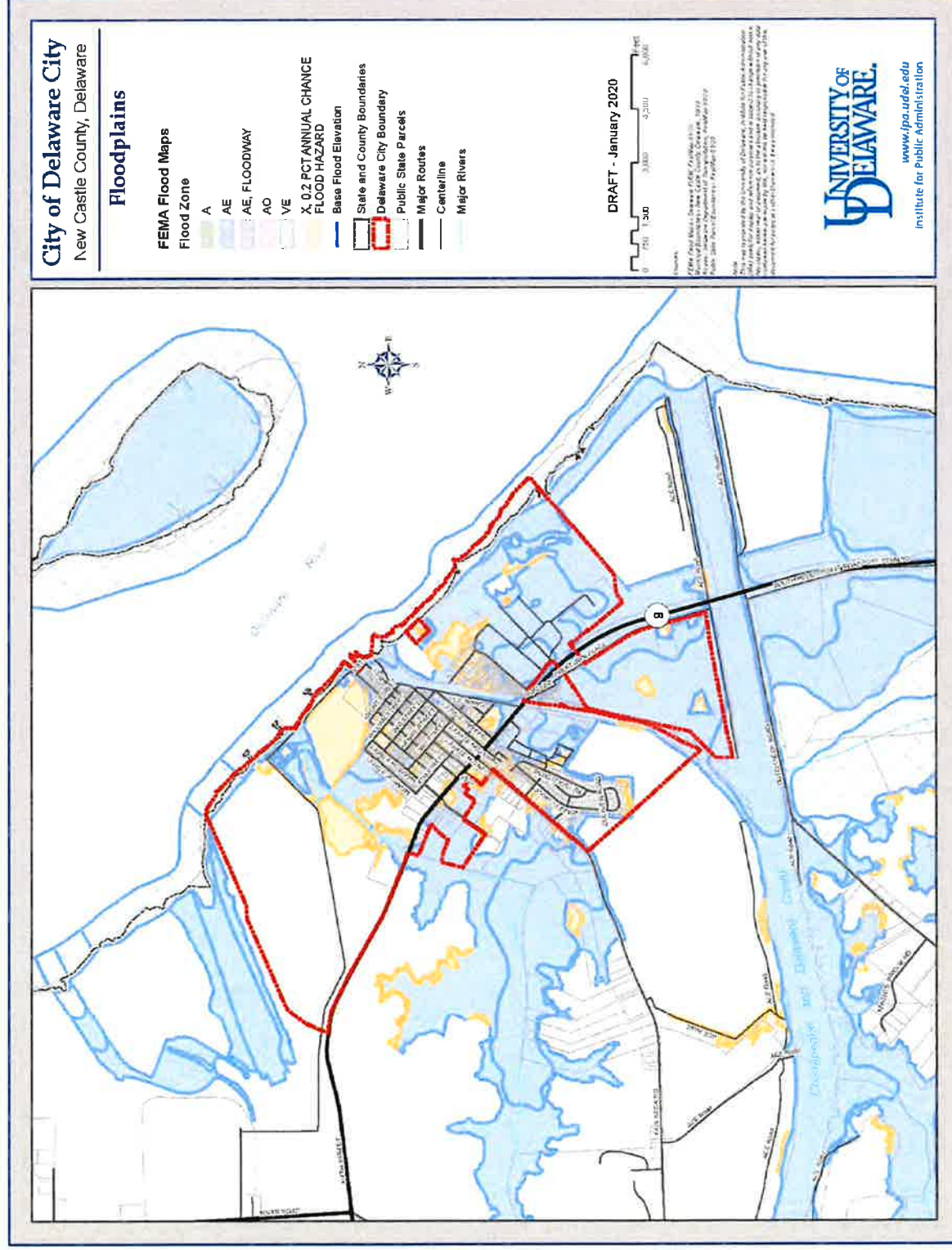
Map 5 – Environmental Features



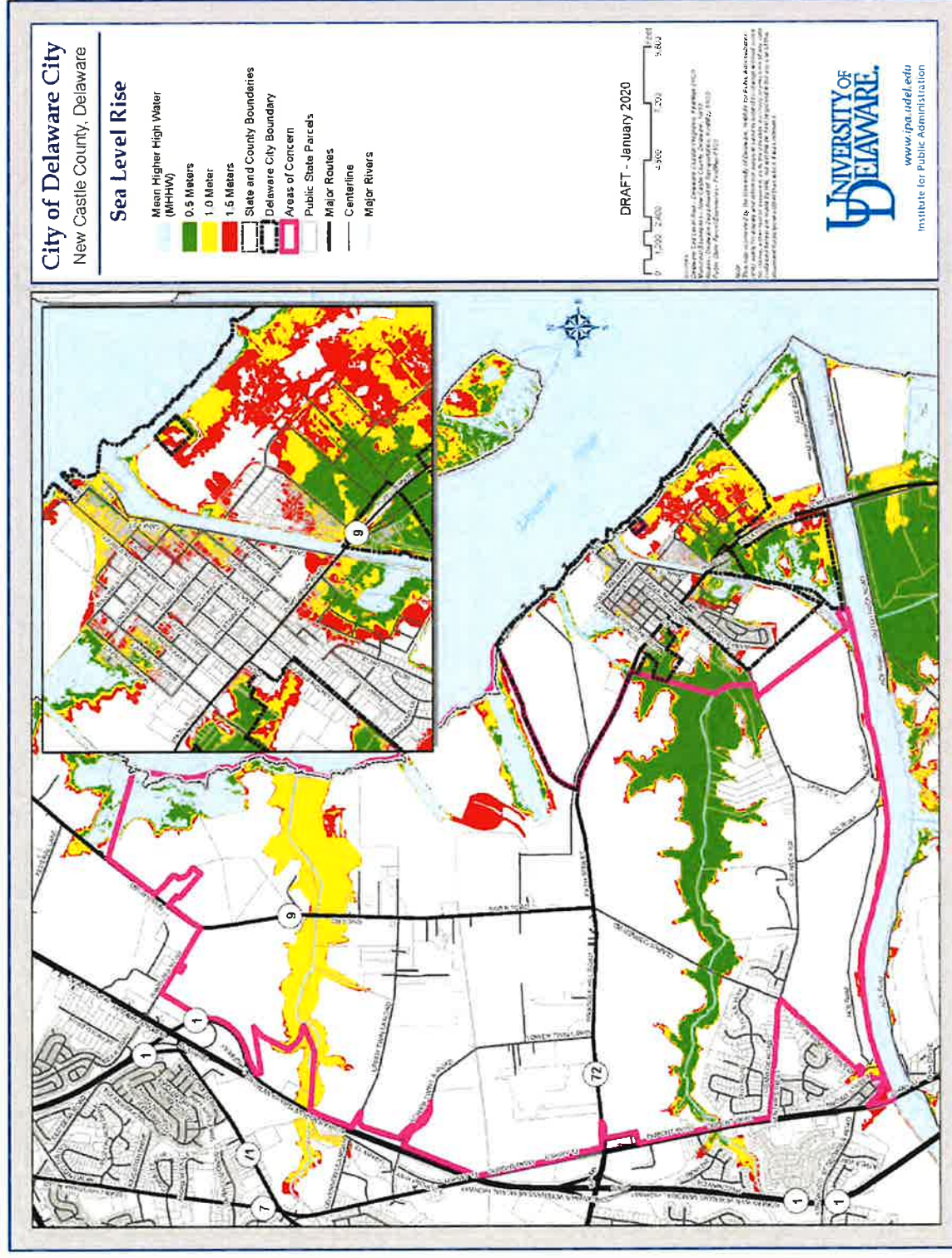
Map 6 – Historic Resources



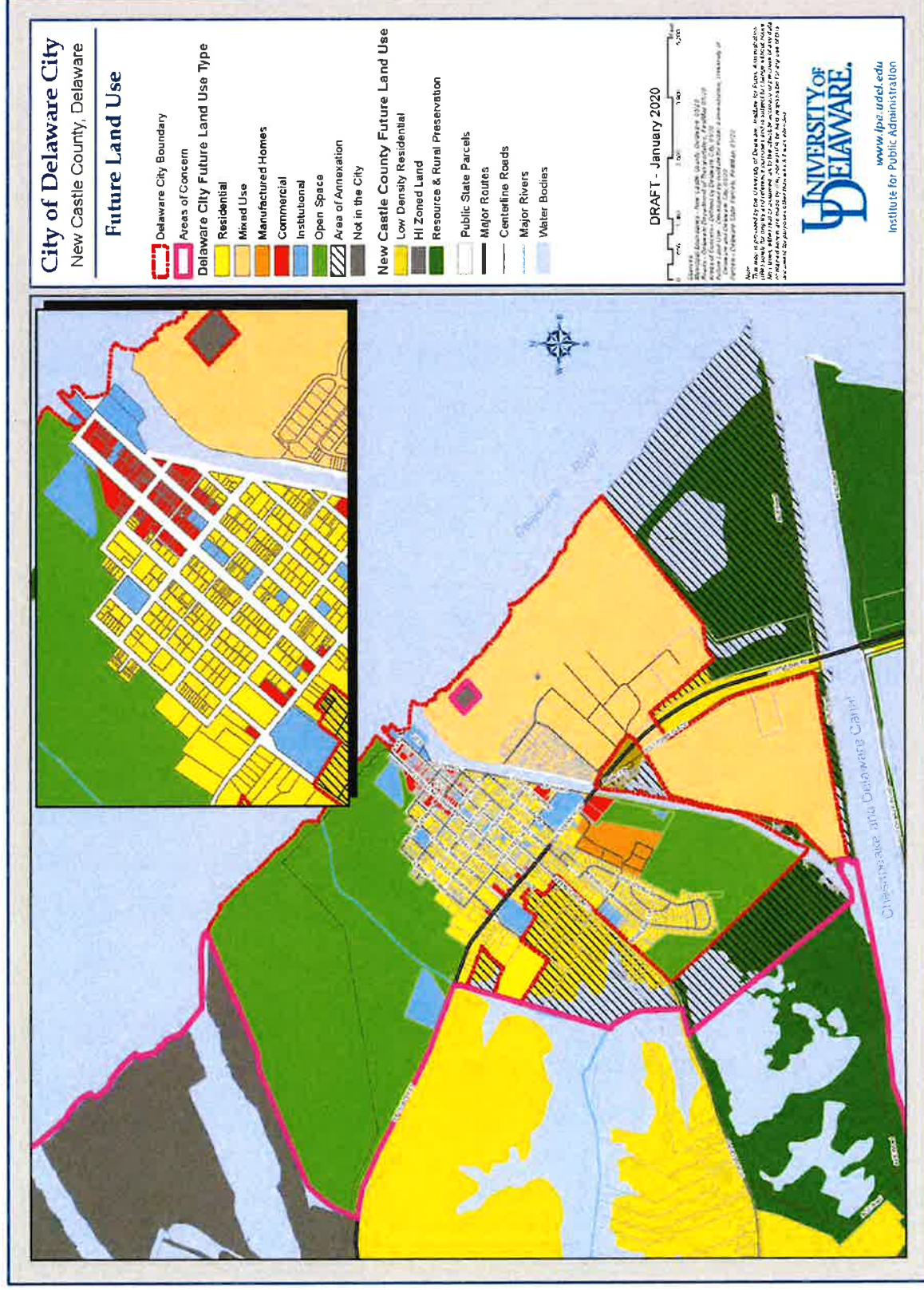
Map 7 –Floodplains



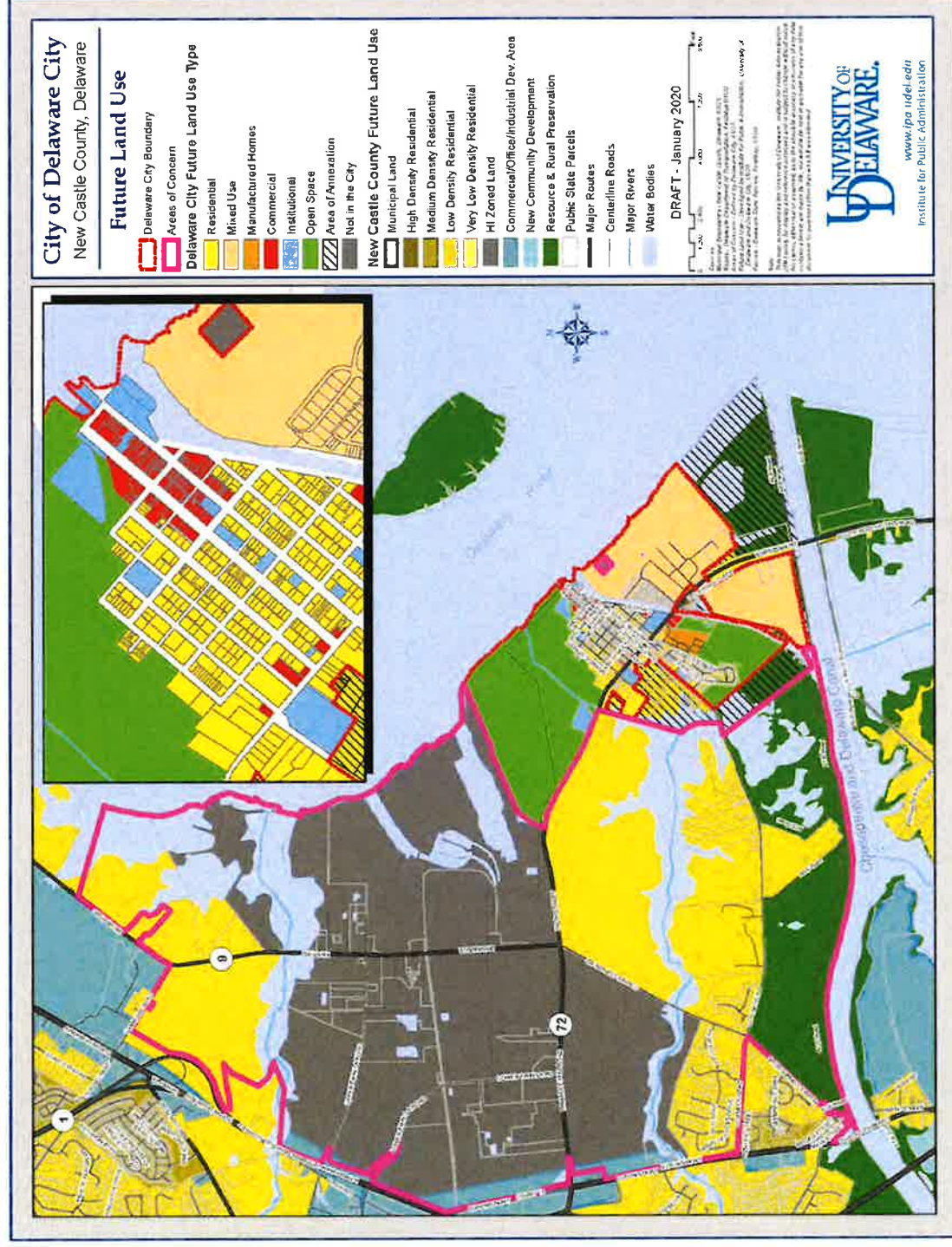
Map 8 – Potential Sea Level Rise



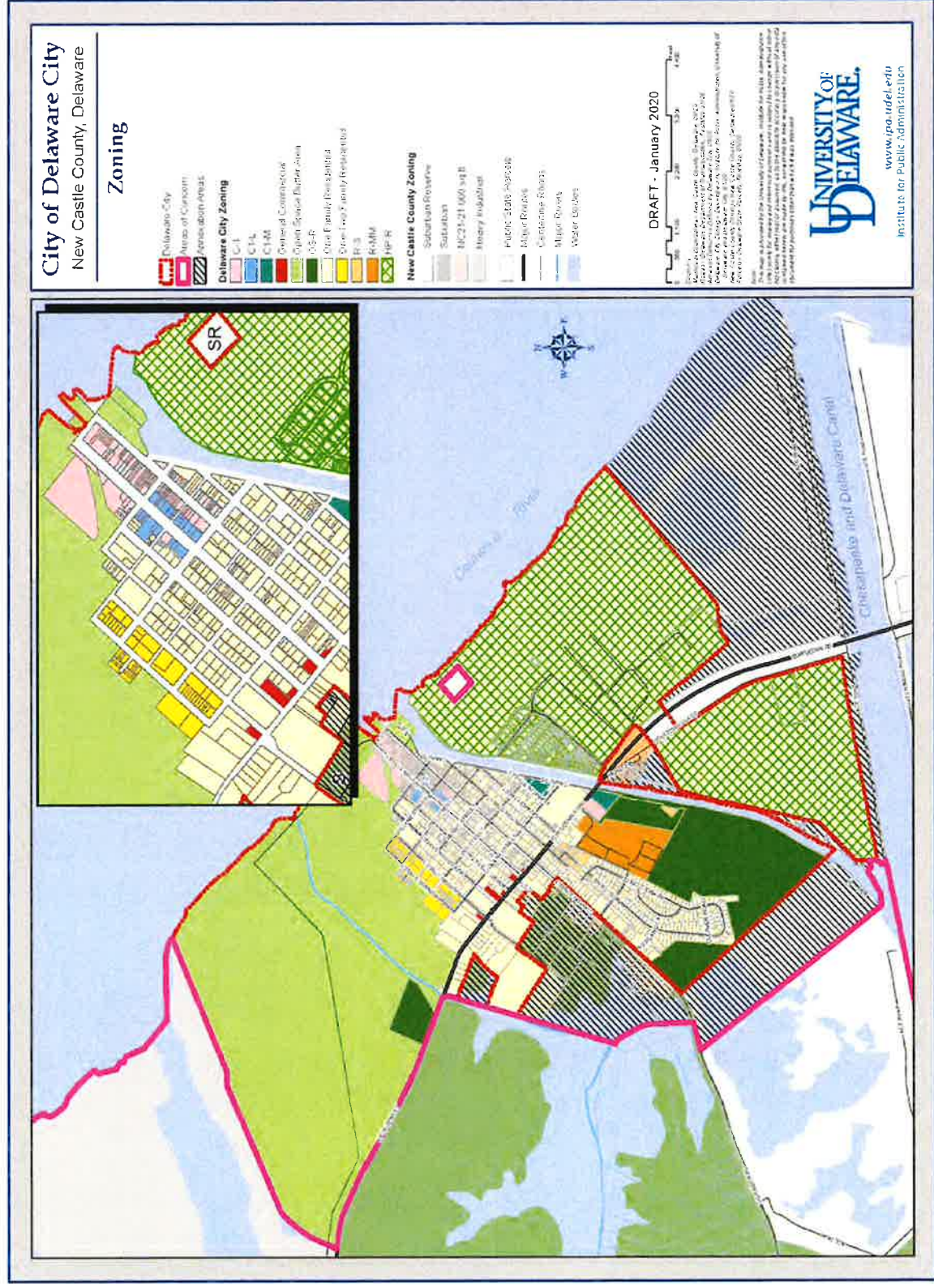
Map 9 – Future Land Use and Annexations



Map 10 – Future Land Use and Areas of Concern



Map 11 – Existing Zoning



Appendix B: Correspondence with Agencies

Matthew S. Meyer
County Executive



Richard E. Hall, AICP
General Manager

Department of Land Use

May 13, 2022

David Edgell, AICP
Director
Delaware Office of State Planning Coordination
122 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. South
Dover, DE 19901

Mr. Edgell,

The New Castle County Department of Land Use has completed its review of Delaware City's update to their Comprehensive Plan and offers the following concerns/comments.

A. Data Concerns

1. Del. Title 29, § 9152 (c)- requires that:

All state agencies, counties, municipalities, and school districts must use the Consortium's projections for planning and policy purposes. If a population estimate is not available for a given year, state agencies, counties, municipalities, and school districts must use either the most recent Consortium projections or the most recent population estimates prepared by the United States Census Bureau, whichever contains the higher population estimate.

Please update the data to reflect the 2021 adopted projections (depicted in figure 2):

	2010	2020	2030	2040	2050
Delaware City	1,777	1,840	1,867	1,889	1,895

B. Goals and Strategies

1. **Housing:** The Department of Land Use has reviewed the Housing Goals and Strategies and finds them to be consistent with the County's comprehensive planning efforts. We hope that implementation of these policies will be accomplished with a focus on equitable housing opportunities.
2. **Historic Preservation:** The Department of Land Use has reviewed the Historic Preservation Goals and Strategies and finds them to be consistent with the County's comprehensive planning and historic

87 Reads Way, New Castle, DE 19720

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Phone: 302-395-5400 Fax: 302-395-5587

preservation initiatives. Achieving these aspirations will help bolster and maintain the rich community character of Delaware City.

3. **Community Services and Facilities:** The Department of Land Use has reviewed the Community Services Goals and Strategies and concurs that Delaware City will benefit from the operation of a full-time police department.
4. **Recreation and Open Space:** The Department of Land Use has reviewed the Recreation and Open Space Goals and Strategies and finds them to be consistent with County's open space preservation goals.
5. **Water, Wastewater, and Stormwater Management:** The Department of Land Use has reviewed and support the proposed Water, Wastewater, and Stormwater Management Goals and Strategies. We encourage to continue to work the New Castle County Department of Public Works regarding the sewer agreement.
6. **Environmental Protection and Natural Features:** The Department of Land Use has reviewed and support the proposed Environmental Protection and Natural Features Goals and Strategies and find them to be consistent with the County's comprehensive planning efforts.
7. **Transportation:** The Department of Land Use has reviewed and support the proposed Transportation Goals and Strategies and hope that implementation will help increase multimodal opportunities and safety for residents.
8. **Economic Development:** The Department of Land Use has reviewed and support the proposed Economic Development Goals and Strategies. The Department encourages Delaware City to pursue the balance between growth, community character and preservation as well as the evaluation of programs such as the Downtown Development District.
9. **Future Land Use:** The Department of Land Use has reviewed the proposed Future Land Use Goals and Strategies and specifically support the continued Resource and Rural Preservation designation of the proposed annexations to the south and west of the City

The Department of Land Use has no further comments. Feel free to contact me should you have any questions.

Matthew Rogers
Acting Planning Manager, Comprehensive Planning
New Castle County Dept. of Land Use

CC: Paul H. Johnson, Sr., Mayor
Betty Barrett, Vice-Mayor
William Rhodunda, City Solicitor
Tricia Ardnt, OSPC



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Fax: 302-831-3488
Email: ipag@udel.edu

2/10/2020

Heather Sachs
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
10 South Howard Street
Baltimore, MD 21201

Re: Delaware City Delaware Comprehensive Plan

Dear Mrs. Sachs:

I write on behalf of the City of Delaware City, Delaware ("City").

The City is in the process of updating its comprehensive development plan, as required by 22 Del. C. § 702. Based upon certain discussions regarding the potential divestiture of some of the lands underneath the Branch Canal, the City has identified the Branch Canal and certain other adjacent areas as a potential future annexation area in its draft plan. See Exhibit A.¹ It is the City's position that the Canal is already a part of the City by virtue of 22 Del. C. § 101, but just in case an annexation would be needed or contemplated in the future, the City has identified the Canal as an area for future annexation in its plan.

During the State's review of the plan in the certification process, the preliminary land use service review comments ("PLUS Comments" attached hereto as Exhibit B) require the City to reach out to DNREC and the Army Corps for comment. This letter is intended to solicit comment by both agencies as requested by the PLUS comments.

If you have any comments or questions regarding the future annexation area designation, please provide me those comments no later than February 28, 2020. The Delaware City Planning Commission is slated to provide its recommendation on the plan on March 2, 2020.

Sincerely,

Sean O'Neill, AICP
Policy Scientist

Cc: David Baylor, City Manager (by electronic mail)
Max B. Walton, City Solicitor (by electronic mail)

¹ Identification of an area as a future annexation area does not mean the area will be annexed. Rather, it only means that the area is eligible for annexation upon request of the property owner.



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February 10, 2020

Secretary Shawn Garvin
Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control
89 Kings Highway
Dover, DE 19901

Re: Delaware City Delaware Comprehensive Plan

Dear Secretary Garvin:

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Richard E. Hall, AICP
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Delaware Office of State Planning Coordination
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