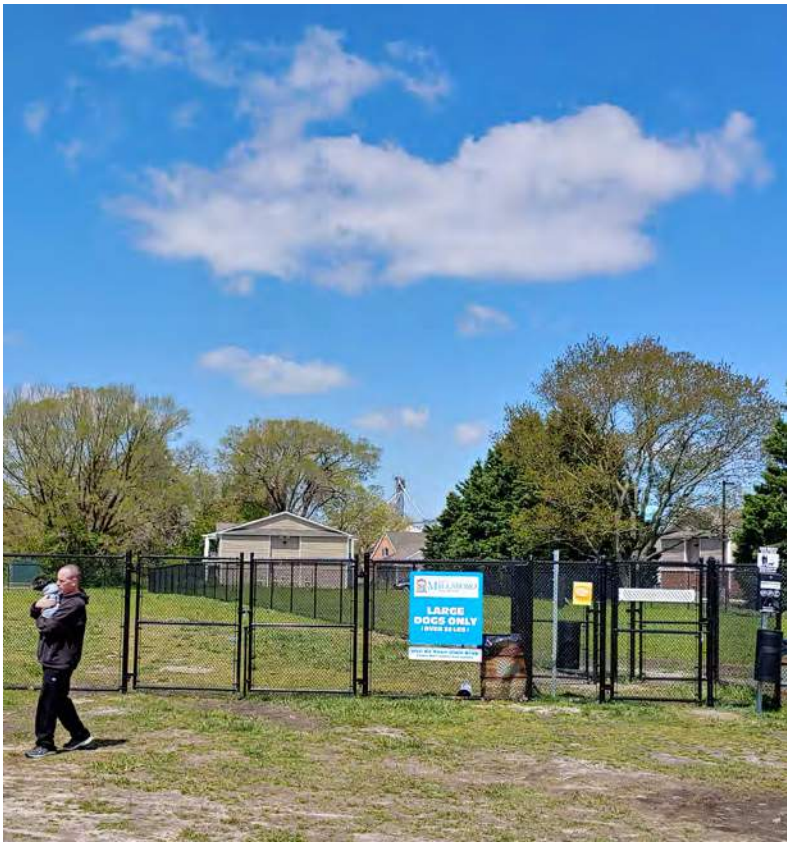
Town of MILLSBORO DELAWARE

AECOM







MILLSBORO

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The TRULY Probusiness, Profamily Town. Ask Anyone!

Cover Photos: Coastal Point R. Chris Clark (right)

Adopted
February 2021

PROJECT

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Planning Task Force
Michelle Truitt, Mayor
Tim Hodges, Vice Mayor
John Thoroughgood, Councilperson
Sheldon Hudson, Town Manager
Jamie Burk, Assistant Town Manager

Consultant
AECOM

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TOWN, COUNTY, AND STATE OFFICIALS

Town of Millsboro Officials
Council Members
Michelle Truitt, Mayor
Tim Hodges, Vice Mayor
John Thoroughgood, Council president pro tem
Jim Kells, Secretary
Brad Cordrey, Treasurer
Ron O'Neal, Councilman
Larry Gum, Councilman

Town Staff
Sheldon P. Hudson, Town Manager
Jamie Burk, Assistant Town Manager
Brian Calloway, Chief of Police
Matthew Hall, Director of Finance & IT
George "Kenny" Niblett, Director of Public Works
Carrie A. Kruger, P.E., Town Engineer
Joanne Dorey, Town Clerk
Joyce Angellella, Accounting Tech II
Debbie Weatherby, Permit Tech
Tammy Phillips, Accounting Tech I
Lauren Shockley, Accounting Tech I

Board of Adjustment
Bob Doughty
Derb Hall
Joe Kollock
Gary Moyle

State of Delaware
John Carney, Governor
Tom Carper, Senior Senator
Chris Coons, Senator
Gerald W. Hocker, 20th District Senator
Richard G. Collins, 41st District Representative
Constance C. Holland, AICP, Office of State Planning & Coordination Director
Dorothy Morris, AICP, Office of State Planning & Coordination, Sussex County Circuit Rider

AN ORDINANCE REVISING, UPDATING, AMENDING AND ADOPTING THE 2021 UPDATE TO THE TOWN OF MILLSBORO COMPREHENSIVE PLAN.

WHEREAS, pursuant to Title 22, Delaware Code, Chapter 700, the Town of Millsboro developed and adopted a Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, according to 22 Del.C. § 702, at least every ten (10) years, each municipality shall revise, update and amend as necessary, and readopt its Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council, together with Town staff and Town consultants, have engaged in a process to study and review the Town's Comprehensive Plan in order to determine where such should be revised, updated and amended, as required by 22 Del.C. § 702; and

WHEREAS, as part of the study and review process, a public hearing was held for the purpose of considering the proposed revisions, updates and amendments to the Town's Comprehensive Plan and providing the public with an opportunity to comment on said proposed revisions, updates and amendments to the Town's Comprehensive Plan.

WHEREAS, the revised, updated and amended draft of the Town's Comprehensive Plan, was submitted to the Office of State Planning Coordination for its review and approval; and

WHEREAS, the Town has received notice that the Office of State Planning Coordination has approved and recommended for certification the revised, updated and amended draft of the Town's Comprehensive Plan.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED, by the Town Council of the Town of Millsboro, in session met, a quorum pertaining at all times thereto, that the revised, updated and amended Comprehensive Plan of the Town of Millsboro, including the text, maps and other exhibits attached thereto, which has been approved and recommended for certification by the Office of State Planning Coordination, be and is hereby adopted by the Town of Millsboro;

AND BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Manager be and is hereby directed to cause a notice which shall consist of a true copy of this Ordinance, in full or by title only, to be published in a newspaper of general circulation in the Town of Millsboro.

I, James C. Kells, Secretary of the Town Council of the Town of Millsboro, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the Ordinance passed by the Town Council at its Regular Meeting held on February 1, 2021, at which a quorum was present and voting throughout and that the same is still in full force and effect.

Dated: 2/3/2021

James C. Kells

James C. Kells, Secretary

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MILLSBORO

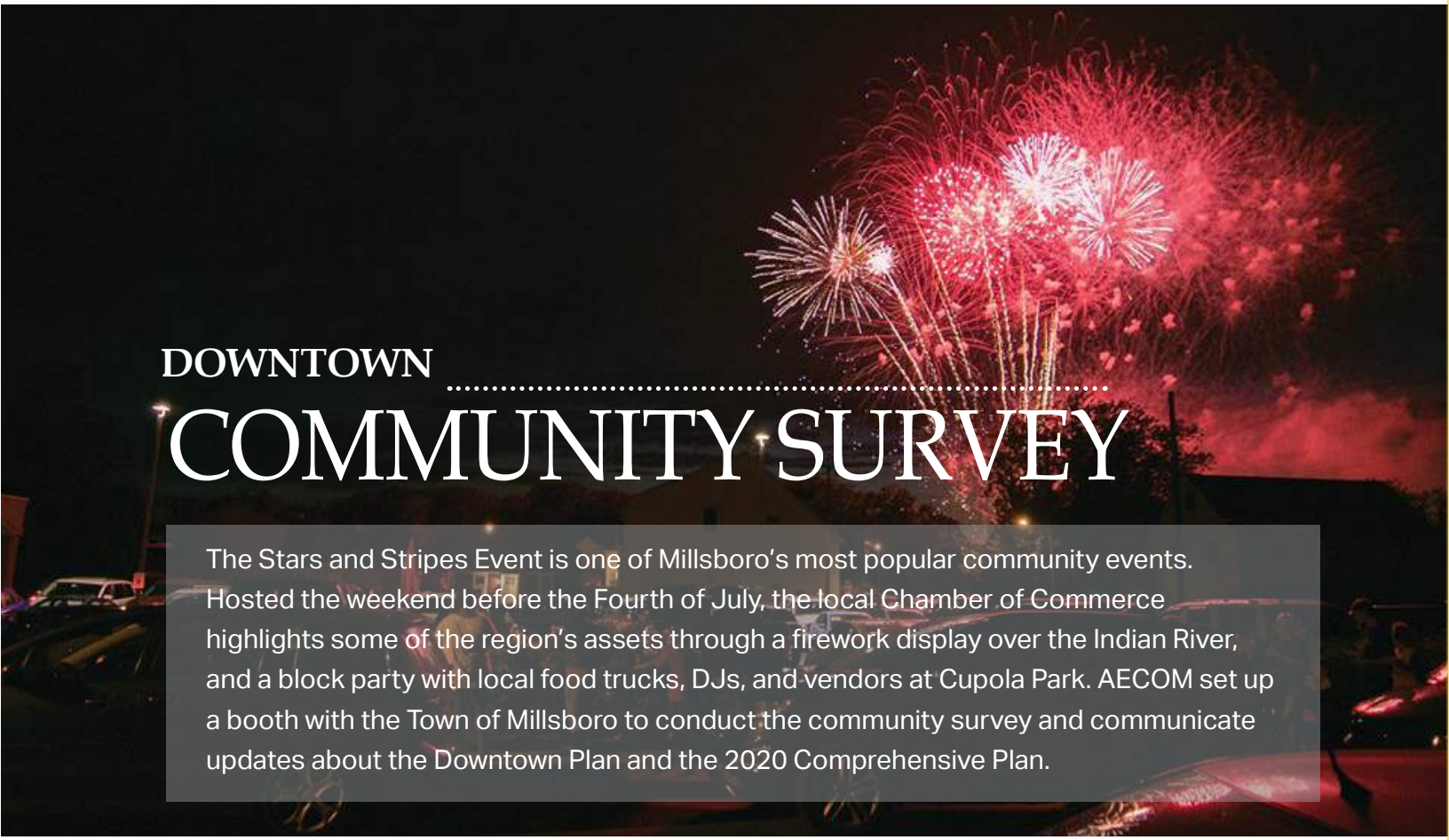
GROWING & INNOVATING

The Town of Millsboro ranks #1 out of 25 cities in Sussex County, the fastest growing County in Delaware, for residential growth based on the number of residential building permits issued (2021). The Town is also an emerging employment and retail center, offering lowered impact fees and utilizing big data to recruit quality employers. The Town offers low property taxes, low crime rates, good schools, and numerous recreation and cultural opportunities. It is situated along US 113, SR 24, SR 20, and SR 30, and less than 20 miles from the coast.

1 INTRODUCTION

Most people know Millsboro as a town close to the Delaware beaches. In many ways, downtown Millsboro is a similar picture of other downtowns found in communities across the country. But in other ways Millsboro is so much more – it is the second fastest growing residential community in Delaware, and a community that embraces convenience and innovation. Today, Millsboro is probusiness and profamily; it is an emerging employment and retail center abound with opportunity.





DOWNTOWN
COMMUNITY SURVEY

The Stars and Stripes Event is one of Millsboro's most popular community events. Hosted the weekend before the Fourth of July, the local Chamber of Commerce highlights some of the region's assets through a firework display over the Indian River, and a block party with local food trucks, DJs, and vendors at Cupola Park. AECOM set up a booth with the Town of Millsboro to conduct the community survey and communicate updates about the Downtown Plan and the 2020 Comprehensive Plan.

Photo Credit: Greater Millsboro Chamber of Commerce

2 | PUBLIC OUTREACH

Public participation plays a key role in understanding what the residents of the Town need and desire. Public opinion helps prioritize what goals need to be accomplished first to ensure the highest quality of life for current and future residents. The comments received from the public, including home owners, business owners and visitors, provide direction and helps to shape the comprehensive plan. Public participation for the Town of Millsboro was facilitated through a public opinion survey taken during a Town sponsored event and feedback received during an open house. A description of the events and results are detailed below.

Task Force Members:

Michelle Truitt
Mayor

Tim Hodges
Vice Mayor

John Thoroughgood
Pro Tem

Sheldon Hudson
Town Manager

Jamie Burk
Assistant Town Manager

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PLANNING COMMITTEE

First, the consultants along with Town Administration identified key representatives and assembled a Planning Committee.

During the summer of 2018 the comprehensive planning committee and downtown task force met to discuss the 2009 Comprehensive Plan and their vision for the future. Part of the visioning effort was conducted simultaneously with Millsboro's Downtown Improvement Plan. A SWOT analysis was conducted with the committee. While the analysis was conducted with downtown Millsboro in mind, many of the principles apply to the entire Town.

The results of the visioning exercise and summer public survey results (disucssed on the next page) provided the basis for the goals and strategies discussed within this Plan.

S
STRENGTHS

- Organization/leadership
- Traffic
- Low Vacancy
- Walkable
- Arts
- Nice restaurants (2)
- Family-friendly
- Influx of workers
- Police presence
- Traditional Downtown core
- Brick (unique)
- Employers
- Theater
- No parking fee
- Location
- Year Round
- Low crime

W
WEAKNESSES

- Traffic
- Sidewalks/connectivity
- Lighting (soft)
- Green Space
- Rented businesses (low ownership rates)
- Lack of restricted parking
- Signage (blends in, not recognizable)

O
OPPORTUNITIES

- Arts
- Location (convenient, close)
- Natural Features
- Signage improvement grant
- New businesses (diverse)
- Housing stock
- Food, Brewery market
- Public wifi
- Outdoor dining
- By-pass
- Leadership
- Park
- Workers

T
THREATS

- Growth (regional)
- Integrating newcomers
- Aging residents
- Truck traffic
- Narrow streets
- Parallel parking
- By-pass
- Stomwater management and regulations

PUBLIC SURVEY

Community feedback is an integral part of the plan visioning process. In order to better understand the community's vision for future development/ redevelopment in Millsboro, AECOM constructed an 8 question survey. AECOM then set up a booth with the Town of Millsboro at the Greater Millsboro Chamber of Commerce's annual Stars and Stripes event with surveys, maps and information about our current long-range planning efforts with the Town. See **Figure 2.1** Boards Displayed at the Stars and Stripes Event. Respondents who chose to participate in the survey were given a raffle ticket to one of two gift baskets that were given out at the end of the event. During the three hours (5:30 pm – 8:30 pm) that AECOM was on hand, they received 63 completed surveys. Some of the highlights include:

- The majority of respondents would like to see future growth accommodated by filling in or redeveloping vacant and/or underutilized lots and by allowing a mix of residential and commercial uses.
- Overwhelmingly, beach traffic was noted as the biggest transportation hurdle (bearing in mind the survey was taken on the weekend before July 4 – one of the busiest weekends of the year for beach traffic.)
- People feel safe in Millsboro.
- Many would like to see additional outdoor seating and outdoor dining options in the downtown area.
- A lot of residents see promise along Millsboro's waterfront – especially for trails.
- Constituents would like to see more sidewalks and commercial growth in the downtown core.

The community survey and full results are provided in **Appendix B.**



Figure 2.1 Boards Displayed at the Stars and Stripes Event

In addition to participating in the survey, residents gathered information regarding the Downtown Improvement Plan and the 2020 Comprehensive Plan Update.

3 | BACKGROUND

The Town of Millsboro is located in southern Delaware in the southcentral portion of Sussex County. It is bounded to the east by the Indian River and is bisected by SR 24, SR 20 and US 113. The Town is situated approximately 20 miles from the Atlantic Coast and 10 miles from the Maryland State Line. It is approximately 10 miles south of Georgetown, the County seat.







PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE COASTAL POINT | R. Chris Clark (left), Tyler Valliant (bottom-right)

COMMUNITY OVERVIEW

The Town has a traditional downtown encompassing four blocks around the intersection of SR 24 (Main and Washington Streets) and State Street. Frontage along US 113 consists primarily of commercial buildings, including several large shopping centers such as the on-going development of Peninsula Crossing, a 72-acre site with a potential for over 500,000 square feet of commercial space. The importance of Millsboro as a regional commercial center is evidenced by its central location in southeastern Sussex County away from other large urbanized areas. Some of the US 113 frontage is still transitioning from single-family residential to commercial. Traditional single-family neighborhoods exist around the downtown core and to the west of US 113. Subdivisions and multi-family developments are interspersed throughout the Town and along its developing edges, most notably Plantation Lakes.

Key to Millsboro's natural setting is its location along the Indian River and adjacent ponds including the Millsboro Pond. The Town is surrounded primarily by agricultural lands and is close to several state parks, preserves, and natural features including Doe Bridge Nature Preserve, Trap Pond State Park, Holt's Landing, Cape Henlopen State Park, the Great Cypress Swamp, and the shores of the Atlantic Ocean, Rehoboth Bay, Indian River Bay, and Delaware Bay. The Southern Delaware Heritage Trail links the inland Sussex communities of Millsboro, Milton, Milford, Greenwood, Seaford, Laurel, and Delmar along points of historic and natural significance.

According to the 2010 US Census Millsboro's population was 3,877. The latest American Community Survey (2019) projection produced by the Census estimates 4,342 people living in Millsboro. Based on building records, the Town and the Town's consultant AECOM estimates the current (2020) population to be around 7,045 people. The Town provides basic public services related to police, parks, public works (including streets, sidewalks, stormwater, drinking water and wastewater), land use regulations, and building inspection. Basic community services such as the Town Hall, Library, Post Office, Police Station, and Fire Department are located near the center of Town.

The Town is within the Indian River School District and is home to the East Millsboro Elementary School and Millsboro Middle School which are both located along State Street in the southeastern portion of Town. Major employers include Intervet/Schering-Plough, M&T Bank and Delmarva Power, which are located on the central-west and south-west sections of Town. Major agricultural employers exist just outside of the Town. Medical services and pharmacies are currently concentrated on the southern end of Town around the Beebe Medical Health Center's Mid-Sussex Medical Center and the Delmarva Health Pavilion by Peninsula Regional Medical Center (PRMC). As of April 2020, PRMC has also announced the addition of a medical campus on the northern edge of the Town along US 113.

The Town's character is rooted in a small town feel that is still evident today, specifically with the configuration of the compact downtown and family friendly community. As the Town continues to grow, the focus is on developing a business-friendly environment. To provide the best quality of life for current and future residents, the Town of Millsboro believes the combination of a family friendly and business friendly community will continue to enhance the Town as a desirable place to work and live.

AUTHORITY TO PLAN

The Town of Millsboro has the authority to plan granted by the Delaware General Assembly in Title 22 of the Delaware Code. In a continued effort to encourage comprehensive planning, then Governor Minner and the General Assembly, in 2001, revised the requirements for municipalities

to make comprehensive plans through House Bill 255 Comprehensive Plan Implementation and Annexation Standards. The Town of Millsboro is above the 2,000 population threshold for requiring the development of a full comprehensive plan based on the enabling legislation. The following is the section of the Delaware Code relevant to the development of municipal comprehensive plans. Title 22, Delaware Code, § 702. Comprehensive development plan.

1. A planning commission established by any incorporated municipality under this chapter shall prepare a comprehensive plan for the city or Town or portions thereof as the commission deems appropriate. It is the purpose of this section 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 through a process of municipal comprehensive planning.

2. Comprehensive plan means 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. The comprehensive planning process shall demonstrate coordination with other municipalities, the county and the State during plan preparation. The comprehensive plan for municipalities of greater than 2,000 population shall also contain, as appropriate to the size and character of the jurisdiction, a description of the physical, demographic and economic conditions of the jurisdiction; as well as policies, statements, goals and planning components for public and private uses of land, transportation, economic development, affordable housing, community facilities, open spaces and recreation, protection of sensitive areas, community design, adequate water and wastewater systems, protection of historic and cultural resources, annexation and such other elements which in accordance with present and future needs, in the judgment of the municipality, best promotes the health, safety, prosperity and general public welfare of the jurisdiction's residents.

3. The comprehensive plan shall be the basis for the development of zoning regulations as permitted pursuant to Chapter 3 of this title. Should a jurisdiction exercise its authority to establish municipal zoning regulations pursuant to Chapter 3 of this title, it shall, within 18 months of the adoption of a comprehensive development plan or revision thereof, amend its official zoning map to rezone all lands within the municipality in accordance with the uses of land provided for in the comprehensive development plan.

4. After a comprehensive plan or portion thereof has been adopted by the municipality in accordance to this chapter, the comprehensive plan shall have the force of law and no development shall be permitted except as consistent with the plan.

5. At least every 5 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 10 years; provided, however, the municipality may request an extension of such date by forwarding an official request to the Cabinet Committee at least 90 days prior to the deadline. The basis for the request shall be clearly indicated. The decision whether to grant a request an extension, the duration of such extension, shall be at the discretion of the Cabinet Committee.

6. The comprehensive plan or amendments or revisions thereto shall be submitted to the Office of State Planning Coordination for review at such time as the plan is made available for public review. The plan shall be reviewed in accordance with the comprehensive plan review and certification process detailed in § 9103 of Title 29.

7. Municipalities shall provide to the Office of State Planning Coordination a report describing implementation of their comprehensive plan and identifying development issues, trends or conditions since the plan was last adopted or amended. The report shall be due annually no later than on each anniversary of the effective date of the most recently adopted comprehensive plan or plan update until January 1, 2012, and annually no later than July 1 each year thereafter starting on July 1, 2012.

22 Del. C. 1953, § 702; 49 Del. Laws, c. 415, § 1; 70 Del. Laws, c. 186, § 1; 71 Del. Laws, c. 477, § 1; 73 Del. Laws, c. 186, §§ 7-9; 78 Del. Laws, c. 92, §§ 26-28;

The Charter for the Town of Millsboro in Section 3 provides the power to annex properties and make plans for lands annexed. In addition, the charter provides the power to regulate and maintain sewer, water, and municipal streets and sidewalk system. The Town of Millsboro, through its municipal code and the Delaware Code Title 22, has established a planning committee to develop a comprehensive plan.

PLANNING PROCESS

A comprehensive plan is one of the most important planning tools for a municipality. The plan addresses an array of important topics such as population, land use, municipal services, and transportation. A comprehensive plan typically starts with a vision statement which provides the reader insight into what a town strives to be for its residents, businesses, and visitors. The current state of a town is discussed through an analysis of US Census data and a town assessment. One of the most important components of the comprehensive plan is the discussion on population growth and potential for future town expansion. That section sets the stage for the implementation strategies to help plan for the future and meet the town's vision. It is important to remember that a comprehensive plan is not only used by town officials and staff. A comprehensive plan is also an important source for current and future property owners, business owners, and developers.

Millsboro was incorporated in 1893 as "The Commissioners of the Town of Millsboro." The Town of Millsboro was resurveyed and reincorporated with expanded powers in 1909, another wholesale revision occurred with reincorporation in 1976. The Town also wrote their first comprehensive plan in 1973. Over 20 years later the Town revisited and updated the comprehensive plan after the adoption of Title 22 of the Delaware Code as discussed above. Since 2001, the Town of Millsboro has been committed to reviewing and/or updating their plan every five years. It is crucial the Town continue with their plan updates as the Town is seeing continuous growth.

The following is a summary of the Town of Millsboro's comprehensive plan from the first plan to 2019 update:

1973 Comprehensive Plan

The Town started the process of implementing long range planning and managing land use in the 1970s. The Town developed a comprehensive plan and established their first zoning ordinance in 1973. While the comprehensive plan was not utilized in the same way it is today, the zoning ordinance has proven to be an important planning tool. Between 1980 and 1997 the zoning ordinance was updated 31 times. The number of updates was reflective of the growth seen in Town and the region during that time. With the pressures of rapid growth, the Town recognized the need for an updated comprehensive plan to guide land use decisions.

2001 Comprehensive Plan

In the winter of 1999, the Town Council and Mayor of Millsboro appointed a planning committee to update the 1973 Comprehensive Plan. This action was undertaken to increase the involvement of the public in the plan development process. This committee provided guidance to develop the vision and goals, review land use and growth objectives, review the Town zoning and subdivision practices, and to make revisions in the comprehensive plan.

The planning process included an extensive public participation effort and intergovernmental coordination effort. The public participation effort began in June 1998 with the development of citizen surveys distributed initially at the Chicken Festival and subsequently in other venues. This effort continued in the fall of 1998 and spring of 1999 with a Town Council Workshop, Public Workshop, articles in the Chamber of Commerce newsletter and meetings with various stakeholders. These stakeholders included the Greater Millsboro Chamber of Commerce, the Indian River School District, Sussex County, and state agencies such as the Delaware Department of Transportation and State Housing Authority. These outreach efforts were aimed at determining issues and priorities for the Town of Millsboro. The coordination efforts with state and local agencies were intended to bring together the long-range plans and capital investment strategies of these agencies together with the analysis of Millsboro's future.

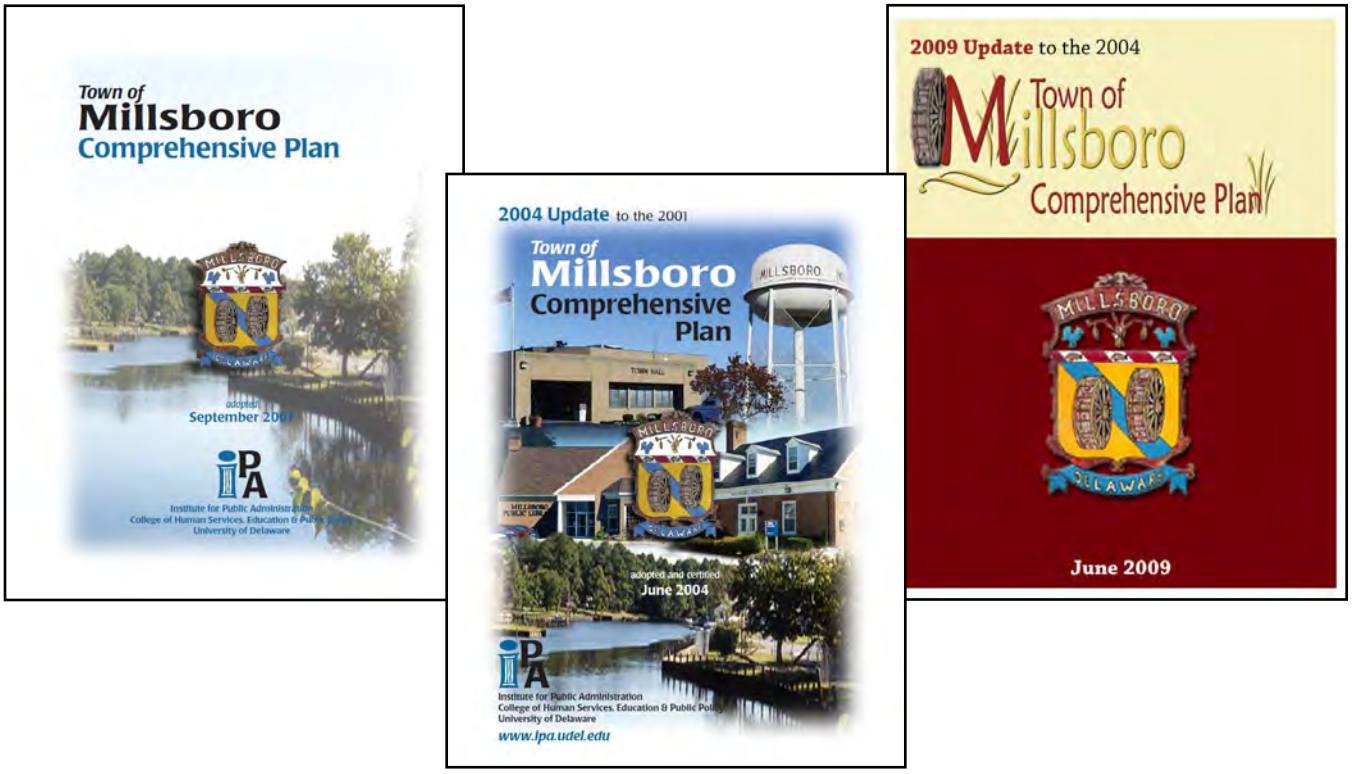
2004 Update

In the fall of 2003, the Town Council and Mayor of Millsboro re-established its Planning Committee to update the 2001 Comprehensive Plan. The 2004 Plan update did not stray far from the 2001 Plan but addressed the new development pressures that Millsboro faced. Based on the outreach efforts in developing the 2001 Comprehensive Plan and the Planning Committee meetings of the 2004 Plan update, several factors were identified as being important to the Town of Millsboro. The Planning Committee and many citizens, who provided input into this process, voiced an appreciation for the small-town character of Millsboro. The Town and its citizens welcomed growth and economic diversity but intended to pursue these qualities while preserving small town characteristics. There was strong support for maintaining the traditional downtown and improving its appearance. Housing concerns were noted frequently with housing diversity (including more choices for higher-end markets) and the quality of the rental market being among the concerns with high priority. The 2004 Plan also focused on future annexation, infrastructure, zoning, and subdivision decisions. Recommendations in the plan included having town-focused development activities in the Millsboro area and that the Town area is provided with adequate infrastructure and annexed as appropriate into the corporate limits of Millsboro. The Town recommended that Sussex County and the State of Delaware focus development in the corporate limits of the Town and provide mechanisms to discourage scattered residential, commercial, and industrial development that cannot be efficiently served by public sewer and water systems. The Town further recommended that Sussex County, through the implementation of its comprehensive plan, direct growth into the corporate limits of Millsboro with appropriate infrastructure investments and clear indication of Millsboro's vision of a growing, well-planned town.

2009 Update

In the summer of 2008, the Town of Millsboro began the process of updating the Comprehensive Plan by once again re-establishing its Planning Committee. In addition, the Town hired URS Corporation for technical support with the update.

In general, this Plan updated the policies, goals, objectives and strategies set forth in the Town's 2004 Plan. The focus was on evaluating the recent growth and development trends, updating the changes to the current and future land use and annexations maps, and refining a path to diminish the impacts and optimize the opportunities associated with the recent and foreseeable growth.



The Plan identified critical issues associated with new developments and recent annexations, and further focused on implementing new services, infrastructure and facilities to accommodate the significant growth. The update refined the goals, objectives, policies and actions that guide planning, development, and redevelopment efforts.

A public participation effort consisted of a public opinion survey, public workshop and Planning Committee meetings. These outreach efforts were aimed at reviewing and updating the issues and priorities for the Town of Millsboro and incorporating any changes from the 2004 update. Coordination with state and local agencies was intended to integrate the long-range plans and capital investment strategies of these agencies together with the vision for Millsboro's future.

2020 Update

Between 2009 and 2019 no changes were made to the Comprehensive Plan as the Town felt the information and implementation items were all still applicable. The process of updating the 2019 Plan began in 2018. As with the previous plans, public participation played a role in guiding the Plan update. Opposed to the more traditional surveys done in the past, a more interactive approach was taken with Town staff and planning consultants receiving feedback from residents and non-residents during two different public events. People were provided the opportunity to discuss what they felt were strengths and weaknesses of the Town.

As with the last comprehensive plan, the Town has continued to deal with rapid growth seen in both the residential and commercial sectors. Numerous subdivisions have been approved and constructed since the last plan increasing the number of people currently living in Town. Since the 2009 Plan, the number of businesses has also drastically increased with majority of those businesses located along US 113. The first phase of Peninsula Crossing Shopping Center had been constructed at the adoption of the 2009 Comprehensive Plan, but since then the shopping center has continued to expand with existing neighboring shopping centers following suite and expanding too.

With continuing growth, two areas of focus for the 2019 update are planning for future expansion and refocusing efforts towards improving the downtown. The Town has made major changes to their future land use and annexation map, which has the potential to double the size of Millsboro. The Plan update also incorporates information provided in the Downtown Improvement Plan which was adopted February 2019.

GOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION

The State of Delaware encourages the coordination of planning efforts between state, county, and municipal agencies. Coordination is encouraged while a comprehensive plan is being crafted and after plan adoption as a Town works towards completing their implementation items. The comprehensive plan update process provides a municipality the opportunity to submit their most up-to-date comprehensive plan to be reviewed through the pre-Preliminary Land Use Services (PLUS) process. The plan is reviewed by various State agencies such as Office of State Planning, DNREC, DelDOT, and State Housing Authority. This process provides a municipality the opportunity to receive feedback from the State agencies and integrate their comments to help strengthen their comprehensive plan.

Another important State resource utilized in drafting a comprehensive plan is the Delaware Strategies for State Policies and Spending. As stated in the report written by the Office of State Planning, the purpose of the State Strategies is to "coordinate land-use decision-making with the provision of infrastructure and services in a manner that makes the best use of our natural and fiscal resources." The most recent document and map of this type was adopted in 2016. Further explanation of the State Strategies and how it impacts Millsboro are included in this updated plan in the chapter discussing land use.

It is also important for a municipality to evaluate the data and growth strategies set forth in a county comprehensive plan. How a county plans for future growth and expansion could have major impacts on a municipality and how they plan for the future. A thorough review of Sussex County's 2018 Comprehensive Plan was completed for this plan. Rapid growth is the major take-away from the County's updated plan and its implications in needing more services to support the population. Topics of interest to the Town of Millsboro were Sussex County's plan for future land use, economic development, community design, and mobility. The County strongly encourages development in designated growth areas, which aligns with the goals of the State Strategies. For Millsboro, the Town is primarily within Levels 1 and 2 of the State Strategies which encourages growth. Another area of focus for the Town is economic development which is equally important to the County. Sussex County is looking to incorporate economic development initiatives into every sector of governance, and focus on the major industries which include agriculture, manufacturing, and tourism. As for community design, Millsboro already promotes some of the ideas set forth in the County's plan including Residential Planned Community (RPC) Districts. Lastly, the County's updated plan addresses mobility which is an issue at both the County and municipal level. Rapid growth has led to congestions issues across the County, and Millsboro has seen an increase in traffic delays along Route 24 and US 113. The County's plan identifies "Congested Areas" naming SR 24 as one of many areas seeing traffic congestion. Overall, Sussex County's updated Comprehensive Plan is insightful into growth trends and how the County is planning for the future, with much of the information being applicable to the Town of Millsboro and their future plans.

A copy of the Comprehensive Plan was sent to the neighboring communities of Dagsboro, Georgetown, and Sussex County. No comments were received but copies of the transmittal

letters are included in Appendix C.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Public participation plays a key role in understanding what the residents of the Town of Millsboro need and desire. Public opinion helps prioritize what goals need to be accomplished first to ensure the highest quality of life for current and future residents. The comments received from the public, including home owners, business owners and visitors, provide direction and help shape the comprehensive plan. Public participation for the Town of Millsboro was facilitated through a public opinion survey taken during a Town sponsored event and feedback received during an open house. A description of the events and results are detailed below.

Stars and Stripes Event

Millsboro held a four-hour event on June 30, 2018 during the Town's Stars and Stripes event to survey public opinion based on projected growth within town limits. The event was open to residents and non-residents alike who were given the opportunity to address a multitude of current and upcoming growth concerns. About one-third of the participation (36.5%) was from employees or visitors while the other 63.5% of votes came from those who are full or part-time residents within the Town. The accumulated votes polled that 63 people participated in the event. The event also highlighted the area of concern for those taking the survey was downtown Millsboro.

Open House

On October 18, 2018, from the hours of 5 pm to 7 pm, the Town Hall hosted an open house event in which four stations were set up to discuss topics related to the Town and future growth. The four key concepts at the stations were as follows: Issues and Challenges, Strengths and Assets, Livability Indicator, and a breakdown of the purpose and goals of a comprehensive plan. The event was advertised in the local newspaper, the Coastal Point, as well as the Town's website and electronic message board.

Public Opinion Results

The feedback received at the Stars and Stripes event and the open house was consistent in naming the issues and strengths of the Town. The number one issue identified was traffic, with many of the concerns revolving around truck traffic. People noted problems with drivers using neighborhoods and alleys to avoid traffic, parking concerns, and the speed limit in certain areas of Town. Trucks, in particular, are contributing to traffic issues, effecting air quality, and are generally considered unsafe by those participating in the surveys. Connected to the traffic and mobility issues is the need to improve walkability. Residents would like to see more sidewalks downtown as a safe means of travel and to better connect the community.

Community members felt Millsboro's strengths and assets were clear: it is neighborly, safe, and family-oriented. Multiple residents liked the pace of life associated with a small town, and they felt there was a good police presence in Town.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

Frequent status updates were provided at Millsboro Town Council meetings on the progress of the plan. The Plan was formally introduced to Town Council in April with plans for an August adoption.




a cup of coffee
a moment of
togetherness


SUSSEX CENTRAL
HIGH SCHOOL
GEORGETOWN,
DELAWARE
GOLDEN KNIGHTS

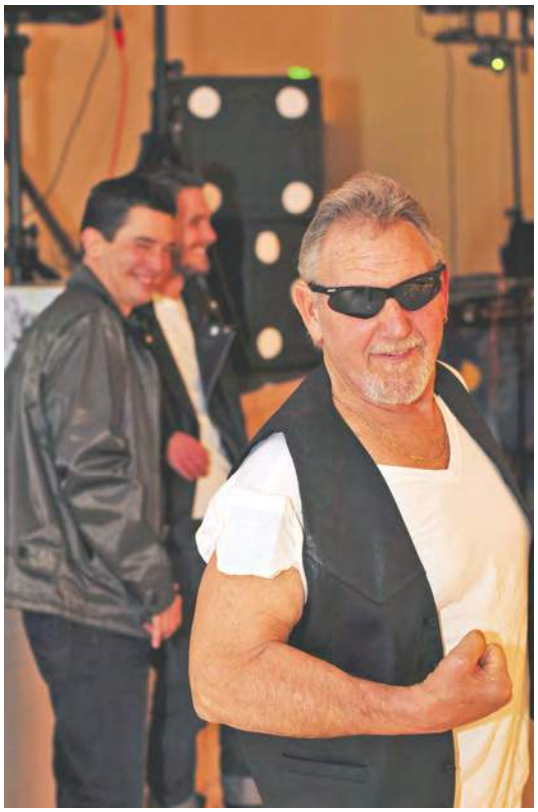


4 | POPULATION & DEMOGRAPHICS

The Town of Millsboro has been growing steadily and rapidly over the past 20 years. With developments still in varying construction phases it appears the Town will see the total population continue to rise.







PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE COASTAL POINT | Tyler Valliant (middle-left, bottom-left p.22) R. Chris Clark (right, p.23)

METHODOLOGY

When analyzing demographic trends and making projections for future growth, it is important to review and utilize data from a variety of reliable sources. The most reliable data source is the US Census. Information from the Census Bureau can also be paired with population data prepared by state and county agencies. The other important source is data maintained by a municipality. For the Town of Millsboro in particular, it is important to review a variety of sources as the population is growing rapidly, outpacing some sources like the Census that are updated on a 10-year cycle. The following is a brief explanation of the data sources and how they were used in evaluating demographic trends and population projections for Millsboro.

US Census

The US Census is the most comprehensive source for finding demographics information at the municipal, county and state level. Data includes population totals, a break down by age and gender as well as race. Additional data can be reviewed including housing, education, and income. The Census Bureau updates their data every 10 years. This chapter references data from the 2000 and 2010 Census to compare how the Town of Millsboro has changed. In between Census years, five-year estimates for demographics are published, referred to as the American Community Survey (ACS). For this comprehensive plan, the 2013-2017 and 2015-2019 ACS data was utilized as a comparison to the 2010 data. It is important to remember the figures are estimates and should be considered approximations. Also, from the Census, the 2020 Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA) data was used in determining current population estimates.

Delaware Population Consortium

The Delaware Population Consortium is an organization made up of officials from the State of Delaware, all three counties and major municipalities throughout Delaware. The group updates the population and housing figures annually. For this plan, the Delaware Population Consortium was used as a data source to determine the Town's population, as well as projections for the State and Sussex County when comparing growth rate to the Town of Millsboro. Their most recent data is dated October 31, 2020. Projections for each of the 57 municipalities in Delaware are based on the compound annual growth rates of population using the 2010 Decennial Census population for each municipality and the most recent 2015 ACS population estimates to develop compound annual growth rates which then are applied over the period 2020-2050.

Town of Millsboro Data

As stated above, Millsboro has seen rapid growth far exceeding population projections published by the US Census. For a more accurate estimate of current population, and population projections, building activity was considered in determining those figures. The Town keeps detailed records of building activity each year which were used to calculate future growth.

GROWTH

The 2000 and 2010 US Census, American Community Survey, and Delaware Population Consortium reports were all utilized in this section to determine population projections. According to the 2000 US Census, Millsboro had a population of 2,360 people and by the 2010 Census that figure rose to 3,877 residents. In that 10-year time period the Town grew by 64%. Historically, Millsboro experienced a steady population growth, however, since 2000 the Town has seen major increases in the population.

The Delaware Population Consortium estimates Millsboro's 2020 population at 4,629 residents. That is in comparison to a population projection determined by Town planners at AECOM which estimated Millsboro's 2018 population to be 6,525 residents. Town planners used the 2020

Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA) to calculate the estimated population. This method used Census records as a base and updated them per Town tax records.

Based on the 6,525 population estimate, from 2010 to 2018 there has been a population growth rate of about 68%. When compared to the County and State, the Town of Millsboro has been growing at a significantly faster rate. The Delaware Population Consortium data proposes only an 18% growth rate between 2010 and 2018. This figure aligns closer to Sussex County at 16% but is still higher than both the County and State.

Looking ahead at projections for 2030, the Town can consider a low and high population projection. The Delaware Population Consortium (DPC) estimates the population to be 5,183 by 2030. Again, the Town projects a much higher population – more than 12,000 residents by 2030. This figure was determined based on the Town's building permit data. There were approximately 200 new units built within Town limits in 2019.

TABLE 4.1. TOTAL POPULATION AND POPULATION PROJECTIONS 1960-2030

	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2018	2020	2030
TOWN OF MILLSBORO	536	1,073	1,233	1,643	2,360	3,877	**6,525**	7,045	12,245
DPC							4,445	4,629	5,183
SUSSEX COUNTY	73,195	80,356	98,004	113,847	157,463	197,145	229,286	235,396	255,143
DELAWARE	446,292	548,104	594,338	669,069	786,431	897,934	967,171	989,803	1,044,965

Source: US Census Bureau, Delaware Population Consortium, and Town of Millsboro data - 2020

Multiplying that by 2.6 persons per household, equals 520 people per year. The Town recognizes that this calculation is based on the consistent high growth rate the Town has seen the past several years and does not account for possible slow growth years.

The increase in population numbers demonstrates the desirability of living in Millsboro and importantly the availability of housing for new residents. The projections for growth illustrate the rapid increase in population due to tourism and retirees moving to coastal Sussex County. Millsboro has already experienced the spillover effects from the coast in the development of a recreation-based community along the Indian River, and job growth and housing growth for employment areas relating to retirement and tourism sectors of the economy. As growth continues along the coast, increasing pressure on the residential, commercial and office space market will occur within near coastal areas, such as Millsboro.

A greater understanding of the Town's future population can be gained by examining the recent and foreseeable developments and annexations in Town. There is a build-out analysis and forecast based on current development activities, as well as vacant and developable lands in Town and the Town's growth area.

Major Development Activities in Town between 2009 and 2019

Since 2000, there have been 23 major residential subdivisions and developments and 32 individual single-family permits approved within the Town of Millsboro, totaling 4,853 new units. The developments are at various stages in the approval process, ranging from preliminary plan approval to the issuance of a

certificate of occupancy. Table 4.2 shows the residential developments that have been approved, are under construction, or have been completed. There were 805 certificates of occupancies issued between 2000 and 2008, as noted in the previous comprehensive plan. That number remained the same for 2015 to 2019 with 804 certificates of occupancies being issued, however, that was over the course of a four-year timeframe oppose to eight years demonstrating the rapid growth seen in Millsboro.

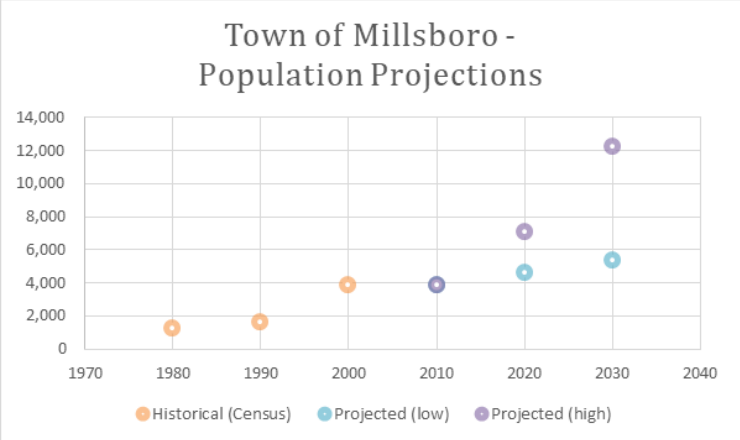
TABLE 4.2. CURRENT DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES IN TOWN

PROPERTY REFERENCE	NUMBER OF DWELLING UNITS	APPROVAL STATUS
Fall Brook	36	Completed
Magnolia Meadows	105	Completed
Mill Crossing	6	Completed
Moores Crossing	52	Completed
Old Landing Apartments	46	Completed
Single Family Lots	32	Approved
Burtons Crossing	111	Approved
Hillcrest	6	Approved
Mill Landing	62	Approved
Monroe Square	16	Approved
Otter Branch	35	Approved
Plantation Lakes - Phase 1	910	Completed
Retreat @ Millstone	94	50% Completed
Commons @ Raddish Farms	165	Completed
St Helen's Crossing	118	50% Completed
The Homestead - Phase 1	130	Completed
Villages of Millwood Phase I	362	Completed*
Wharton's Bluff - Phase I	84	Completed
Dukes Manor	18	Final Approval
Plantation Lakes - Phase 2	1,559	Approved
Dukes Property	307	Preliminary Approval
Sommerton Chase	223	Preliminary Approval
Wharton's Bluff - Phase II	134	Completed
Alderleaf Meadows	150	Completed
Westtown Village	92	Completed
	TOTAL: 4,853	

**Townhouse Section not completed*

In a Town that is seeing a consistently high rate of growth, it is difficult to determine a truly accurate population projection. The Town recognizes that this trend will not continue and at some point, will plateau or drop. Figure 4.1 shows population growth based on U.S. Census data, the Delaware Population Consortium projections, and Town projections based on building development. It is clear this upward trend will continue. The Town should continue to maintain detailed building records to best determine future growth. When the 2020 U.S. Census is published, the Town should revisit these projections and update accordingly.

FIGURE 4.1. POPULATION PROJECTIONS



DEMOGRAPHICS

Aside from total population, there are other categories in a demographic profile that are important to analyze. A demographic profile can account for age, gender and race as well as household types. An analysis of this information provides a picture of what a town's current population looks like and how it has changed over time. This section provides data on the racial composition and age of Millsboro's residents and how it compares to Sussex County and the State of Delaware.

Race

A comparison of the racial composition of the Town's residents shows there are some differences between 2010 and 2017. The majority of residents are white, with the percentage increasing from 71.5 to 81% between 2010 and 2017. The Town and County both have a percentage of about 81 for the white population as of 2017, however, the increase from 2010 was much more significant for the Town than the County. The African American population has remained approximately the same for the County, and State with a slight decrease for the Town.

The differences in racial composition are in the categorization of "Other," shown in Tables 4.3 and 4.4 below, and the Latino population. The category "Other" includes American Indian and Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, and "Some Other Race." Between 2010 and 2017 this population category decreased from almost 11% to 2%. The County also saw a decrease in this category while the State remained approximately the same. As for the Latino population, between 2010 and 2017 the population was listed at 6.5%, that is in comparison to the County and State which were both around 8%. The Census' 2017 data estimates the Latino population in Millsboro to be at 9% which aligns with both the County and State.

TABLE 4.3. POPULATION BY RACE, 2010

2010	WHITE		BLACK		OTHER		HISPANIC OR LATINO	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Town of Millsboro	2,773	71.5%	695	17.9%	409	10.6%	252	6.5%
Sussex County	155,663	79.0%	25,115	12.7%	16,367	8.3%	16,954	8.6%
Delaware	618,617	68.9%	191,814	21.4%	87,503	9.7%	73,221	8.2%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2010

TABLE 4.4. POPULATION BY RACE, 2017

2017	WHITE		BLACK		OTHER		HISPANIC OR LATINO	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Town of Millsboro	3,385	81.0%	695	16.6%	101	2.4%	375	9.0%
Sussex County	176,511	81.9%	26,592	12.3%	12,448	5.8%	19,860	9.2%
Delaware	652,170	69.1%	206,290	21.9%	85,272	9.1%	84,793	9.0%

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2017

Age

Examining the Town's population across age categories, there are various trends that summarize the Town's population. Overall, the population is fairly-well spread out across age categories with some notable differences. According to Table 4.5, about 15% of the Town's total population are children under the age of 10 years. That can be compared to the County and State which are slightly less at 11 and 12% respectively. As for the population 65 years and older the percentages of the total population are close for Millsboro (19%) and State (17%), while the County has a higher count at 25%. This balance in population means there needs to be a wide variety of services, from educational opportunities to senior services, to meet the needs of the population.

TABLE 4.5. POPULATION BY AGE, 2017

	TOWN OF MILLSBORO	SUSSEX COUNTY	DELAWARE
Age	Percentage of Population		
Under 5 years	6.1%	5.3%	5.9%
5 - 9 years	8.8%	5.4%	6.0%
10 - 14 years	10.5%	5.4%	6.1%
15 - 19 years	5.9%	4.8%	6.4%
20 - 24 years	3.8%	5.1%	6.6%
25 - 34 years	11.5%	10.5%	13.3%
35 - 44 years	17.6%	9.9%	11.7%
45 - 54 years	7.4%	12.7%	13.6%
55 - 59 years	3.6%	7.7%	7.1%
60 - 64 years	5.7%	8.2%	6.4%
65 - 74 years	10.4%	15.6%	10.1%
75 – 84 years	5.0%	7.1%	4.9%
85 years and over	3.8%	2.5%	1.9%

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2017

It is interesting to compare the 2010 and 2017 demographic profiles for Millsboro, Sussex County and the State. In 2010, Millsboro's population under 20 years was 24%. That can be compared to 2017 which estimates that portion of the population at 31%. While Millsboro saw a major increase in the number of younger residents, the County and State saw minor declines. With the population 65 years and older the Town saw the slightest decrease in total percentage (21% to 19%) between 2010 and 2017 while the County and State saw some increases. Overall these numbers reflect the changes in median age. The Town of Millsboro saw a decrease in median age from about 40 years in 2010 to an estimated 38 years in 2017. Both Sussex County and the State saw slight increases to the median ages between 2010 and 2017. The Census data appears to reflect slight changes in demographics. In recent years Millsboro has promoted itself as a family-friendly community with housing options to meet the needs of retirees and families with children.

TABLE 4.6. PROFILE AND DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS, 2010

2010	TOWN OF MILLSBORO	SUSSEX COUNTY	DELAWARE
Total Population	3,877	197,145	897,934
Age			
Population under 20 years	24.0%	22.5%	26.0%
Population 65 years and older	20.9%	20.8%	14.4%
Median Age (years)	39.6	45.4	38.8

Source: US Census Bureau, 2010

TABLE 4.7. PROFILE AND DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS, 2017

2017	TOWN OF MILLSBORO	SUSSEX COUNTY	DELAWARE
Total Population	4,181	215,551	943,732
Age			
Population under 20 years	31.3%	20.9%	24.4%
Population 65 years and older	19.2%	25.2%	16.9%
Median Age (years)	37.9	48.3	39.8

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2017



DISCUSSION

The Town of Millsboro has been growing steadily and rapidly over the past 20 years. With developments still in varying construction phases it appears the Town will see the total population continue to rise. Once these communities are built-out the Town will likely go back to seeing a more steady increase in population opposed to the major spikes the Town has seen in more recent years. A growing population means more services are needed to support the current population and knowing the numbers may continue to increase. With more families moving to the area, educational opportunities will continue to be important as well as activities and entertainment geared towards children. On the other end of the spectrum, the population 65 years and older continues to make up about the same total percentage of the population. This could be due to Millsboro being an attractive place to live for those moving into their retirement years. Services geared towards seniors will be equally important.

This pro-growth position must be supported with careful planning to ensure that infrastructure meets the growing demand, and that new growth does not place undue burden on existing populations. Careful coordination is required with Sussex County to ensure that most of the new growth occurs within the incorporated area of Millsboro and designated growth areas, such that local services are supported by local taxes. High growth in unincorporated areas around a town often lead to a situation where that town supplies police protection, recreational services, and other support to populations that do not pay local taxes.

5 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Millsboro has an open approach to economic development and a welcoming environment to business. Thanks to its central location, Millsboro is a regional destination for its large box stores, unique shops downtown and natural attractions. Overall unemployment rates in Town are low with the 2017 American Community Survey reporting 2.4% total unemployment.

The median household income is $43,750. According to the latest American Community Survey, 25.4% of all people and 18.6% of families within Millsboro were below the poverty level in the past 12 months.



Goal

The Town of Millsboro would like to continue to attract an array of employers and businesses, concentrating downtown commercial development in the Main and Washington Street corridor, and Highway Commercial development along US 113.

LABOR MARKET

Around 30% of Millsboro's residents 25 years and older have earned an Associate's degree or higher. More than 20% of residents do not have a high school diploma or equivalent. The distribution of education in Millsboro demonstrates the need for diverse employment opportunities and education/training programs.

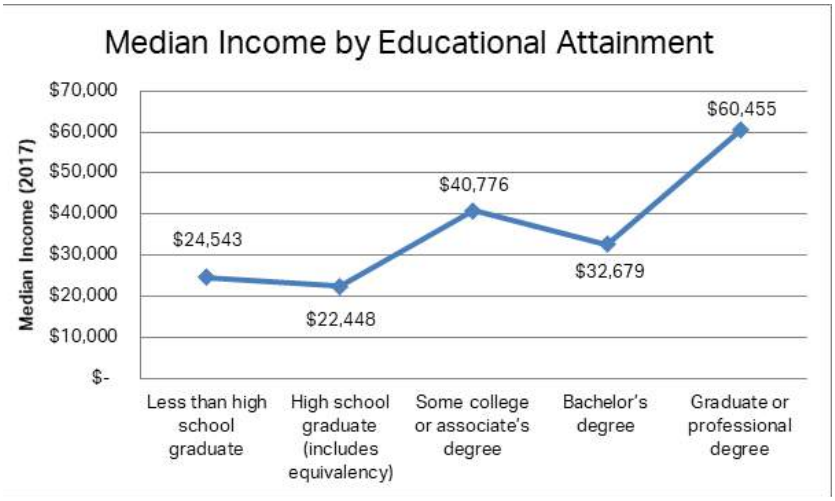


TABLE 5.1. EARNINGS BY LEVEL OF EDUCATION

MEDIAN EARNINGS FOR POPULATION 25+ BY EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT	
Less than high school graduate	$24,543
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	$22,448
Some college or associate's degree	$40,776
Bachelor's degree	$32,679
Graduate or professional degree	$60,455

Source: US Census Bureau, 2017 American Community Survey

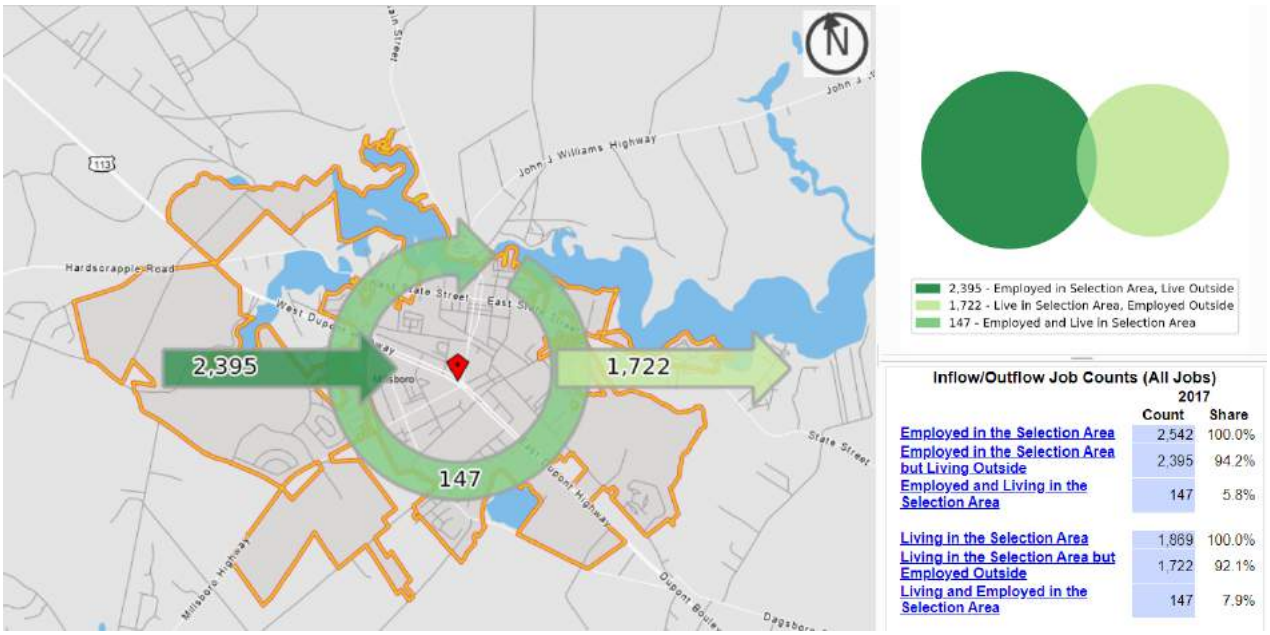
FIGURE 5.1. EARNINGS BY LEVEL OF EDUCATION



Source: US Census Bureau, 2017 American Community Survey

Figure 5.2 shows the inflow and outflow of jobs in Millsboro in 2017. Of the 1,869 workers living in Town, only 147 both live and work within Town. Some 2,542 individuals are employed within Millsboro but live outside of the Town boundaries. Currently, Millsboro is a net-importer of employees. While the Town has seen tremendous residential growth, there is still opportunity to provide housing for the Town's workforce.

FIGURE 5.2. INFLOW/OUTFLOW OF JOBS



Inflow/Outflow Job Counts (All Jobs)

	2017 Count	Share
Employed in the Selection Area	2,542	100.0%
Employed in the Selection Area but Living Outside	2,395	94.2%
Employed and Living in the Selection Area	147	5.8%
Living in the Selection Area	1,869	100.0%
Living in the Selection Area but Employed Outside	1,722	92.1%
Living and Employed in the Selection Area	147	7.9%

Source: On The Map, US Census Bureau

A live-work community is one where people are walking around and interacting in the community. Throughout the day and evening, people are running daily errands, going out to eat, socializing after work, and gathering as a community. There is a need to create a more balanced inflow and outflow of workers by increasing job opportunities for residents and housing opportunities for employees. The Town should aim to capture some of those that live outside the Town and strive for more of an overlap of people both living and working within the downtown. Employers would benefit from a stable workforce living nearby, and employees would benefit from time saved on their commute. Overall, the community benefits by having a more active and vibrant community and increased investment from new residents.

CONSUMER MARKET

As the Town continues to respond to rapid growth and development it is important to identify and approve appropriate uses for the growing demographic base. In order to better understand the wants and needs of their residents the Town of Millsboro employed The Retail Coach, a national retail consulting, market research and development firm that combines strategy, technology, and creative expertise to develop and deliver high-impact retail recruitment and development strategies to local governments, chambers of commerce and economic development organizations. Part of the foundation to developing lasting business partnerships is understanding the demographic that both entities are serving. The Retail Coach identified the three most dominant psychographic profiles amongst Millsboro residents .

TABLE 5.2. PSYCHOGRAPHIC PROFILES IN MILLSBORO

LIFE MODE GROUP	COZY COUNTRY LIVING	MIDDLE GROUND	RUSTIC OUTPOSTS
SEGMENT	THE GREAT OUTDOORS	OLD AND NEWCOMERS	DOWN THE ROAD
AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE	2.44	2.12	2.76
MEDIAN AGE	47.4	39.4	35.0
MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME	$56,400	$44,900	$38,700
SUMMARY	These neighborhoods are found in pastoral settings throughout the United States. Consumers are educated empty nesters living an active but modest lifestyle. Their focus is land. They are more likely to invest in real estate or a vacation home than stocks. They are active gardeners and partial to homegrown and home-cooked meals. Although retirement beckons, most of these residents still work, with incomes slightly above the US level.	This market features singles' lifestyle on a budget. The focus is more on convenience than consumerism, economy over acquisition. Old and Newcomers is composed of neighborhoods in transition, populated by renters who are just beginning their careers or retiring. Some are still in college; some are taking adult education classes. They support charity causes and are environmentally conscious. Age is not always obvious from their choices.	Down the Road is a mix of low-density, semirural neighborhoods in larger metropolitan areas; half are located in the South, with the rest chiefly in the West and Midwest. Almost half of householders live in mobile homes; more than two-fifths live in single-family homes. These are younger, diverse communities, with the highest proportion of American Indians of any segment. These family-oriented consumers value their traditions. Worker are in service, retail trade, manufacturing, and construction industries, with higher proportions in agriculture and mining, compared to the US. This market has higher unemployment, much lower median household income and home value, and more than a fifth of households with income below poverty level.

Source: The Retail Coach, 2019

INDUSTRIES

Based on the American Community Survey, the top three industry sectors in the Town are 'Educational services, and health care and social assistance' (23.4%), 'Retail Trade' (17.3%), and 'Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services' (15.8%).

The majority of jobs in Millsboro are classified into five North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) Industry Sectors: Retail Trade (26.9%), Finance and Insurance (22.3%), Manufacturing (14.1%), Health Care and Social Assistance (13.0%), and Accommodation and Food Services (11.5%). These industries provide a variety of stable jobs at different pay scales.

COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS

Highway Commercial

Peninsula Crossing is a premier shopping destination that has developed on the southern edge of Millsboro. Its strategic location along US 113 draws a regional customer base to large chain stores such as BJ's Wholesale Clubs, Lowes and Petsmart. The success of these anchor stores has sparked the development of smaller scale shops and restaurants surrounding Peninsula Crossing. They currently include several fast-food chains, hair salons, banks, nail salons, retail shops, and medical service providers. Most recently, the Town has approved the addition of a hotel in the Peninsula Crossing area. Millsboro is continuing to receive new development and re-development applications in this area of Town regularly. Most recently, site plans for sit down eateries Grotto Pizza and Texas Roadhouse have been approved.

Downtown Revitalization

While the majority of commercial growth currently occurring in Millsboro is fronting on US 113, there is a desire from both the Town government and community to revitalize the downtown. In February 2019 the Town of Millsboro completed a Downtown Improvement Plan with a vision, goals, and strategies for sparking economic development in Millsboro's Downtown. As part of the Plan a survey was conducted at a local event in July 2018. When asked about accommodating future commercial growth nearly 1/3 of respondents said they would encourage commercial growth in Downtown Millsboro.

The Downtown Improvement Area contains 125 parcels, totaling 89 acres, including streets and right of ways. It consists mainly of commercial uses. The average lot size in this district is 0.56 acres. The area is bounded by Cupola Park to the north, Ellis Street to the West, Mitchell Street on the Southern end, and Morris Street and Old Landing Road provide eastern borders.

The Plan outlines 10 goals for achieving the vision of a vibrant and thriving downtown:

1. Preserve and highlight the community's natural setting and assets.
2. Promote a diversity of housing options.
3. Support and enhance the unique characteristics of a vibrant downtown.
4. Improve transportation choices, while prioritizing safety.
5. Promote Millsboro as a regional employment and retail hub.
6. Enhance dining and shopping options in the downtown district.
7. Foster new educational and recreational opportunities.
8. Promote community events and programming.
9. Increase pedestrian accessibility downtown.
10. Maintain a year-round community that enhances quality of life for its residents.

DNREC Brownfields Program

The Town of Millsboro has several brownfield sites, defined as real property where the redevelopment, reuse or expansion could be hindered due to a belief the site may be environmentally contaminated. Reinvesting in these sites can contribute to downtown revitalization and economic development. The Town should work with DNREC Brownfields Program for assistance in planning for the redevelopment of these properties. The Delaware Brownfields Marketplace is an interactive database that contains a list of potential Brownfield sites throughout Delaware. The inventory is designed to make it easier for buyers and developers to locate potential Brownfield properties.



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Downtown Millsboro faces major facelift

New sidewalks, pavers, lighting among

By Memorial Day 2019, an extreme makeover of a good portion of the town's downtown business district should be completed through the Main Street improvements project.

The Main Street initiative includes new sidewalks most likely augmented by a decorative brick paver component and enhanced, decorative street lighting.

The project will run along both sides of Main Street from Church Street to State Street.

Some $275,000 has been budgeted for fiscal year 2019.

"I think it is going to send a huge message to the community, to the public that the town is serious about investing in the downtown and just making it a more aesthetically pleasing area, even more walkable and a place to visit for sure," said Millsboro Town Manager Sheldon Hudson.

Jason Loar of Davis, Bowen & Friedel presented a project update with various options and scope during Millsboro council's Sept. 4 meeting.

Three sidewalk/paver options span a low estimate of $343,000 with 18-inch pavers and concrete to $433,000 for all-brick pavers, Mr. Loar said.

"More brick, more cost," said Mr. Loar.

See Faces — Page 8

Strategies

1. Pursue new growth and business recruitment efforts in target industries.
    a. To accelerate growth of businesses in Millsboro, we will utilize data and analytics to create an operating environment in which they can thrive.
    b. The Town should work with the Chamber of Commerce to market downtown retail spaces to small businesses and direct large-scale growth to the Highway Commercial district.

2. Build a streamlined and cohesive development process.
    a. Millsboro will improve the regulatory and permitting procedures to create a fair, transparent, and quick process.
    b. Millsboro will continually reassess the approval process for improvements.

3. Promote Millsboro's lifestyle.
    a. Millsboro is a unique place, with the benefits and conveniences of a city, yet the closeness and comforts of a small town. To capitalize on its unique character and location, Millsboro will promote its heritage and support businesses to complement local tourism.
    b. Create an environment that encourages innovation and entrepreneurship, builds on local strengths for business success and growth, and offers businesses a functional and attractive place to locate.

6 HOUSING

Over the course of the last two decades the persons per household within the Town of Millsboro have been steadily increasing. The percentages of homes with a single occupant or with three occupants have both decreased while two occupant and four or more occupant homes have increased. The Town has retained a household population that is on par with the State and higher than Sussex County. Within the next several decades Millsboro is expected to experience more growth.



Goal

Encourage an adequate supply of a range of residential uses and housing types. Maintain existing multi-family developments and encourage a mix of high quality housing for families and individuals of all ranges of income. Encourage residential development in appropriate areas as designated by the future land use plan that will be integrated with existing residential developments.

Over the last decade the Town has seen close to 100% increase in total housing. Compared to the County and the State this housing is affordable with the average cost being $30,000 or more cheaper. The residents predominately live in single-family homes and over the last few years the availability for this housing has increased. Currently, the Town housing stock is new housing or has been built after 1980. With the Town growing as rapidly as it has for the last few years it would be expected that this percentage would only increase. Very few of these houses are vacant and the vacancies within Millsboro are largely due to houses being rented. One initiative the Town would like to continue to improve upon is the diversification of housing prices. With a rapidly growing community it will be important to keep the average housing prices at an affordable level and provide a mix of housing choices for the future.

HOUSEHOLDS

Based on the 2000 and 2010 censuses from the US Census Bureau's American Fact Finder, Millsboro has seen a large increase in the number of persons per household. Table 6.1 Number of Persons per Occupied Household, 2000 – 2017, exemplifies that growth and from it some conclusions can be drawn. As the population grew over the last decade it also increased in average occupants per house. Therefore, people who have moved to Millsboro have likely settled here and begun families which would account for both the population and occupancy rise. The table below contains data from the two previously mentioned censuses and the 2017 ACS data. The difference in responses between these two surveys accounts for the decrease in households and the increase in population due to the data not being consistent. For the sake of consistency with the population projections, the base persons per household number that will be used in this chapter is 2.6 for Millsboro.

Table 6.1. Number of Persons per Occupied Household, 2000-2017

YEAR	HOUSEHOLDS	POPULATION	PERSONS PER HOUSEHOLD
2000	1,045	2,360	2.26
2010	1,609	3,877	2.41
2017	1,551	4,181	2.69

Source: US Census Bureau, 2000 and 2010 Census, 2017 ACS

The percentage of households with two occupants and four or more occupants has increased while homes with a single occupant and three occupants has decreased. Separated, these two shifts are not significant but if you consider them together, as seen in Table 6.2 - Number of Occupied Households by Persons Per Household, it would suggest that residents are starting families and that established families are growing. This also represents that new housing is being proactively geared toward retirees and family homes. When the 2020 Census data is released, household trends will become more clear.

Table 6.2. Number of Occupied Households by Persons Per Household, 2000 – 2017

PERSONS PER HOUSEHOLD	2010 PERCENTAGES	2017 PERCENTAGES
1 Person	31%	29%
2 Persons	36%	41%
3 Persons	16%	5%
4 Persons or More	17%	25%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2010 Census, 2017 ACS

The Town of Millsboro has a higher persons per household rate when compared to both the County and the State. This will be a driving factor in decision making for the future of the Town and will help determine policies concerning housing size, lot size, and

functionality of future homes.

Table 6.3. Number of Occupied Households Compared to County and State, 2017

	HOUSEHOLDS	POPULATION	PERSONS PER HOUSEHOLD
Town of Millsboro	1,551	4,181	2.69
Sussex County	86,322	215,551	2.41
Delaware	352,357	943,732	2.68

Source: US Census Bureau, 2017 ACS

The projected number of households from Table 6.4 Households Projection, indicates that at the current rate of build-out the Town should reach 8,396 households by 2050. This does not take much consideration for the availability or housing market changes that could affect the build-out potential, but it works as an estimate. If the Town is at full build-out by 2050 they will have an estimated population of approximately 21,800 residents, assuming the current persons per household rate of 2.6.

These estimations are based on the information from the U.S. Census Bureau data and have been compiled to project growth within the Town. More occupants per home can lead to increased income, business, and development in the future. In addition to this it could also help to provide more skilled and unskilled labor to the work force in the surrounding area which would be a predominant factor in raising housing values while continuing to attract new employment seekers.

Table 6.4. Households Projection, 2000 - 2050

	2000	2010	2020	2030	2040	2050
Historical	1,153	1,878	-	-	-	-
Projected	-	-	3,506	5,136	6,766	8,396

Source: US Census Bureau, 2000 and 2010 Census, 2017 ACS, Town of Millsboro as of 9/19/2019

HOUSING VALUE

It can be difficult to provide housing to accommodate a population's need, but the Town has balanced this successfully over the last decade. Over time the housing market of Millsboro has grown by almost half its size per decade. The past 10 years the Town has had nearly 100% growth.

Table 6.5. Housing by Percent Increase, 1970 -2019

YEAR	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020
Units	375	562	815	1,153	1,770	3,506
% Change	-	50%	45%	41%	54%	98%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2017 ACS; 2009 Millsboro Comprehensive Plan; Town of Millsboro Building Permit Data





Although it was only endorsed and adopted in February 2019 the Town Council has worked diligently to use concepts outlined in the Downtown Improvement Plan to create a healthy downtown. The Downtown Improvement Plan is specifically designed around building an attractive downtown area for visitors and residents. By increasing the value of the Downtown area through improvements they invite growth for the Town and bolster the demand for more affordable housing stock. To continue to implement the plan the Town has a multitude of options available to change the public perception of the downtown area. These include additional street lighting, emphasizing the historic buildings and town history with wayfinding signs and plaques, attracting small businesses to the area, and improving mobility throughout the streetscape. Looking to the future there are several ways in which the Town could look to provide more housing in the downtown area to further improve housing options with the town. This could be attained through retrofitting old buildings, utilizing empty lots that are not adequate for commercial use, and incentivizing urban development of the current building stock.

The value of housing from Table 6.6 Housing by Value Compared to County and State puts the median house price at $208,000. As portrayed in the table, the housing stock in Millsboro costs less than the average house in Sussex County or the State, approximately $30,000 or more less. A large percentage of housing is focused around this median number as well, which exemplifies the effort that Millsboro has given toward providing affordable housing. This alignment with the median price range for most homes indicates that Millsboro is providing housing to its incoming population at an affordable rate. It also suggests that the housing value of lower valued homes should be increasing over time. In turn this provides the home owners additional value on their property.

Table 6.6. Housing by Value Compared to County and State, 2017

VALUE RANGE	MILLSBORO	SUSSEX COUNTY	DELAWARE
Less than $50,000	4%	8%	6%
$50,000 - $99,999	6%	7%	5%
$100,000 - $149,999	14%	9%	9%
$150,000 - $199,999	22%	14%	17%
$200,000 - $299,999	31%	25%	31%
$300,000 - $499,999	20%	25%	25%
$500,000 - $599,999	3%	9%	6%
$1,000,000 or more	0%	2%	1%
Median (dollars)	$208,000	$242,900	$238,600

Source: US Census Bureau, 2017 ACS

HOUSING STOCK

Although Millsboro is experiencing high levels of growth it has retained its small-town charm which has helped to retain the value of its housing stock. The percentages shown in Table 6.7 Housing Stock by Type indicate a decrease in single-family homes while bolstering multi-family houses and duplex units from 2010 to 2017. However, over the next two years these percentages revert. In a survey conducted in April 2019 the residents specified that single-family is most desired type of housing for future developers. It is also important to note that the chart below was

created using the U.S. Census Bureau 2010 ACS and not the Census data.

The construction of a large quantity of single-family homes could account for the fluctuation in housing stock. One decrease in percentages worth mentioning is the lack of availability for mobile homes. According to the table below, mobile homes and manufactured homes used for housing have experienced a decrease throughout the last two decades while multi-family homes have fluctuated. As of right now the most common type of housing, by a large margin, is single-family housing.

The percentage increase between 2000 and 2009 as more housing was made available through the construction of new homes on Table 6.8 - Housing Stock by Age illustrates how a large percentage of the current housing was constructed after 1999. According to the Town of Millsboro's building permit data, in 2016 the amount of single-family home development rose dramatically. The previous year only 168 building permits were issued for residential new homes and the next year it was much higher at 234. Since that time the number of permits for new homes issued has been relatively close to 200
.

Table 6.7. Housing Stock by Type, 2010 – 2019

UNITS IN STRUCTURE	2010 % OF TOTAL	2017 % OF TOTAL	2019 % OF TOTAL
Single-Family	73.2%	58.2%	63.9%
Duplex	2.5%	4.5%	3.9%
Multi-Family	19.5%	32.8%	28.3%
Mobile Home, Trailer	4.9%	4.5%	3.9%
Other	0%	0%	0%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017 ACS; Town of Millsboro as of 9/19/2019

Table 6.8. Housing Stock by Age, 2017

YEAR BUILT	UNITS OF % TOTAL
Built 1939 or Earlier	0.60%
Built 1940 to 1949	4.50%
Built 1950 to 1959	3.20%
Built 1960 to 1969	2.80%
Built 1970 to 1979	4.00%
Built 1980 to 1989	12.3%
Built 1990 to 1999	10.9%
Built 2000 to 2009	35.5%
Built 2010 to 2013	18.3%
Built 2014 or Later	8.00%



Source: U.S Census Bureau, 2017 ACS; Town of Millsboro as of 9/19/2019

The 2018 and 2019 issued permits data provided by the Town, when added to the built 2014 or later category, raises the number of units from 8% to 21% of the total housing in the Town of Millsboro. Approximately 86% of the housing is currently occupied. While a majority of the residential use in the Town is owner occupied at 60%, rental properties make up roughly half of all the vacancies within the Town at 7% (U.S. Census Bureau, 2013 - 2017 ACS). Due to an increase of single-family homes being built, the rest of the vacancy comes from houses in production or commercial uses. The development that is being constructed is favorable to people looking to move to the area and the Town is providing adequate accommodations for this market. Overall the vacancy has been declining since 2010 as seen in Table 6.9-Vacancies. The percentage of vacant units has varied by year, but they have dropped by more than 15% over the course of time.

Table 6.9. Total Housing Vacancy, 2000 - 2017

YEAR	OCCUPIED UNITS	OWNED	RENTED	VACANCY
2010	1,440	830	610	19%
2011	1,514	825	689	20%
2012	1,610	829	781	22%
2013	1,647	916	731	18%
2014	1,687	861	826	14%
2015	1,655	909	746	11%
2016	1,695	944	751	14%
2017	1,551	936	615	14%

Source: U.S Census Bureau ACS from 2010 - 2017

Strategies

1. The Town should seek to continue providing housing at affordable rates to incoming populations.
2. Review and continue to monitor vacant parcels and homes to rebuild or plan for development.
3. Continue to provide improvement to the downtown area to attract prospective home owners.
4. Keep residential growth in consideration for annexation areas and review how services will be provided to these new areas.

7 | LAND USE

The Town of Millsboro has grown around a traditional small-town urban form with a compact downtown, enhanced by surrounding neighborhoods and convenient public spaces. From this traditional form, newer areas have grown with less-dense development, suburban-style residential neighborhoods, and highway commercial shopping centers. Over the years, growth and infill have created some areas where adjacent land uses may not be compatible. Recent residential development includes mixed-use residential and higher density residential land uses that demonstrate a market for this type of development.

Goal

Remain a center for appropriate and planned growth within Sussex County. The Town recommends to Sussex County and the State of Delaware the mapping of accurate and substantial representation of Millsboro's capacity and ability to accept growth in residential, commercial and employment activities.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The Town conducted their initial land use survey within the municipal boundaries and included adjacent areas. The survey was conducted in 1998 and updated in 1999. The information was updated again in 2004 and combined with the information from the 2002 Land Use Land Cover survey conducted by the State of Delaware. The 2008 planning process updated the 2004 land use data by first conducting a windshield survey to identify land use changes and then combined the updated data with the 2007 Land Use Land Cover survey. Currently, the Town bases its existing land use off the State of Delaware's 2012 Land Use Land Cover survey which was ground truthed and updated by the Town Planning staff.

The land use survey identified different land types which were categorized into areas of agricultural, forest land, wetlands, commercial, industrial, institutional, mixed-use, recreational, residential, transitional, and utilities. The largest portion of existing land use within the Town limits is currently agricultural land according to the 2012 Land Use Land Cover data.

The Existing Land Use Map identifies a commercial core along Main and Washington Streets. The main corridor of Town boasts a large Highway Commercial District which spans the length of US 113 within Town limits. Industrial uses are concentrated along the railroad at the intersections of Delaware and Monroe Streets and Washington and Monroe Streets. There is continued development of the industrial uses located at the south end of Town along Mitchell Street, as well as a research and development center near the Indian River on State Street. Residential development began in the Town centered along the Indian River and extending through SR 24. This area is bordered by the Indian River to the east and the railroad to west and runs from Sussex Alley to Wilson Highway. The west side of US 113 has a second ring of newer development which includes new mixed residential developments, townhouses, apartments, and small single detached and semi-detached housing. The apartment communities are located along Monroe Street as well as Old Landing Road. In these areas, single-family detached housing predominates but there are some scattered apartments and townhouses as well.

GROWTH AND ANNEXATIONS

State Investment Strategies

State agencies have identified locations where state-supported growth should occur. To this end, the Delaware Office of State Planning and Coordination, with oversight by the Cabinet Committee on State Planning Issues, has developed policies and mapped these issues to indicate the State's priorities for a variety of planning, infrastructure and service investments. In April 2016, Governor Jack Markell approved the "2015 Delaware Strategies for State Policies and Spending." The State has decided that by promoting and supporting development and redevelopment in places where adequate infrastructure exists or is planned, it can manage congestion, preserve farm land, enhance community character and protect important State resources. In short, the State is striving to preserve Delaware's high quality of life. To accomplish this, State agencies must work with county and municipal governments, and all parties need guidelines to help make smart land use decisions.

The Cabinet Committee on State Planning Issues has developed a set of strategies to guide State spending and policies. Millsboro has been designated through this process as a Level 1 area with Level 2 and 3 areas surrounding the Town. A summary of State Strategies is included in this plan to demonstrate the connection between goals and objectives of the Millsboro Comprehensive Plan and the State Strategies.

Level 1 and 2 investment areas are generally







the lands most prepared for growth and where the State can make the most cost effective infrastructure improvements, including schools, roads and public safety. Level 3 lands are most often impacted by environmentally sensitive features, agricultural preservation issues or other infrastructure issues. The State supports properly phased growth in these areas that are sensitive to the context of the natural and agricultural surroundings. Due to the limits of finite financial resources, state infrastructure spending on "hard" or "grey" infrastructure such as roads, sewer, water and public facilities will generally be directed to Investment Level 1 and 2 areas during this planning period. Although Levels 1 and 2 are the strategic areas for development, Level 3 areas have the potential to be developed. The State will consider investing in these types of infrastructure in Investment Level 3 areas and when the infrastructure or facilities are logical extensions of existing systems and deemed appropriate to serve a particular area. This is intended to adequately and appropriately guide the timing, character and pattern of growth by preventing spot development that is not contiguous with existing density and infrastructure.

The State Strategies are designed to encourage state investments and policies that support and encourage a wide range of uses and densities, promote alternative transportation options, foster efficient use of existing public and private investments, and enhance community identity and integrity. In communities, the State will provide the greatest number of transportation options with an emphasis on public transportation, walking, and bicycling. The State will also make existing infrastructure and planned improvements as safe and efficient as possible. The State will direct maximum assistance to upgrades, reconstruction, treatment improvements, and system expansions within communities. Priority will be for investments in existing water and wastewater systems for improved efficiency, enhanced water quality management, and additional capacity for redevelopment, infill, and for new community development that supports efficient and orderly land use patterns. Communities are priority locations for new public uses and expanded existing uses, except

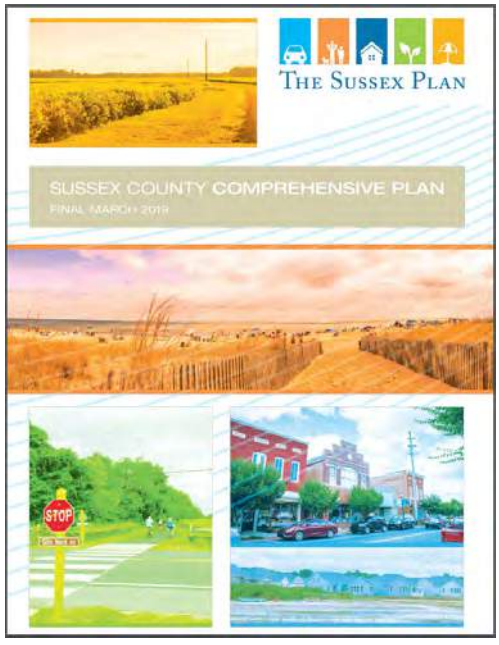
where a particular use is otherwise incompatible (such as a prison). The State should promote locations for schools and other facilities that would enhance community integrity and encourage the use of more than one transportation option. The State supports development and maintenance of recreational and open space facilities to serve community needs, including urban parks and recreational areas, waterfronts, and links between uses and throughways (greenways, bikeways, etc.).

In the areas of housing, economic development and public safety, the State has adopted policies that attempt to locate quality investments in the housing and labor markets to provide adequate housing and employment while providing a safe environment for the community as a whole. The State will promote a mixture of housing types and prices, and protection and enhancement of existing housing stock and choice. Investments in housing, community revitalization and critical public services will be used to restore and improve existing neighborhoods, promote viable downtowns and reuse of older residential, industrial and commercial zones, and to improve access to health, safety, education and other services. The State will work with communities to identify and aggressively market underused, abandoned or brownfield sites in a manner consistent with the communities' character and needs. The State will focus health and social services on under-served and disadvantaged populations, and support community-based programs for revitalization. Public safety objectives include providing adequate law enforcement services and safety, effective emergency services, and reduced vulnerability to natural and man-made hazards.

As indicated on the State Strategy Map located in the Appendix, the majority of the Town of Millsboro is designated as Level 1 investment area. The target areas for development, in the Level 1 and 2 areas, are within the Plan's recommended areas for annexation. The Town accepts the principal ideas within the State Strategies. The Plan reflects that additional growth in the Millsboro should be focused within the Town's corporate limits that are connected to public water and wastewater treatment. A portion of its adjacent land areas have been designated for Level 2 and 3. The areas immediately adjacent to Millsboro are likely to develop in the future. This area should be incorporated into the fabric of the Town as development is considered.

Sussex County Plan

The Sussex County Comprehensive Plan 2018 Update indicates that the area for future development around the Town of Millsboro has remained generally similar to what the Town considers as their future annexation area. The Sussex County Comprehensive Plan indicates that Millsboro and the surrounding areas are to be developed in a manner consistent with town center development (referred to as "planned commercial" in the Town's 2009 Plan Update). The plan indicates areas of industrial development on the east side of Millsboro that includes the Indian River power station and the Mountaire, Inc. agricultural processing plant and associated lands.



The Town's Secondary Annexation Area, that includes a large area north and west of Town, is consistent with the Counties growth area around Millsboro. This area is identified as low density. It is noted that the County

growth areas are largely developed through the use of municipal comprehensive plans in effect at the time of the County Update. It is also noted that there is an overlap between the Town of Millsboro Annexation Area and Town of Dagsboro Area of Concern, which is a potential long-term growth area.

Town Annexation Area

The Town has proposed areas for annexation and future consideration on Appendix A, Map 2 - Annexation Areas. These proposed expansion areas have been divided into two phases.

Primary Annexation Area

The Plan recommends that areas within the Primary Annexation Area are the first phase of annexation to be considered by the Town. The Primary Annexation Area totals approximately 4,166 acres of both developed and undeveloped land. The Plan designates most of these acres for residential use. The majority of the Primary Annexation area consists of a few small enclaves spread throughout the Town limits that are available for development and annexation. There are also large parcels of land just southwest of the current boundary. There are a few other prominent parcels that, if annexed into the Town, would make the area considerably larger, namely the northwest area along US 113 and the southeast portion that meets with the Dagsboro annexation boundary. The predominant future land use is residential followed by the combined commercial, open space, and mixed-use. The availability of residential acres within the Town boundaries is 1,794. Mixed-use land just west of US 113 has potential to accommodate the south western annexation areas that are largely residential. Keeping opportunities, such as the mixed-use parcels off of Old Landing Road, open to accommodate business uses would also benefit Millsboro. This portion of the annexation area has access to services without having to cross US 113 and would help alleviate traffic congestion and provide goods and services to the area.

Secondary Annexation Area

The Town recognizes areas of potential growth for residential housing as well as important environmental features to protect surrounding the community of Millsboro, and has identified an **area of study** called the 'Secondary Annexation Area.' Parcels within this area should only be considered after parcels within the primary annexation area have been developed with the exception of any parcels that are strategic for water and sewer infrastructure or efficient growth, providing existing residential developments with utilities. For example, areas adjacent or in close proximity to the Town's existing spray irrigation site along Hardscrabble Road, are being reviewed by the Town for future wastewater disposal and would be maintained as public open space. Developed parcels within the secondary annexation area will also be considered for annexation based on health and safety concerns.

Annexation would be based on the availability of infrastructure and the willingness of existing property owners. This study area has been identified to facilitate future prudent planning. A plan and map amendment will be required if any of the lands in the Secondary Annexation Area are proposed for annexation into the Town of Millsboro. The total land area of the Secondary Annexation Area is approximately 6,300 acres. Approximately 2,193 acres of the Secondary Annexation area is already developed with residential and commercial uses.

Proposed New Bypass

It was discovered after the North/South 113 study was completed that the route being surveyed called the Blue Alternative would not be an acceptable change to the current traffic patterns in the area. The State and County reviewed other possible plans and have come up with a solution they both find acceptable, known as the Yellow Alternative which will affect the intersection of US Route 113 and State Route 20. The new plan is to create a bypass just northwest of the current town boundary of Millsboro. The Yellow Alternative, which has local support, will change many land uses in that area. It is likely that it will draw in commercial and residential land use as the area grows around the interchange of US Route 113. Currently, the alternative is in the engineering phases but construction is set to be completed around 2025. More information on the bypass can be found in the Transportation section of this Comprehensive Plan.

Build-out Capacities within Town and Phase 1 Annexation Area

A density of 3.5 dwelling units per acre (du/acre) is utilized as a base planning number to estimate build-out on developable lands in town boundaries and the annexation area. It is noted that a 3.5 du/acre is generally accepted zoning yield to provide for the efficient provision of sewer and water systems, and is likely a worst case scenario factoring in environmental and physical site constraints, as well as areas necessary for rights-of-way.

There are approximately 4,351 total acres between the Town and Phase I of the annexation area that are designated for residential per this Plan. In order to accurately gauge the amount of acreage that can be built upon, the areas already built need to be factored out of the equation. This includes the acreage for Plantation Lakes and the Dukes property as well as any property currently zoned residential and under five acres. Taking 25% of the total acreage of what is left yields 1,892 acres. Multiplying this number by the dwelling units per acres calculates about 6,623 houses could be constructed. Using this number, we can estimate that the full build-out of the residential land uses in Town and new homes added in the Phase 1 residential growth area could result in a significant increase in population. Assuming that there are 2.6 persons per household it can be estimated a Phase I build-out could include a population of 17,217 additional residents. Attaining full build-out is currently not projected but would certainly increase the need to provide services to a much greater population and it can be assumed a 50-year build-out would be an aggressive estimation of time to completion.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE COASTAL POINT | Tyler Valliant

FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

Commercial Development

The Town should concentrate on professional offices, small business, and restaurants within the downtown, as defined by the Main Street and Washington Street corridor bounded by the railroad tracts in the west and Morris Street in the east. The commercial district along US 113 should retain smaller business development

from Delaware Avenue to Laurel Road and larger commercial enterprises be located on larger parcels to the south of Laurel Road. In the commercial areas along US 113, the development of service roads and alternative access should reduce the negative traffic impacts on new and existing business uses to US 113. Particular attention should be paid to the SR 24 and US 113 intersection and the crossovers along US 113.

Planned Commercial & Highway Commercial

The Millsboro Zoning Code was updated to include a new zoning category, "Planned Commercial," as recommended in the 2009 Comprehensive Plan update. As of now there are no current "Planned Commercial" parcels however, Map 4 Future Land Use identifies areas along US 113 on the northern side of Town to potentially rezone to Planned Commercial. The Highway Commercial District was updated with new permitted uses updated bulk standards, and appropriate expanded requirements for hotels due to increased interest in hotel development in Town.

Mixed Use

The Town would like to encourage more Mixed Use development, the Town has identified specific 'hubs' for mixed-use development that could work as anchors in the community. These hubs would encourage multi-modal travel, decrease the need for cross-town-trips and increase the convenience that Millsboro is already known for.

Residential

Millsboro recognizes a pattern of sustained growth in eastern Sussex County. Residential areas have been identified throughout Town and across the annexation area to accommodate projected growth.

Institutional

Important municipal facilities such as spray irrigation fields and stormwater disposal sites have been identified within this category.

Industrial & Office/Light Industry

As identified on Appendix A, Map 3 – Existing Land Use, Millsboro has a significant amount of agricultural lands in the Town limits, in the proposed annexation areas, and areas surrounding the annexation limit. Agriculture provides the context and setting for Millsboro and is therefore a key component of Town identity. A Town objective is to sustain and support the agricultural industry, and to promote agriculture as a part of the community.

It is recommended that the Town amend the zoning ordinance to permit a larger range of









agricultural businesses in the industrial zone. It is noted that rail access is important for movement of product, which is where the existing and proposed industrial uses are located. The purpose of the permitting agri-business is to foster opportunities for a wide range of agri-business uses and to enhance efforts to protect farmland while fostering greater income producing opportunities in these areas. Such uses may typically include nurseries, produce markets, and farm equipment businesses, and sale and production of agriculturally related goods and services.

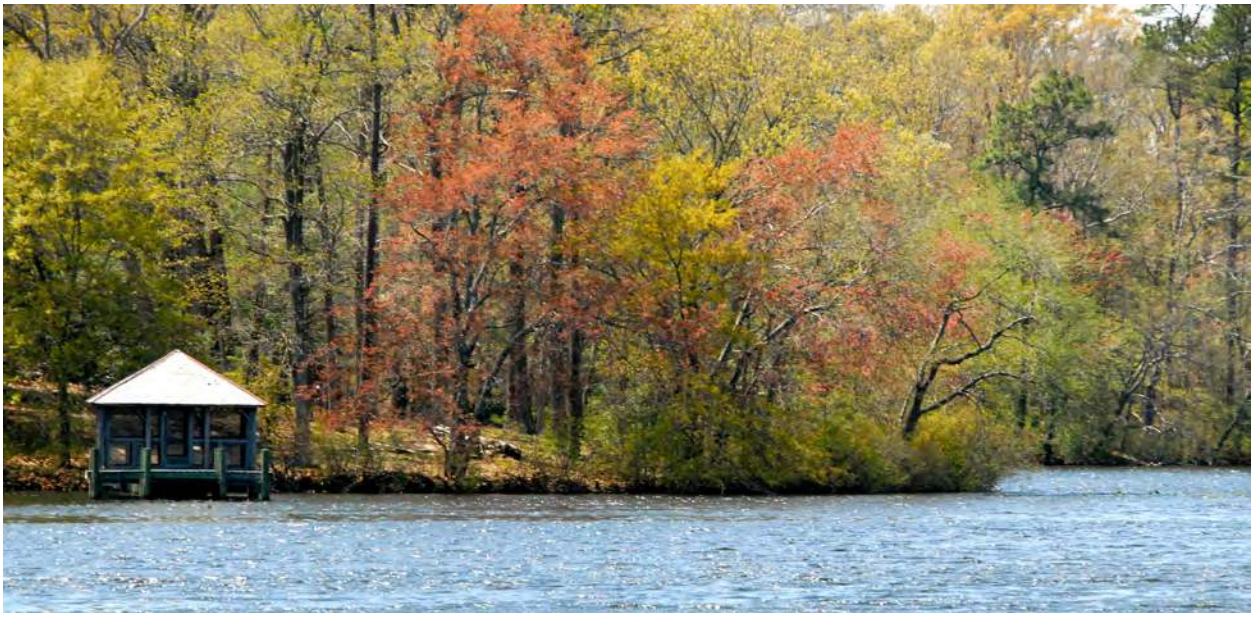
It is noted that the majority of the agricultural lands, with the exception of lands located in the northwest annexation area, are designated for residential use. The Town should assess the opportunity to provide density incentives for the agricultural lands in Town limits and the proposed annexation area in exchange for conservation easements on remaining portions of those same farms that are further removed from the town center. Density incentives would include clustering development towards the built environment or transfer of development rights. The conveyance of easements would limit future uses to farming and a wide range of related agricultural industry or agri-business uses. Appropriate regulations will need be developed to provide adequate off-street parking, sign control, and buffering to protect nearby residential areas.

Midlands Wildlife Area

The Midlands Wildlife Area is a noteworthy area within the Secondary Annexation study area. It is used for hunting, the discharge of rifles and crossbows is permitted. Given that Millsboro does not allow for the discharge of weapons within its corporate limits, except for Police training, DNREC reviewers advise the Town that there are no plans to request annexation of the Midlands Wildlife Area into the Town at this time. These lands were purchased to provide increased outdoor recreation opportunities for the public; therefore, due to the Town's current firearms code, the annexation of this land would prohibit hunters from harvesting managed wildlife in the State Wildlife Area.

Environmentally Sensitive Areas

There are multiple areas of concern within the two annexation areas that the Town should be considering when implementing plans for development and annexation. Appendix A, Map 6 - Environmental Land Use shows the southern wetland areas are under various types



of protection such as wetland, FEMA designations, and farm land preservation. These different protections are enforced by DNREC and the Army Corp of Engineers, the Millsboro Code backed by DEMA and FEMA, and the Department of Agriculture respectively.

The western portion of the map also has several parcels in farmland preservation which will make development around these areas complex. It is important that new development is sensitive and complimentary to these existing agricultural uses. It will take coordination from all the agencies involved to develop a plan for how best to utilize these specific areas to greater impact and improve the lives of those around and in the Town of Millsboro.

County & State

East of Millsboro, around the Indian River Bay, is a portion of the "Coastal Area" as designated in the Future Land Use Map in the 2018 Sussex County Comprehensive Plan Update. The "Coastal Area" is described in the County Comprehensive Plan as one of the most desirable locations in the County while also containing ecologically important resources that help absorb floodwaters and provide a place for wildlife habitat. In previous Comprehensive Plans this area was referred to as Environmentally Sensitive Developing Areas. The County felt "Coastal Areas" was a more accurate designation based on land use. The County has gone through a review process and updated or re-designated the categories with the future land use section. These areas are critical to the overall health of the Inland Bays. One of the major concerns is stormwater runoff flowing into and polluting waterways.

The State and County envision that development in this area be balanced with environment and public health concerns. As shown in the County's Future Land Use map, the "Coastal Areas" are not within Millsboro's town limits. However, the "Coastal Areas" are within the secondary annexation area of the Town. As the County continues to define the "Coastal Areas," the Town should remain aware of any updates or potential expansion to the area and the impacts it would have to the Town and its annexation area.

Appendix A, Map 4- Future Land Use contains the recommended land use plan for the Town of Millsboro. The plan recommends that Millsboro consider annexations within areas toward the northwest of Town on US 113, west of Town on SR 24 and to the southeast of Town along Old Landing Road. This policy reinforces existing patterns of development and is compatible with the layout of water and wastewater infrastructure. The plan recommends that annexation be consistent with the Town's water and sewer plans to prevent isolated development. The issues of transportation and interconnection of new and existing subdivisions will become increasingly important as development is directed into these two areas. Existing developments have problems with internal circulation and access for emergency vehicles.

As developments are proposed in these areas, attention shall be paid to the vehicular circulation and the development of new through streets. All new developments should be required to set aside land for public recreation and open space usable by all residents of Town.

Strategies

1. The Town of Millsboro recommends that future development be concentrated within the Town boundaries and immediate areas to be annexed and served by Town services.
    a. Investigate and pursue annexation of developed or developing areas to provide services and create contiguous boundaries without pockets of unincorporated areas within the Town boundaries.
    b. Encourage the annexation of vacant lands in the developed areas to allow for well planned growth with logical extension of utilities and roadway improvements.
    c. Encourage development within the Town limits of Millsboro, where it can be served by existing and planned infrastructure. The plan further recommends that Sussex County discourage medium and high-density residential, commercial and industrial development within the County without annexation into Millsboro and the adjacent area of Millsboro. Municipal water and sewer would better serve this type of development.
    d. Continue the policy of evaluating and planning for needed municipal services on properties prior to annexation.

2. Maintain a diversity of land uses.
    a. Encourage residential development of similar scale to existing development on undeveloped parcels within the boundaries of Millsboro and upon parcels immediately adjacent to Millsboro.
    b. Provide for a range of commercial uses throughout the Town. In the town center along Main Street the plan recommends the support of existing downtown commercial activities through parking and street improvements and the management of available land for office space and neighborhood commercial along SR 24 and US 113 outside of the downtown. Large-scale regional retail shall be concentrated in existing areas along US 113 due to the suitability of sites along that corridor. The plan recommends limitations on new office commercial and residential conversion on the US 113 corridor to balance the market for office and smaller scale commercial properties in favor of the Main Street corridor between Railroad Street and Dodd Street.
    c. Continue to pursue opportunities for a planned commercial development at the junction of SR 20 and US 113.

3. Coordinate with local agencies.

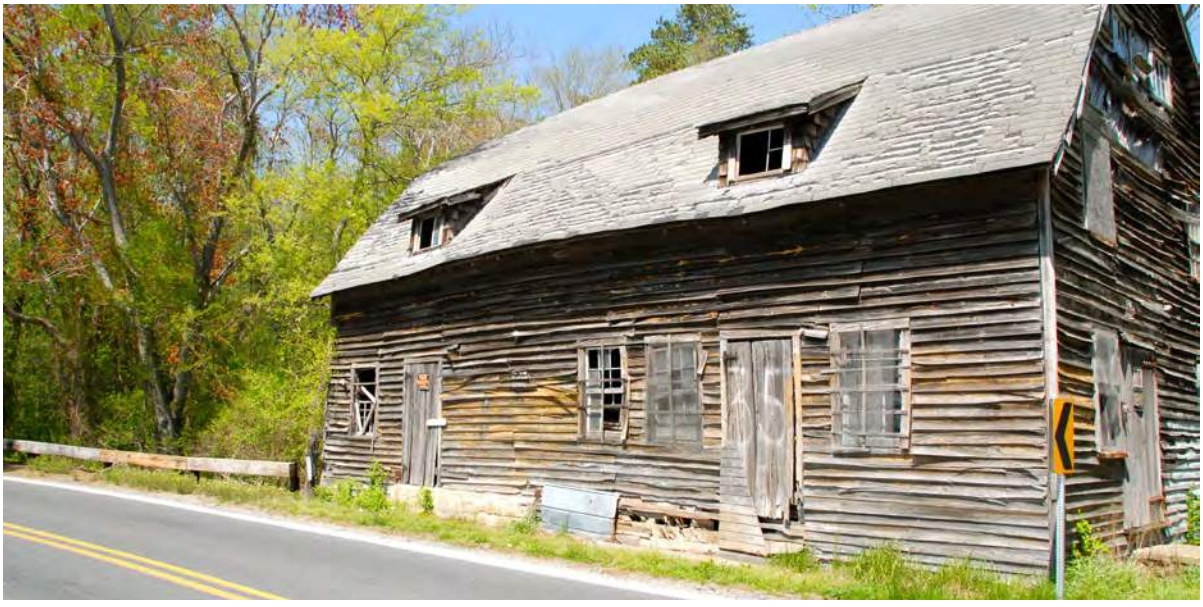
a. Encourage communication with the Indian River School District on the location of new and expanded schools and attendance patterns.

b. In the area west of Town, development has occurred outside of the municipal bounds, outside the areas designated for development by Sussex County, and outside the areas targeted for infrastructure investments by the State. The pattern of development is characteristic of a rural subdivision. The Town of Millsboro recognizes this development trend, and the Plan recommends Millsboro provide an orderly development process that will incorporate a portion of this development activity within Town limits and served by Town services. This will also provide the basis for extending public services in the direction of existing and proposed development with the possible connection to these Town public services in the future.

c, Work with the Office of State Planning Coordination on any future land use amendments and annexations.

8 HISTORICAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES

The Town of Millsboro owes its existence to its location along the Indian River. It is the first point, traveling upriver from the mouth, that the river narrows enough to build an earthen dam and bridge with the technology available in the late eighteenth century. The Town generally sets the date for its establishment as 1792, the year Elisha Dickerson dammed up the headwaters of the Indian River at the point known as Rock Hole. In fact, there had been a thriving rural farming community in existence in the area for more than a century by that date. Most early colonial residents were second or third generation residents of the Maryland and Virginia Eastern Shore. When they arrived in the area they called "Head of Indian River," the river served as the boundary between the Colony of Pennsylvania and William Penn's "Three Lower Counties Upon Delaware."



Goal

Preserve historic properties and archeological resources through regulations to manage the development, rehabilitation or redevelopment activities that impact these resources.

HISTORY CONTINUED

The area had a much earlier Native American presence. As English settlement pressures increased in the area now known as Worcester County, Maryland, Native Americans who had originally been known as Assateagues began moving from that area northwest to areas along Assawoman Bay and near the head of Indian River. Once there, they became known as "Indian River Indians," and it is probably that the river was named for the Native Americans on the southwestern side of the river encompassing much of what is now the southwestern side of Millsboro. Over the years this "Indian Land" was gradually purchased by members of the Burton Family and together with their other lands, served as a major plantation. Their home farm stood just west of US 113 near present-day Hickory Hill Road. The farm road that ran from this farm to their landing on the Indian River later became the public road known as "Old Landing Road." It is probable that surviving elements of the Native American community join with other groups, such as the Nanticokes, to form the original Indian River Hundred Nanticoke community.

Elisha Dickerson's large grist mill and sawmill were only two of more than 15 grist and sawmills that existed within a four-mile radius of Millsboro in the early nineteenth century. Originally, the name "Millsborough" applied only to the area on the northeastern side of the river where Dickerson's gristmill was located. The area got this name in 1809 when residents adopted it as an alternative to the earlier "Rock Hole Mills." The growing community on the southwestern side of the river was known as "Washington" until 1837 when the town villages became a single community under the name Millsborough, later shortened to Millsboro.

The mills were quickly augmented by other industries including a tannery, iron furnace, foundry, and a business that shipped hand-hewn cypress shingles made from the vast cypress stands in nearby Great Cypress Swamp. The foundry and forge, which operated until after the Civil War, were located at what is now known as Cupola Park. The word "Cupola" refers to the iron stack atop the brick furnace. An outgrowth of the iron business was the charcoal business that continued until shortly before the Second World War. However, the great mainstay of the local economy was the same in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as it is today – agriculture and timber. In the late 1890's two large lumber mills began operation. One of them, the Houston-White Company, continued as Millsboro's largest industry until the 1950s. The H.E. Williams granary continues to operate today to serve the agricultural activities in the area. While the Vlasic Foods, Inc. cannery, located on the edge of Town, is no longer in business the property is still being utilized by the food industry – Allen Harim Foods Company. Millsboro had always been a market center for the outlying area because of its river location; thus, it was natural for the railroad to be routed through Town hauling agricultural products to market, grain to poultry farmers, and coal to the local generator.

Since the early 1930's, the dominant agricultural product in the Millsboro area has been the broiler. The advantage of the poultry industry was that it was year-round, thus reducing the risk of a particular crop. The leading practitioner in the local poultry industry was Townsend's, Inc. The Townsend family had long been involved in lumber, strawberries, orchards, and canneries. Between the mid-1930s and mid-1950s the family gradually converted its vast Indian Swan Orchards east of Millsboro to the production of poultry and related products. By the 1940s, Townsend's Inc. had become the nation's first fully integrated poultry company managing every aspect of the business from growing feed, hatching of eggs, dressing, and shipping to market. Although Townsend's, Inc. was the largest local poultry company, there were and still are many others. The veterinary research and

development companies of Intervet and Shering-Plough have located in Millsboro, perhaps in response to the poultry and other livestock operations in the area.

Over the centuries, Millsboro has seen vast change and has adapted to shifting economic tides. Its growth continues today and has diversified to begin including trades, such as health care, tourism, and white-collar office work while retaining its steadfast connection to agricultural activities that helped found the Town. (Source: Richard B. Carter. Adapted from the Greater Millsboro Chamber of Commerce Guide, 1998-1999.)

HISTORIC & CULTURAL RESOURCES

There are several historic properties located within Town limits and in the nearby area. Properties can be deemed historic solely based on the year constructed, more than 50 years, while other properties have maintained their integrity and received national recognition for their contributions to local history. Table 8.1 provides the properties in and around Millsboro that are listed on the US Department of the Interior's National Register of Historic Places. There are four properties listed on the National Register that are located within the current Town boundaries. The Perry-Stockley House (1901), which no longer stands, was the first property to be listed in 1985. Almost 30 years later in 2014 the second property, Burton-Blackstone-Carey Store (1840) located Downtown, was nominated and listed. More recently, the Godwin School (1897) and Ball Theater (1937) became the third and fourth properties to be listed, both receiving designation in 2018. The Ball Theater is located Downtown while the Godwin School is located on the north side of Town.

There has been interest in restoing the Ball Theater (214 Main Street.) The current owners purchased the 1930s theater in 2016 with plans for a full restoration back into a theater. The 478-seat theater was opened in the late 1930s by Walter McKinley "Huck" Betts, a major league pitcher for the Philadelphia Phillies and Boston Braves in the 1920s and early 30s. Betts was also a Millsboro native. The Ball Theater operated for over 30 years, closing its doors in 1971. Since then, the building has remained mostly vacant with the

FIGURE 8.1. THE OLD MILLSTONE THEATER (THE HISTORIC BALL THEATER) IN AND PRESENT DAY



Ball Theater

This is Millsboro's first and only movie theater. The theater opened in 1937 and closed in 1971 (Delmarva Now). After almost 50 years, the movie theater is being restored, bringing back an iconic historic landmark. While permits have stalled progress, there still remains interest in the renovation of the movie theater.

more recent use by the United Faith Church congregation. The current restoration plans include the interior – stage, seating, lobby, and mezzanine – and exterior – façade, entrance, and marquee sign to resemble the original design. Millsboro's Downtown will benefit in a number of ways from the Ball Theater restoration project including a new business, a venue for arts and entertainment, and improvements to the overall streetscape.

As noted in Table 8.1, Warren's Mill has been listed on the National Register since 1978. The property is just outside of Town limits; however, the Town owns the portion of the property where the Mill is located. The Warren family donated the Mill to the Town.

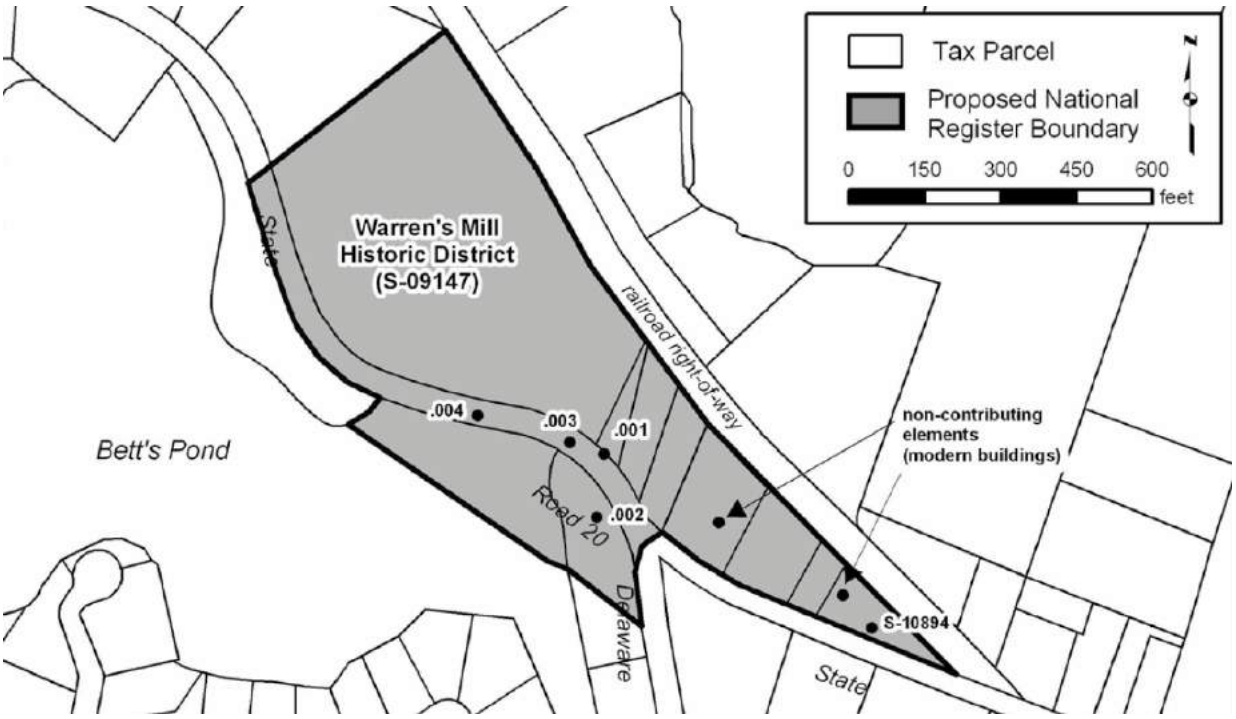
TABLE 8.1. HISTORIC RESOURCES LISTED ON THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES IN THE MILLSBORO AREA

	RESOURCE NAME	ADDRESS	AGE OF STRUCTURE	YEAR LISTED
1*	Ball Theater	214 Main Street	1937	2018
2*	Burton – Blackstone – Carey Store	103 State Street	1840	2014
3	Carey's Camp Meeting Ground	22503 Careys Camp Road	1888	1973
4	Davis, Robert, Farmhouse	S of Rt. 24	1900	1979
5*	Godwin School	23235 Godwin School Road	1897	2018
6	Harmon School	S of jct. of Rt. 24 and CR 297	1920	1979
7	Harmon, Isaac, Farmhouse	Layton Davis Road	1840	1979
8	Harmony Methodist Episcopal Church	Rt. 24, E of CR 313	1891	1979
9	Hitchens, Ames, Chicken Farm	N of Rt. 24	1910	1979
10	Indian Mission Methodist Episcopal Church and Cemetery	Jct. of Rt. 5 and CR 48	1921	1979
11	Indian Mission School	Rt. 24 between CR 312A and 313A	1948	1979
12	Indian River Archeological Complex	Address Restricted		1978
13	Johnson School	28158 John J Williams Highway	1920	1979
14*	Perry – Shockley House	219 Washington Street	1901	1985
15**	Warren's Mill	NW of Millsboro on DE 326	1910	1978
16	Wright, Warren T., Farmhouse Site	Address Restricted		1979

*Note: *indicates location within Town of Millsboro; ** Warren's MIll is located outside of Town limits but owned by Town*
Source: The Sussex Plan: Sussex County Comprehensive Plan, 2019 and DHAC CHRIS

Based on CHRIS, an online mapping resource maintained by the Delaware Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs, there are two properties within Millsboro's Town boundary that have been determined to be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. One property is a privately-owned residence located at 230 Washington Street. The second property is a retail business located at 28479 DuPont Boulevard. There are a few properties located just outside of Town limits that have also been identified as eligible for National Register listing. One of the more notable eligible listings is the Warren's Mill Historic District (See Figure 8.2). The site was identified as eligible in 1999 and resurveyed in 2009 by John Milner Associated (JMA) as part of the US 113 North/South Study. The proposed Warren's Mill Historic District includes the Mill that is currently on the National Register, the dam, spillway and trail race, and owner's house, along with an unidentified c. 1890s building.

FIGURE 8.2. THE PROPOSED WARREN'S MILL HISTORIC DISTRICT



Source: Delaware State Historic Preservation Office, Cultural Resource Survey and CHRIS

Strategies

1. The Plan recommends that historic properties and places of cultural significance be protected as development is approved.
    a. For new annexations, the Town will rely on the guidance of the State Historic Preservation Office for places of archeological significance or properties registered or eligible to be registered on the National Register of Historic Places.

2. The Town of Millsboro recognizes the historic significance of properties in the downtown area and will work with homeowners, commercial property owners, and institutional owners to preserve historically significant resources.
    a. The Plan recommends that the Town study its building and subdivision codes to preserve the historic pattern of development with respect to setbacks, building heights, building types, parking requirements, and other standards.

3. The Town should encourage owners of historic properties to take advantage of historic tax credits from the state and federal governments.
    a. The Plan recommends that the Town encourage the adaptive reuse of historic properties for commercial and office uses.
    b. The Town may also want to consider the development of a historic district to provide greater access to state and federal resources for preservation for property owners of Millsboro's historic structures.

9 | ENVIRONMENT

The Town of Millsboro benefits from a number of natural features found throughout Town including extensive areas of greenery and its proximity to water. According to the Delaware Forestry Service, the Town's urban tree canopy is about 28% of the total incorporated lands, excluding open water. That equates to about 1,035 acres. The Indian River makes up a portion of the Town's eastern boundary and there are several ponds, such as Millsboro Pond. Many of these land and water features have been identified as part of the Delaware Ecological Network (DEN). The DEN links ecologically significant core areas through natural corridors. These corridors and core areas provide high-quality habitat for plant life and wildlife contributing to species survival. With valuable natural features it is important for the Town to be proactive in protecting these resources.



Goal

Protect the natural environment and prevent the destruction of natural resources through the preservation of ecological systems and mitigation of development impact on the natural environment.

TOTAL MAXIMUM DAILY LOADS (TMDLS) AND THE INLAND BAY WATERSHED

Under Section 303(d) of the 1972 Federal Clean Water Act (CWA), states are required to identify all impaired waters and establish total maximum daily loads (TMDLs) to restore their beneficial uses (e.g., swimming, fishing, and drinking water). A TMDL defines the amount of a given pollutant that may be discharged to a water body from point, nonpoint, and natural background sources and still allows attainment or maintenance of the applicable narrative and numerical water quality standards. By reducing these pollutants to the level specified by the TMDL(s) the community will ensure that a water body meets the water quality criteria and goals in the State Water Quality Standards.

A Pollution Control Strategy (PCS) is an implementation strategy that identifies the actions necessary to systematically reduce the pollutant loading rate for a given water body and meet the TMDL reduction requirements specified for that water body, ultimately leading to the restoration of the waterbody's designated beneficial uses. A PCS encourages the application of best management practices, such as wetland buffers and green-technology stormwater management, to help reduce and/or mitigate nutrient and bacterial pollutant runoff. The pollutants specifically targeted for reduction in the Inland Bays watershed are nutrients (e.g., nitrogen and phosphorus) and bacteria. The PCS for the Inland Bays was approved on November 2008 and is now a regulatory directive containing enforceable provisions.

The Town of Millsboro is located within the greater Inland Bays drainage. The Inland Bays drainage is assigned a range of nutrient (e.g., nitrogen and phosphorus) and bacterial TMDL load reduction requirements that, as mentioned previously, must be met in order to meet the State Water Quality Standards (See Table 9.1).

TABLE 9.1. TMDL NUTRIENT (NITROGEN AND PHOSPHORUS) AND BACTERIA REDUCTION REQUIREMENTS FOR THE INLAND BAYS (HIGH-NUTRIENT REDUCTION ZONE) WATERSHED

INLAND BAYS DRAINAGE (HIGH NUTRIENT)	N-REDUCTION REQUIREMENTS	P-REDUCTION REQUIREMENTS	BACTERIA REDUCTION REQUIREMENTS
Indian River Bay Watershed	85%	65%	40% Fresh 17% Marine

WELLHEAD PROTECTION AND EXCELLENT RECHARGE AREAS

DNREC oversees the State's Source Water Assessment Program (SWAP), which is primarily aimed at protecting water supplies from contamination. Central well protection areas and excellent recharge areas have been designated by DNREC, as shown on Map 6 Environmental Features. There are two wellhead protection areas in the Town and immediate surrounding; one in the downtown area at the Town water plan facility, from Main Street to Sussex Alley and one at the southeastern Town limits. The majority of the later is in the Town Primary Annexation Area. There are also two significant areas of excellent recharge found within the Town boundaries, and one located just outside the Town's western border in the Secondary Annexation Area. These recharge areas are important for the role they play in mitigating flooding and maintaining the quantity and quality of water that recharges into the underground aquifers from which the Town draws its drinking water. Impervious surfaces in the excellent recharge areas should be minimized and techniques should be used to maximize recharge.

In 2007 the Town adopted a Wellhead Protection Overlay (WP) District to protect the public water supply from land uses which pose a threat to the quality and quantity of the groundwater being extracted from wells, which serve public water systems. The WP Overlay District applies to all land uses located or proposed within the area delineated as the wellhead protection overlay zone on the official zoning map of the Town. The ordinance created a hierarchy of classified districts including 1) Immediate Recharge Area is land within the "wellhead areas" as identified in Map 6 Environmental Features; 2) Primary Recharge Areas are located within the "excellent recharge areas" as shown in Map 2 and include aquifer areas identified as potential new municipal well sites; and 3) Secondary Recharge Area is land located within the "good recharge areas" as shown on Map 6 and considered areas that provide good groundwater recharge. It should be noted the mapping associated with this ordinance utilizes DNREC's data. Key elements of the ordinance are to protect the wellhead areas include limited permitted uses and lot specifications including a maximum lot coverage restriction. The ordinance also includes an extensive application and site plan review process. Applications for certain types of activities, mainly those associated with potential sources of contamination, require additional information for the site plan review process. The ordinance includes requirements for construction and demolition activity, stormwater management, and hazardous materials to name a few.

FLOODPLAIN

The Environmental Features Map displays the 100-year floodplains per the Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) prepared by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). In addition, the Town established a flood hazard protection measures in the zoning and subdivision codes that restrict building and implement appropriate construction safeguards the floodplain. These measures will continue to be enforced through the site plan and building permit approval process. The Town updated their Floodplain Ordinance in 2015 in accordance with revisions made by FEMA, DEMA, and DNREC.

WETLANDS

Regulatory protection of wetlands (tidal and nontidal) is mandated under Section 404 provisions of the Federal Clean Water Act through the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). Certain other wetlands (mainly tidal areas) are accorded additional regulatory protection under Title 7 Chapter 66 provisions of the State of Delaware's Code.

It is noted that Town of Millsboro code currently requires all applicants for new commercial and/or residential development to submit to the Town a copy of the development site plan sowing the extent of State-regulated wetlands, any streams and ditches and any USACE approved wetlands.

STORMWATER

The Town performs minor roles in stormwater management such as of construction oversight and inspections. The Town's consulting engineer reviews sediment and stormwater management plans in new developments, and further coordinates with the Sussex Conservation District (SCD) to ensure compliance with Delaware's Sediment and Stormwater Regulations. Ownership and maintenance of stormwater ponds in residential developments is the responsibility of homeowners' associations under the State regulations with oversight provided by SCD. In addition, the SCD inspects the construction and compliance of approved plans and conducts annual inspections of permanent stormwater facilities.



Currently, the Town experiences minor issues with flooding and failing of existing infrastructure. In addition, some older sections of Town outside of the downtown do not have stormwater piping, as runoff from pavements seeps into grassy areas. The Town has identified some areas that continue to see flooding and drainage issues. In the downtown area tidal flooding occurs at Cupola Park and Hunters Point, as well as drainage issues along Tiger Branch, behind Millsboro Middle School, due to debris build-up in a stormwater pipe. Drainage issues also persist along Iron Branch at the intersection of Mitchell Street and the pinch point at Railroad Bridge. On the west side of Route 113, drainage issues occur along Delaware Avenue near the intersection with Radish Road. A new development, Alderleaf Meadows, is approved. Drainage issues in this area and along East Monroe Street should be improved with the new development.

A town-wide comprehensive stormwater management plan does not currently exist. As a result, the stormwater infrastructure is fragmented, flooding issues will arise with the requirement of new sidewalks, and pollutants may be more prone to enter both surface waters and the underground aquifers.

The Town recognizes that most of the statewide and local stormwater management regulations in the past have focused on regulating new development. However, many stormwater runoff problems are associated with existing developments that were built prior to the adoption of the recent source water protection and non-point pollution control strategies. The Town further recognizes that traditional stormwater management technologies significantly alter the natural hydrology of a site, which has regional impacts. An additional factor is the frequency in major storm and weather events. The increase in, and number of, severe rain storms has contributed to more recent flooding issues.

CLIMATE CHANGE

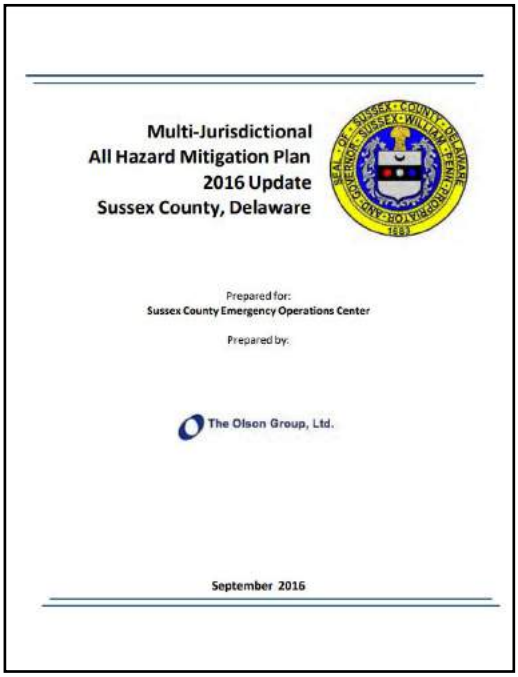
As part of the planning process it is important to consider potential impacts due to environmental changes. Sussex County and DNREC have identified three vulnerabilities due to climate change – sea level rise, increased heavy precipitation events and rising temperatures. Even though these threats are typically associated with coastal communities these named vulnerabilities can still affect inland communities, just to a different degree. Increase in temperatures are a concern as they affect public safety and in the long-term could affect infrastructure. Sea level rise affects all tidal bodies of water and can lead to inundation of infrastructure and natural areas. Severe rain events are becoming more frequent and could lead to increased flooding events.

For the Town of Millsboro, sea level rise and increases in rain events are of concern. There are a few low-lying areas along the Indian River that see more severe flooding that other areas in Town. In particular, the neighborhood of Hunters Point and Cupola Park both have seen an increase in issues related to flooding due to their location along the Indian River. Another low area along Tiger Branch, around Mitchell Street, sees occasional flooding issues. Then there are areas that may not have any existing issues but could be vulnerable to future storms. One of those areas of concern in Millsboro is dam at Millsboro Pond. Heavy rain brings nuisance flooding, typically found in the older sections of Town, where drainage infrastructure is vulnerable. While flooding issues are minimal at this time, except for the named areas, it is predicted the number of severe weather events will continue to increase. This means, if not addressed, flooding could become a more serious issue.

A separate but related issue is the effects on transportation during major storm events. Sussex County has been affected by two major hurricanes, Irene and Sandy. Many of the coastal towns evacuated in anticipation of hurricanes. For residents leaving beach communities such as Bethany Beach and Fenwick Island, as well as Ocean City, Maryland, the primary evacuation routes include Route 26, Route 20 and Route 54. All these roads eventually connect to US 113. The Town of Millsboro is one of many areas that has been identified by Sussex County as a "Potential Congestion Area" during evacuations.

HAZARD MITIGATION

A hazard mitigation plan was developed by Sussex County in cooperation with several other agencies that highlights in-depth statistical data gathered for the region concerning many of the various types of hazards that occur during storms. Everything from annual rainfall to tornado frequency can be found in the comprehensive document. There are many different images, charts, tables, and maps showing all the ways in which storms can cause damage to a property and buildings. The Town of Millsboro may choose to consult this document in further planning efforts.


Multi-Jurisdictional
All Hazard Mitigation Plan
2016 Update
Sussex County, Delaware

Prepared for:
Sussex County Emergency Operations Center

Prepared by:

The Olson Group, Ltd.

September 2016

Strategies

1. The Town should continue to enforce the existing environmental protection ordinances and regulations through the site plan review and building permit approval process.

    a. The Town should initiate discussion with DNREC and SCD to develop Low Impact Development (LID) and Stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs) in the Town that minimize stormwater runoff impacts within the Inland Bays watershed. These efforts should strive to manage stormwater runoff in the most efficient and effective manner while respecting natural features and constraints.

2. It is recommended that a comprehensive approach be taken to reduce pollutants into water bodies and to improve water quality and the natural environment. To meet these TMDL requirements and overall environmental protection goals, it is recommended that the Town evaluate and adopt ordinance(s), which would:

    a. Allow for the use of "green-technology" storm water management in lieu of "open- water" stormwater management ponds whenever practicable. See the stormwater management recommendations below for more discussion on stormwater Best Management Practices.
    b. Require the calculation for surface imperviousness for all commercial and residential development.
    c. Require upland buffer from the landward edge of all wetlands, streams and water bodies. Said buffers are typically 50 to 100 feet and planted with native vegetation.

3. It is recommended that the Town continue to coordinate with the Sussex Conservation District in ensuring new developments adequately address how stormwater quantity and quality treatment will be achieved.

4. It is recommended that the Town investigate the need for a Town-wide drainage study that identifies any issues that need to be mitigated.

    a. The drainage study will provide an inventory of facilities and locate problem areas, such as flooding, infrastructure decay, lack of oversight and maintenance. Information from a study could be used to develop a capital improvements plan for specific improvements and would further identify sources of funding including, but not limited to developer impact fees, grants and loans.
    b. Resulting strategies and recommended improvements should include the preservation of large, continuous areas of open space, groundwater recharge areas, wellhead areas and critical ecological areas, such as wetlands, floodplains and riparian corridors
    c. Coordinate with Sussex County and DNREC on the drainage study.

10 COMMUNITY SERVICES

The Town of Millsboro offers several municipal services to its residents which makes it an attractive place to live. While the Town already offers robust police and administrative services, both departments are undergoing moves and renovations which will enhance their capacity and ability to serve the local community.



Goal

Continue to be a center for educational, medical, and other institution uses. Encourage the siting of school and other public facilities inside the Town limits where and when appropriate.

POLICE AND SAFETY

The Millsboro Police Station is located at 307 Main Street and houses 17 staff members. There is a Chief, Clerk, Victim Services Specialist, two Police Detectives, and support staff patrolmen. Of the eight police forces throughout the State that carry the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) only two reside in Sussex County. Millsboro's Police Department is one of the two Sussex County departments that are a Nationally Accredited Police Force. The officers have a total of 12 patrol vehicles at the ready (3 are unmarked vehicles) and respond to calls with a combination of computer programs that help them determine where services are most needed. Some of the officers specialize in specific tasks such as the Criminal Investigation Unit, Accident Reconstruction Officer, and Community Outreach who all take specialize training for these roles. The Department also oversees the placement of School Resource Officers for the Indian River School District.

The Police Department stays connected with the public through an up-to-date website and various social media and remains active in the community through outreach and other initiatives. One initiative involves the implementation of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) throughout the downtown area. The International CPTED Association (ICA) defines Crime Prevention through Environmental Design as a multi-disciplinary approach for reducing crime through management of urban spaces and built environments. Pursuing this objective will involve creating what is known as Designing Out Crime a concept in which towns work with law enforcement to create a sense of community among inhabitants, increase visibility, and reduce opportunities for crime and fear of crime (cpted.net). Some ways to accomplish this involve installing new or updated lighting on streetscapes, increase the amount of wayfinding and signage available to the public, and making the downtown a more pedestrian friendly area. To implement these improvements, the Police department should investigate alternative funding opportunities, such as Energize Delaware and Division of Climate, Coastal & Energy for street lighting projects.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

The Millsboro Fire Department plays an active role in keeping the community safe. Between responding to vehicular collisions and preventing or extinguishing fires in the area, the volunteer force keeps active. Currently, there are 80 active volunteer firefighters, nine EMS ambulance





associates, fire police, and ladies' auxiliary members. They maintain and provide 19 different state of the art firefighting apparatus that serve to provide safety for both those in need and the volunteers. The Fire Department is headquartered on State Street right in the heart of Millsboro which decreases their response times to calls.

TOWN HALL

Millsboro's Town Hall has a diverse role to play in the operation of daily activity within Town. The internal structure delegates tasks so that the Town can be efficient and practical in its responsibilities. There is a Town Manager, Assistant Town Manager, Director of Finance and Technology, Town Clerk, and three Administrative Staff. The Director of Public Works also serves as the Code Enforcement Official as well as the Zoning Official. In 2020, the Town added a fulltime Town Engineer to their staff. Many Town Hall officials hold multiple positions and each of these roles plays an integral part in keeping the Town ahead of possible issues. These precautions create an open forum for the residents to access information about the Town's future.

As the Town continues to grow and it adapts to a growing list of needs from its residents, the Millsboro Police Department is exploring options to relocate. An undeveloped, 2.5 acres parcel at West Railroad Avenue, property adjacent to the current police station, as well as a proposal in which the police department would relocate to the Millsboro Town Center, sharing that facility on Wilson Highway with Town Hall staff are all options under consideration as a possible site for the department, currently based in cramped quarters at its 307 Main St.





POST OFFICE

The Millsboro post office is located at 100 Main Street in the downtown area and bounded by S. Central Alley and Railroad Avenue. It is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. every day of the week and from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturdays. The office is closed on Sundays and National Holidays.

MILLSBORO PUBLIC LIBRARY

In 1973 the Town of Millsboro opened its first public library. The opening of the first library was facilitated by the efforts of several individuals including the Millsboro Women's Civic Club and a generous grant from the governor. Since that time the library has moved to a new location. The current library sits on West State Street and is open Monday through Saturday. The new building was completed and opened its doors to the public October 6, 1997 and has a total of 6,000 square feet of space.

SENIOR SERVICES

Donald and Florence Mortlock founded the Indian River Senior Center in 1970, which originally was based out of St. Marks Episcopal Church in Millsboro. Growing membership made the Senior Center reach out for a larger space and by the end of 1972 they had incorporated and purchased a parcel of land in Millsboro. They formed a partnership with the Town and in the mid 1980's, when the building was complete, sold the building to the Town for the original cost. Currently the center is located at 214 Irons Avenue behind the Wawa on 113 where it moved to in April 2009 due to another increase of membership. Throughout the week seniors can take part in activities ranging from aerobics and line dancing to tax preparation and defensive driving classes.

There are also three CHEER centers in the area. None of the Centers are located in the Town Limits. However, they are close enough to provide their services to Millsboro residents. There is one located just south of Georgetown along US 113 as well as one in the Long Neck area which carries the Millsboro zip code. Another center in close proximity to the Town is in Roxana just southeast of Frankford.

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Indian River School District

The Town is within the Indian River School District, which has its administrative office in Selbyville. Geographically, it is the largest non-technical school district in the State covering approximately 360 square miles. The District consists of seven elementary schools, three middle schools, two high schools, two alternative schools, an arts magnet school and an outdoor education center. Its schools serve more than 10,000 students and its workforce is among the largest in the State. The District has more than 900 teachers and 200 paraprofessionals.

Facilities

The public schools serving the Town are East Millsboro Elementary School, Millsboro Middle School, Sussex Central Senior High School, and Sussex Technical High School. Of these, East Millsboro Elementary and Millsboro Middle School are part of the Indian River School District and within the Town limits. Student enrollment as of September 30, 2019 is as follows: East Millsboro Elementary – 864, Millsboro Middle School – 752, Sussex Central – 1,661, and Sussex Technical – 1,240.

The attendance area for East Millsboro Elementary School is quite large, encompassing a small area to the east and northeast of the Town and a large area to the south and southeast including Gumboro and beyond to the Maryland State Line. The northern attendance boundary for East Millsboro Elementary roughly follows SR 20. The Millsboro Middle School, located on East State Street, recently underwent a major renovation. The Sussex Central High School is located on 158.6 acres across from the Stockley Center immediately to the north of Millsboro. Georgetown provides wastewater service to this new high school which will need to be in consideration if Millsboro would like to annex the parcel into Town. The Howard T. Ennis School, also located in Georgetown, serves special needs students from throughout the Indian River School District.

The Indian River School District currently has plans to build a new larger Sussex Central Highschool adjacent to the existing school. It will be important for the Town to work with the Indian River School District for any annexations due to potential overlap areas. The future growth of the Town will also need to accommodate school age children to support the increase in student population. Collaboration between the Town and the IRSD will play a major role in the successful annexation of any new parcels.

Private Schools

There are several private schools in the Millsboro area in relative proximity to the Town. The Epworth Christian School has approximately 150 students. The Gigglebugs Early Learning Center accommodates children ages 2 months to 5th grade. There is also the George Washington Carver Academy south of Town and the Harmon School in Long Neck.

Institutions of Higher Learning

Residents of the Town have access to institutions of higher education, including the Beebe School of Nursing, University of Delaware and College of Marine Studies in Lewes. The Delaware Technical Community College in Georgetown is home to the Partnership Center offering courses for the University of Delaware, Delaware State College, and Wilmington College.

MEDICAL FACILITIES

There are several medical buildings within the Town boundaries including: Multi-Special Healthcare, Mid Sussex Medical Center, Pearl Clinic, Interim Healthcare, Healthcare Associates, Beebe Rehab Services, Beebe Healthcare Walk-In Care, Renal Care Center, and Peninsula Regional Family Medicine. The nearby hospitals include Beebe Hospital in Lewes (17 miles north east), Nanticoke Hospital in Seaford (19 miles west), Peninsula Regional Medical Center (PRMC) in Salisbury, MD (25 miles southwest), Atlantic General Hospital in Berlin, MD (20 miles south) and the Bayhealth Sussex Campus (22 miles north).

Plans are currently being developed to expand medical services in Town. Salisbury based, Peninsula Regional Medical Center, hospital is looking to expand and support the area's growing population. Right now, officials are looking at annexing a piece of land along Route 113 to build an ambulatory campus. That proposal may include services that support acute care or hospital care, from medical offices to labs to imaging.

Strategies

1. The Plan recommends that the Town coordinate with the school district to find suitable sites for new schools within the Town limits or at a minimum served by public facilities of the Town.
    a. The Plan recommends that Town Council consider requiring the setting aside of land for schools, or a fee in lieu of, as a condition of annexation for new major development proposals.

2. It is recommended that the Town assess options for offering targeted services to meet the needs of senior citizens and the rest of the growing population through strengthening police presence, fire safety, and accessibility for all its residents.
    a. Work with the Indian River School District to secure funding for school expansion and renovation.
    b. Work with the Indian River School District to identify locations for future school construction, particularly west of US 113 within the existing or future Town limits.
    c. Continue to support the Millsboro Police force continue to uphold and commit to the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) standards and recognition.
    d. Consider expanding lighting downtown to be consistent with measures that alleviate or prevent crime and include wayfaring signage into the budget for the downtown area.
    e. Continue to support the aging population of Millsboro with senior citizen involvement initiatives. Assess their needs through targeted outreach and a possible partnership with local communities and/or the Institute for Public Administration.

11 | OPEN SPACE & RECREATION

The Town of Millsboro recognizes the need to provide parks, open spaces, and recreation facilities and opportunities to its residents. Millsboro has developed standards within the Zoning Code by defining an Open Space District that the Town refers to for the creation of adequate parks and open spaces. The Town has also cooperated with other organizations to provide these amenities. Incorporation of open space, greenways, and recreation facilities into the design of new development and the provision of adequate facilities and space for existing residents are main priorities for Millsboro. Also, it is a high priority for commercial, manufacturing, and office parks to use environmental and visually appealing green spaces and landscaping screening.



Goal

Maintain and expand open space and recreation facilities to meet current and future needs. Develop a local park on recently acquired parcels by the Town on the west side of US 113. Continue to enforce open space requirements as part of major residential subdivisions, and work towards creating a connected open space network.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The Town has worked with the State of Delaware, individuals, and non-profit organizations to develop areas for recreation and open space. Outdoor recreation in the Town has increased and as the municipality grows additional open space and recreational opportunities will be added. The existing facilities within the Town for outdoor recreation include Cupola Park, Millsboro Pond and boat launch area, W.B. Atkins Memorial Park, the Plantation Lakes Golf Course, and the fields associated with Millsboro Middle School. Passive open space exists in various residential developments as well. There are areas near the Town library and surrounding the municipal utility properties that also serve the residents in this capacity. The Town is currently developing plans for a new 10-acre park for passive recreation on route 24, west of US 113.

During the Comprehensive Plan open house held for the town in October 2018, participants noted the strengths of Town were strong feelings of safety, community, and being family oriented. The participants all noted how effective the pedestrian mobility and recreational facilities have been in creating the feeling of a safe community in particular parts of Town and that they would like to see this integrated into future development.

Another Comprehensive Plan survey was conducted as part of the Town's Stars and Stripes event during the fourth of July weekend in 2018. There were many participants, most of which either frequent the Town or live within it, noted that there are key areas where recreation would thrive if infrastructure was improved. Most notably was the Downtown area which participants said they would like to see more trails and walkways and that overall it felt safe. Overall participants vied for better outdoor seating and improved appearance as top priorities for the Town.

Existing Parks and Recreational Resources

Cupola Park is a waterfront park at the end of Morris Street on the Indian River. The park features a pavilion with picnic tables and barbeque grills, a playground, boat slips, shoreline fishing, and a pavilion for entertainment. The park is also home to the largest cypress tree in Delaware. The park is centrally located and is within walking distance of the downtown area (See Map 7 Open Space and Recreation).

Millsboro Pond is owned and made accessible to the public by the Town, most notably Cupola Park, and is an expansive area that provides a range of water-based recreation. It has enough depth and width for various watercrafts yet is calm enough to be a comfortable place for non-motorized recreation such as kayaking and canoeing. It has increasingly become a part of the scope for downtown improvement which includes the natural vistas and beauty of the pond. It is also home to a brand new boat and kayak launch.





The *W.B. Atkins Memorial Park* is located on State Street. The Park includes six ballfields that are used for Little League and the site for some of the community's large outdoor events. Atkins Park can accommodate thousands of people for fairs, carnivals, tournaments, concerts, etc. The park features electrical service, lighting, sound, and indoor restrooms. Two portable stages are available, and other equipment can be brought in with permission.

The *Plantation Lakes Golf Course* is the centerpiece of the Plantation Lakes Community. It currently has nine holes, a practice driving range, and short game area which will be expanded upon as the rest of the community is developed. Once completed, the course will feature 18 holes with multiple water features, sand bunkers, and other features to challenge golfers. The course is surrounded by the multi-modal paths built into the community which makes bicycle, pedestrian, and cart travel possible on all portions of the course.

A *dog park* just recently opened on a three-acre parcel near the Brandywine Apartments and the Millsboro Municipal Building. The dog park was pursued as the result of a public survey asking residents about desired amenities and use of public open space.

On top of having various open space and recreation throughout the Town in private communities, there are also open spaces around several municipal buildings which provide safe areas for activity for the residents. The Town acquired two parcels west of Route 113 for the designation of future parkland. One site is located near Handy Road and the other is located on SR 24 at the Dukes property. The property along SR24 is proposed to provide active recreation and will be developed at a later date to provide recreation amenities the growing western side of Town. The Handy road property has not been developed yet and will become additional recreation for the Town in years to come.

OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

The Town, through this planning process, has determined that a need exists for additional open space and recreation areas. The Town has adopted standards for open space that require new residential developments set aside land for open space and recreational uses. The amount of open space that is required is based on a sliding scale, based on the size of the residential project. The Town currently implements these provisions by requiring the reservation of open space, recreation, and other public facilities as a part of the site plan approval process for all single- family, two-family, and multiple-family residential developments.

The Town has also amended the Zoning Code by adding an Open Space District. The purpose of this district is to provide a suitable classification for public or private sites permanently designated for parks, open spaces, or recreational sites; and to protect the public health and safety by limiting lands that are subject to flooding or other hazards to open space uses. Key elements to achieve these purposes include provisions for principle, accessory and conditional uses, as well as permitted use, and buffer requirements to ensure that the land set aside is always utilized for recreation and conservation purposes. To date the Open Space District includes the parcel along Route 24, lands along Route 20, and Cupola Park. The Town can look to expand this use in the future.



FORESTLAND PRESERVATION

The areas surrounding the Town of Millsboro are rich with forestland. Currently, the Town has no requirements through either zoning or other ordinances that protects these important features. As the Town grows it would be beneficial to make provisions for the creation of an ordinance to address such issues. It is in the best interest of the Town and future generations to protect and preserve these resources. The Town would protect these areas through the development of a forest land preservation ordinance or tree preservation standards to be incorporated into the site plan and subdivision standards contained in the Town's Zoning and Subdivision codes. Such tree preservation requirements can aid in preserving and increasing the Town's existing tree canopy and be beneficial in countering the impacts of climate change and help future development to be more aesthetically pleasing.

STATEWIDE COMPREHENSIVE OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN

The state of Delaware produces a statewide comprehensive outdoor recreation plan (SCORP) that is designed to address the recreational needs for current and future populations in predetermined areas. This plan is updated every 10 years in accordance with statewide policy. For the purpose of refining data and research findings, Delaware has been divided into five planning regions under the planning procedures of SCORP. These regions were first adopted in 2002 in an effort to track recreational trends. Regions 4 and 5 divide western and eastern Sussex County, the state's largest and fastest growing county. Millsboro is in Region 5, the south eastern planning region that includes much of the coastal beach areas south of, and including, Cape Henlopen. Development patterns, population, and census tracts were initially used to formulate the regional boundaries. An analysis of the survey response data was performed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences as well as proprietary software developed by Responsive Management. The results were weighted so that the sample size for the regions and oversampled municipalities matched the actual populations for the corresponding areas. Additionally, the results were weighted by demographic and geographic characteristics so that the sample was representative of Delaware residents. Specifically, the survey concentrated on assessing the respondents' view of five content areas:

- Importance of, and participation in, outdoor recreation
- Reasons for participating in outdoor recreation
- Ratings of facilities and opinions on specific aspects of facilities
- Accessing facilities
- Priorities for funding and policy making decisions

The SCORP was most recently updated in 2018. Similar surveys were conducted in 2002, 2008, and 2011 and were used for comparison and to give insight into outdoor recreational trends. The survey has also indicated that not only is there a demand for recreational activities but that the demand is increasing with each year. The plan identified the priority activities in Region five which can be seen in Table 11.1 - SCORP Region 5 for Millsboro and the surrounding area. The Town provides a high level of these recreational activities and should look to implement other ways to provide recreation to complement the already existing infrastructure.

TABLE 11.1. SCORP REGION 5

ACTIVITY	PARTICIPATION
Walking or Jogging	81%
Beach Swimming	79%
Fishing	66%
Visiting Historic Sites	65%
Bicycling	64%

Strategies

1. The Town should continue to review the plans for open space and recreational facilities.

a. Continue to enforce the open space and recreation requirements, as well as the buffer, screening, and landscaping requirements as part of the site plan review and building permit approval process.

b. Evaluate the zoning and subdivision regulations to ensure that required open space and recreational facilities built as part of new developments are appropriately located, accessible and meet the needs of all residents, not just the new residents in the subdivision.

c. Adopt an ordinance that requires full or partial cash payment to be made by the developer in lieu of a full or partial dedication of land when such dedication is proven infeasible or not appropriate. The fee should be equivalent to the appraised value of land area required. The land area value shall be based on the appraisal prepared for the developer to secure construction financing.

d. Formalize the parks and recreation committee to administer and evaluate open space needs. Among other things, the committee could make recommendations to council on dedications, payments in lieu of and facility financing. The committee could also administer organized sports, senior activates, health and wellness programs, and the operation and maintenance of park facilities.

2. Expand recreational facilities making greater use of existing open space, waterways, amenities and facilities.

a. Expand recreational use of Millsboro Pond. Evaluate potential public access points for non-motorized recreational boating opportunities and water trails.

b. Explore options to develop partnerships and agreements with the Millsboro Library to utilize the lands behind the library as parkland with outdoor reading pavilions, non- motorized recreational boat launches and/or observation piers, and the U.S. Postal Service to place amenities, such as a fountain, clock, and/or park benches, on the land adjacent to the current Post Office.

c. Improve the Town Owned open space west of US 113 with low impact activities, such as nature and exercise trails.

d. Explore options for partnering organizations to establish a seasonal farmers market in Town, possible locations could include the future Town Hall, the present location of Town Hall, Cupola Park, and W.B. Atkins Memorial Park.

3.As the Town's population increases, evaluate the need for a Town funded Park and Recreation Department to provide for organize sports, senior activates, health and wellness programs, and management of park facilities.

12 TRANSPORTATION

Millsboro is one of the fastest growing towns in the state of Delaware. Furthermore, its central location as a gateway to Eastern Sussex County has placed increased pressure on the local transportation network. The future of the Town will be shaped by the quality of transportation facilities and interconnection between land use decisions and the provision of appropriate transportation investments. The regional development outside of Town limits will continue to have a profound impact on seasonal vehicular traffic and coordination with the surrounding municipalities will be paramount. The importance of the US 113 corridor for transportation and as a tool for economic development will continue in the future and, therefore, the capacity and access to US 113 will need to be preserved. SR 24 provides a vital east-west link between western Sussex County, US 113, and the beach communities. Increased traffic on this roadway, which bisects the Town, will need to be managed to preserve the quality of life of the Town.

As Millsboro continues to grow it anticipates that residents will mainly meet their transportation needs through motorized vehicles, but the Town will encourage walking and bicycling for local trips through an increased focus on providing and maintaining safe pedestrian and cycling infrastructure.



TRANSPORTATION GOALS

- Maintain and improve the existing transportation and circulation pattern within the Town.
- Encourage mobility friendly designs that interconnect new development and the existing street pattern. The development of new roads, pedestrian walkways, and bicycle connections should provide for alternative routes to relieve congestion from internally generated trips.
- Connect land use and transportation decisions to preserve the capacity of existing and future transportation investments.
- Support the Town's and region's economic well-being by preserving and enhancing the internal transportation network and connections to the regional transportation network.
- Protect the circulation of traffic and capacity of US 113 and State Routes 24, 20, and 30.
- Fill in gaps in the current pedestrian network and expand it to appropriate locations.
- Expand the current transportation offerings in Town.
- Continue to work with the Sussex County Association of Towns, Sussex County government, and the Delaware Department of Transportation in implementing the county and statewide long-range plans. Continue to present and monitor input in transportation plans that affect transportation routes through Millsboro.
- Enhance streetscaping and improve sidewalk conditions downtown.

One indicating factor in the overall effectiveness of traffic design is the amount of time it takes residents to get to work. This distance can effectively gauge how people travel to work and has a great influence on congestion at traffic heavy intersections. It also can dictate whether or not populations are willing to take jobs or live within an area. The significance of this can be seen in the tables below.

As shown in Table 12.1 – Travel Time to Work, data from the 2017 American Community Survey indicates that about 41% of Millsboro residents have a commute of less than 20 minutes. This commute would be in the immediate Millsboro region and includes places such as Georgetown and Selbyville. For the majority of workers, 49%, commute times vary between 20 and 40 minutes. When combined with drivers that have a commute under 20 minutes, 90 percent of residents get to work within approximately 40 minutes or less. Only 10% of individuals have to drive more than 40 minutes from home to make it to their place of employment, which is a much lower number than the national average of nearly 20%. Overall, commute times in Millsboro have shifted to be more centralized around 30-40 minutes. Compared to the national average these are five to 10 minutes longer, but also include a wider range of the population.

According to the Census Bureau, in 2017 the most commonly utilized means of transportation to work was driving a personal vehicle at 78.77%. That same survey also highlighted that no workers rode bicycles or motorcycles to work. Table 12.2 – Means of Transportation also identifies that nearly 6% of residents walked to work rather than use any type of vehicular transportation. It is also worth noting that there is a rising amount of people who work from home, which was very low in the 2010 census but is now over 7%. It can be assumed based on the numbers from the last Census that a small portion of commuters have switched from driving alone to carpooling. This can help decrease local traffic if this trend continues; the Town should look into strategies for incentivizing carpooling to make participation in it easier.

TABLE 12.1. TRAVEL TIME TO WORK

TRAVEL TIME	NUMBER	PERCENT
0-4 minutes	11	0.67%
5-9 minutes	186	11.42%
10-14 minutes	131	8.04%
15-19 minutes	341	20.93%
20-24 minutes	207	12.71%
25-29 minutes	36	2.21%
30-34 minutes	480	29.47%
35-39 minutes	80	4.91%
40-44 minutes	81	4.97%
45-59 minutes	14	0.86%
60-89 minutes	55	3.38%
90 or more minutes	7	0.43%
Total	**1,629**	**100%**

Source: US Census Bureau, 2018

TABLE 12.2. MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION TO WORK

MODE	NUMBER	PERCENT
Drove alone	1,384	78.77%
Carpool	83	4.72%
Public Transit	63	3.59%
Motorcycle	0	-
Bicycle	0	-
Walked	99	5.63%
Other	0	-
Worked at Home	128	7.29%
Total	**1,757**	**100%**

Source: US Census Bureau, 2019

ROADWAY FACILITIES

The primary transportation corridor for the Town is the US 113 north-south corridor that connects the City of Dover to the Maryland State Line. SR 24 provides the east-west connection between the Towns of Laurel and Lewes. Other important roads are the east- west SR 26 to the south of Millsboro and the northwest-southeast SR 20 that runs through the Town. SR 30 provides a connection to Milton, Milford and US 1.

A grid network of municipal streets exists in the historic core of Millsboro. A wider grid-like system has also developed in portions of the state that are west of US 113. The more recent development has occurred in modern suburban patterns on local streets with limited access to the existing road patterns. Not listed on the official DelDOT road map are several private street systems within developments. These private developments have one access point to a municipal street. The Plan recommends that existing and new development be interconnected with the existing pattern of roadways where feasible. Future development proposals will need to meet higher roadway standards for streets within housing developments.

The number and location of driveway entrances along a roadway can have a major impact on traffic flow and safety. The Town realizes that access must be provided to all existing and newly created lots; residential and commercial alike. However, the Town believes that access can be provided without lining new (or existing) roadways with curb cuts. Shared driveways should be encouraged and required if possible. Shared vehicular access between commercial properties should be facilitated where appropriate. Future development proposals will need to meet higher roadway standards for streets within housing developments. It is noted that the Town subdivision regulations require that all future subdivision streets within new developments serving Millsboro residents become public streets meeting municipal and state standards. As per zoning code regulation, multi-use paths are also required to be constructed within the right of way (in the highway commercial district). This recommendation does not include current state-maintained streets or any future state-maintained streets. The Plan does not recommend that the Town accept maintenance responsibilities for any current state-maintained streets. The Town will strive to annex all relevant portions of State roads for police response services.

The Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT) manages access to state maintained streets. DelDOT uses an access management policy to provide guidance to the department, other levels of government, and property owners on the standards for access and conditions that access would be granted. The purpose of this policy is to provide efficient transportation access.

SR 24 and SR 20 are major collectors. This designation means that access will be provided in accordance with safety regulations. Through traffic will be expected on these roads, and access to properties shall be designed to reduce conflicts between through traffic and entering and exiting traffic. Signalization is expected along these corridors. In Millsboro these roads function as minor arterial roads that interconnect US 113 and municipal streets and provide east-west regional connections. Sidewalks and bicycle facilities should be provided where appropriate. The remaining minor State roads are local streets.

The primary purpose of these roads and similar municipal streets is to provide access to properties. Through traffic is limited and traffic calming mechanisms are expected to reduce speeds on these roads as they have in areas around the Town where such devices have been implemented. Pedestrian and bicycle facilities are expected as roads are improved in Multimodal Transportation Improvement Areas. The Corridor Preservation Program impacts transportation

and land use on the US 113 corridor. US 113 has been designated as a Preservation Corridor to conserve the capacity of the roadway. US 113 also has been designated as a principal arterial highway. Under the Corridor Preservation Program, access properties along US 113 will be managed to a degree to preserve the capacity of the arterial highway as a regional interconnection.

The Town of Millsboro recognizes the importance of US 113 as a transportation asset and has worked with DelDOT to maintain and improve the capacity of US 113. Prior to rezoning or providing development approval for properties along this corridor, access plans will need to be developed to interconnect properties and provide service roads.





Facilities downtown have been improved through the Main Street paver project. The project will include new sidewalks and brick pavers on both sides of Del. 24, basically from Church Street to State Street in the downtown district. The paver project is sandwiched between several other proposals impacting the downtown area. In early October, the Delmarva Central Railroad project at the Del. 24 split just before eastbound Main Street and westbound Washington Street was completed. That project included new warning signals and shorter crossing gates; at-grade crossing surfaces with full-depth concrete decking; Americans with Disabilities Act-complaint sidewalks across the tracks and on the north and side of the crossing; a concrete median area; and new paving/striping. Additionally, Delaware's Department of Transportation is tentatively scheduled to repave both Washington and Main streets with new blacktop.

TRAFFIC CONGESTION

Downtown Millsboro was the commercial center of the Town at one time, much like many Main Streets in cities and towns across the nation. There has been a slow decline in downtown activity, yet Millsboro has seen rapid growth in retail and commercial development. Most of this growth has been along the US 113 corridor (or Highway Commercial District) and has created a wider-distribution of commercial uses which has resulted in an increase in traffic. Truck traffic, which is not specifically tracked in the AADT surveys, is particularly difficult to account for on downtown thoroughfares and has caused a great deal of congestion. The nearby resort communities and beaches attract significant visitor traffic during the summer months and "shoulder season" in the spring and fall. This through-traffic puts significant stress on arterial roadways like US 113 and is expected to increase in the future. Proximity to the major arterial road helps commerce but it also facilitates heavy traffic through Downtown area, specifically Washington Street and Main Street. As the Town continues to develop and make land use decision, they should consider that commercial uses along US 113 may be competing with businesses in the Downtown area.

Commercial growth along Millsboro's main corridors has increased local and regional traffic. This is helping to establish Millsboro as the centralized hub for the area. State Route 20 and 24 have seen increases of 12% and 26% respectively. US 113 data has not been updated from the time of the last Comprehensive Plan Update but based off the changes in the counts for SR 20 and 24 there has been a significant increase in traffic on US 113. A highlight of this congestion is the traffic differential just across the Millsboro bridge on Route 24 where John J. William and State Route 24 meet at the N.E. Millsboro Limits. The northbound traffic has seen a drastic decrease in volume and the southbound traffic has seen the opposite. The growth in Millsboro is pulling in more traffic from the north making it more of a point of interest while people who traditionally commute from south to north across the bridge have begun either keeping their business in Town or have found other routes to accomplish daily tasks due to the congestion across the bridge.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Currently, the Town has limited public transportation options. DART, the State's public transportation service provider operated by the Delaware Transit Corporation, has two routes that stop in Millsboro – 215 Rehoboth/Millsboro and 902F Flex Georgetown-Millsboro. The 215 is a traditional fixed route while the 902 is a flex route. The flex route is described by DART as providing "regular bus service to designated bus stops, but also have the flexibility to accommodate off-route, curbside pick-up and drop-off locations up to one mile off the regular route by reservation." The other difference between fixed and flex routes is currently the flex routes only run on weekdays. Both types of routes have flag zones which are designated areas where customers can wave down a bus to stop, providing riders another opportunity to use public transit.

It has been suggested with open house and public opinion responses that additional public transportation opportunities within Town are strongly supported by residents. Millsboro strongly believes public transit will help offset some traffic problems in and around Town. The Town looks to strengthen its role as a central economic retail hub, as well as a bedroom community. The Town understands that to address traffic congestion, the number of vehicle trips generated must be reduced. Public transportation could help the Town reduce those numbers.

MILLSBORO BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN PLAN

In 2006, the Town of Millsboro and DelDOT began developing the Millsboro Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. The intent of the plan was to identify gaps in bicycle and pedestrian facilities throughout the Town and devise strategies to address these deficiencies. The project increased awareness of gaps in the current system. In addition, the plan resulted in a signalized pedestrian crossing at US Route 113 and State Route 24 in 2008 and improvements to sidewalks along Main Street.

Through this planning process and other active pursuits, the Town is expanding upon the work conducted in the 2006 Millsboro Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan by identifying gaps in the infrastructure to provide solutions for the development of a well-connected Bike and Pedestrian pathway throughout Town. In October of 2017, the Town applied for a grant to complete an East-West Connector Route, but was denied the award. However, as a follow-up DelDot has began working with the Town to develop an updated Bicycle Master Plan, which will include the creation of a Bicycle Advisory Committee who will oversee the proper implementation of all the goals of the grant. Within the course of the next few years the Town hopes to provide its citizens with a fully connected multimodal network, not only to provide safe and efficient flow of traffic, but also to encourage sustainable growth. The Town would like to be prepared to accommodate growth through planning initiatives and the creation of mobility alternatives.

In an effort to foster safety when utilizing bike paths, the Millsboro Police Department and sponsors from throughout the Town held a Bike Rodeo event on May 11, 2019, which showcased five stations geared toward teaching the community all the proper safety precautions to take while on a bike in a trafficked area. It lasted four hours and included free helmets and reflective safety stickers to hand out to the attendees to further promote those safety concepts. The Police Department and the Town would like to see residents and visitors successfully and safely engaged in using all modes of transportation in Millsboro.

Sidewalks provide for safe and convenient pedestrian movement. Sidewalks are important in areas of heavy pedestrian flow and in areas where Millsboro is eager to promote pedestrian traffic. Examples of such areas are the downtown

area; the area near the ball park and library; areas near schools and roads that serve as access routes to activity centers such as schools, shopping centers, and recreation facilities; and residential areas that have, or are likely to have, considerable pedestrian traffic. Downtown Millsboro has an organized network of sidewalks. There are also sidewalks in some older residential areas of the Town on streets near Millsboro Elementary School, and the Library. Millsboro believes that walking can help reduce the use of the private vehicles. Public participation activities have noted how the lack of sidewalks within the Downtown areas and connecting commercial uses forces shoppers to drive from store to store. Citizens believe that walking is not a reasonable option on the sidewalk in their current state to issues with connectivity, even for the shortest trips. In addition, many parking areas do not connect and shoppers are forced back to the US 113, increasing traffic congestion to access uses adjacent to the property. A downtown development plan was created to alleviate many of these topics and is currently being addressed in new developments as well.

Millsboro believes that sidewalks facilitate and promote increased pedestrian circulation and safety. In addition, the Town believes that new development offers the greatest potential for sidewalk development. Sidewalks are required as part of commercial development and as part of residential development. Throughout the existing development, sidewalks should be installed in areas with high pedestrian traffic and areas where pedestrian traffic is encouraged. The Town is also encouraging development of crosswalks in high traffic areas to greatly increase pedestrian comfort and safety.

Multi-modal paths provide for safe opportunity to both cyclists and pedestrians. These paths allow for pedestrians to travel greater distances via bicycle to outside the downtown area and to the outskirts of Town. In addition, multi-modal paths allow for pedestrians to travel from the safe internal roads of Town to the more congested US 113 on a safe well-maintained path. Currently, these paths are located at the Peninsula Crossing Development on US 113 and Handy Road, throughout the Plantation Lakes development, and some other smaller parcels scattered throughout Town limits. The Town is seeking a way to create East-West connectivity between these established paths. The Town would also like to make the community's residents a part of this implementation process by fostering a want for better connectivity through activities, events, and other marketing sources.

The Town of Millsboro supports the idea of bridging pedestrian gaps with the use of greenways. Greenways developed within Town will help to counteract the significant impact of land development and the resulting impacts on of the natural environment. Because greenways are often placed along creeks and streams within flood prone areas, they provide numerous environmental benefits. Greenway corridors help to preserve native trees and vegetation, provide flood control, filter sediment from erodible lands, improve water quality, protect wetlands and floodplains, improve air quality, absorb and soften noise from industry and traffic, and maintain a varied habitat to support different kinds of plants and animals. The Town is currently working with DelDOT to complete a Master Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. Upon completion and adoption of the Plan by Town Council, this Comprehensive Plan should be amended to include any associated maps from the Master Plan.

RAILROAD FACILITIES

Norfolk Southern operates the railroad route in Millsboro. This line is known as the Indian River secondary line. The line serves the Conectiv power station at Indian River and provides access to a nationwide rail system for the industries throughout Millsboro. It provides a way to safely transport various goods to and from these industries without choking or congesting the

traffic within the Town with heavy truck traffic.

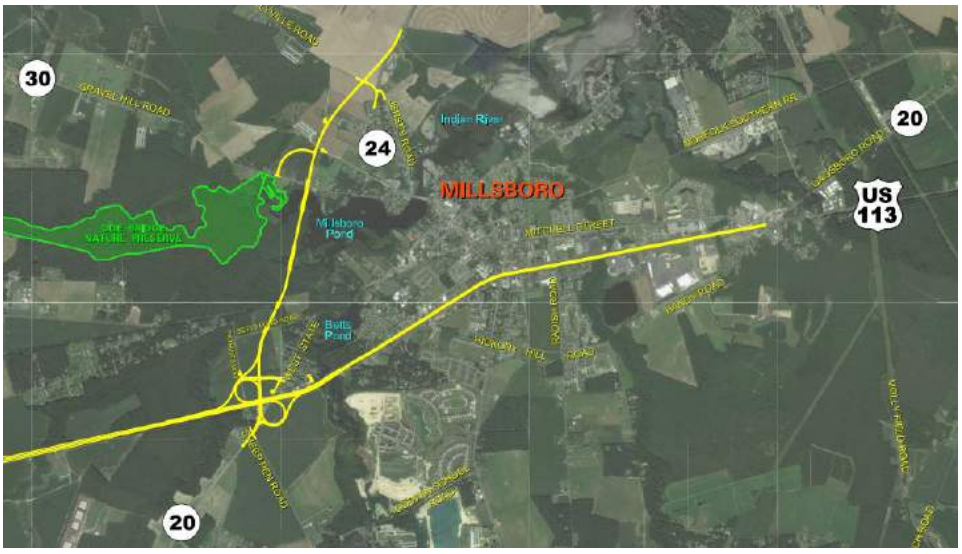
PROPOSED US 113 NORTH/SOUTH BYPASS

As part of a collective plan to alleviate traffic on US 113 from Selbyville to Milford, DelDOT performed a study indicating possible changes that could be made to the highway to accommodate planned and future economic growth in the areas surrounding US Route 113. The area concerning Millsboro, known as the Millsboro – South Area in the plan, has been evaluated several times to find the best traffic alternatives to accommodate for future growth. In 2013, DelDOT released a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) which calculated the environmental impacts of creating a bypass in the area north of Town. After comments were received concerning the Blue Alternative it was decided that another course of action must be taken. DelDOT created a Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) based on the response from the community concerning the Blue Alternative. To remain in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) they decided to modify the Yellow Alternative.

The overall goal of the Modified Yellow Alternative was to preserve mobility for local residents and businesses while maintaining safety and create traffic improvements to reduce congestion in anticipation of growth in local, seasonal, and through traffic on the US 113 corridor. The plan's origin began with 10 public workshops and two public hearings, starting in 2004 and has been adjusted to best fit the needs of the communities being affected. At the time of this Comprehensive Plan's adoption the Final Draft of Environmental Impact Statement has been accepted and construction is set to start in 2023.

The Preferred Alternative or Modified Yellow Alternative is going to consist of a two-lane connection from US 113 to SR 24 on 2.3 miles of new road. The area south of this addition heading into Millsboro will be widened utilizing a portion of the center median and will take the road from four lanes to six lanes. DelDOT will also see to the removal of six unsignalized crossovers along US 113 in this area while retaining the four pre-existing signalized intersections. To reduce impacts to surrounding properties two changes were recommended for the connector road:

- The connector road was shifted north in order to tie in with a realigned segment of SR 20 with a separated intersection and a new grade.
- An overpass will be constructed at SR 30 with a three-leg intersection west of SR 24 which will also be at a new grade.



Source: Delaware Department of Transportation, US 113 North/South Study Recommended Preferred Alternatives Map

Strategies

1. Develop a municipal street plan to interconnect existing development with future development.

2. Pursue possible Transportation Enhancement funds and other alternative funding pools for construction of sidewalk gaps and critical missing segments as well as Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) funding.

3. The adopted Planned Commercial District and Large-Scale Commercial Overlay District have provisions for shared access and assemblage of small redeveloping parcels on US 113 in order to minimize ingress/egress conflicts. During plan review of developments in these districts, it is recommended that the Town ensure coordination with DelDOT's Standards and Regulations for Access to State Highways and Corridor Capacity Preservation Program.

4. Explore opportunities for the provision of service roads along US 113.

5. Initiate an east-west traffic study focusing on SR 24 and consider improvements on Delaware Avenue/SR 82, Hickory Hill Road, and other alternatives.

6. The subdivision ordinance requires new subdivisions connect to local street networks through and between developing areas. It is recommended that this provision be applied in Residential Planned Community (RPC) zoning district as well. Local streets should be designed so that internal traffic is dispersed throughout the neighborhood with a grid street network. The use of cul-de-sacs should be minimized and should be short in length where utilized.

7. Continue to coordinate with DelDOT on current improvements to US 113 to address crossover safety and access issues.

8. Work with Delaware Transit Corporation toe xpand transit service in Town. The Town should pursue the provision of appropriate infrastructure and land use access around proposed transit stops.

9. Work with DelDOT on the development of a truck route or bypass for truck traffic on SR 24.

10. Pursue the streetscape improvements and traffic calming methods on Main and Washington Streets. The Town should pursue grant funding to implement the improvements and amenities, such as shade trees, pedestrian-oriented lighting and sidewalk improvements, crosswalks, brick pavers, stamped concrete, landscaped nodes and medians, among other amenities. In addition, the Town should coordinate with DelDOT to create a State capital improvement project. Streetscape improvements may not only affect the appearance of an area but can also contribute to the safety and convenience of vehicular, pedestrian and bicycle mobility. Other street features may include benches, lighting standards, trash receptacles, tree grates, bicycle racks and signs, which would all assist to create a positive image, promote a pedestrian friendly environment and assist to stimulate economic activity.

11. Continue to improve and embellish the 'Gateway' into Millsboro at the convergence of Main and Washington Streets. The Town has already made streetscaping improvements in the area by adding signage and landscaping. The new Town Hall is to be relocated in this area and will serve as a community and architectural focal point when entering the Town. As the Town Hall project continues, streetscaping around the property should be considered.

12. Provide alternative transportation choices including public transit, and a pedestrian and bicycle network.

13. Improve the pedestrian and bike connectivity and safety throughout the Town to create a more walking and biking friendly community.

13 | UTILITIES & MUNICIPAL SERVICES

The Town of Millsboro offers several municipal services to its residents which make it an attractive place to live. This chapter provides an overview of the Town's water and wastewater systems.

Goal

Focus major developments in areas that have adequate or planned infrastructure upgrades and that are located adjacent to existing uses and have access to US 113, SR 20 and SR 24 and continue to meet the municipal service demands of a growing community.

WATER SYSTEM

Millsboro's Master Water Plan was originally adopted in 1982. The Plan recommendations have been systematically implemented and updated over the last 20 years. The Town completed a Water Asset ManagementPlan in 2016. A new deep well and expansion of the water treatment plant were two high-priority projects that were constructed. These changes along with significant growth are the reason the Town continues to update the Water Asset Management Plan.

The Town of Millsboro is currently serviced by three elevated storage tanks. The tank on Washington Street, west of Route 113, holds 100,000 gallons. The Plantation Lakes tank has a 500,000 gallon capacity. The final tank being utilized is located on Church Street on the site of the water treatment plant; it holds 250,000 gallons. An elevated tank located on the White Farm will be constructed. The tanks provide adequate storage and pressure needs within Millsboro.

The Town water is sourced from three production wells within the area, all of which draw from the Manokin Aquifer. The Town also has two shallow production wells which draw from the Columbia aquifer. The Town of Millsboro is nearing treatment capacity for average daily flow as well as peak design flows in the summer season. In order to alleviate this, the Town has worked with a developer on constructing a second water treatment plant and three production wells in the Plantation Lakes area. The Town is looking at other parcels for additional shallow well installation. A new water treatment plant is being designed for construction in Plantation Lakes. The new water treatment plans and wells will double the water production and treatment capacity of the Town. An additional facility would help to provide the Town with an alternate means to meet the demands of the growing population.

All tanks, treatments plants, and equipment are regularly inspected and maintained to ensure that potable water is always available within Town. There are 4,109 customers in Millsboro who receive water and wastewater services from the Town.

WASTEWATER FACILITIES

The Millsboro wastewater system consists of multiple facilities and sites that contribute to proper disposal of reclaimed water. The process of reclaiming water starts at the collection of wastewater on a property, whether that be homes, businesses, or industrial sites.

The Town has recently decreased and continues to find ways to decrease inflow and infiltration (I/I) which occurs during extreme weather events. Inflow and infiltration are terms used by municipalities to describe the process by which water that is not intended to be treated finds its way into the sanitary sewer system and takes up wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) capacity. In Millsboro, the primary cause of I/I is from aging wastewater facilities on private properties. This loss of capacity at the treatment plant becomes problematic if the Town is treating stormwater and lacks the capacity for the sanitary wastewater needing treatment. The Town is currently working with several landowners throughout Town as well as the Stockley Center just north of Town, to reduce this extra influx of water.

The wastewater flows through gravity sewer piping to the WWTP which is located at 361 East State Street, adjacent to the Indian River. The original plant was built in 1964 and was upgraded in 1980s, 1993, and 2009. Before 2014, treated wastewater was discharged into the Indian River. The State of Delaware mandated that effluent could no-longer be discharged into surface waters of the Inland Bays. In response to this, the Town now pumps treated effluent through piping to two separate locations for disposal. Most of the effluent makes its way to White Farm located between Route 113 and Route 20 on the northern side of Town.

There are seven Rapid Infiltration Basins (RIBs) on White Farm that disperse the water back into the ground through an infiltration process. This parcel also contains most of the Town's land dedicated to spray irrigation. Spray irrigation is the process by which reclaimed water is pumped through piping and dispersed over land, where it is taken up by the crops. Millsboro spray irrigates crop fields on the White Farm. The Town leases the farm fields to a local farmer. The resulting irrigation helps grow crops. Both sites onle use treated wastewater on a consumptive use basis. The second site is the Millsboro Middle School Sports fields. Spray operations have been conducted on the Middle School fields since July 2015 and at the White Farm since July 2018. Both areas have had no issue with the spray operations.

The existing WWTP has a design capacity of 1.15 million gallons per day (MGD). The Town of Millsboro typically reuses about 0.75 mgd of treated effluent, including the flow from the Stockley Center, which averages 35,000 gallons per day due to I/I issues that are currently being resolved.



Another result of running a wastewater treatment plant is the need to dispose of biosolids. To achieve this, the Town sends their refuse to the Southern Solid Waste Management Center in Georgetown.

With an increasing population the Town will need to implement more economical and beneficial methods to reducing the amount of reclaimed water that needs to be spray irrigated. Implementing Reclaimed Water for Beneficial Reuse (RWBR) programs would help to alleviate the growing populations need for spray irrigation. The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection classifies RWBR programs as; "taking waste product, giving it a specialized level of treatment and using the resulting high-quality reclaimed water for beneficial uses." Some of these repurposing efforts include fire protection, irrigation, construction uses, and aesthetic fountain use.

Millsboro is currently looking into irrigation of the baseball fields in Town, farm fields, new developments, golf courses, and fire-suppression within newly constructed buildings. Millsboro has met with representatives of DNREC to discuss its continued water reuse initiatives. If allowed, this water would be run through what is known as "purple piping" which is a designation given to any lines that are run that may only contain non-potable reclaimed water. They are given this name due to the coloring of the pipe, which is a light purple and is easily identified from other water lines. The Town currently has an 18-inch diameter beneficial reuse main, which transmits the treated wastewater ("reclaimed water") from the WWTP to the Middle School and the White Farm. By utilizing these methods, the Town would greatly increase their reclaimed distribution capacity while also providing an economical means for improving the Town.

WASTEWATER MATCHING PLANNING GRANT

In 2019 Millsboro worked with the Delaware Water Infrastructure Advisory council (WIAC) to apply for a grant from the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) to develop a 30-year Wastewater Facility Master Plan. The Town's Engineers, Duffield Associates, is currently finalizing the Wastewater Master Plan. A copy of the plan will be available for viewing by request at Town Hall. The intent of the Wastewater Master Plan is to create a projection based, 30-year plan for managing wastewater, water that has been use in domestic, manufacturing, or industrial purpose, in and around Millsboro . The plan was based off a review of three years of collected data from the facilities and their operations. The report is scheduled to be complete at the beginning of 2021.

MID-ATLANTIC POWER PATHWAY (MAPP)

When Millsboro adopted its last Comprehensive Plan in 2009, Delmarva Power had been planning an expansion of its regional power transmission system called Mid-Atlantic Power Pathway (MAPP.) The MAPP project was designed to enable the transfer of power sources west of the Chesapeake Bay from the Delmarva Peninsula to the Mid-Atlantic region. The project included about 69 miles of AC lines and 83 miles of DC lines, and a 39-mile HVDC undersea cable across the Chesapeake Bay. After making some initial progress in August 2012, the regional transmission organization decided to remove the project from the RTEP 15-year plan due to lower electric demand and the development of new generation in the area. The project remains suspended to date. As the Town continues to grow it should work with regional partners to ensure that the electric demand will be adequately met for the next 20 – 30 years.

FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

The Town is pursuing additional infrastructure in wastewater treatment. Millsboro has purchased approximately two acres northwest of the existing WWTP to allow for the construction of additional tankage. The Stockely Center is also currently in the process of repairing broken or worn collection systems piping in which the ground water is infiltrating. The Town has a history of investment in wastewater treatment technology to meet Clean Water Act requirements. The plan recommends, prior to any future investment, that an agreement between the Town and DNREC on the type of wastewater treatment to be used, service area, location of facilities, and amount to be treated be finalized.

Strategies

1. Continue to implement, evaluate and amend the Wastewater Asset Management Plan to address the accelerating growth rate.
    a. Re-evaluate the disposal alternatives with regard to the area's rapidly rising cost of land. Implement the amended plans to comply with the TMDL regulation and to accommodate growth. Expand the collection and transmission system in planned increments to serve future annexations.
    b. Upon completion of the Plan amendment, proceed with design and construction of the recommended plant expansion, upgrades and effluent disposal system.

2. Continue to implement, evaluate and amend the Wastewater Asset Management Plan to address the increased rate of growth by expanding the water supply, treatment and storage capacity in order to provide bulk water service to meet increased demand associated with future annexations.
    a. Enlarge the water distribution in planned increments to serve future annexations. Continue to coordinate with DNREC to increase the allocation of water to supply the residents and businesses of Millsboro as needed.
    b. Continue to administer and evaluate the annexation fee system to equitably distribute the cost of infrastructure expansion and upgrades among those creating the need.
    c. Coordinate with the State and Sussex County to identify funding sources for water/wastewater capacity upgrades.

3. Work with Sussex County to identify lands not within the Town's sewer district that have failing septic systems or high levels of nitrate caused by poorly designed septic's and assist in the operation of a package wastewater plant, if deemed appropriate.

14 IMPLEMENTATION

This section lists priority actionable strategies in this Comprehensive Plan, identifies partners who are also committed to the town's progress and potential funding sources. Implementation of this plan will involve collaboration between all stakeholders and partners, under the committed leadership of the Town Officials and Staff.

Once this plan is adopted, the Town will continue to prioritize these strategies to best address current and future needs. With the steady increase in growth, the areas of land use, population needs and community services, and transportation will be of focused attention. Economic development will also be of importance as the Millsboro continues their efforts in becoming more business friendly. Closely tied to growth concerns will be the ongoing evaluation of housing and utility capacity to meet the needs to current and future residents. Environmental, historic resources, and open space will also continue to be ongoing areas of interest and will take reevaluation of current regulations, expansion of protections, and establishing partnerships. The Town Council should annually assess the goals and assign short or long-term objective timelines based on current priorities.

Population & Demographics

As Millsboro continues to see significant population growth, it will be critical for the Town to identify needed services for a diverse population. Efforts will need to focus on understanding the current population and how it is changing as the Town develops.

Recommendations	Potential Partners & Coordinating Agency	Potential Technical & Financial Assistance
POPULATION & DEMOGRAPHICS		
Conduct a study or survey that will help to plan for the Future population increases as areas currently under construction are built out. Continue to investigate management methods for providing services to these areas.	Indian River School District, Superintendent of Schools, Delaware Population Consortium	Delaware Population Consortium
Prepare for the eventual increased need for educational services within the area as well as entertainment and activities.	Indian River School District, Sussex County Economic Development Office, Greater Millsboro Chamber of Commerce	
Continue to provide services to the population of residents in the 65 and older category and investigate opportunities to expand these services.	CHEER, Indian River Senior Center, DSHA	
The Town should carefully coordinate with Sussex County to ensure that most of the new growth occurs within the incorporated area of Millsboro and designated growth areas, such that local services are supported by local taxes to prevent a situation where the Town provides police protection, recreation, and other supporting services to residents who do not contribute to the local bracket.	Sussex County Planning & Zoning Department	

Economic Development

As the Town looks to promote their business-friendly community, the Town will need to consider a number of strategies from downtown revitalization to job development. These strategies will require conducting additional studies and exploring future partnerships.

Recommendations	Potential Partners & Coordinating Agency	Potential Technical & Financial Assistance
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT		
Encourage job development with the Town limits of Millsboro	Greater Millsboro Chamber of Commerce, Sussex County - Economic Development	Delaware Division of Small Business
Identify an appropriate location for an industrial park development with appropriate rail and highway access.	Sussex County, DelDOT	
Identify appropriate locations for offfice development, including adaptive reuse in downtown Millsboro, which can be provided with appropriate parking, road access, and transit service.	DelDOT, DART, Sussex County Historic Preservation Office	University of DE Center for Historic Architecture & Design
Explore funding opportunities through state agencies, grants, and public-private partnerships that can implement streetscape improvements in downtown Millsboro.	DelDOT	Main Street America
Initiate a study of the business mix in downtown to identify the ideal mix of business types, potential for office development, and the role of locally owned businesses.	Greater Millsboro Chamber of Commerce, Sussex County Economic Development Office, Delaware Division of Small Business	Delaware Division of Small Business
Initiate a study of downtown parking needs and solutions	DelDOT	University of DE IPA
Actively participate in regional tourism campaigns and facility development	Sussex County Economic Development Office, Southern DE Tourism, Towns of Dagsboro, Frankford, and Georgetown	
Work with state and local economic development agents to encourage realization of other critical community development including emergency/ urgent medical care facilities, housing and medical service options for senior citizens, lodging, conference facilities, and expanded recreational facilities.	Sussex County Economic Development Office, DSHA, DNREC - Divison of Parks & Recreation	
Identify underutilized commercial structures and develop marketing plans, incentives, and other tools to encourage their redevelopment	Sussex County Economic Development Office and Historic Preservation Office	Main Street America, University of DE IPA

Housing

With the popularity of Millsboro as a place to live, the Town will continue analyzing housing needs for current and future residents.

Recommendations	Potential Partners & Coordinating Agency	Potential Technical & Financial Assistance
HOUSING		
The Town should seek to continue providing housing at affordable rates to incoming populations	DSHA	
Review and continue to monitor vacant parcels and homes to rebuild or plan for development		
Continue to provide improvements to the downtown area to attract prospective home owners	DelDOT	Main Street America
Keep residential growth in consideration for annexation areas and review how services will be provided to these new areas.		

Land Use

For the past decade land use has been a top priority and remains important as growth continues. This includes evaluation and analysis of existing land use and determining future needs. The Town has identified an expansive annexation area and will need to continue discussions on smart growth practices.

Recommendations	Potential Partners & Coordinating Agency	Potential Technical & Financial Assistance
LAND USE		
Maintain a diversity of land uses during the processes of development and redevelopment		
Encourage interconnected residential infill development of vacant parcels adjacent to existing residential, particularly along the southeast side of old landing road and on the southwest side of Town.		
Encourage residential development that is similar in scale to existing development on undeveloped parcels		
Encourage communication with the Indian River School district on the location of new and expanded schools and attendance patterns		
Continue policies related to annexation agreements		
Continue to provide for a range of commercial uses throughout the Town particularly along main street.		
Provide a planned commercial development at the junction of SR 20 and 113.		
The Town should look to provide annexation and services to any areas that Millsboro recognizes that are characteristically similar to current in town development as long as this provides and orderly development process.		

Historic & Cultural Resources

Millsboro has a number of historic resources with the potential to utilize these sites to promote community character. Additional studies will be to be completed to move forward with protecting the Town's historic resources.

Recommendations	Potential Partners & Coordinating Agency	Potential Technical & Financial Assistance
HISTORIC & CULTURAL RESOURCES		
The Town should focus on protection of historic properties and places of cultural significance as development is approved.	Sussex County and Delaware Historic Preservation Offices	
The Town should rely on guidance from the National Register of Historical Places	Sussex County and Delaware Historic Preservation Offices	University of DE Center for Historic Architecture & Design
The Town should conduct a study of the building and subdivision codes to preserve the historic pattern of development with respect to setbacks, building heights, building types, parking requirements, and other standards.	Sussex County Historic Preservation Office	University of DE Center for Historic Architecture & Design
The Town should consider and encourage adaptive reuse of historic properties for commercial and office uses	Sussex County and Delaware Historic Preservation Offices	University of DE Center for Historic Architecture & Design
The Town should consider development of a historic district to provide access to state and federal resources for preservation of properties.	Sussex County and Delaware Historic Preservation Offices	

Environment

The Town looks to continue enforcing existing regulations protecting the Town's environmental features and plans to partner with various State agencies in the future to increase additional protections.

Recommendations	Potential Partners & Coordinating Agency	Potential Technical & Financial Assistance
ENVIRONMENT		
Continue to enforce existing environmental protection ordinances and regulations through the site plan review process		
Comprehensive approach be taken to reduce pollutants into water bodies and improve wate quality through creation of an ordinance that would allow for such management practices	Sussex Conservation District, DNREC, Center for the Inland Bays (CIB)	
Continue to work with the sussex conservation district to develop capital improvements plan working in coordination with environmental protection measures already in place	Sussex Conservation District, DNREC, CIB	
Develop BMPS and LID (low impact development) plans to reduce stormwater run off.	DNREC, Delaware Department of Agriculture, Sussex County Environmental Services Department, CIB	
Develop additional layers of protection for any areas that impact the Inland Bays water quality	DNREC, CIB	

Community Services

The evaluation of community services will tie to discussions to population and demographics in determining services needed for current and future residents.

Recommendations	Potential Partners & Coordinating Agency	Potential Technical & Financial Assistance
COMMUNITY SERVICES		
Work with the Indian River school district to secure funding for school expansion and renovation	Indian River School District, Superintendent of Schools	
Work with the Indian River School District to identify locations for future school construction, particularly west of US 113	Indian River School District, Superintendent of Schools, DelDOT	
The police force should continue to pursue and commit to CALEA standards and recognition	Millsboro Police Department	
The Town consider upgrading the lighting and street designs to be consistent with measures that alleviate or prevent crime and include wayfaring signage into the budget for the downtown area	Town of Millsboro Police Department, DelDOT, Univeristy of DE IPA	DelDOT, University of DE IPA
Continue to support the aging population of Millsboro with senior citizen involvement initiatives.	CHEER, Indian River Senior Center	Univeristy of DE IPA, AARP Livable Communities Challenge, Energize DE and Division of Climate, Coastal & Energy

Utilities

Evaluating the Town's utilities is ongoing as the Town continues to reevaluate its wastewater and water master plans and plan for current and future growth capacity needs.

Recommendations	Potential Partners & Coordinating Agency	Potential Technical & Financial Assistance
UTILITIES		
Continue to implement, evaluate and amend the Wastewater Asset Management Plan to address the accelerating growth rate.	DNREC	DNREC
Re-evaluate the disposal alternatives with regard to the area's rapidly rising cost of land. Implement the amended plans to comply with the TMDL regulation and to accommodate growth. Expand the collection and transmission system in planned increments to serve future annexations.	DNREC	DNREC
Upon completion of the Plan amendment, proceed with design and construction of the recommended plant expansion, upgrades and effluent disposal system.	DNREC	
Continue to implement, evaluate and amend the Wastewater Asset Management Plan to address the increased rate of growth by expanding the water supply, treatment and storage capacity in order to provide bulk water service to meet increased demand associated with future annexations.	DHSS, Office of Drinking Water	DHSS, Office of Drinking Water
Enlarge the water distribution in planned increments to serve future annexations. Continue to coordinate with DNREC to increase the allocation of water to supply the residents and businesses of Millsboro as needed.	DNREC	
Continue to administer and evaluate the annexation fee system to equitably distribute the cost of infrastructure expansion and upgrades among those creating the need.		
Coordinate with the State and Sussex County to identify funding sources for water/wastewater capacity upgrades.	DNREC, Sussex County	
Work with Sussex County to identify lands not within the Town's sewer district that have failing septic systems or high levels of nitrate caused by poorly designed septic's and assist in the operation of a package wastewater plant, if deemed appropriate.	Sussex County	

Open Space & Recreation

The Town is able to provide open space and recreation opportunities for residents, but there are plans to evaluate current open space requirements, explore options for expansion, and seek funding sources.

Recommendations	Potential Partners & Coordinating Agency	Potential Technical & Financial Assistance
OPEN SPACE & RECREATION		
The Town should continue to review the plans for open space and recreational facilities.		
Continue to enforce the open space and recreation requirements, as well as the buffer, screening, and landscaping requirements as part of the site plan review and building permit approval process.		
Evaluate the zoning and subdivision regulations to ensure that required open space and recreational facilities built as part of new developments are appropriately located, accessible and meet the needs of all residents, not just the new residents in the subdivision.		
Adopt an ordinance that requires full or partial cash payment to be made by the developer in lieu of a full or partial dedication of land when such dedication is proven infeasible or not appropriate. The fee should be equivalent to the appraised value of land area required. The land area value shall be based on the appraisal prepared for the developer to secure construction financing.		
Formalize the parks and recreation committee to administer and evaluate open space needs. Among other things, the committee could make recommendations to council on dedications, payments in lieu of and facility financing. The committee could also administer organized sports, senior activates, health and wellness programs, and the operation and maintenance of park facilities.		

(Continued)

Expand recreational facilities making greater use of existing open space, waterways, amenities and facilities.	DNREC - Division of Parks & Recreation	Outdoor Recreation, Parks & Trails Program
Expand recreational use of Millsboro Pond. Evaluate potential public access points for non-motorized recreational boating opportunities and water trails.	DNREC - Division of Parks & Recreation	Outdoor Recreation, Parks & Trails Program
Explore options to develop partnerships and agreements with the Millsboro Library to utilize the lands behind the library as parkland with outdoor reading pavilions, non- motorized recreational boat launches and/or observation piers, and the U.S. Postal Service to place amenities, such as a fountain, clock, and/or park benches, on the land adjacent to the current Post Office.		
Improve the Town Owned open space west of US 113 with low impact activities, such as nature and exercise trails.	DNREC - Division of Parks & Recreation	Outdoor Recreation, Parks & Trails Program
Explore options for partnering organizations to establish a seasonal farmers market in Town, possible locations could include the future Town Hall, the present location of Town Hall, Cupola Park, and W.B. Atkins Memorial Park.	Delaware Department of Agriculture	
As the Towns' population increases, evaluate the need for a Town funded Park and Recreation Department to provide for organize sports, senior activates, health and wellness programs, and management of park facilities.		

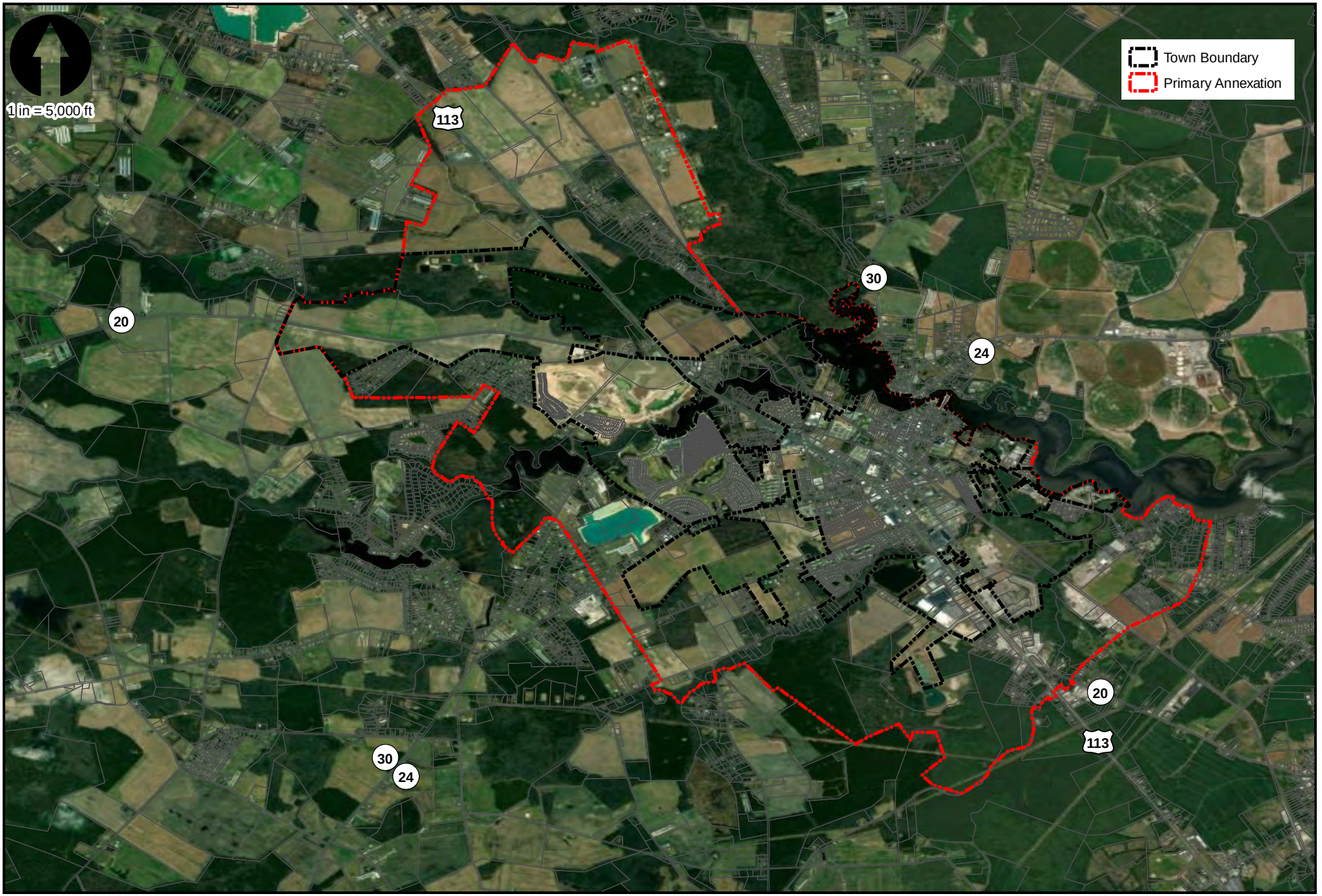
Transportation

In recent years the Town has seen an increase in traffic and has developed strategies to lessen these issues, but it will take further studies and coordination with DelDOT to pursue may of these implementation items.

Recommendations	Potential Partners & Coordinating Agency	Potential Technical & Financial Assistance
TRANSPORTATION		
Develop a municpal street plan to interconnect existing development with future development	DelDOT	
Pursue possible Transportation enhancement funds for construction of sidewalk gaps and critical missing segments as well as Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) funding.	DelDOT	Transportation Alternatives Program
The Town should ensure coordination with DelDOTs Standards and Regulations for Access to State Highways and Corridor Capacity Preservation Program		
Explore opportunites for the provisions of service roads along US113	DelDOT	
Local streets should be designed so that internal traffic is dispersed throughout the neighborhood with a grid street network and the use of cul-de-scas should be minimized and should be short in length where utilized.		
Continue to coordinate with DelDOT on current improvements to US 113 to address crossover safety and access issues.	DelDOT	
Pursue the provision of appropriate infrastructure and land use access around proposed transit stops while working with the Delaware Transit Corporation to institue transit service to Georgetown for commuter traffic in the near term and beach access in the future.	DelDOT, DART	
Pursue traffic calming and streetscape improvements on Main and Washington streets and grant funding to implement the improvements and amenities.	DelDOT, Main Street America	Main Street America
Continue to embellish and improve the "gateway" into Millsboro at the convergence of Main and Washington Streets.	DelDOT	Main Street America
Continue to improve the pedestrian and bike connectivity and safety throughout the Town to create a more walking and biking friendly community	DelDOT	Transportation Alternatives Program

APPENDIX A

MAPS

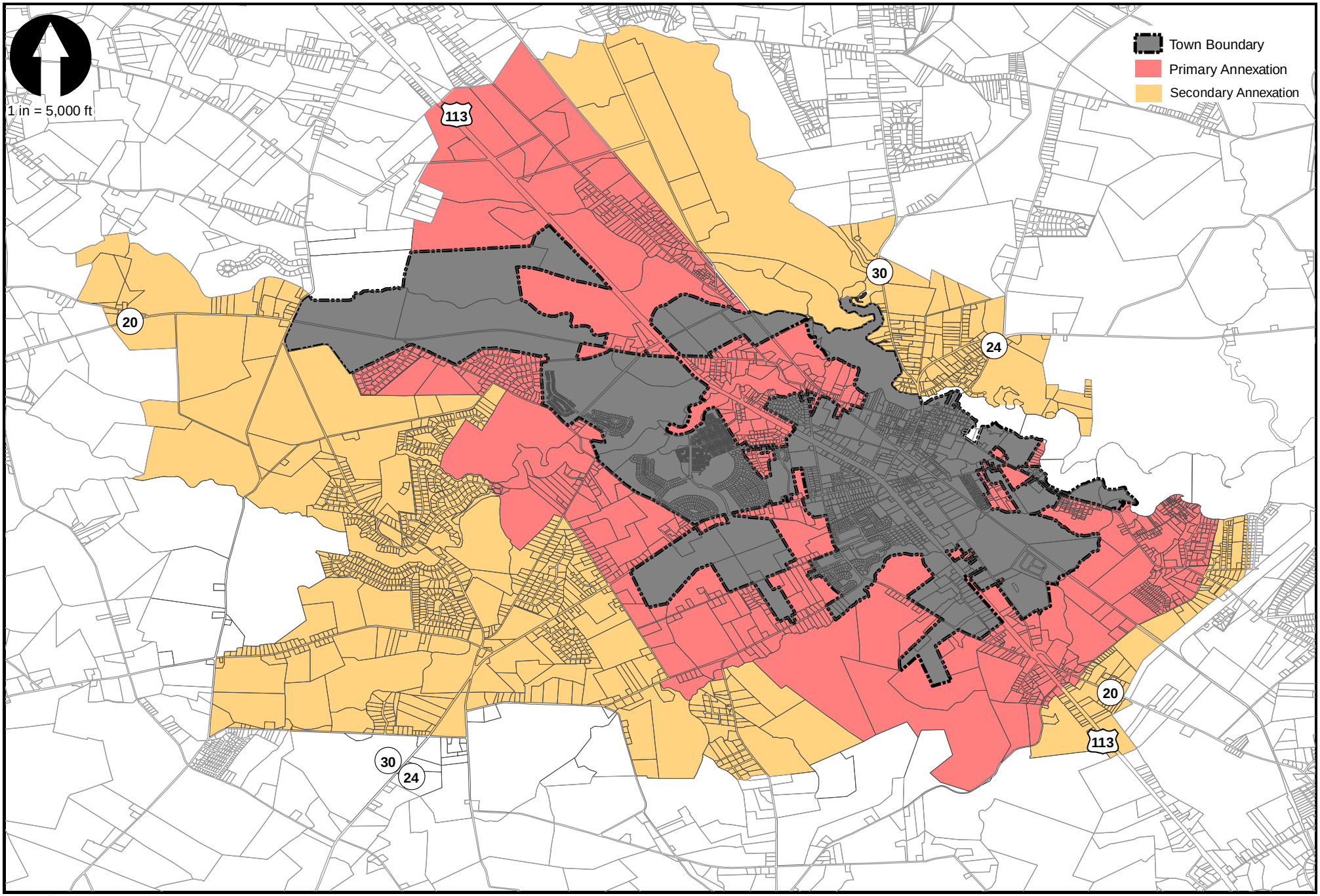


MAP 1. AERIAL VIEW
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE 2020

Town of Millsboro

AECOM

February 2020

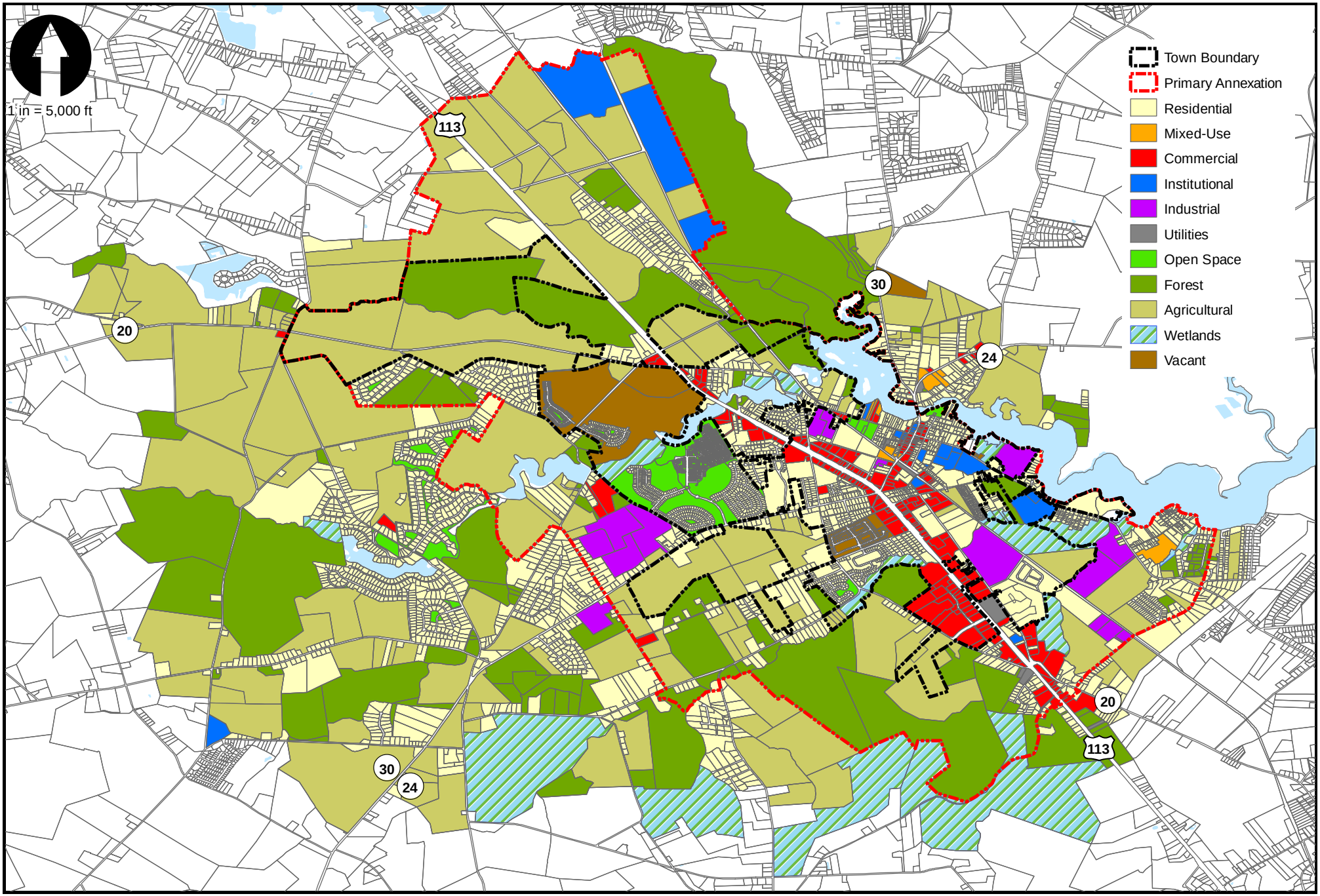


MAP 2. ANNEXATION AREAS
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE 2020

Town of Millsboro

AECOM

February 2020

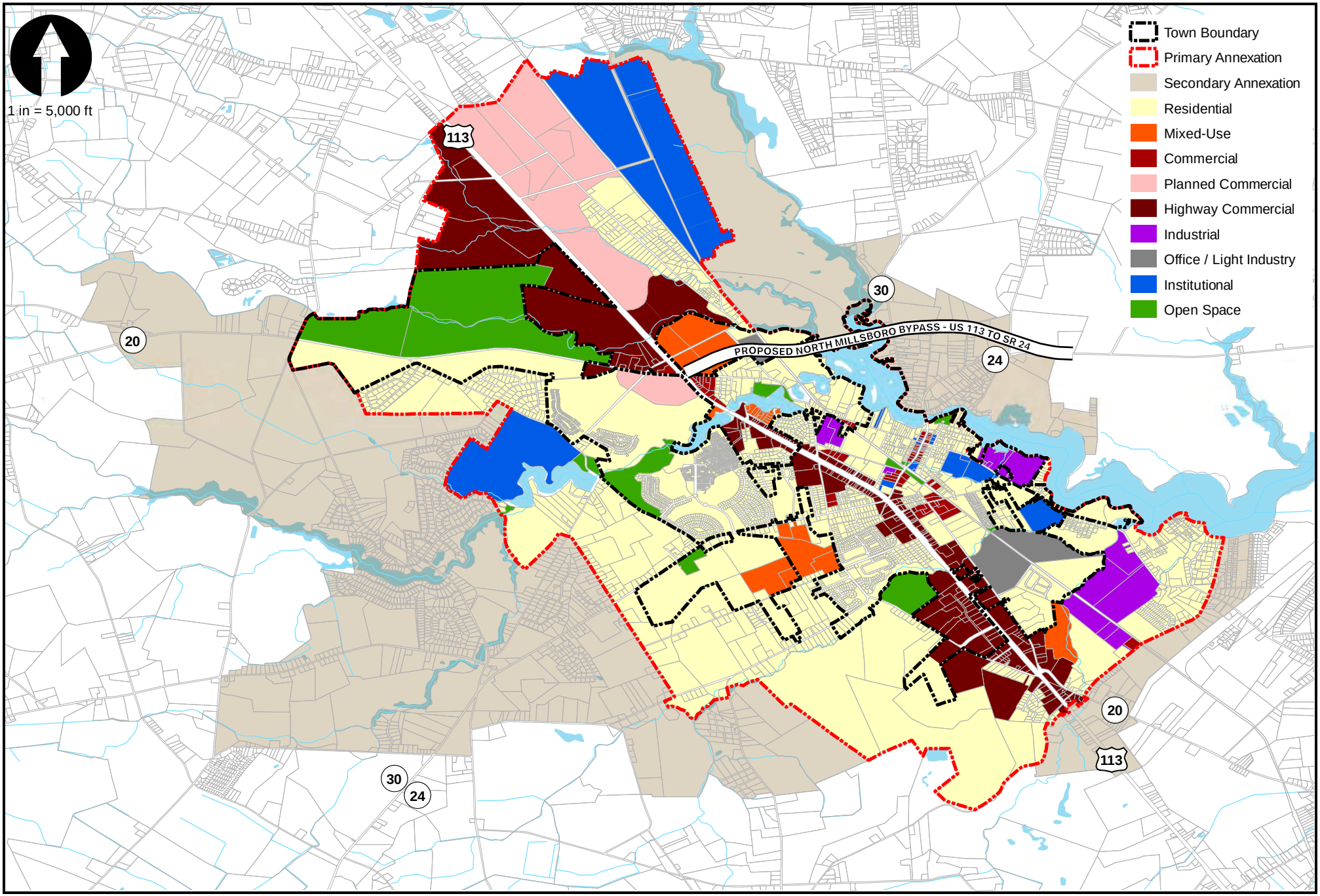


MAP 3. EXISTING LAND USE
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE 2020

Town of Millsboro

AECOM

February 2020



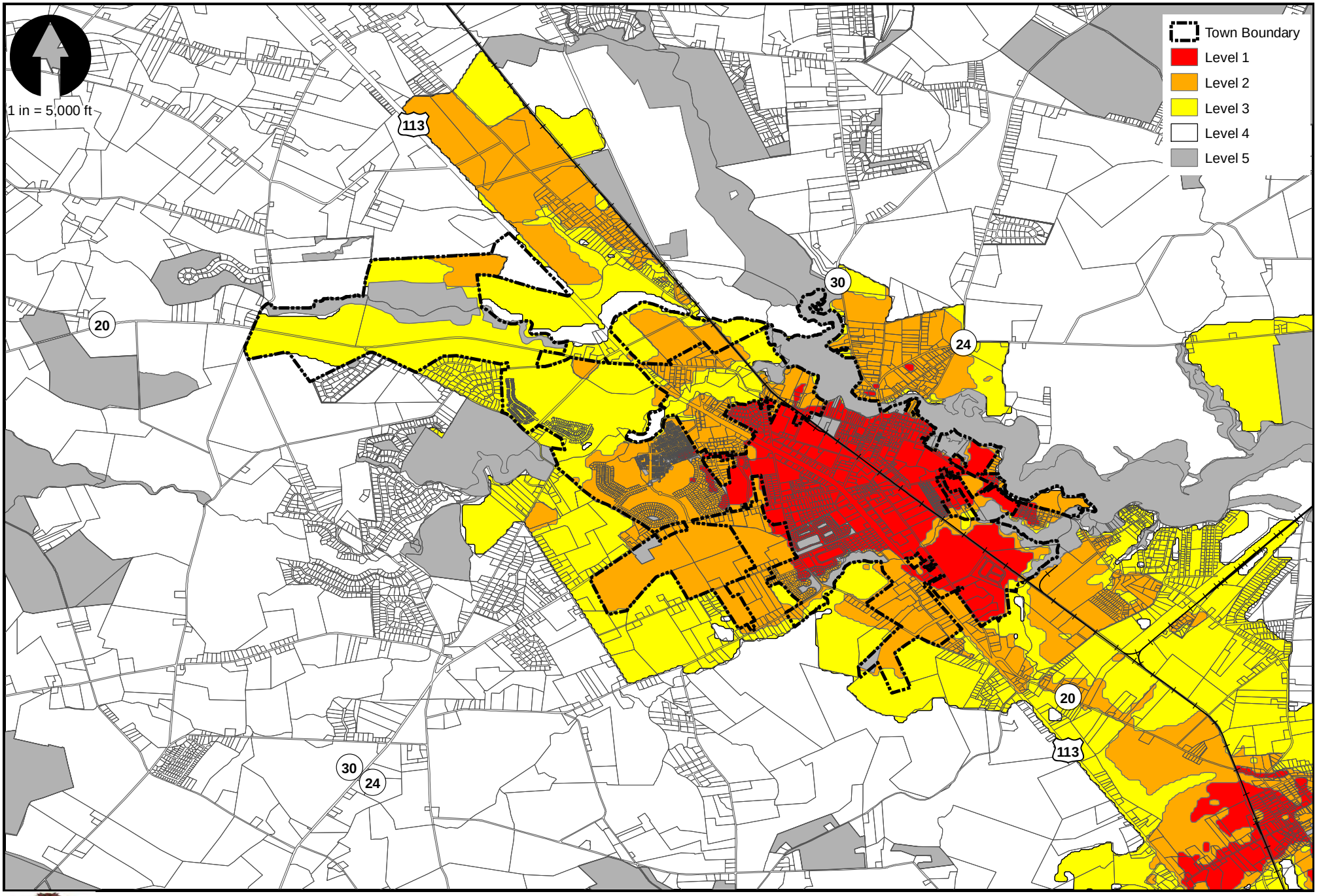
MAP 4. FUTURE LAND USE AND ANNEXATION

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE 2020

Town of Millsboro

AECOM

November 2020

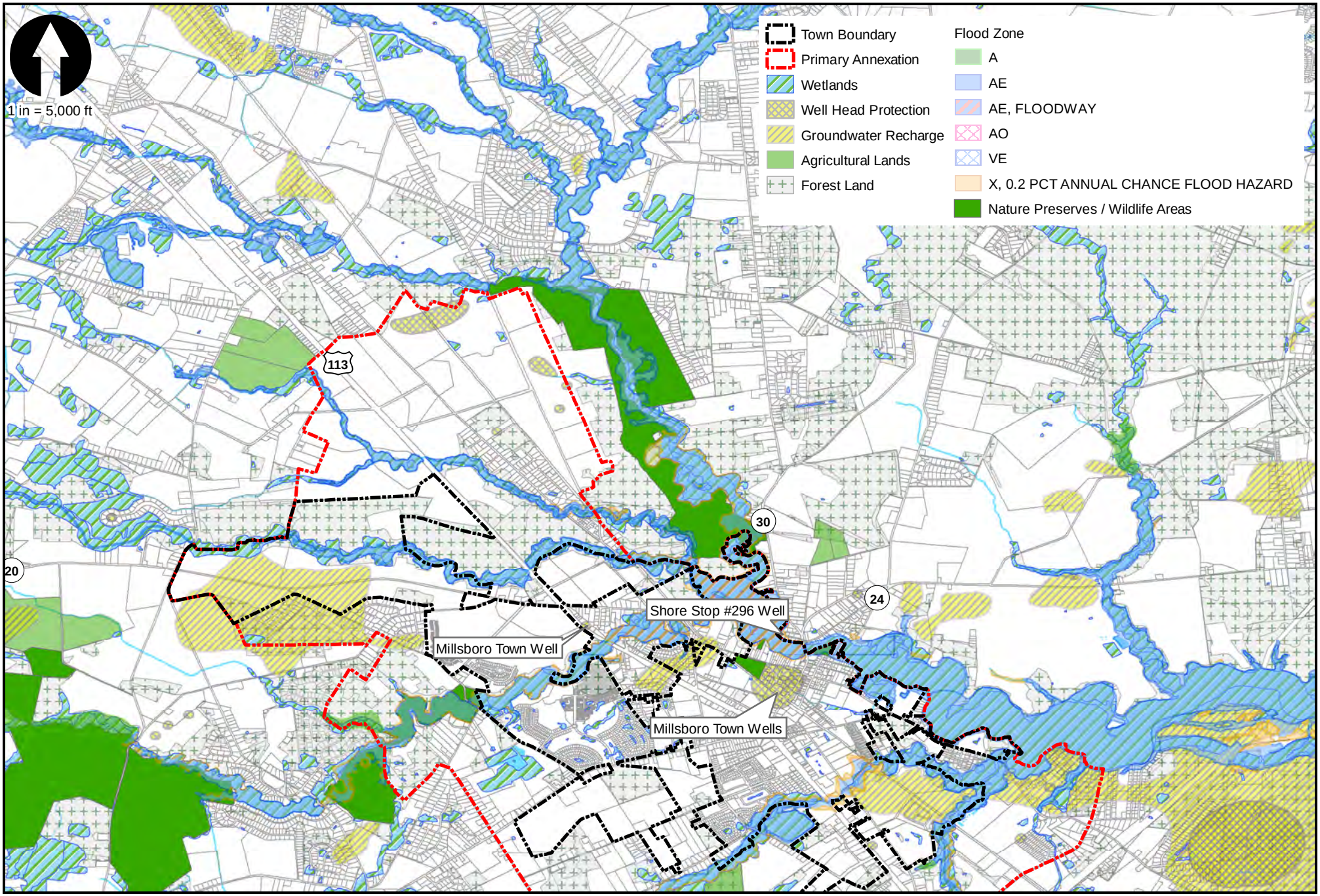


MAP 5. STATE STRATEGIES
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE 2020

Town of Millsboro

AECOM

February 2020



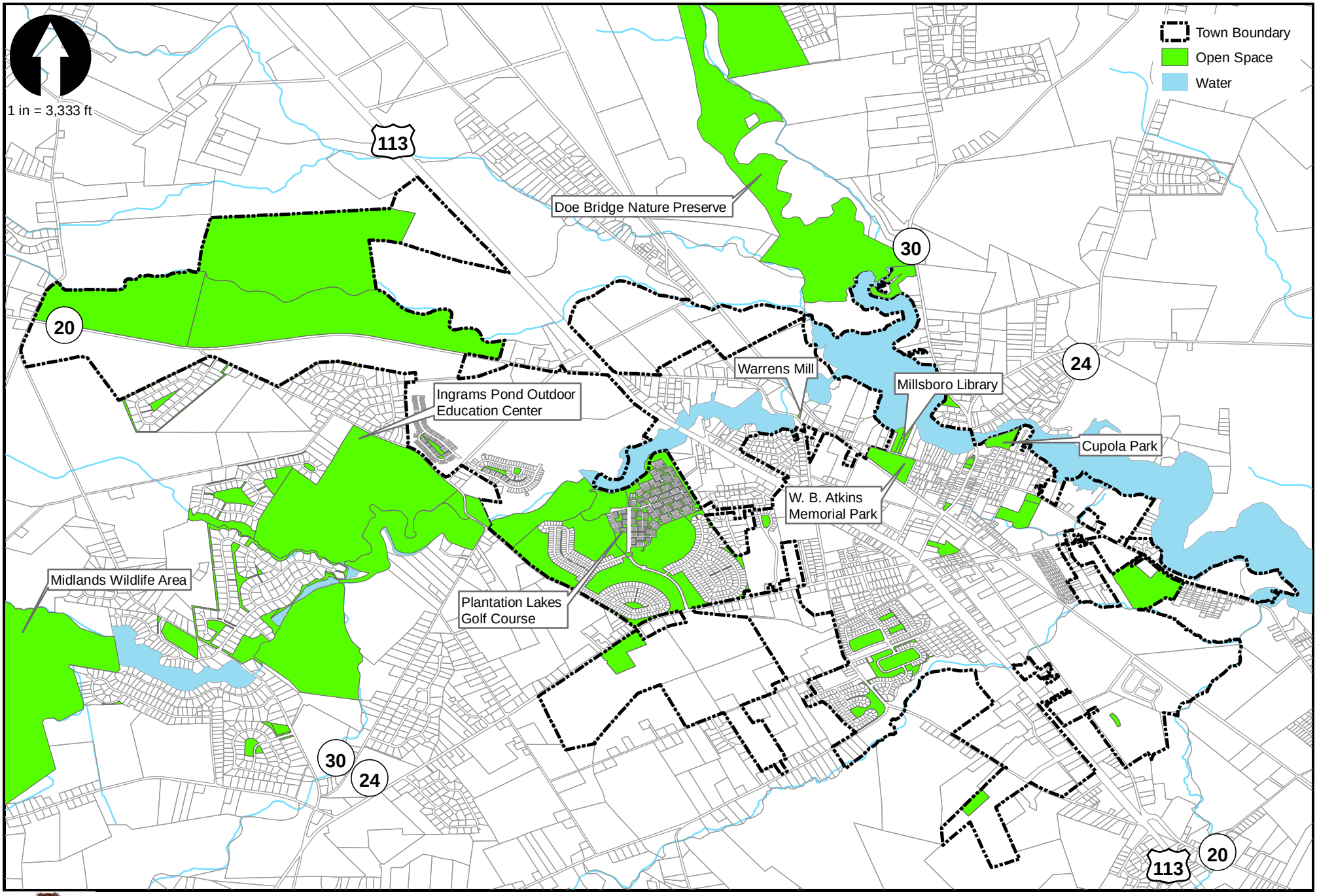
MAP 6. ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE 2020

Town of Millsboro

AECOM

February 2020



MAP 7. OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE 2020

Town of Millsboro

AECOM

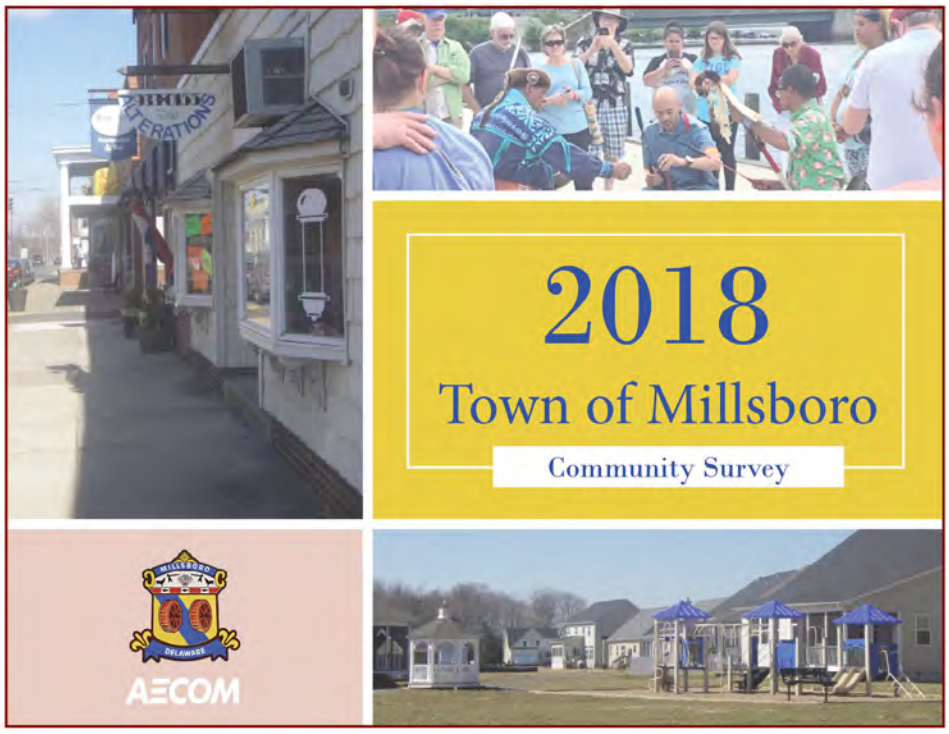
February 2020

APPENDIX B

PUBLIC SURVEY RESULTS

Community Survey

The survey card provided at the Stars and Stripes event had 7 questions. The 8th survey question was on one of the displayed boards. This board can be found in Figure 2.



1. Are you a Millsboro:
(Check all that apply)

- ☐ Full-time/year-round Resident
- ☐ Part-time Resident
- ☐ Employee
- ☐ Visitor

2. Where in Town would you encourage commercial/retail growth?

3. Where in Town would you like to see more sidewalks or trails?

4. How would you deal with population growth over the next 20 years?
(Check all that apply)

- ☐ Increase allowed maximum density in single family zone
- ☐ Increase the amount of Multi-Family zoned property
- ☐ Encourage development of vacant or under-utilized property
- ☐ Allow residential development mixed with commercial development

5. What do you see as Millsboro's most pressing transportation issues?

- ☐ Public Transit
- ☐ Beach traffic
- ☐ Lack of pedestrian amenities
- ☐ Truck traffic

Thank You
For your Participation

6. Do you feel safe in Millsboro's downtown during day or night?

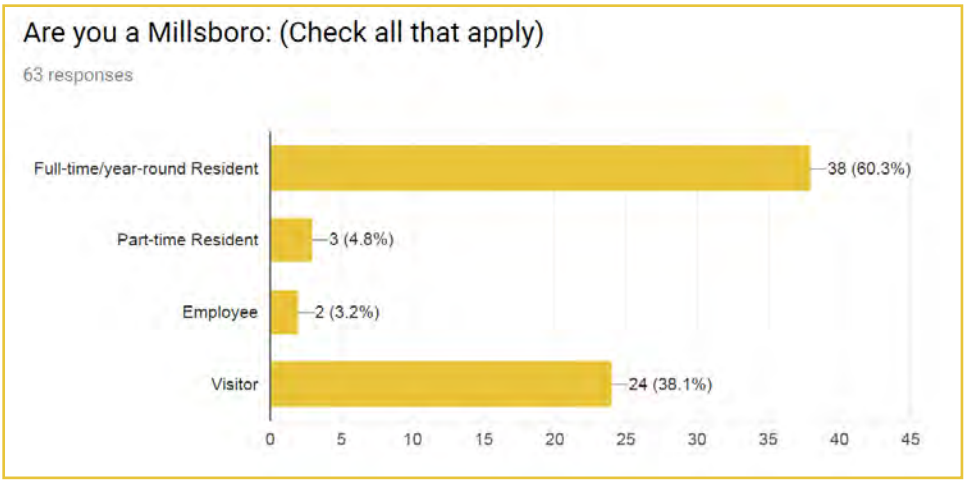
Day	☐ Yes	☐ No
Night	☐ Yes	☐ No

7. What time do you typically visit Millsboro's downtown?
(Check all that apply)

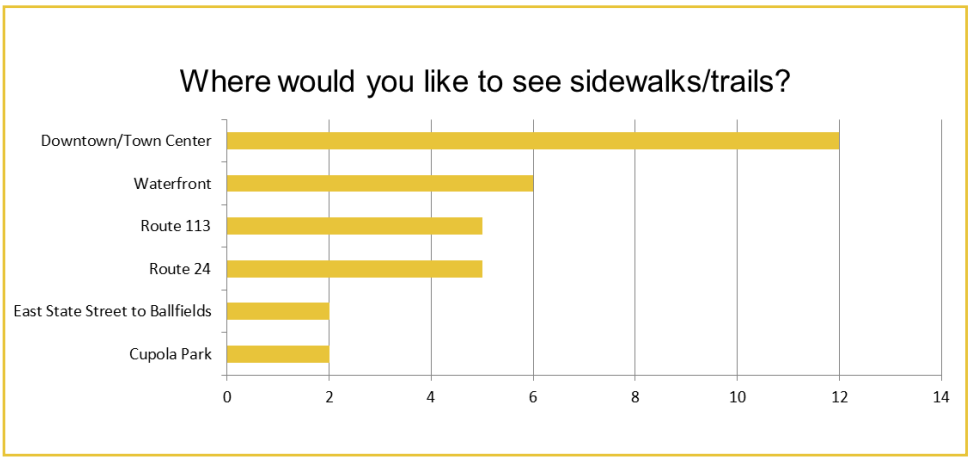
- ☐ Monday – Friday, before 5 pm
- ☐ Monday – Friday, after 5 pm
- ☐ Saturday – Sunday, before 5 pm
- ☐ Saturday – Sunday, after 5 pm
- ☐ I don't visit downtown Millsboro often.

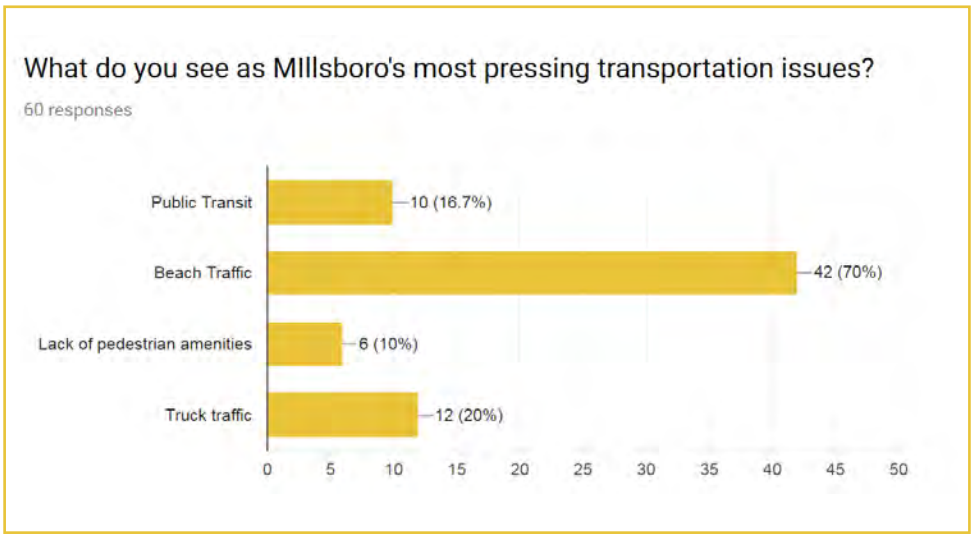
Survey Results

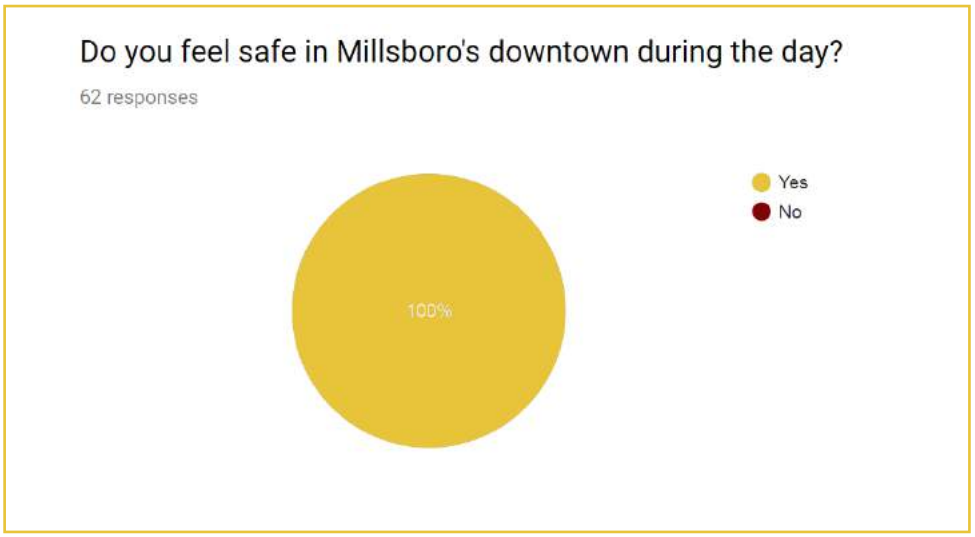
The Community Survey had a total of 63 responses.

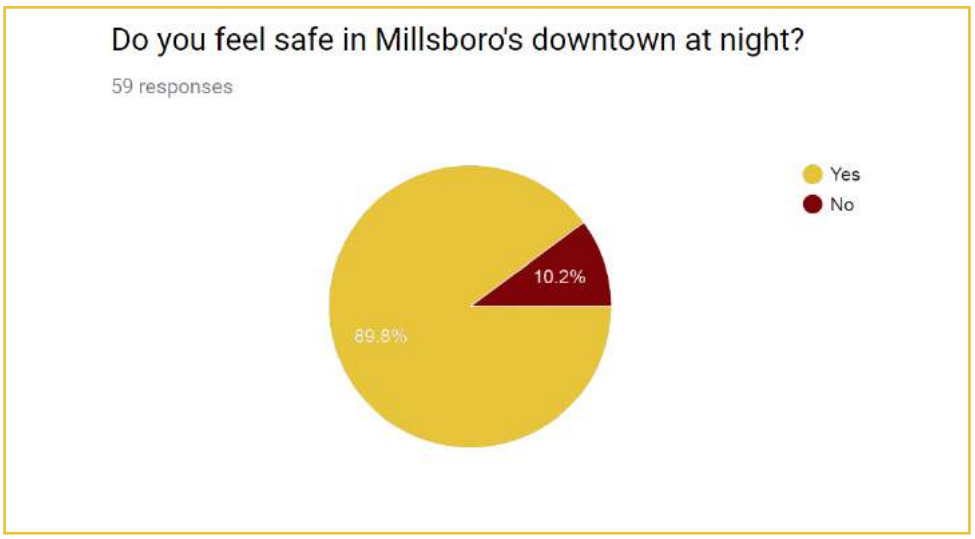


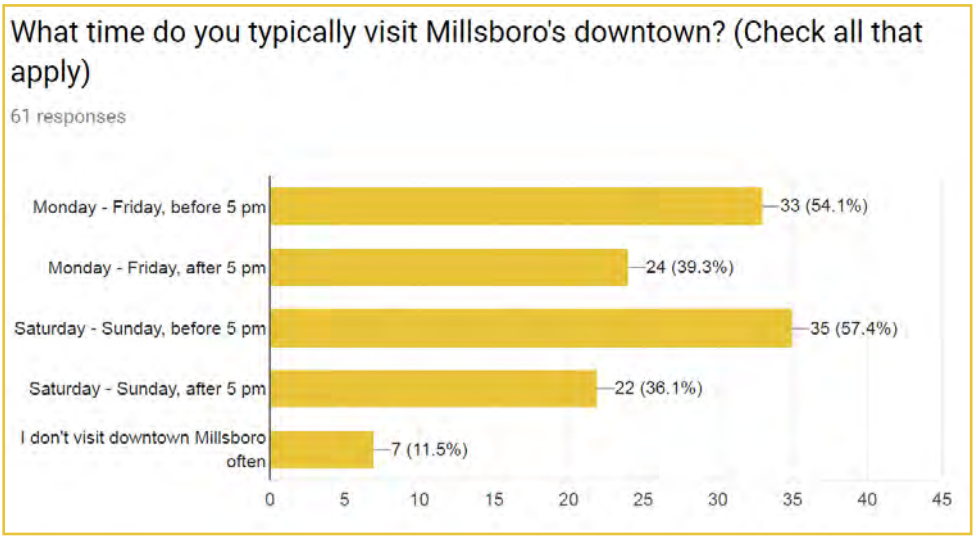


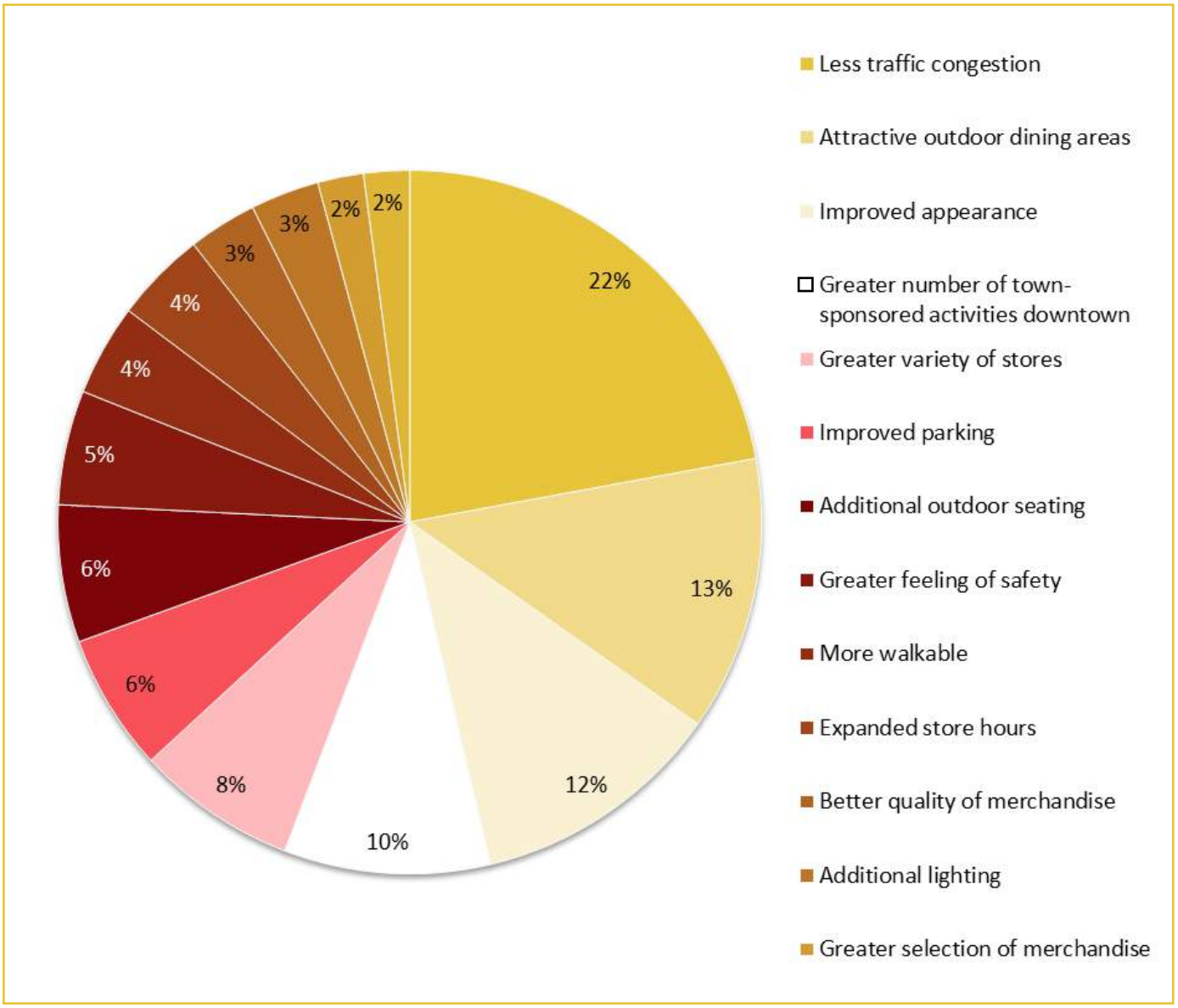



What do you see as MIllsboro's most pressing transportation issues?
60 responses
Public Transit
10 (16.7%)
Beach Traffic
42 (70%)
Lack of pedestrian amenities
6 (10%)
Truck traffic
12 (20%)
0
5
10
15
20
25
30
35
40
45
50


Do you feel safe in Millsboro's downtown during the day?
62 responses
Yes
No
100%


Do you feel safe in Millsboro's downtown at night?
59 responses
Yes
No
10.2%
89.8%


What time do you typically visit Millsboro's downtown? (Check all that apply)
61 responses
Monday - Friday, before 5 pm
33 (54.1%)
Monday - Friday, after 5 pm
24 (39.3%)
Saturday - Sunday, before 5 pm
35 (57.4%)
Saturday - Sunday, after 5 pm
22 (36.1%)
I don't visit downtown Millsboro often
7 (11.5%)
0
5
10
15
20
25
30
35
40
45


22%
13%
12%
10%
8%
6%
6%
5%
4%
4%
3%
3%
2%
2%
Less traffic congestion
Attractive outdoor dining areas
Improved appearance
Greater number of town-sponsored activities downtown
Greater variety of stores
Improved parking
Additional outdoor seating
Greater feeling of safety
More walkable
Expanded store hours
Better quality of merchandise
Additional lighting
Greater selection of merchandise

APPENDIX C

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION

Files sent to tadagsboro@mediacombb.net and 2 others

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jamie.whitehouse@sussexcountyde.gov

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3 items

Appendix A - Maps.pdf
8.74 MB

Appendix D - Downtown Improvement Plan.pdf
5.12 MB

Millsboro 2020 Draft Comprehensive Plan 2.0.pdf
20.7 MB

Message

Good Morning,

The Town of Millsboro has been cooperating with several agencies to create the 2020 Comprehensive Plan that will be used to dictate Zoning and Land Use. Over the next several months the Town Council, Planning commission, and State will also review this document. At our request would you please review the included documents and submit any questions, comments, and concerns to savannah.edwards@aecom.com or town@millsboro.org by March 27, 2020.

Thank you,

Savannah Edwards
Planner, AECOM

[EXTERNAL] RE: Millsboro Draft Comprehensive Plan Review/Comment

JW Jamie Whitehouse <jamie.whitehouse@sussexcountyde.gov>
To Mendelson, Amy

Reply | Reply All | Forward | ...
Tue 5/26/2020 1:52 PM

Amy/Savannah,

Thank you for consulting us. I have only one additional comment to add – the State Planning Office has indicated that the 2020 State Spending Strategies are likely to be adopted later this year. The Draft Comp plan refers to the 2015 Spending Strategies, and it may be worthwhile making reference to the upcoming update.

It otherwise looks good and reflects a lot of hard work.

Thanks

Jamie

[EXTERNAL] Re: Millsboro Draft Comprehensive Plan Review/Comment

CB Cynthia Brought <tadagsboro@mediacombb.net>
To Mendelson, Amy

Reply | Reply All | Forward | ...
Fri 5/22/2020 3:18 PM

You replied to this message on 5/22/2020 3:38 PM.

Good Afternoon Amy:

I reviewed the Comprehensive Plan for Millsboro and the Town of Dagsboro has no objections/comments in regard to the Plan.

Cynthia Brought
Town Administrator
Town of Dagsboro
302-732-3777

APPENDIX D

DOWNTOWN IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Town of MILLSBORO DELAWARE

AECOM



DOWNTOWN IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Vision, goals, and strategies for Millsboro's downtown

February 2019

Adopted & Endorsed
by Millsboro Town Council

PROJECT

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Funding

This Plan was prepared by the Town of Millsboro with financial assistance provided by the Neighborhood Building Blocks Fund (NBBF) through the Delaware Division of Small Business.

Downtown Task Force

Sheldon Hudson, Town Manager
Jamie Burk, Assistant Town Manager
John Thoroughgood, Mayor
Brian Calloway, Chief of Police
Michelle Truitt, Town Council, Downtown Committee
Kevin Turner, Greater Millsboro Chamber of Commerce

Consultant

AECOM

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DOWNTOWN

IMPROVEMENT AREA

The Downtown Improvement Area contains 125 parcels, totaling 89 acres, including streets and right of ways. The average lot size in this district is 0.56 acres. The area is bounded by Cupola Park to the north, Ellis Street to the West, Mitchell Street on the Southern end and Morris Street and Old Landing Road provide eastern borders.

1 INTRODUCTION

Most people know Millsboro as a small, rural town close to the Delaware beaches. In many ways, downtown Millsboro is a similar picture of other downtowns found in small towns across the country. But in other ways Millsboro is so much more – it is the second fastest growing residential community in Delaware; it is home to the very first Wawa gas station; it is a community that embraces convenience and innovation. This project will help us deliver convenience downtown by implementing innovative and holistic planning strategies.

Figure 1.1 Improvement Area



Cupola Park
Waterfront park ideal for outdoor events within walking distance from the downtown.

Main Street Business District
Offers a wide variety of goods and services, from chain stores to locally owned small businesses.

Railroad Corridor Open Space
Underutilized land in a central location with the potential to link residential, institutional, and commercial uses.

Millsboro Town Center
The center of civic participation and a large event space for community gathering.

While Millsboro benefits from the charms and values linked to small town America, it simultaneously suffers from the associated negative effects, such as residential shifts, declining business activity downtown, and limited resources. Downtown Millsboro once acted as the commercial center for not only the town, but Sussex County as well. Over the years, the downtown has lost appeal as a place to live, shop, and dine. The community would like to make the downtown a popular place to live and a shopping, dining and entertainment destination once again.

One of the biggest challenges is the population moving out of the downtown area, in favor of planned housing communities. This transitory pattern is leaving behind a usable housing stock that is deteriorating. With the right improvements, housing could be rehabilitated and be a driver to bring people back to the downtown. Along with residential shifts, the downtown is competing with the businesses along Route 113, from fast-food establishments to big box retail. The variety of retail and "one-stop shopping" on Route 113 pulls potential shoppers from the downtown area. Due to the expansion of commercial development on the highway, residents have fewer reasons to go downtown for their shopping needs. This issue is further compounded by the popularity of coastal communities. Prospective businesses tend to choose to locate closer to the highway due to the benefits of the high volume of seasonal visitors. Both of these shifts have only added to traffic clogging the downtown commercial corridor. The traffic through Main and Washington Street, whether it is truck traffic or vacationers, could easily be a deterrent for someone who wants to visit downtown.

Moreover, while Millsboro has a good foundation for multi-modal travel; streetscaping and targeted pedestrian infrastructure improvements will go a long way towards providing safe, connected pedestrian and bicycle facilities. The benefits of increased pedestrian facilities are myriad. First, more residents will be able to complete simple errands within town without needing to get in their vehicle and add to already congested roads. Second, increased activity improves the health of both the individual and the town. As with many municipalities in Sussex County, Millsboro's median age is older than the state's and more retirees continue to choose to locate in this area. Pedestrian infrastructure is vital for allowing these residents to safely age in place. While aging individuals choose to stay in their homes close to the downtown, these already vulnerable individuals become more susceptible to threats such as theft due to a lack of activity downtown. Regardless of crime statistics, the lack of activity downtown is enough to provoke fear in vulnerable residents. The Downtown Improvement Plan will make recommendations using Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) strategies to address vacant and underutilized lots. Finally, the downtown study area includes parks and recreation areas that are vital tools for creating equity. These recreational amenities are accessible to all residents since they are located all throughout the improvement area as shown in **Figure 1.1.** Complete Street policies and associated goals will be woven into the master plan to ensure broad, equitable access to these health-improving assets.

The Town recognizes the decline of the downtown but knows the potential it has to become a destination for residents and visitors to live, work, shop, dine and take pride in. The key to a successful project is the renewed interest in the downtown by the Town, businesses, stakeholders and residents. Completing a Downtown Improvement Plan will allow the Town to develop a vision for their downtown through researching and analyzing its history, current conditions and future potential, with an expanded effort towards placemaking, crime prevention and sustainability.

PURPOSE

Healthy and vibrant downtowns are critical components of Delaware's economic well-being and quality of life. The Town of Millsboro has recognized the merits of investing in revitalizing the downtown core. As such, the Town of Millsboro identified a need for a consolidated plan that would identify and prioritize steps for improving their downtown district. The Downtown Improvement Plan identifies assets, challenges, and opportunities within the Town of Millsboro's Downtown Improvement Area. It also establishes goals and objectives for the community with recommended implementation strategies to achieve these goals.

Main Street and Washington Street make up Millsboro's downtown commercial corridor. There are retail and antique shops, several restaurants - including a popular family restaurant – Georgia House, a Post Office, dance studio and two banks. The Millsboro Police Department and Fire Department are located downtown as well. While off-street parking is provided at some businesses, both Main and Washington have designated on-street parking spaces, and the Town operates one public parking lot downtown. Just beyond the commercial corridor are single family homes that are adjacent to parks, churches and a school.

The Downtown Improvement Area contains 125 parcels, totaling 89 acres, including streets and right of ways. The average lot size in this district is 0.56 acres. The area is bounded by Cupola Park to the north, Ellis Street to the West, Mitchell Street on the Southern end and Morris Street and Old Landing Road provide eastern borders. The boundary was delineated based on the following rationale:

- Aligns with the Town's Urban Business District.
- Captures a high concentration of crime committed in Millsboro.
- Captures a high concentration of non-owner occupied housing units.
- Captures a part of Town that is struggling to keep up with the rate of development occurring in other parts of Town.
- Builds upon the Town's historical commercial core.
- Includes parks, municipal service centers, and multi-modal transportation options.

STATE PROGRAMS

Recognizing the success of Towns and Cities enrolled in Delaware's Downtown Development District (DDD) program, the Town of Millsboro decided to pursue their own Downtown Improvement Plan in order to prioritize projects, leverage investments, and mimic other goals of the DDD program. The Town was able to secure funding for the project through the State's Neighborhood Building Blocks Fund (NBBF).

DDD Program

Delaware's small size lends its unique opportunities to coordinate and manage growth. Leading up to 2014, state leaders recognized a trend of people leaving Delaware's downtown areas, leading to blight and the subsequent decline of businesses in those areas as well. The Downtown Development Districts Act of 2014 was enacted by the General Assembly to leverage the resources of the state government in a limited number of designated areas in a multifaceted effort to:

- Spur private investment in business districts
- Stimulate job growth and improve commercial hub vitality
- Stabilize communities of long term residents by improving housing opportunities
- Attract talented people, innovative small business, and diverse residents to downtowns

The DDD grant program is administered by the Delaware State Housing Authority (DHSA) and the Office of State Planning Coordination (OSPC.) Currently there are 8 DDDs: Wilmington, Dover, Seaford, Smyrna, Harrington, Milford, Georgetown and Laurel.

NBBF Program

The 2008-09 financial and economic crises had a large effect a number of individuals who lost jobs and subsequently homes. Unsafe practices by mortgage lenders and large banks led to Delaware receiving million dollar settlements. In 2016, several non-profits and state agencies were vying for the dollars. Many believed that the money should go to DSHA to support housing initiatives, while others felt that it should go to the Attorney General and the Department of Justice, who sued the banks. As a result the Neighborhood Building Blocks Fund (NBBF) Board was established and comprised of members from Delaware's Division of Small Business, Development and Tourism (formerly DEDO), the Delaware Department of Justice, DSHA, and OSPC.. Together they decided on a list of common goals and assess applications for grant dollars based on those goals:

- Support revitalization in targeted areas such as Delaware's Downtown Development Districts and Strong Neighborhoods;
- Improve Delaware's use of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED);
- Support community planning that adopts Healthy Communities principles;
- Improve resources and opportunities for at-risk juveniles and adolescents; and
- Address the needs of high crime areas statewide.

PLANNING DOCUMENTS

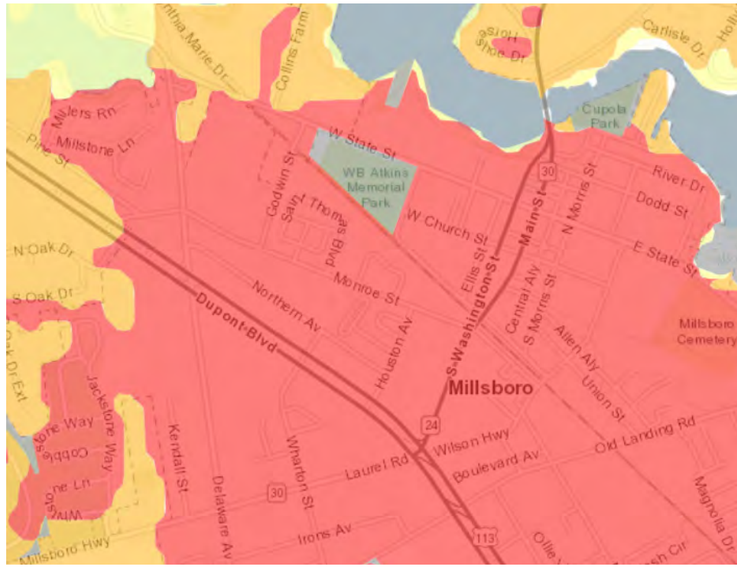
Relevant planning documents were reviewed to develop a better understanding of the district and its background for the Plan. Overall, each documents points to the fact that the Town of Millsboro is working to improve the quality of life for its residents by actively managing development, providing for a mix of land uses, improving multi-modal transportation, and promoting appropriate redevelopment.

State Strategies

The 2015 Delaware State Strategies for Policies and Spending is a document produced by the Delaware Office for State Planning Coordination to coordinate land-use decision-making with infrastructure and services in order to make the best use of Delaware's natural and fiscal resources. All of Millsboro's Downtown Improvement Area is categorized as Investment Level 1. See **Figure 1.2** State Strategies. According to the State's Plan, "investments and policies should support and encourage a wide range of uses and densities, promote a variety of transportation options, foster efficient use of existing public and private investments, and enhance community identity and integrity." OSPC recommends investing in economic development, housing, education facilities and redevelopment in Level 1 areas.

Figure 1.2 State Strategies

Nearly all of the Downtown Improvement Area is Level 1



Source: Delaware Office of State Planning Coordination

Millsboro's 2009 Comprehensive Plan

An update to the Plan is currently underway as of the date of this report and the Town intends to incorporate elements as appropriate to enhance the downtown.

Overall, the 2009 Plan notes that there was strong support for maintaining the traditional downtown and improving its appearance. The document further enumerates, "the Town has a traditional downtown encompassing four blocks around the intersection of SR 24 and State Street. The downtown is thriving with few vacancies and a range of storefronts including restaurants, antique shops, printers, five & dime, hairdressers, banks, and other such locally oriented enterprises. Traditional single-family neighborhoods exist around the downtown core…" As was the case in 2008, vacancies are not an issue for Millsboro's downtown. The Plan does however outline a large need for additional housing options near the urban center in order to sustain the community and make better use of under-utilized infrastructure on the weekends. The Comprehensive Plan also cited a survey that was conducted in 2008 to gauge resident satisfaction with quality of life indicators; 44% of respondents rated downtown shopping/ restaurants as fair. Attracting new business and job opportunities were rated as the highest priority and improving the appearance of downtown was ranked as a mid-tier priority.

Among the plan's goals are the following:

- Remain a center for appropriate and planned growth within Sussex County.
- Encourage an adequate supply of a range of residential uses and housing types. Maintain existing multi-family developments and encourage a mix of high quality housing for families and individuals of all ranges of income. Encourage residential development in appropriate areas as designated by the future land use plan that will be integrated with existing residential developments.
- Concentrate downtown commercial development in the Main and Washington Street corridor from Railroad Street to the north junction of Main and Washington Streets.
- Maintain and expand open space and recreation facilities to meet current and future needs.
- Protect transportation investments and improve access to transportation resources through connecting land use decisions and transportation investment decisions, developing interconnected residential neighborhoods, consolidating entrances for commercial properties where appropriate, and to provide access to alternative transportation modes.
- Continue to be a center for educational, medical, and other institution uses. Encourage the siting of school and other public facilities inside the Town limits where and when appropriate.

Sussex Plan

While developing their Comprehensive Plan, Sussex County took an extensive look at how to accommodate growth and development over the next twenty years. Much like Millsboro, Sussex County has experienced high growth. As such, there is a greater need for supportive services such as schools, central water and sewer, traffic control, health care, social services, affordable housing, and recreation facilities. The County calls for accommodating growth mainly in already-established towns and cities, such as Millsboro, and clustering higher densities near town centers. The County also recommends prioritizing destination marketing and tourism-based economic development because it is capable of yielding a broad set of impacts.

LOCAL HISTORY

As more English began settling in Maryland in the late 1600s and early 1700s, Native Americans began slowly moving north from the Assateague region. In 1711 the Maryland Colonial Assembly established a reservation for them on the southwest side of the Indian River. Over the years the land was purchased by individuals and the Indians joined other groups such as the Nanticoke community. Millsboro generally sets the date for its establishment at 1792, (millsboro.org) the year that Elisha Dickerson dammed up the headwaters of the Indian River at the point known as Rock Hole (named for the rockfish spawning there.) More than fifteen grist and saw mills were established within a four-mile radius of Millsboro (originally named "Millsborough".) Several other industries were created from the success of the mills, including tanneries, shipping, and a foundry and forge. The foundry and forge, which operated until after the Civil War, were located at what is now known as Cupola Park.

Millsboro's location along the river made it a natural transportation hub and post-Civil War routes were developed through Town that helped it grow further. In the 1890s two large lumber mills began. Holly wreaths, strawberries, and tomato canneries were also thriving businesses that were unique to Millsboro. From the 1930's onward, the broiler became Millsboro's dominate "crop."

The Town of Millsboro officially became a municipality in 1909. The Town's first comprehensive plan and zoning code were developed in 1973. The Town reincorporated in 1976. It adopted a new comprehensive plan in 2001 and updated it in 2004. An updated plan was produced in 2009, and in 2014 the Town reaffirmed its applicability. Since the early 2000's Millsboro has seen a population boom. Today it is one of the fastest growing communities in Delaware and an employment hub in Sussex County.

Ball Theater

This is Millsboro's first and only movie theater. The theater opened in 1937 and closed in 1971 (Delmarva Now). After almost 50 years, the movie theater is being restored, bringing back an iconic historic landmark. The renovation of the movie theater has been a catalyst project for the redevelopment and rejuvenation of the downtown.



After the building renovation, the theater will open its doors as the Millstone Theater.

Source: The original photo is currently displayed inside of the Millstone Theater.



DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY SURVEY

For the second year in a row, the Stars and Stripes Event was one of Millsboro's most popular community events. Hosted the weekend before the Fourth of July, the local Chamber of Commerce highlights some of the region's assets through a firework display over the Indian River, and a block party with local food trucks, DJs, and vendors at Cupola Park. AECOM set up a booth with the Town of Millsboro to conduct the community survey and communicate updates about the Downtown Plan and the 2019 Comprehensive Plan.

Photo Credit: Greater Millsboro Chamber of Commerce

Task Force Members:

Sheldon Hudson
Town Manager

Jamie Burk
Assistant Town Manager

John Thoroughgood
Mayor

Brian Calloway
Chief of Police

Michelle Truitt
Town Council, Downtown Committee

Kevin Turner
Greater Millsboro Chamber of Commerce

2 | PUBLIC OUTREACH

Community feedback is an integral part of plan visioning process. In order to better understand the community's vision for future development/ redevelopment in Millsboro. Project consultants undertook a two-tiered approach to outreach for the Downtown Improvement Plan.

DOWNTOWN TASK FORCE

First, the consultants along with Town Administration identified key stakeholders and assembled a Downtown Task Force.

Between May and July 2018, the Task Force met on three occasions to discuss the scope of the project, current issues, possible solutions, and priorities. One of the first activities the Task Force completed was a SWOT analysis of the downtown study area. Overall, the conversation was positive – task force members identified more strengths and opportunities than weaknesses and threats.

STRENGTHS

- Organization/leadership
- Traffic
- Low Vacancy
- Walkable
- Arts
- Nice restaurants (2)
- Family-friendly
- Influx of workers
- Police presence
- Traditional Downtown core
- Brick (unique)
- Employers
- Theater
- No parking fee
- Location
- Year Round
- Low crime

WEAKNESSES

- Traffic
- Sidewalks/connectivity
- Lighting (soft)
- Green Space
- Rented businesses (low ownership rates)
- Lack of restricted parking
- Signage (blends in, not recognizable)

OPPORTUNITIES

- Arts
- Location (convenient, close)
- Natural Features
- Signage improvement grant
- New businesses (diverse)
- Housing stock
- Food, Brewery market
- Public wifi
- Outdoor dining
- By-pass
- Leadership
- Park
- Workers

THREATS

- Growth (regional)
- Integrating newcomers
- Aging residents
- Truck traffic
- Narrow streets
- Parallel parking
- By-pass
- Stomwater management and regulations
- Aging housing stock

PUBLIC SURVEY

Community feedback is an integral part of plan visioning process. In order to better understand the community's vision for future development/ redevelopment in Millsboro, AECOM constructed an 8 question survey. AECOM then set up a booth with the Town of Millsboro at the Greater Millsboro Chamber of Commerce's annual Stars and Stripes event with surveys, maps and information about our current long-range planning efforts with the Town. See **Figure 2.1 Boards Displayed at the Stars and Stripes Event.** Respondents who chose to participate in the survey were given a raffle ticket to one of two gift baskets that were given out at the end of the event. During the three hours (5:30 pm – 8:30 pm) that AECOM was on hand, they received 63 completed surveys. Some of the highlights include:

- The majority of respondents would like to see future growth accommodated by filling in or redeveloping vacant and/or underutilized lots and by allowing a mix of residential and commercial uses.
- Overwhelmingly, beach traffic was noted as the biggest transportation hurdle (bearing in mind the survey was taken on the weekend before July 4 – one of the busiest weekends of the year for beach traffic.)
- People feel safe in Millsboro.
- Many would like to see additional outdoor seating and outdoor dining options in the downtown area.
- A lot of residents see promise along Millsboro's waterfront – especially for trails.
- Constituents would like to see more sidewalks and commercial growth in the downtown core.

The community survey and full results are provided in **Appendix A.**

Figure 2.1 Boards Displayed at the Stars and Stripes Event

In addition to participating in the survey, residents gathered information regarding the Downtown Improvement Plan and the 2019 Comprehensive Plan Update.



3. ISSUES, OPPORTUNITIES, NEEDS

3

ISSUES, OPPORTUNITIES, NEEDS

There are various challenges that might be discouraging potential new homeowners and business owners from investing in Millsboro's Downtown. This section describes the Downtown's challenges and strengths, with a focus on the socioeconomic and physical conditions that may be affecting its economic development.



POPULATION AND HOUSING

The 2015-2020 Delaware Housing Needs Assessment outlines a framework of significant trends and issues within the state-wide housing market in order to guide housing policy. The document analysed six different regional markets: North New Castle, South New Castle, North Kent, South Kent, East Sussex and West Sussex. Millsboro is located within the 'East Sussex' region. The report identifies the east Sussex County housing market as the fastest growing and most expensive market in the State. This market includes both beach and in-land communities that are attracting retirees and second homebuyers. In Millsboro and its downtown area, housing is more affordable than in most parts of the region, when comparing median home values and monthly rent. In 2016, the average median value for homes within the improvement area was $163,000, and its average median monthly rent was $600. This is about $70,000 and $370 less than the County, respectively.

Some of Delaware's strongest industries have low and moderate wage workers, creating a significant demand for workforce housing. Particularly, these industries are health care, tourism and retail. According to the Delaware Housing Needs Assessment, there is a shortage of housing affordable to workers within these industries, particularly in east Sussex County. Given the fact that eastern Sussex County relies heavily on tourism to support its economy, a large number of workers in that area have jobs in the service and retail industries. Typically, these types of jobs pay less than area median income, and with high housing costs along the coast, many of these workers have a difficult time finding affordable housing. Being surrounded by abundant tourism, retail and industrial employment opportunities, Millsboro is providing reasonably priced quality housing for a regional workforce.

The Town has experienced significant housing and population growth in recent years - a 75% increase since 2000. This residential growth, as with the tremendous commercial growth, has been occurring within the outer portions of town. In 2015, there were approximately 550 people living in about 255 occupied housing units within the downtown improvement area. A vibrant downtown, such as the one in Berlin, MD, has a density of 7 units per acre. Millsbroro has a density of about 3 units per acre, which is very low for a thriving downtown. Out of the 255 occupied units within the area, 74 are homeowner-occupied and 181 units are renter-occupied. The low homeownership rate of 39% falls significantly behind the Town (56%), County (78%), and State (71%) rates. (Note: The majority of these housing units are within apartment complexes- Millsboro Village and Brandywine Apartments). The low residential density and low homeownership could be key factors that are hindering the downtown from becoming a vibrant live-work community, which is essential to be a hub for economic and cultural activity. Without strategic planning to provide more quality housing options in the downtown, the hub of the greater Millsboro region will be Route 113.

There are opportunities to increase housing, increase the demand for retail and services in the downtown, and create a live-work community. Millsboro's downtown could capitalize on the growing regional population by attracting residences to the downtown. New quality mixed-use buildings, with apartments above retail or offices, could occur on vacant land or through redevelopment of underutilized lots and buildings. And homeownership could increase by encouraging investment and improvements to the existing housing stock as well as converting some renter-occupied units to owner-occupied homes.

Expanding the availability of housing options would improve workforce housing offerings that serve the growing tourism, retail, healthcare, and manufacturing industries in the region. It would create a more 24/7 community that would optimize the use of the facilities and infrastructure that are underutilized on weekends and evenings. Moreover, it would provide the population necessary to support a greater range of commercial services and amenities. Through increased homeownership, infill development, and rehabilitation, the Town will improve the overall housing conditions, and increase property values and tax revenues. The Town will also see a greater sense of pride and property upkeep, which will result enhanced community appearance and perception. – All of which will help to create a stronger sense of place, community identity, and civic pride.

Strategy

Incentivize mixed-use development with residences through bonus density, tax abatements, waive fees, and streamline approval process

Table 3.1 Demographics Summary

	Downtown	Millsboro	506.02 BG2*	506.02 BG3*	County	State
Population	554	4,121	1,109	2,167	211,224	926,454
Home Ownership	29%	56%	49%	54%	78%	71%
Rental	71%	44%	51%	46%	22%	29%
Vacant Housing Units	11%	14%	17%	20%	35%	17%
Median Household Income	$30,750	$40,300	$36,600	$24,900	$54,218	$60,500
Median Home Value	$163,000	$185,500	$158,900	$166,900	$231,600	$231,500
Poverty Rate	31%	22%	21%	41%	13%	12%
Structures built before 1939	3.1%	1.3%	2.5%	3.7%	4.9%	9.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5 Year Estimates, 2012 - 2016
* For census geographic entities map, see **Appendix B**

INCOME AND EMPLOYMENT

Income

Per 2016 U.S. Census Bureau estimates, the average median income of the households within Millsboro's downtown was approximately $30,750, which is lower than the Town ($40,300) and significantly lower than the County ($65,500) and State ($60,500). The poverty rate in the downtown's block groups averaged 31%, which is higher than the poverty rate at the Town (22%), County (11%) and State (12.0%). The greatest disparities are clear in Block Group 3, Census Tract 506.02, which had a 41% poverty rate and a median household income of only $25,000. While the poverty rate for the Town has remained about the same since 2000, the median household income has increased almost 50%.

See **Table 3.1** Demographics Summary.

Employment

Job Types

According to the Census Bureau's Center for Economic Studies, 370 of the 2,300+ primary jobs in Millsboro were located in the downtown improvement area in 2015. There were 123 people living within the downtown area who held primary jobs. (A primary job is a single job per worker, public or private, that is the highest paying job for that individual.) One-third of the individuals whose primary job was within the district earned less than $1,250 per month. One-third earned $1,251 to $3,333, and one-third earned over $3,333 per month. Half of the individuals who worked within the improvement area were between 30 and 54 years old. Industries representing the downtown's workers are listed in **Table 3.2** 2015 NAICS Industry Sectors Job Count. Most of the jobs were in education (30%) and accommodation / food service (27%). Only 11% were in retail and 5% were in arts, entertainment and recreation.

Table 3.2 2015 NAICS Industry Sectors Job Count

Industry	#	%
Educational Services	112	30.3
Accommodation & Food Services	102	27.6
Public Administration	46	12.4
Retail Trade	41	11.1
Finance and Insurance	27	7.3
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	18	4.9
Manufacturing and Construction	5	1.3
Health Care & Social Assistance	5	1.3
Other	14	3.8
Total	370	100

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5 Year Estimates, 2011 - 2015

Unemployment

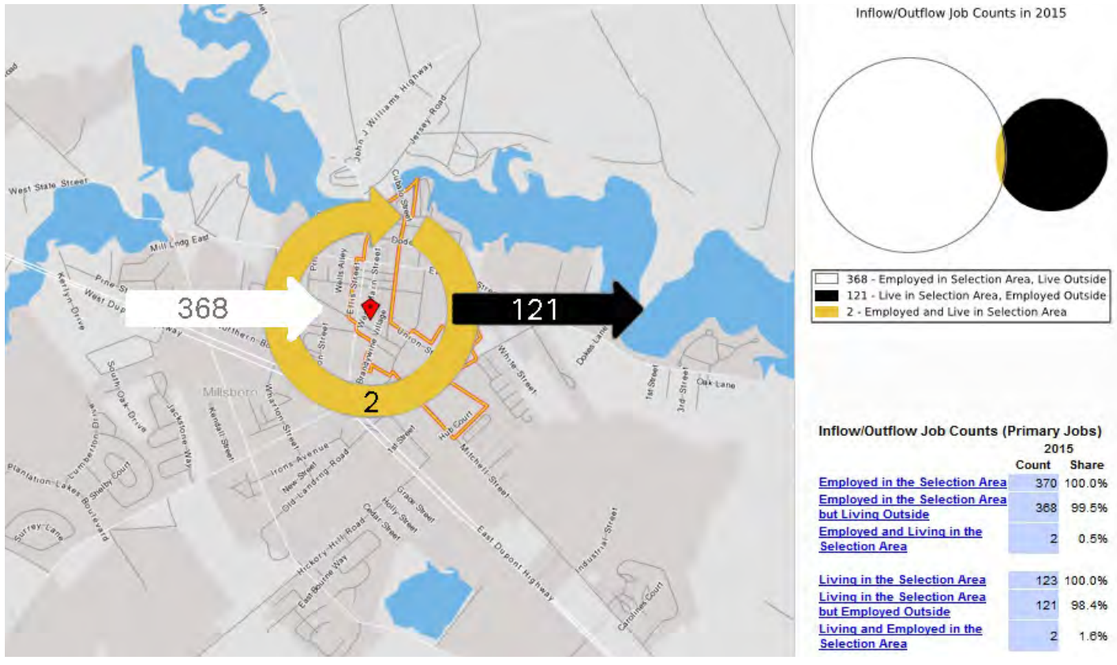
Per the 2016 Census estimates, the Town had a 4.3% unemployment rate, which is comparable to the 4.5% rate for the County and State levels in 2016 per Bureau of Labor Statistics. (The unemployment rate is the number of unemployed persons divided by the number of persons in the civilian labor force.)

Job Inflow and Outflow

Figure 3.1 shows the inflow and outflow of jobs in the downtown improvement area in 2015. Of the 370 workers in the boundary, only two both lived and worked there. An estimated 20 others lived in Millsboro limits and worked in the downtown. (Source: Census Bureau's Center for Economic Studies). This is an important statistic to understand since the Town desires to become a more successful live-work community.

A live-work community is one where people are walking around and interacting in the community. Throughout the day and evening, people are running daily errands, going out to eat, socializing after work, and gathering as a community. There is a need to create a more balanced inflow and outflow of workers by increasing job opportunities for residents and housing opportunities for employees. The Town should aim to capture some of those that live outside the Town and strive for more of an overlap of people both living and working within the downtown. Employers would benefit from a stable workforce living nearby, employees benefit from time saved on their commute, and communities benefit by having a more active and vibrant community and increased investment from new residents.

Figure 3.1 Job Inflow and Outflow

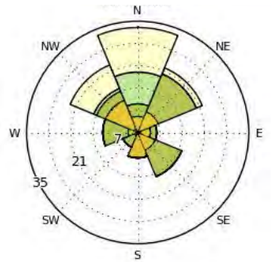


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies, 2015.

Where Employed Residents are Going

In 2015, of 123 the employed residents in the downtown improvement area, 45 (or 36%) worked less than 10 miles from their home, including about 11 that worked in the Town limits. 43 (or 35%) of employed residents commute between 10 and 24 miles. 35 (or 28%) commute between 25 miles or more. Most employed residents were travelling north to places such as Georgetown and Dover. **Figure 3.2** show the distance, direction and destination of where downtown residents commute to work.

Figure 3.2 Where Employed Residents are Going

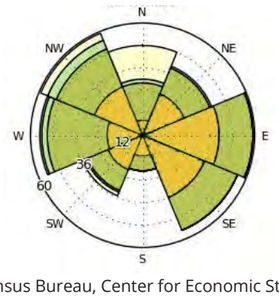


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies, 2015.

Where Workers are Coming From

Half of the 370 workers in the downtown improvement area traveled less than 10 miles to arrive at their jobs within the downtown, with an estimated 22 workers living within Millsboro limits in 2015. About 40% commute from between 10 and 24 miles away, and with 10% traveling 25 miles or more. **Figure 3.3** shows the distance and direction of where workers traveled from to get to the work in the downtown improvement area.

Figure 3.3 Where Workers are Coming From



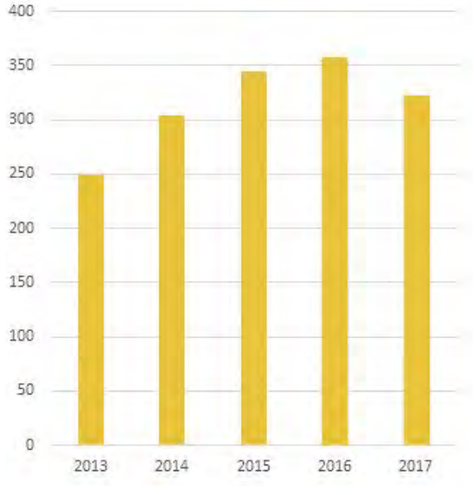
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies, 2015.

CRIME INCIDENTS AND TRENDS

The Millsboro Police Department provided the reported criminal incidents within the business district from January 2013 to December 2017. Overall, Millsboro's business district experienced a steady increase in crime from 2013 to 2016 and a slight decrease in 2017. See **Figure 3.4** Business District Criminal Incidents 2013-2017.

Throughout these years, the business district had 1,577 incidents shown in **Figure 3.5** Business District Criminal Incidents by Type 2013-2017. The three most common criminal incidents within this time period were drug violations (212), theft from buildings (113), and disorderly conduct (97). The second most common criminal incidents were family offenses (96), field interviews (65), intimidation (50), and shoplifting (45). There were no cases of murder and nonnegligent manslaughter.

Figure 3.4 Business District Total Criminal Incidents 2013-2017



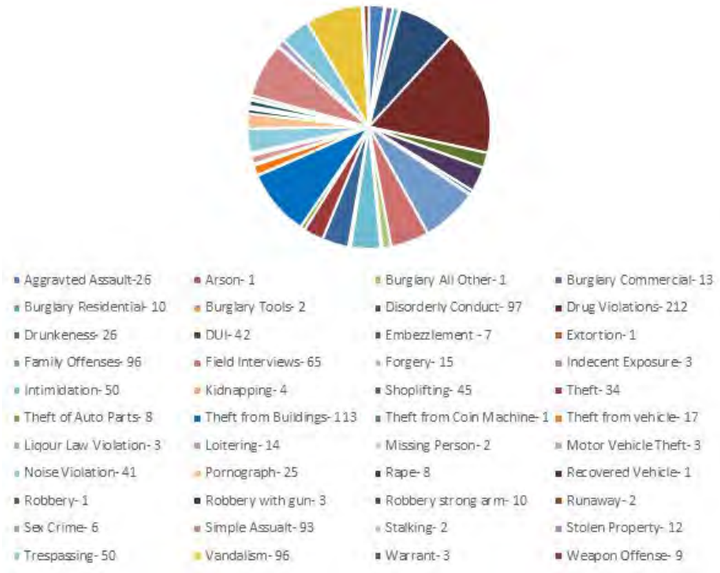
Source: Millsboro Police Department, 2017

The crime types shown in Figure 3.5 were divided in four categories:

- Violent Crimes (aggravated assault, rape, and robbery)
- Property Crimes (arson, burglary, larceny-theft, and motor vehicle theft)
- Drug Offenses and Weapons
- Others (disorderly conduct, DUI, family offenses, indecent exposure, liquor law violation, embezzlement, field interviews, intimidation, loitering, noise violation, drunkenness, extortion, kidnapping, missing person, and pornography).

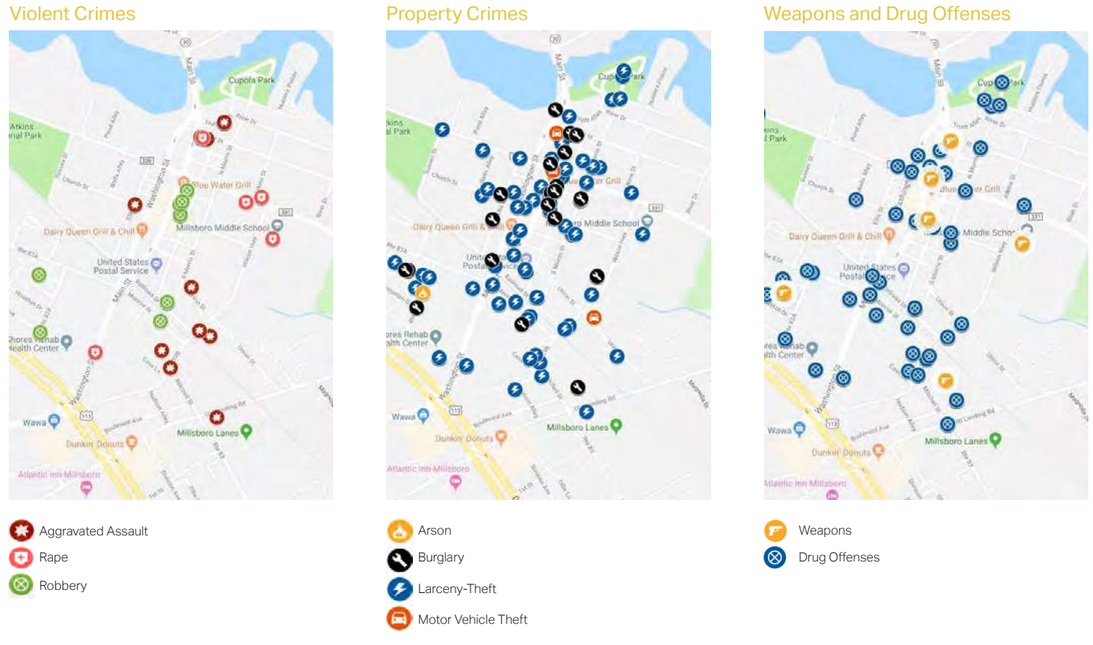
Figure 3.6 shows the location of violent crimes, property crimes, drug offenses and weapons within the business district and improvement area.

Figure 3.5 Business District Criminal Incidents by Crime Type



Source: Millsboro Police Department, 2017

Figure 3.6 Business District Criminal Incidents by Category 2013-2017



Data Source: Millsboro Police Department, 2017

LAND USE AND ZONING

The downtown improvement area contains a diverse mix of commercial, institutional, civic, and residential uses that exemplify traditional small town "Main Street America". The improvement area has retail and antique shops, several restaurants, a Post Office and two banks. It also consists of single-family homes, apartment complexes, commercial and professional services, a park, a bowling alley, the Police Department, and the Millsboro Town Center. Also close to the downtown commercial district are churches, day cares, little league fields, a school, and the Fire Department, among others. Once the commercial center for the region, Millsboro's downtown is now overshadowed by the significant growth of newer, larger shopping centers and planned residential communities. The downtown has lost some of its standing as an economic and cultural hub, but has retained its close-knit community and small town character.

There are some readily apparent reasons for the downtown experiencing a steady decline. Perhaps the most glaring is competition. The abundance and variety of commercial uses along Route 113, from fast-food establishments to big box retail, ultimately equate to convenience for the consumer. Rather than attempt to maintain pace and compete with the convenience of Route 113, Millsboro's downtown could offer a very different experience than the highway commercial areas. The downtown could offer uses and services that dovetail and capitalize on the abundant commercial, employment and residential uses in the greater area. It could evolve with its own unique mix of residential, civic, cultural, service, and entertainment uses, not just retail. Such uses include specialty foods, restaurants, a movie or live-performance theater, services, boutiques, galleries, health and fitness studios, and professional offices, among others. While the large-scale shopping centers, fast-food establishments, and big box stores serve their purpose, they are more auto-oriented, "in and out", and transactional in nature. The downtown could offer a more walkable, small town environment where pedestrians can leisurely shop, dine, run errands, participate in activities, and gather as a community.

Sixty-percent (60%) of the parcels in the improvement area are in the UB – Urban Business zone. See **Figure 3.7** Zoning Map. The purpose of the UB zone is to be the central business district with local commercial activities that benefit one another and that serve the immediate residential areas from which they draw support. The UB zone provides flexibility to maintain and enhance downtown character. It permits a wide range of uses, including small retail stores, professional offices, banks, government uses, and other service uses. These flexible zoning requirements help to create an environment where most daily needs can be met. However, too much flexibility or regulation may both have unintended adverse effects that are not consistent with the goals and objectives for the downtown.

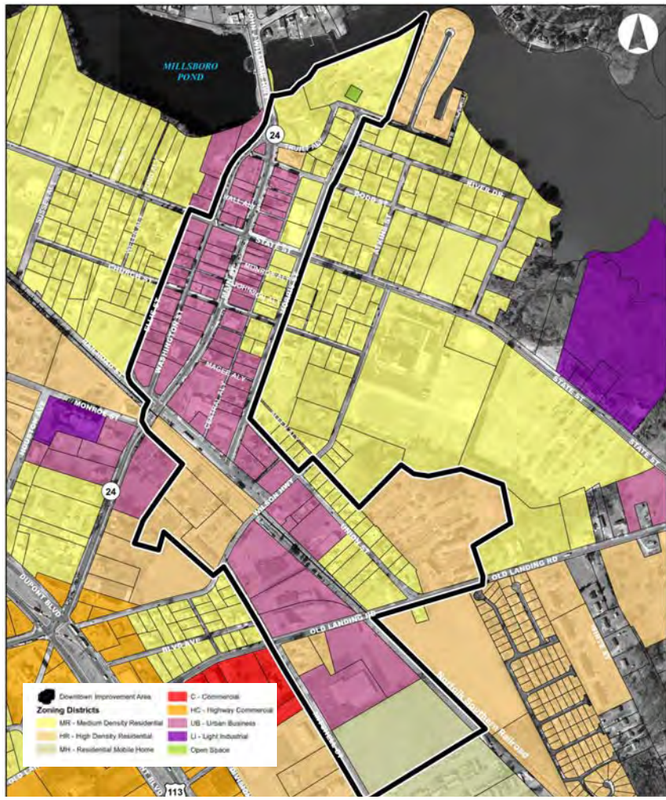
Another factor that may be hindering economic development in the downtown is the lack of mixed-use buildings and housing. There are currently no mixed-use developments, such as residential apartments above office or retails, in the downtown core. As population in the area continues to surge, the Town would like to increase its downtown resident population. Mixed-use buildings would offer more housing options for ages and income levels, especially the growing retirement and tourism sectors. Accessory Dwelling Units or Granny Flats may also be an attractive option for Millsboro; they are tailored to the older population that exists in Millsboro and offer As Millsboro envisions a more vibrant live-work community, a mix of uses and quality housing options would help to promote day and night economic activity, as well as year round activity.

Other factors that may be hindering the downtown's economic development are ineffective development and design standards. The lack of adequate requirements and standards has resulted in development that is auto-oriented, on large lots with large setbacks and large parking lots, and no building aesthetics. Especially in highly visible and prominent locations, these types of development do not contribute to a historic walkable downtown, and are more suitable for a suburban commercial highway environment. There is a need to amend the existing zoning regulations to ensure that they promote a compact, attractive, and pedestrian-scale environment, create a sense of place, and promote the sidewalk as a public space. This, in turn, will help to generate more foot traffic and business opportunities. Some examples of traditional downtown development include:

- Small lot sizes and widths
- Zero side yard setbacks
- Buildings built to the sidewalk
- Minimum two-story buildings
- Residences on upper floors
- Attractive storefronts
- Limit auto-oriented uses, such as drive-thrus and parking lots
- Limit expansive parking lots

It will be important that code amendments aim to strike a balance between ensuring desired development without too much regulation that could deter redevelopment and investment in property.

Figure 3.7 Zoning Map



Source: Town of Millsboro, 2018

VACANT AND UNDERUTILIZED PROPERTY

There are some vacant and underutilized properties within the downtown improvement area. Underutilized properties may contain an occupied building or parking area, but could be subdivided or added on to under the current zoning regulations. They may also be uses that do not attract substantial foot traffic, which is desirable for an active downtown. The majority of the vacant and underutilized properties are in the UB (Urban Business) commercial zoning district- generally completely vacant lots are on Washington Street and the underutilized lots are on Main Street. While property tax revenue can be impeded by vacancies, blighted and underutilized properties, they also offer opportunities for infill development, redevelopment and private investments into the community.

Over half of the respondents in the public opinion survey revealed that they prefer that future population growth occur as infill and redevelopment on vacant and underutilized areas over other types of development. In addition, they prefer commercial/retail growth in the downtown area to other locations. **Figure 3.8** displays vacant and underutilized properties that offer prime opportunities for infill and redevelopment. The Town should evaluate ways to market these opportunities to prospective investors and developers.

Downtown redevelopment and business retention are strongly supported in the community. While turnover may be an issue, there are not a large number of vacant storefronts, as seen in many older downtowns. Indeed, many existing buildings would benefit from redevelopment and smaller improvements, such as interior renovations, façade improvements, and new signage. The Town of Millsboro is working to support its local businesses by reimbursing up to $2,000 for sign removal, replacement, or improvements. If this sign grant is successful, the Town is considering a similar program for façade renovations and improvements.

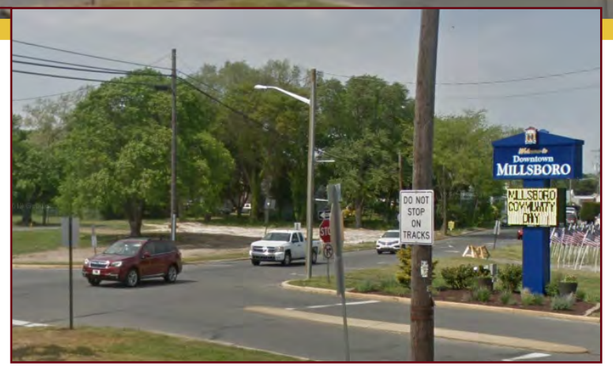
Figure 3.8 Vacant and Underutilized Properties



The Town could also consider expediting the review process for projects that meet some desired outcomes, which would incentivize owners to make improvements that have been put off due to time and expense. The Town could also encourage redevelopment through onsite inspections and guidance through the Town's policies and programs. These current and potential programs, coupled with the Main Street improvements project, will help to stimulate economic development and could initiate a downtown resurgence.



Conceptual rendering showing potential infill.



Vacant corner lot

Washington Street and Railroad Street

Vacant lots at main intersections provide significant and prime infill development opportunities.

URBAN DESIGN AND CHARACTER

Downtown character and urban design are substantially connected to community and economic redevelopment. Millsboro's downtown character is a product of design and thus, it has been analyzed in terms of mobility, appearance, parking, and public spaces, and further how these influence being a hub of economic and cultural activity. It is a priority to improve the downtown form, character, and activity, which will contribute to its revitalization and beautification and stimulate economic development.

Downtown Redevelopment

Downtown Millsboro was once the commercial center of the Town. Like many cities and towns across the nation, the last couple of decades have seen a steady decline in downtown activity. At the same time, greater Millsboro has seen a commercial and residential development boom, especially along Route 113. Although it is unlikely that downtown Millsboro will support the type and level of retail to compete with surrounding development, it has great potential to capitalize upon this boom by developing as a civic, cultural and entertainment hub.

Vehicular and Pedestrian Mobility

A grid network of municipal streets exists in the downtown area around State Route 24. Route 24 serves two main functions: It is the traditional main street and commercial business district, as well as a major east-west corridor connecting US Route 113, eastern Sussex County, and the beaches. Eastbound Route 24 is Main Street and westbound is Washington Street.

While the proximity to major routes connects people to many employers and large-scale retailers, it also creates overwhelming traffic in the downtown, especially during peak beach season. The public opinion survey conducted as part of this study revealed that the community views beach traffic as Millsboro's most pressing transportation issue. Main Street and Washington Street were not designed to be major thoroughfares to carry the heavy volumes of traffic. This causes concern about safety, efficiency, and appearance. Heavy traffic, exacerbated by truck and tractor-trailer traffic, disrupts access to local businesses and organizations, discourages pedestrian and bicycle activity, and is a deterrent for someone who wants to explore downtown. In Novemeber 2017, DelDOT unveiled a new plan for Route 113. This plan covered 17 project planned over 20 years. The top priority is a Route 24 connector that would bypass Millsboro's downtown. Currently the project is in the design phase. After construction, the bypass would redirect traffic and reduce congestion on Main and Washington Street, making the downtown more pedestrian and bike firendly.



Heavy traffic, exacerbated by truck traffic, disrupts accessibility.



Millsboro's downtown has a compact and walkable core; however, there are many opportunities and challenges to improve the public realm and create a more pedestrian-friendly environment. It has the bones for a well-defined streets and a safe, convenient and welcoming atmosphere. The area is only about a ¼-mile radius from its center, and the majority of the downtown area residents are within ½-mile or about a 10-minute walk to Main Street businesses as shown in **Figure 3.9**. Most of the downtown improvement area is well served by sidewalks. The buildings are generally built to the sidewalks, which help to define the streetscape. And most of the streets are one way with on-street parallel parking, which helps to calm traffic and improve pedestrian mobility and safety.

Figure 3.9 Walkability



There are some key issues in the overall network that hinder pedestrian mobility and safety. While the downtown is fairly well-served with sidewalks, there are areas that feel unsafe due to narrowness, wide driveways, and little separation from the street or parking areas. There is also lack of continuity in terms of materials, width, upkeep, ADA compliance, and amenities. Futhermore, the intersections lack pedestrian features, such as crosswalks or pedestrian-signals. See **Figure 3.10** Sidewalks Served and Unserved Areas. Additionally, numerous large unimproved parking areas and driveways dominate the street frontage, creating visual blight and using up valuable land that could have higher and more beneficial uses. In addition, there are areas with poor drainage and ponding that obstruct movement. One of the most concerning issues to many Millsboro residents is the appearance. The streets generally lack pedestrian-oriented amenities and features such as street trees, historic lighting, planters, attractive facades, and window displays, among others. Well-designed streetscape and pedestrian improvements can greatly enhance the attractiveness of downtown for residents and visitors.

Figure 3.10 Sidewalks Served and Unserved Areas



As Millsboro continues to grow with a larger regional draw, it will be critical for the downtown streetscape to incrementally evolve with greater pedestrian safety, comfort, and appeal. Progress is already underway, as the sidewalks and streetscape along both sides of Main Street from Church Street to State Street are being improved as part of a comprehensive Main Street improvements project. The Main Street initiative, anticipated to be completed by Spring 2019, includes plans for improved sidewalks with decorative brick pavers, decorative street lighting, paving, water line replacement, and stormwater upgrades. In addition, crossing and signalization have recently been upgraded at the State Street intersections at Main Street and Washington Street.

The next step will be to transform the sidewalk into a vibrant public realm with outdoor dining, store displays, shade trees, and streetscape furniture. Examples of streetscape features include pedestrian-scale street lighting with plantings and banners, wayfinding signage, and landscaped islands and medians. Other street features may include benches, trash receptacles, tree grates, bicycle racks, and ADA curb ramps, among other amenities. Interesting signage, attractive window displays, façade improvements, and sidewalk furnishings placed by business owners also add character. Towards this goal, the Town has recently announced a sign improvement grant. In addition, the Town would like to pursue something similar for façade improvements if the sign grant is successful. Simple building, signage, and streetscape improvements would make the downtown more inviting, which would in turn attract business investment. These improvements and programs are a big step in the right direction towards creating a downtown with a consistent theme and a positive image, which will in turn help stimulate economic activity. Perhaps over time, the highway scale 'cobra head' streetlights could be removed and the utility poles could be relocated or moved underground to add to the pedestrian-scale streetscape, with the added benefit of greater power reliability.

Other programs and policies that could benefit the downtown business community involve assisting in the establishment of incubator businesses or "pop-up shops".

"I think it is going to send a huge message to the community, to the public that the town is serious about investing in the downtown and just making it a more aesthetically pleasing area, even more walkable and a place to visit for sure," said Millsboro Town Manager Sheldon Hudson.



Vacant land, vast parking areas, highway scale streetlights and signage, and lack of sidewalks and streetscape amenities do not help create a welcoming entry into the downtown.



However, with lighting and sidewalk improvements underway, Main Street is undergoing a transformation.

Gateways and Wayfinding

There is an opportunity and a need to define proper and attractive gateways into the downtown, and to encourage and welcome visitors to the downtown businesses and attractions. It is a goal to reinforce to visitors and travelers on Route 113 that Millsboro has much more to offer than large-scale retail stores and shopping centers. It is also a goal to reinforce Millsboro's identity with attractive and safe entry into and around town. Some of the potential locations for these improvements are shown in **Figure 3.11**.

The area between Main Street, Washington Street, Houston Drive, Truitt Alley, and the bridge is a main entrance into town. The area is designed for motor vehicles only and has a significant lack of mobility and safety for bicyclists and pedestrians. This entrance has a lot of visual noise with signs and utility poles. While some aesthetical improvements have recently occurred here, the area would benefit from gateway and intersection upgrades to improve appearance, mobility and safety. As stated in the Comprehensive Plan, this can be achieved through access management, landscape and frontage improvements, signage and banners, and overall quality of site and building design in the area.

Wayfinding is a system of signs that direct visitors and residents to points of interest and businesses, and they can also serve as an introduction to the local history, arts and culture of a community. There is currently a lack of clear, comprehensive wayfinding signage that directs travelers to the downtown and its facilities and amenities. All signage, as well as other features such as kiosks and banners, should have a consistent design and branding theme.



Wayfinding example from Berlin, MD

Figure 3.11 Locations of Proposed Improvements



Conceptual rendering showing potential gateway and intersection improvements



Area between Main Street, Washington Street, Houston Drive, Truitt Alley, and the Bridge

Gateways help to define community identity and instill a sense of place and civic pride. Gateways at the convergences of Main Street and Washington Street would visually reinforce entry into Millsboro's downtown, define the edges, and calm and manage vehicular traffic in a more safe and efficient manner. The Town Officials look forward to working with DelDOT to accomplish this vision.

Parking

Parking in the downtown improvement area is somewhat disorganized, compartmentalized, and generally in need of improvement. **Figure 3.12** shows that there are large expanses of parking, mostly multiple private parking lots, covering a significant portion (15% - 20%) of the downtown area. Most parking lots are situated on the same lot as the buildings they serve, and there are a few shared parking areas. There are two municipal lots, located at the corner of Main Street and State Street and Cupola Park. There are also two large lots for the fire department, which have the potential to serve as a public parking supply. Unrestricted public parking is also provided on Main Street and Washington Street.

Some parking areas are visually prominent and dominate the street frontage. Some are located at key intersections or take up a high portion of the streetscape. Many are underutilized and do not fill up during the day and are entirely empty during the night and on weekends. And most parking areas would benefit from improvements such as paving, striping, curbing, landscaping and lighting. The vast, unfilled, and unimproved lots at prominent areas create unattractive dead spaces on the streetscape. Some offer opportunities for infill development with higher and more beneficial uses that would better fit the downtown context and character. It is noted that the larger lots could accommodate buildings along the street frontage with sufficient parking in the side or rear of the building.

Figure 3.12 Parking Areas





Conceptual rendering showing potential parking lot improvements



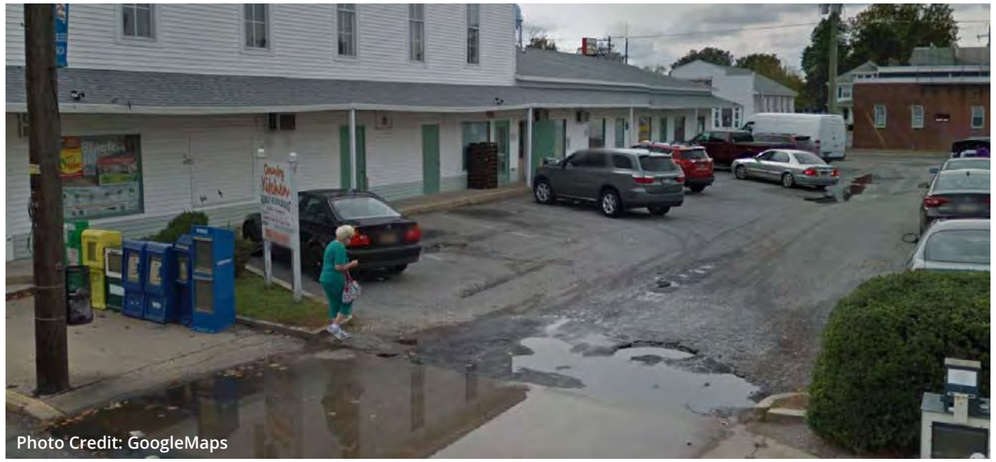
Existing Conditions

The lot at Main Street and State Street was improved in Fall 2018, with new pavement and striping.

Due to the large supply of private and public parking in the downtown area, there appears to be a need to optimize the use of existing spaces over the development of any new parking. The zoning code requires non-residential uses to have one off-street parking space for 200 building square feet of building floor area, which is high for a typical walkable downtown. The code also requires two spaces per residential dwelling unit, which is generally better suited for a new residential subdivision in a suburban environment. Since many lots and on-street spaces are currently under capacity, requiring even more spaces could result in too much parking, which can hurt the downtown fabric. This coupled with the fact that the downtown lots are smaller than lots in suburban environments, there appears to be an unnecessary burden placed on owners to comply with rigid parking requirements.

Alternatively, the zoning code could offer flexibility and credits towards complying with the regulations. There is an opportunity to allow off-site parking lots, on-street parking spaces, and shared parking arrangements to be counted towards the required amount of spaces. For instance, parking spaces may be provided on a separate lot if located within 500 feet of the building. In addition, two or more lot owners may join towards complying with the required number of parking spaces. For example, some spaces used by banks on weekdays could be used by retail and dining venues at nights and on weekends. Alternatively, builders could pay a fee in-lieu of providing the required spaces, which would be kept in a dedicated fund to provide for public parking purposes.

There is a need for a parking study to evaluate parking issues, challenges and opportunities, and to set forth parking goals and strategies to meet the needs of residents, businesses, and visitors in the downtown. Such a study could evaluate existing supply and demand, review current parking policies, and make recommendations to improve the utilization of existing spaces before requiring new lots.



Unimproved parking areas could have a higher and better use appropriate for Downtown. Many respondents in the Downtown Survey state they want improved parking conditions.

Public Space

Public spaces provide key assets and opportunities for a downtown as they offer residents and visitors a destination for leisure, tranquility, and relaxation. Public spaces also provide a public gathering space for community events, festivals and programs. There are three community-gathering spaces within the downtown improvement area- Cupola Park at the waterfront, Millsboro Town Center, and the potential open space corridor between the railroad and Monroe Street. Public parking lots, such as the lot on State Street between Main Street and Washington Street, also offer a location for events and gatherings. See **Figure 3.13** Public Open Space.

Special events and festivals that highlight Millsboro's scenery, culture, heritage, and civic pride, such as the Starts and Stripes Event and the Big Saturday Car Show, foster community identity and attract visitors. There is an opportunity for expanded partnerships with the Greater Millsboro Chamber of Commerce and Southern Delaware Tourism to expand these programs and events to support downtown businesses.

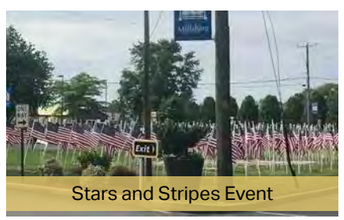
Figure 3.13 Public Open Space





Source: Town of Millsboro

Cupola Park features a pavilion with picnic tables and barbeque grills, a playground, boat ramps, shoreline fishing, and the largest bald cypress tree in Delaware. The park is within walking distance from the downtown.



Stars and Stripes Event



Christmas Parade

Source: delawarestatenews.net

Community event's in Millsboro's downtown.

DOWNTOWN

MAIN STREET

A comprehensive transformation process is underway to improve the pedestrian environment and streetscape appearance. The Main Street initiative includes plans for improved sidewalks with brick pavers, decorative street lighting, paving, water line replacement, and stormwater upgrades, from Church Street to State Street.

4

VISION, GOALS, OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES



VISION

Downtown Millsboro is a gateway to the community and symbolic of Millsboro's convenience of a city and charm of a town. As a traditional downtown, it is aesthetically pleasing, highlighting the community's natural setting, while tying together recreation spaces, shopping, restaurants, and a diversity of housing options. It is an inviting and safe live, work community.

This plan outlines a vision with incremental strategies for fostering a vibrant downtown. Overall, the objectives focus on making the downtown more accessible and inviting. The Town has already begun improving mobility downtown through sidewalk replacement and exterior lighting upgrades. Additional streetscape improvements will improve the appearance of the downtown, strengthen mobility and connectivity, and enhance the curb appeal to people who may just be passing through Town. The Town will work with downtown business owners to implement façade improvements in a non-combative way. The Town has also already begun offering sign improvement grants to existing businesses downtown. Vacant storefronts can also be used to showcase future potential uses, Town events, or local artist. Vacant parcels can temporarily be used for pop-up shops, pocket parks or start-up incubators. Vacancy design standards will not only make the downtown area more visually pleasing, but it will also present an opportunity for additional Town branding.

Moreover, zoning updates and more flexibility within the Town's Code will improve conditions for developers and encourage creative solutions to an aging portfolio. Incentives will give small-business owners the needed boost to facilitate improvements and in-turn more individuals will feel a greater sense of pride in their community. All of these help to create a stronger sense of place, community identity, and civic pride, which in turn, can improve public health and reduce crime.

While Millsboro continues to expand its population, it will focus on building capacity in the downtown to meet the need for businesses and services, and accommodate future growth. Meanwhile, the Town will focus on attracting retail diversity than can complement the growth occurring along Route 113 and create new jobs. First, the Town can start by summarizing a step-by-step process of how to open a business in a guide. It should address topics like zoning, building permits, inspections and taxes with the appropriate contact information for each topic. Additionally, the Town will work with downtown and regional partners in promoting and branding the Town's unique character, improving wayfinding, expanding events and community gatherings, and promoting Millsboro as a well-rounded community. Downtown Millsboro has several assets such as public parking, green space, historic buildings. Not all of these amenities are clearly visible from the main thoroughfares, though. Wayfinding should be coordinated with Town branding. Attractive and unique wayfinding signage can direct tourist and community members towards these amenities and increase town branding/character.

All of these changes will require the Town to continue to promote all of Millsboro's assets, engage the community for feedback, and be an advocate for downtown improvement. As the Town looks toward long-range planning, it should look into acquiring additional land downtown to be used a central gathering space.

GOALS

In order to achieve their vision of a vibrant and thriving community, the Town has outlined ten goals:

1. Preserve and highlight the community's natural setting and assets.
2. Promote a diversity of housing options.
3. Support and enhance the unique characteristics of a vibrant downtown.
4. Improve transportation choices, while prioritizing safety.
5. Promote Millsboro as a regional employment and retail hub.
6. Enhance dining and shopping options in the downtown district.
7. Foster new educational and recreational opportunities.
8. Promote community events and programming.
9. Increase pedestrian accessibility downtown.
10. Maintain a year-round community that enhances quality of life for its residents.

OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

Each of the Town's goals was translated into a tangible objective with strategies.

1 Increase the variety of goods, services, restaurants, and entertainment available in the Downtown.

a) Continue to explore retail opportunities.

b) Maintain retail database.

c) Create 'conducting business in Millsboro' resource guide.

d) Amend zoning code for less-strict parking requirements.

e) Explore opportunities to increase downtown parking options.

f) Explore opportunities to create a downtown community bulletin board/information kiosk.

2 Encourage infill development and redevelopment downtown.

a) Work with the Greater Millsboro Chamber of Commerce to promote and market key infill, redevelopment and reuse opportunities.

b) Consider exploring the adoption of a Historic District.

c) Create a process for addressing and monitoring blighted or dilapidated buildings.

d) Train relevant staff and contractors to utilize GovPilot for tracking zoning compliance.

3 Increase employment opportunities in the Town and create a live/work community.

a) Amend the zoning code to allow mixed-use developments (requiring a commercial component) in the Urban Business (UB) District.

b) Provide for housing types to accommodate aging baby boomers and millennials seeking a more walkable and urban living experience.

4 Enhance the overall appearance of the downtown.

a) Sign improvement grants

b) Façade improvement Loan program

c) Invest in streescape beautification

d) Develop vacancy treatment standards

e) Develop a Brick Ordinance/Design Standards (front only) for new development

5 Implement programs and events to attract residents and visitors alike to the Downtown.

a) Maintain a strong relationship with the Greater Millsboro Chamber of Commerce

b) Be a catalyst for local events based on heritage and place.

c) Increase awareness of Nanticoke History

d) Explore opportunities to increase Town branding visibility (ex. Uniform trash/recycling receptacles)

e) Promote Cupola Park as an outdoor event venue.

(1) Explore the feasibility of adding additional recreation opportunities in the park (ex. Kayak launch or paddle boats)

6 Maintain a safe environment.

a) Continue to support the needs of the Millsboro Police Department.

b) Continue to support applications for funding that help meet training, equipment, program, and staffing needs.

7 Maintain a diversity of housing options.

a) Explore the feasibility of implementing first-time home-buyer incentives and funding options.

b) Update the zoning code to allow for mixed-use buildings (requiring a commercial component) in the downtown.

c) Explore creative options for adaptive reuse in underutilized parcels.

8 Create an active, healthy and vibrant downtown.

a) Sidewalks

(1) Identify and prioritize sidewalk gaps for infill

(2) Consider a sidewalk loan program

b) Develop a Town pedestrian/bicycling master plan

c) Prepare a wayfinding plan

d) Explore recreation opportunities, especially along the waterfront

e) Identify priority projects for transportation alternatives funding

f) Identify and implement appropriate traffic calming measures

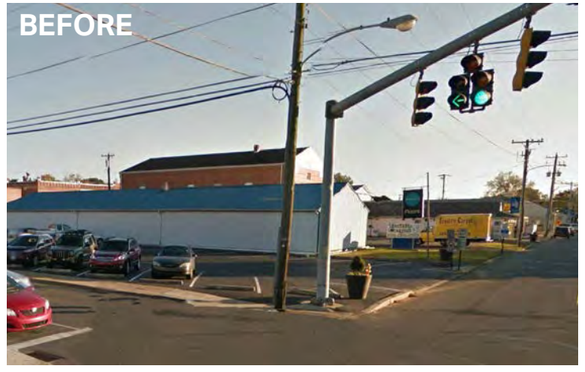
g) Explore opportunities to enhance public transportation offerings downtown

TOWN
LEADERSHIP

For Millsboro's downtown revitalization, success is mostly clearly measured through highly visible completed projects that are the building blocks for real change over time. Town Officials and Staff are showing their commitment to revitalizing the downtown through ongoing street renovations, lowering impact fees by about 25% in an effort to attract employers and retailers, and providing a sign improvement grant.

5 IMPLEMENTATION

This section lists priority strategies in this Downtown Improvement Plan, identifies the Town's leadership role, and identifies partners who are also committed to the Downtown's development. Implementation of this plan will involve collaboration between all stakeholders and partners, under the committed leadership of the Town Officials and Staff.







East State Street and Washington Street Intersection

The town owned parking lot is located in one of the downtown's main intersections. Recent and future parking lot improvements will enhance the downtown's curb appeal.

OVERVIEW

This improvement plan, through extensive research and public outreach, has established the vision and goals for the Downtown. Millsboro is committed to revitalizing the improvement area as a regional hub for commerce and employment, while maintaining a high quality of life for its residents. The Town recognizes that stakeholders, government agencies, and community members need to partner and collaborate to successfully implement the strategies in this plan and achieve the established vision. Some of these crucial stakeholders, government agencies, and community members are listed below.

Delaware Authority for Regional Transit (DART)

Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC)

Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT)

Delaware Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs

Delaware Division of Small Business

Delaware State Housing Authority (DSHA)

Greater Millsboro Chamber of Commerce

Millsboro Fire Department

Millsboro Police Department

State Historic Preservation Officers

Sussex Economic Development Action Committee, Inc (SEDAC)

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)

University of Delaware Center for Historic Architecture and Design

The Town of Millsboro will be the main entity to implement the plan and ensure that current and future projects align with the established objectives and will work closely with the entities listed above and all other organizations that have a community or economic impact on the Town. In addition, Millsboro is currently working on its Comprehensive Plan 2019, which will continue to advance and refine the downtown development objectives and strategies herein. Therefore, the Downtown Improvement Plan is fully integrated in the Town's current planning initiatives leading to a long-lasting impact and implementation.

PRIORITIES

The priorities section lists recommendations in the District Plan, identifies potential partners and/or coordinating agencies, and recognizes possible sources of financial and technical assistance.

The criteria for selecting the priorities include the following:

1. The level of importance towards achieving downtown development goals;

2. Are intrinsically linked with the Comprehensive Plan Update process, which is currently underway;

3. Prevent potential development or redevelopment; and

4. Are key strategies and programs that have the ability to leverage outside funding.

Some of these action items are already underway.

Table 5.1 Priorities

Recommendations	Priority	Potential Partners & Coordinating Agency	Potential Technical & Financial Assistance
Continue to explore retail opportunities	High	SEDAC, Delaware Division of Small Business, Greater Millsboro Chamber of Commerce, USDA	USDA Rural Business Development Grant
Create 'conducting business in Millsboro' resource guide.	High	Greater Millsboro Chamber of Commerce	USDA Rural Business Development Grant
Amend zoning code for less-strict parking requirements	High		
Create a process for addressing and monitoring blighted or dilapidated buildings	High		
Train relevant staff and contractors to utilize GovPilot for tracking zoning compliance.	High		
Amend the zoning code to allow mixed-use developments (requiring a commercial component) in the Urban Business (UB) District.	High		
Provide for housing types to accommodate aging baby boomers and millennials seeking a more walkable and urban living experience	High		
Sign improvement grants	High		

Recommendations	Priority	Potential Partners & Coordinating Agency	Potential Technical & Financial Assistance
Invest in streetscape beautification	High	DelDOT	AARP Livable Communities Challenge
Develop a Brick Ordinance/Design Standards (front only) for new development	High		
Maintain a strong relationship with the Greater Millsboro Chamber of Commerce	High		
Promote Cupola Park as an outdoor event venue.	High		
Continue to support the needs of the Millsboro Police Department.	High	Millsboro Police Department	
Continue to support applications for funding that help meet training, equipment, program, and staffing needs.	High	Millsboro Police Department	
Explore the feasibility of implementing first-time home-buyer incentives and funding options.	High	Delaware State Housing Authority	
Update the zoning code to allow for mixed-use buildings (requiring a commercial component) in the downtown	High		
Identify priority projects for transportation alternatives funding	High	DelDOT	Transportation Alternatives Program
Maintain retail database	Medium		
Explore opportunities to increase downtown parking options	Medium	Millsboro Fire Department	
Work with the Greater Millsboro Chamber of Commerce to promote and market key infill, redevelopment and reuse opportunities.	Medium	Greater Millsboro Chamber of Commerce	
Consider exploring the adoption of a Historic District.	Medium	Delaware Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs, University of Delaware Center for Historic Architecture and Design, State Historic Preservation Officers	Historic Preservation Tax Credit, Delaware Preservation Fund

Recommendations	Priority	Potential Partners & Coordinating Agency	Potential Technical & Financial Assistance
Façade improvement Loan program	Medium		AARP Livable Communities Challenge
Develop vacancy treatment standards	Medium		
Explore opportunities to increase Town branding visibility (ex. Uniform trash/ recycling receptacles)	Medium		AARP Livable Communities Challenge
Explore creative options for adaptive reuse in underutilized parcels.	Medium		Community Development Block Grant
Identify and prioritize sidewalk gaps for infill	Medium		Municipal Street Aid, Community Development Block Grant, Transportation Alternatives Program
Develop a Town pedestrian/bicycling master plan	Medium	DelDOT	Transportation Alternatives Program
Prepare a wayfinding plan	Medium		
Explore recreation opportunities, especially along the waterfront	Medium	DNREC	
Explore opportunities to enhance public transportation offerings downtown	Medium	DART, DelDOT	USDA Rural Business Development Grant
Explore opportunities to create a downtown community bulletin board/information kiosk.	Low		USDA Rural Business Development Grant, AARP Livable Communities Challenge
Be a catalyst for local events based on heritage and place.	Low	Greater Millsboro Chamber of Commerce, Visit Southern Delaware	
Increase awareness of Nanticoke History	Low		
Consider a sidewalk loan program	Low		

Recommendations	Priority	Potential Partners & Coordinating Agency	Potential Technical & Financial Assistance
Identify and implement appropriate traffic calming measures	Low	DelDOT	AARP Livable Communities Challenge
Improve green/open space and parks downtown.	Low	DNREC	USDA Rural Community Facilities Direct Loan & Grant

APPENDIX A

COMMUNITY SURVEY

SURVEY RESULTS

Community Survey

The survey card provided at the starts and stripes event had 7 questions. The 8th survey question was on one of the displayed boards. This board can be found in Figure 2.



1. Are you a Millsboro:
(Check all that apply)

- ☐ Full-time/year-round Resident
- ☐ Part-time Resident
- ☐ Employee
- ☐ Visitor

2. Where in Town would you encourage commercial/retail growth?

3. Where in Town would you like to see more sidewalks or trails?

4. How would you deal with population growth over the next 20 years?
(Check all that apply)

- ☐ Increase allowed maximum density in single family zone
- ☐ Increase the amount of Multi-Family zoned property
- ☐ Encourage development of vacant or under-utilized property
- ☐ Allow residential development mixed with commercial development

5. What do you see as Millsboro's most pressing transportation issues?

- ☐ Public Transit
- ☐ Beach traffic
- ☐ Lack of pedestrian amenities
- ☐ Truck traffic

Thank You
For your Participation

6. Do you feel safe in Millsboro's downtown during day or night?

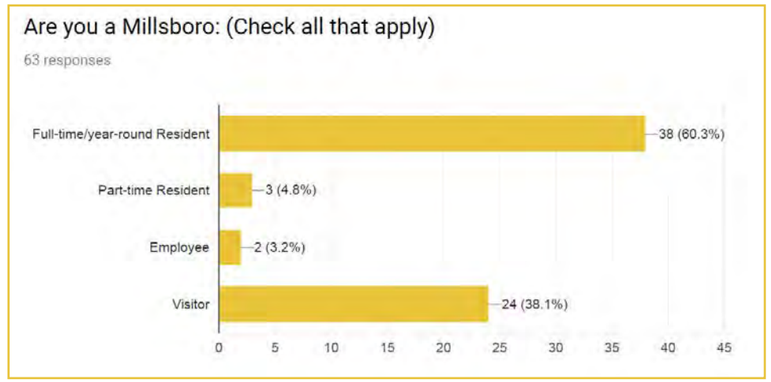
Day	☐ Yes	☐ No
Night	☐ Yes	☐ No

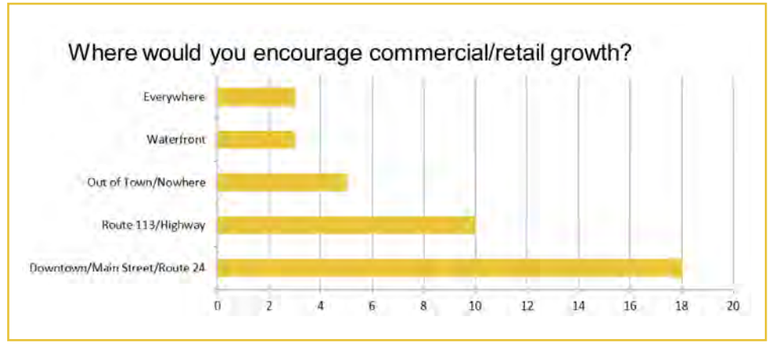
7. What time do you typically visit Millsboro's downtown?
(Check all that apply)

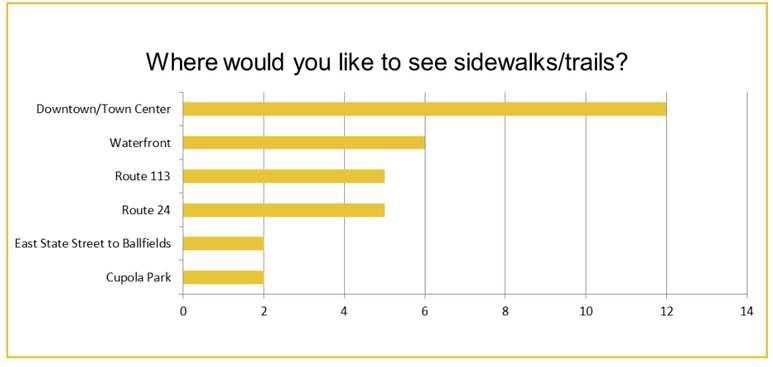
- ☐ Monday – Friday, before 5 pm
- ☐ Monday – Friday, after 5 pm
- ☐ Saturday – Sunday, before 5 pm
- ☐ Saturday – Sunday, after 5 pm
- ☐ I don't visit downtown Millsboro often.

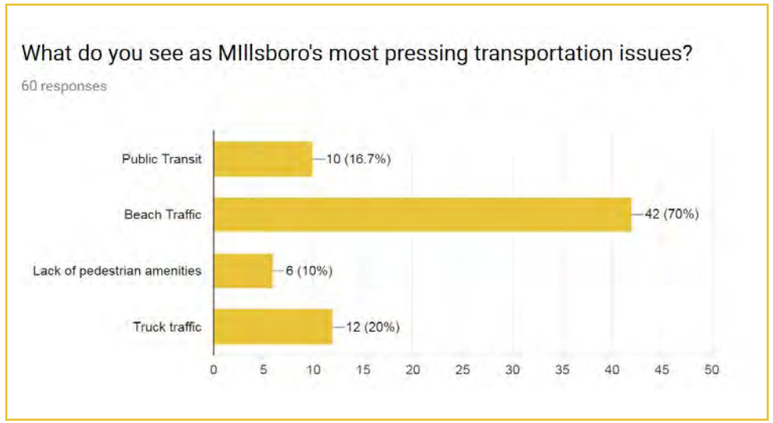
Survey Results

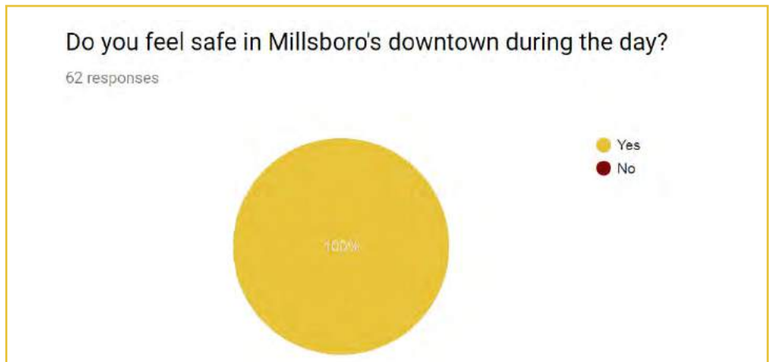
The Community Survey had a total of 63 responses.

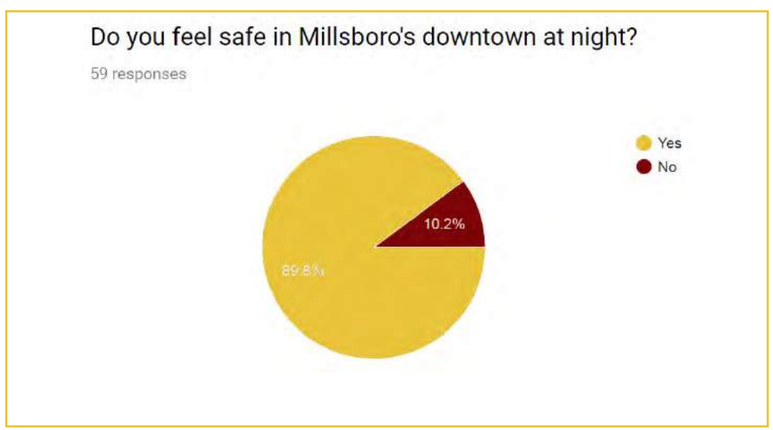


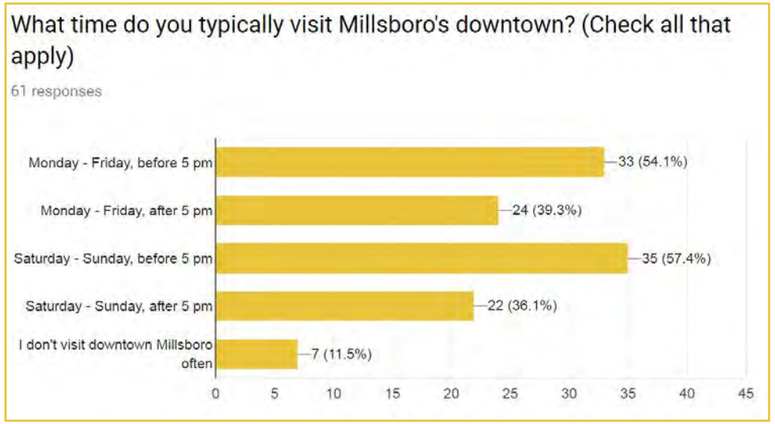


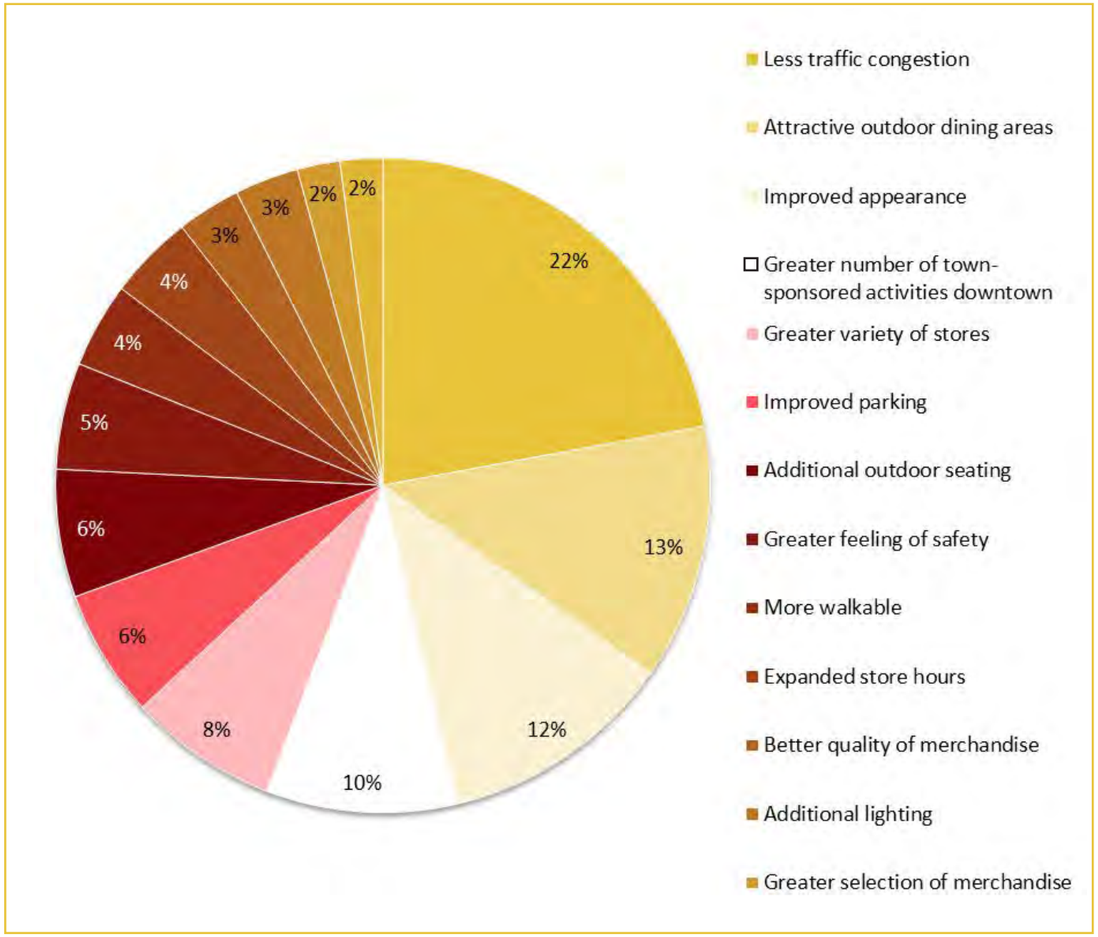



What do you see as MIllsboro's most pressing transportation issues?
60 responses
Public Transit
10 (16.7%)
Beach Traffic
42 (70%)
Lack of pedestrian amenities
6 (10%)
Truck traffic
12 (20%)
0
5
10
15
20
25
30
35
40
45
50


Do you feel safe in Millsboro's downtown during the day?
62 responses
Yes
No
100%


Do you feel safe in Millsboro's downtown at night?
59 responses
Yes
No
10.2%
89.8%


What time do you typically visit Millsboro's downtown? (Check all that apply)
61 responses
Monday - Friday, before 5 pm
33 (54.1%)
Monday - Friday, after 5 pm
24 (39.3%)
Saturday - Sunday, before 5 pm
35 (57.4%)
Saturday - Sunday, after 5 pm
22 (36.1%)
I don't visit downtown Millsboro often
7 (11.5%)
0
5
10
15
20
25
30
35
40
45


22%
13%
12%
10%
8%
6%
6%
5%
4%
4%
3%
3%
2%
2%
Less traffic congestion
Attractive outdoor dining areas
Improved appearance
Greater number of town-sponsored activities downtown
Greater variety of stores
Improved parking
Additional outdoor seating
Greater feeling of safety
More walkable
Expanded store hours
Better quality of merchandise
Additional lighting
Greater selection of merchandise

APPENDIX B

CENSUS GEOGRAPHIC ENTITIES MAP

