

Town of
Dagsboro
Comprehensive Plan
August 2003



STATE OF DELAWARE
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF
STATE PLANNING COORDINATION

September 4, 2003

The Honorable S. Bradley Connor
Mayor, Town of Dagsboro
P.O. Box 420
Dagsboro, DE 19939

RE: Town of Dagsboro Comprehensive Plan Certification

Dear Mayor Connor:

I am pleased to inform the Town of Dagsboro that as of August 13, 2003, per the recommendation of the Office of State Planning Coordination, the comprehensive plan for the Town of Dagsboro is hereby certified provided no major changes to the plan are enacted. The certification signifies that the comprehensive plan is currently in compliance with State Strategies.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Town for working with the State to incorporate our recommendations into the plan before adoption. My staff and I look forward to working with the Town to accomplish the goals set forth in your plan to coordinate growth that will allow economic development while protecting Delaware's heritage and natural resources.

Congratulations on your certification!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Constance C. Holland".

Constance C. Holland
Director

CC: Lori Athey

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TOWN, COUNTY, AND STATE OFFICIALS

Town of Dagsboro

Mayor and Council	S. Bradley Connor, Mayor Kurt Czapp, Vice Mayor James Kollock, Secretary/Treasurer Matt Long, Town Improvement Clay Hall, Police Commissioner
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Planning & Zoning Committee	Eric Ankrom Edward Burton William Chandler III S. Bradley Connor Clay Hall Joseph Kollock E.F. Quillen
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Sussex County

Council	Lynn Rogers, President Dale Dukes, Vice President George Cole Finley Jones Vance Phillips
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Administrator	Robert Stickels
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State of Delaware

Governor	Ruth Ann Minner
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Senate	George H. Bunting Jr., Senator Twentieth District
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House of Representatives	John C. Atkins, Representative Forty-First District
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Office of State Planning Coordination	Constance S. Holland, AICP, Director
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INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

This plan was prepared by the Institute for Public Administration (IPA), a unit within the College of Human Services, Education & Public Policy at the University of Delaware. IPA links the research and resources of the University of Delaware with the management and information needs of local, state, and regional governments in the Delaware Valley. IPA provides assistance to agencies and local governments through direct staff assistance and research projects as well as training programs and policy forums.

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**A MUNICIPAL COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR
DAGSBORO, DELAWARE
Adopted August 2003**

INTRODUCTION

The Town of Dagsboro Comprehensive Development Plan serves several purposes. The planning project that led to the creation of this document was initiated by the town in response to a variety of growth, development, transportation, and annexation issues that highlighted the need for a land use plan.

The plan serves as an official statement about the future of the town. First and foremost, the plan is a unified advisory document to the Town Council and the Planning Commission on land use and growth issues. It should be used to guide future development decisions, rezoning activities, annexations, capital improvements throughout the town, and response to development activity outside the town's borders.

The plan also functions as an informational document for the public. Citizens, business people, and government officials can turn to the plan to learn more about Dagsboro and its policies for future land use decisions. Potential new residents can use the document as an informational resource about the town, its characteristics, and its facilities to help them make decisions about moving to the Town of Dagsboro. This document contains the most current information on population, transportation, housing, employment, and the environment, which will be of interest to land developers, economic development professionals, and financiers.

Finally, the Dagsboro Comprehensive Development Plan is a legal document. The Delaware Code specifies that "any incorporated municipality under this chapter shall prepare a comprehensive plan for the city or town or portions thereof as the commission deems appropriate." The Code further specifies that, "after a comprehensive plan or portion thereof has been adopted by the municipality in accordance with this chapter, the comprehensive plan shall have the force of law and no development shall be permitted except as consistent with the plan" (Del Code § 702, Title 22).

CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND

1-1. The Authority to Plan and Legislative Requirements

Delaware law requires that municipalities engage in comprehensive planning activities for the purpose of encouraging “the most appropriate uses of the physical and fiscal resources of the municipality and the coordination of municipal growth, development, and infrastructure investment actions with those of other municipalities, counties and the State....” This plan was written to comply with the requirements of a municipal development strategy as described in the Delaware Code (below) for towns with a population of 2000 or less.

The municipal comprehensive plan for small communities such as Dagsboro having less than 2000 people is to be a “document in text and maps, containing at a minimum, a municipal development strategy setting forth the jurisdiction’s position on population and housing growth within the jurisdiction, expansion of its boundaries, development of adjacent areas, redevelopment potential, community character, and the general uses of land within the community, and critical community development and infrastructure issues.” In addition, the town’s comprehensive planning process must demonstrate coordination with other municipalities, the County, and the State during plan preparation. (22 Del. C. 1953, § 702; 49 Del. Laws, c. 415, § 1.)

State law requires that planning be an ongoing process and that municipalities identify future planning activities. This document is Dagsboro’s Municipal Comprehensive Plan for development as required by state law. It is intended to cover a ten-year planning period and be reviewed at least every five years.

1-2. Brief Overview of the Community

1-2a. Location

Dagsboro is located in the southeastern portion of Sussex County along the Route 113 corridor. It is approximately 50 miles south-southeast of Dover and about 30 miles northeast of Salisbury, Maryland. The town lies at the head of Pepper Creek, a tributary of the Indian River. Delaware Route 26, which is an east-west route from Sussex County’s inland towns to the state’s coastal resorts, also traverses the town. Dagsboro is located within a division of land historically known as the “Dagsboro [or Dagsborough] Hundred.” The town is the center of a large agricultural region, and is connected by highway to larger markets in northern Delaware, Pennsylvania, and Maryland.

1-2b. History

Prior to 1785, the area that is now Dagsboro was called Blackfoot Town, named after the Native American village of earlier days. After the death of General John Dagworthy in 1784, the town was named Dagsborough in honor of him. Dagworthy served in the French and Indian War and the

American Revolution and was a prominent landowner in the area. The modern spelling of Dagsboro began to be used upon the town's incorporation in the early 1900s.

The land that General Dagworthy owned was called "Dagworthy's Conquest" and included 20,390 acres of land given to Dagworthy by Governor William Sharpe of Maryland for services rendered. Dagworthy's Conquest also bordered Pepper Creek, which, during this period of time, was navigable to ships that took part in trade between this region of the Atlantic Coast and northern cities like New York and Philadelphia. The most common freight for these ships was shingles made from the giant cypress trees that were once abundant in the area. The sawmill that produced these shingles was operated by General Dagworthy for many years. It is said that the stream was not used very much after the death of Dagworthy in 1784.

Prince George's Chapel, built in 1757, is a historical focal point for Dagsboro. It was named in honor of the infant Prince George who later became King George III of England. General Dagworthy financed an addition to the church, and he and his wife are buried under the original building. The chapel has since been restored and listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It serves as a museum under the administration of Delaware's Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs and is open to the public.

Dagsboro is also noted for being the birthplace of John M. Clayton, who served as the Chief Justice of Delaware, a U.S. Senator, and the U.S. Secretary of State under President Zachary Taylor. Dagsboro produced several other noteworthy statesmen. Dr. Edward Dingle, William Dunning, and Colonel William D. Waples all resided in the town and were all chosen as delegates to form the Delaware Constitution of 1832. The Honorable William Hill Wells, who married General Dagworthy's daughter Rachel, served as a U.S. Senator from 1799-1804 and again from 1813-1829. In the early 1930s, an unsuccessful presidential candidate from Dagsboro, Charles W. Perry, ran on the Socialist ticket.

In 1998, the Delaware State Historic Preservation Office identified the boundaries of a potential historic district in Dagsboro, referring to buildings that have retained their historic appearance, settlement history, and architecture. The potential district encompasses the main settlement areas of the town.

1-3. Existing Land Uses

A windshield survey of the existing land uses was conducted in July 2002 by students from the University of Delaware as part of the planning background work for Dagsboro.

The Town of Dagsboro is primarily single-family residential, with a small core of commercial uses along Main Street, and community uses such as churches, a school, and government services scattered throughout the town (see Map 1—Aerial View and Map 2—Existing Land Uses). Delaware Route 26 (SR 26), which runs from U.S. Route 113 into Dagsboro, follows Clayton Street east, turns south onto Main Street and east again on Vines Creek Road. Most of the commercial development is along Main Street, although there is not really a business district, since there are residential and institutional uses mixed in with the commercial uses. The Town Hall, the Post Office, and a bank are located at the intersection of SR 26 (Main Street) and SR 20 (Clayton Street).

There are north-south railroad tracks that run through the town, around which industrial uses are concentrated. The industries here include topsoil packaging and shipping. The location of this industry directly adjacent to a railroad corridor provides a great advantage in transportation and efficiency concerns.

Besides vacant land, residentially developed land is the most prevalent in Dagsboro. Residential uses can be found in the main commercial area of the town, as well as throughout the periphery of the town. Most of the residences are single-family homes on single lots, but recent residential subdivisions have included townhomes and manufactured housing. As Dagsboro becomes a more attractive area for beach travelers to pass through and for seasonal living, the development of subdivisions will likely become more common.

There are approximately 860 acres of vacant land in the town, of which about 420 acres are unconstrained and suitable for development (See Map 3—Developable Land). The disposition of this land will significantly impact the current and future character of Dagsboro. Most of the vacant land is outside of the main core of the town and is currently used agriculturally or as open space. There are also some highly visible smaller parcels of vacant land within the central part of the town, specifically around Main Street and Clayton Street.

Figure 1: Vacant Land in Dagsboro

	Number of Parcels	Total Acres
Commercial	36	39.23
Industrial	6	27.34
Institutional	18	24.29
Out Parcel/Enclave	1	0.93
Office	3	2.17
Parks/Open Space	1	2.37
Residential	219	211.91
Right of way	10	56.48
Utilities	1	1.45
Vacant/No Apparent Use	159	492.79
Total	454	858.96

1-4. Overall Community Vision and Goals

On September 25, 2002, a community workshop was conducted in Dagsboro to gather ideas and visions about the growth of the town from its residents. Another purpose of the workshop was to familiarize the town with the comprehensive planning process and give them an opportunity to contribute to this process. The results of the workshop are outlined below. These issues were also discussed in a number of subsequent meetings with the public and with the Planning Board.

Prior to the workshop, a survey was developed and mailed to all the residents of the town to assess their hopes and concerns for Dagsboro's future. Some of the 35 survey responses were returned at the community workshop while others were mailed back to the town. Additional surveys were distributed, and 14 were collected at the workshop. These two groups of land use questionnaires have been analyzed separately. This analysis endeavors to represent points of consensus between the two groups in order to depict the community's vision.

1-4a. Land Use and Annexation

Both groups most highly favored using vacant land within Dagsboro for residential purposes. The use of this land for agriculture or parks and recreation was also popular. Industrial uses were overwhelmingly rejected by both groups. Respondents expressed their hope to maintain Dagsboro's "small town atmosphere." In a related question, both groups strongly desired urban growth to be balanced with protection of farmland and open space. Both groups favored annexation, although respondents also vastly supported the proposition that the town should focus on the redevelopment of existing land and structures. This seeming contradiction is most likely an expression of residents' desire to protect Dagsboro's small-town character by slowly developing in-town and blocking county sprawl outside the town. Both groups favored linking new developments into the town street and sidewalk network. Residents' chief wish is to protect Dagsboro's traditional character as much as possible, as the surrounding region experiences considerable pressure to develop.

1-4b. Commercial and Industrial Areas

Both survey groups strongly preferred business parks to all other forms of industrial or commercial development. The two groups disagreed about the best way to take advantage of seasonal beach traffic, with the mailed group expressing strong desire to see new restaurants, and the workshop group having split interest in the introduction of antique shops, recreational facilities, and gas station/convenience stores. The final question of this section prompted the respondents to rate their approval of doing nothing at all to take advantage of seasonal beach traffic; to which both groups expressed their overwhelming approval. Dagsboro residents are wary of development and somewhat unsure of how to grow their economy without damaging their small-town atmosphere.

1-4c. Neighborhoods and Community Design

Almost every survey respondent supported the prospect of historic preservation in Dagsboro. There was also a general desire for parks and open spaces, sidewalks, streets connecting adjacent neighborhoods, and landscaping. Respondents expressed a preference for low-density housing by overwhelmingly selecting single-family homes as the most desirable form of housing. To a lesser extent, townhomes were also approved. Both groups expressed a strong desire for an expanded post office. Suggested developments that were also popular included a new park, assisted living for the elderly, more businesses, and expanded shopping and dining opportunities. Overall, residents would like more landscaping and parks to support the town's current housing composition.

1-4d. Transportation Planning

Both groups indicated that traffic congestion is the most pressing transportation issue in Dagsboro. Respondents indicated that car and truck traffic on Main Street is a problem and that pedestrian safety and crime are important issues. The workshop group also expressed concern that there are not adequate sidewalks along main roads. In short, residents would very much like to mitigate through-traffic on Main Street.

1-4e. Overall Goals

- Manage the timing, location, and design of future growth to enhance Dagsboro's small-town, residential character.
- Manage the location, design, and type of future non-residential development to serve residents' needs with minimal negative impact and enhance Dagsboro's small-town character.
- Support the preservation and maintenance of the town's historic homes and structures.
- Minimize the impact of beach traffic on residents and work to improve both the safety of and access to pedestrian and transit facilities.
- Increase access to local parks, recreation, open space, and improve landscaping.
- Maintain development codes and a development process to ensure that all new development and redevelopment enhances Dagsboro's small-town residential character.
- Ensure that utilities, community services and facilities are adequate to serve the existing community as well as planned future growth.
- Phase-in all new development based on the availability of adequate infrastructure.
- Support the continued affordability of housing in Dagsboro by encouraging the maintenance of existing homes and working with developers to provide new housing affordable to people with a wide range of incomes.

CHAPTER 2: MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

2-1. Current Land Use Planning and Regulation Process

Maintain development codes and a development process to ensure that all new development and redevelopment enhances Dagsboro's small-town residential character.

The Town Hall is centrally located in Dagsboro, at the intersection of the two main roads, Main Street and Clayton Street. The Town employs two full-time police officers, a full-time Town Clerk, and a part-time maintenance person. The Town Clerk manages the Town Hall and serves as a resource for the residents of Dagsboro. The maintenance person provides some seasonal services such as grass-cutting and tree-trimming.

Town business is conducted by a four-member Town Council and mayor. There is no separate Planning and Zoning Committee to review land use and planning decisions, which are made by the Town Council with the advice of the town engineer. However, a Planning and Zoning Committee to develop this comprehensive development plan. There is also a three to five-member Board of Adjustment, which hears appeals and grants variances to the Zoning and Subdivision codes. Board of Adjustment members are appointed by the mayor and approved by the Council. The Town currently contracts with the firm Davis Bowen and Freidel to serve the role of town engineer. Dagsboro contracts with a consultant, Carl Platner, on a case by case basis, to perform the work of Zoning Officer, Building and Zoning Official, and Building Inspector.

The Comprehensive Zoning Plan was adopted in October 1994 and the Subdivision Ordinance in November 1998. This document is Dagsboro's first Comprehensive Plan.

Critical Issues and Future Needs

Administrative capacity

As the town grows it may need to hire a full- or part-time staff person to serve as the code enforcement officer and/or represent the town's interests in working with and providing feedback to various state and county agencies. For example, this person might be responsible for responding to the County when there is proposed development near to the town or work with DelDOT on a traffic impact study for a proposed development within the town.

Board of Adjustment screening process

Currently, the Town Council prescreens each application for variance before it goes to the Board of Adjustment (BOA), in order to save the applicant time and money. This administrative review takes up Council time that could be better spent on other issues. Dagsboro should consider shifting this prescreening process to the Building and Zoning Officer to clarify the process.

Land Use Planning and Regulation Recommendations

- Begin to determine long-term governance needs and city services to determine the desired level of service and plan how to institute or upgrade those services as needed to serve the growing population.
- Shift the prescreening process for Board of Adjustment applications to the Building and Zoning Officer.

2-2. Demographics, Future Population and Housing Growth

This section outlines data on current and future demographics for Dagsboro and the surrounding area. Where appropriate, comparisons have been made with Delaware and Sussex County. The data for this chapter have been derived from a variety of sources, with the major source being the year 2000 US Census.

2-2a. Historic and Current Data

Total Population

The United States Census indicates that, from 1940 to 1990, while the population in Delaware and Sussex County had been steadily increasing, the population in Dagsboro has shown more variation. The town’s population peaked at approximately 477 in 1960, then slightly declined through 1980. However, since 1980, the population of the town has increased again, and in 2000 Dagsboro was at a historical high point of 519 people (see Figure 2).

There was a 30.4% population increase in Dagsboro from 1990 to 2000, compared with a 38.3% increase for Sussex County and a 17.6% increase statewide. Dagsboro grew slightly more than did the state as a whole, but not as rapidly as did Sussex County (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: History of Population and Housing Units for Dagsboro, Sussex County, and Delaware

	Population			Housing Units		
	Delaware	Sussex County	Dagsboro	Delaware	Sussex County	Dagsboro
1940	266,505	52,502	222	75,567	7,662	66
1950	318,085	61,336	474	97,013	17,945	118
1960	446,292	73,195	477	143,725	27,053	138
1970	548,104	80,356	375	180,233	44,085	160
1980	594,338	98,004	344	238,611	66,174	171
1990	666,168	113,229	485	289,919	78,006	207
2000	783,600	156,638	519	343,072	93,070	240

Sources: US Census 2000; Selected Historical Decennial Census Population and Housing Counts, United States Census Bureau, <http://www.census.gov>; Census of Population: 1960, ‘Characteristics of the Population,’ Delaware, Volume 1, Part 9.

There has also been an increase in housing units in Dagsboro, consistent with, but not as great as, increases in Sussex County and in the entire State of Delaware. In Dagsboro, the number of housing

units increased 15.9% from 1990 to 2000. In comparison, the number of housing units in Sussex County increased 19.3% and in Delaware 18.3% during that same period (see Figure 2).

Population Projections

Assuming that the town does not annex a significant amount of land, it is possible to estimate the future population of Dagsboro. However, projections for communities as small as Dagsboro are very difficult to prepare accurately. The small population makes it likely that slight inaccuracies or data errors in the current census figures can become very large errors when projected into the future. *These projections should not be considered accurate or binding, and should be relied upon with caution.*

Two very simple population projections have been prepared for Dagsboro. The first method used produced a conservative projection that is labeled the “low projection.” The University of Delaware Center for Applied Demography and Survey Research prepares a series of population projections for the Delaware Department of Transportation based on small geographic areas called “Modified Grids.” These projections are used for transportation planning purposes. A group of modified grids was selected that corresponds to the area surrounding the town.

Based on the 2000 population of the selected study area and the proportion of this population that is made up of the population of the Town of Dagsboro, the future “low projection” for Dagsboro’s population in 2010 and 2020 is given in Figure 3 below. These projections are made with the assumption that the Town of Dagsboro will continue to take up 16.3% of the selected study area through the 20-year projection period. As shown in this “low projection,” the town is expected to have a population of 637 people in 2010 (about 50 new dwelling units), and 693 people in 2020 (about 25 additional dwelling units).

Figure 3: Dagsboro Low Population Projection

	2000	2010	2020
Study Area	3193	3906	4249
Dagsboro	519	637	693
Population Increase	N/A	+118	+56
Percent Change	N/A	+22.7	+8.8

Sources: US Census 2000; Draft Population, Household, and Employment Projections for Sussex County, Center for Applied Demography and Survey Research at the University of Delaware; Projection by IPA.

The second population projection is called the “high projection.” For this projection, the growth rate for each decade is assumed to be 30.4%, which was the town’s rate of population growth between 1990 and 2000 (see Figure 4). In this scenario, the town would grow to about 677 people (about 70 new dwelling units) by 2010 and to about 883 people (another 90 dwelling units) by 2020.

Figure 4: Dagsboro High Population Projection (30.4% Decennial Growth Rate)

	2000	2010	2020
Population	519	677	883
Population Increase	N/A	+158	+206

Source: US Census 1990, 2000. Projection by IPA.

2-2b. Future Housing and Population Buildout

There are approximately 420 acres of unconstrained, developable land already within the municipal limits of Dagsboro (see Figure 1, page 4). If this land were all developed with single-family homes at two dwelling units per acre (roughly the density currently allowed in the Zoning Code), this land could reasonably support about 800 homes. With a current average household size of 2.3 people per home,

Figure 5: Profile of General Demographic Characteristics for Dagsboro, Sussex County, and Delaware 2000

	Delaware	Sussex County	Dagsboro
Total Population	783,600	156,638	519
Age			
Population 17 years and under	24.8%	22.5%	22.2%
Population 62 years and older	15.4%	22.0%	18.3%
Median Age (years)	36	41.1	38.4
Households			
Total Households	298,736	62,577	226
Households with children under 18 years	35.4%	30.8%	30.1%
Households single parent families	10.0%	8.7%	7.5%
Households grandparents raising grandchildren	2.4%	2.4%	3.1%
Householder 65 or older living alone	9.1%	11.1%	17.3%
Households with no vehicle available	8.0%	5.8%	3.5%
Average household size (# people)	2.54	2.45	2.3
Housing Units			
Total Housing Units	343,072	93,070	240
Renter occupied units	27.7%	19.3%	27.0%
Vacant housing units	12.9%	32.8%	7.9%
Seasonal or recreational units	7.6%	26.8%	1.6%
Units built before 1960	30.2%	19.3%	49.2%
Units built before 1940	10.7%	8.2%	27.5%
Income			
Median Household Income	\$47,381	\$39,208	\$37,596
Individuals 17 and younger below poverty level	11.9%	15.0%	5.8%
Individuals 65 or older below the poverty level	7.9%	8.4%	9.1%
Selected Characteristics			
Population 25 and over - High School Graduate or higher	82.6%	76.5%	80.3%
Population 25 and over with Associate or Bachelor's Degree or higher	31.6%	22.7%	26.3%
Population 21 and over Disabled	21.5%	26.1%	27.1%
Population 16 and over in labor force	65.7%	58.5%	62.7%
Population 5 years and over who speak English less than "very well"	3.9%	3.4%	3.0%

Source: U.S. Census 2000

this land could reasonably support approximately 1840 people. This would increase the total number of homes by 430% to 1040 and the population of Dagsboro by 350% to 2359 residents without any additional annexation. However, current available sewer, water and transportation infrastructure will only support a small fraction of this growth, as outlined later in this document.

There is a large difference between the mathematical projections and the buildout scenario. The town is concerned that the rapid pace of growth within the surrounding region indicates that the town could grow much more quickly than the projections would indicate. If infrastructure capacity issues are addressed, perhaps the town could even approach the buildout scenario within the planning period.

Other Demographic Characteristics

Figure 5 outlines selected demographic characteristics for Dagsboro and how they compare to Sussex County and the State of Delaware.

2-2c. Implications, Critical Issues, and Future Needs

High proportion of elderly and disabled residents

This has implications for medical and emergency services, senior support services and businesses, handicapped access, home and yard maintenance, and transportation. Additionally, it suggests that a high number of properties within the town will likely change owners and/or uses over the next decade or two. An assisted-living or other facility for elderly people might be welcomed.

Housing stock greater than 40 years old

Older homes have different and often greater maintenance needs. Older homes have a greater probability of and severity for fires.

2-3. Future Land Use and Annexation

Manage the timing, location and design of future growth to enhance Dagsboro’s small town, residential character.

Manage the location, design and type of future non-residential development to serve resident’s needs with minimal negative impact, and enhance Dagsboro’s small town character.

Support the continued affordability of housing in Dagsboro by encouraging the maintenance of existing homes and working with developers to provide new housing affordable to people with a wide range of incomes.

The 1999 State Investment Strategies Map shows the entire town to be designated as a Community area (see Map 4—State Investment Strategies). A small portion of land to the north and east, just outside of town, is shown as being in the Developing Area. All of the land southwest of Dagsboro between the town and Frankford is designated as Developing area as well. This area also extends west across U.S.

Route 113 for some distance. The remaining lands surrounding the town are designated as Secondary Developing Areas.

These designations indicate that the state is willing to support growth in the Community and Developing Areas before it will support growth in the Secondary Developing Areas. The State supports growth by providing funds for utility expansion, transportation improvements, park development, and other amenities. As a result, it is in Dagsboro's best interest to develop open lands within the town boundaries first, and then lands within the Developing areas, before moving to develop or annex lands within the Secondary Development Areas.

2-3a. Critical Issues and Future Needs

Future Land Uses

Based on the results of the September 25 community workshop and surveys, the town should revise their zoning map and ordinance to allow for mixed-use neighborhood commercial along Main Street and Clayton Street from Main to the railroad tracks. This would be the logical location for community and senior-oriented services and businesses such as restaurants. Lands along U.S. Route 113 are an appropriate location for highway commercial including business/office parks. The remainder of the lands within Dagsboro would be appropriately zoned as residential. See Map 5—Future Land Use.

Utility Capacity

Given the limitations on growth as a result of limited infrastructure (to be discussed in greater detail in the next section), it would be appropriate for the town to carefully phase-in any new growth based on the availability of infrastructure. Additionally, proposed developments within the town should have priority over development proposals requiring annexation.

Density

The town has determined, based on the economics of providing sewer and water, that new development should be zoned for approximately three dwelling units per acre. The Dagsboro zoning code currently allows a minimum of 15,000 square foot lots, or approximately two dwelling units per acre (including right-of-way). Dagsboro will need to amend this existing R-Residential zoning classification to accommodate the desired density for new development. It is important to note that four dwelling units per acre is generally considered to be the minimum density for efficient provision of water and sewer.

Vacant Lands

The Town of Dagsboro contains more than 400 acres of vacant land that is suitable for some sort of urban development. Except for a few scattered lots in the town center and along the highway corridor, the majority of this land is designated by this plan for residential use. The Town will classify this vacant land as R-Residential, which is the base residential zoning category. This zoning category permits single-family detached homes and customary accessory and conditional uses. The gross density allowed in this zone will be adjusted to permit approximately three dwelling units per acre. This zone will allow development that is compatible with the existing style and type of housing predominant in Dagsboro. This zone is appropriate for a wide range of development options, from single-infill lots in the older areas of the town to modestly sized new subdivisions on larger parcels.

Annexation

Dagsboro will consider annexations that are natural extensions of the town and provide services and utilities as part of a phased-in growth strategy. Growth/development should be managed to occur first within the current limits of the town, then within the proposed annexed areas to the north and west, which have been designated as a Developing Area by the state (See Map 6—Growth and Annexation Areas). This plan recommends that the following lands, totaling approximately 455 acres, be annexed by the town if the land owners wish to become part of Dagsboro:

Area 1: Lands west of U.S. Route 113/DuPont Boulevard totaling 139 acres including some existing homes, residential, and commercial development.

Area 2: Lands to the north of town located between U.S. Route 113 and SR 20/Dagsboro Road. These lands total 214 acres and include some existing homes along both roads. A golf course community has been proposed for the remainder of these lands.

Area 3: The intent of annexations in this area to the south and east of town is to clean up the town boundaries and eliminate jurisdictional confusion. Parcels include:

- Two small enclaves on the south side of Armory Road
- Two split parcels on the north side of Vines Creek Road
- Three split parcels on the west side of Main Street, extending back to the creek
- The Hudson Development, a small subdivision split by the town/county boundary, including nine existing parcels off of Vines Creek Road
- The new high school parcels, which are currently split between the town and the county
- The Armory

Figure 6 shows a breakdown of developable residential lands already within the town limits and those proposed for annexation. The total available acres for residential development totals 652 acres.

Figure 6: Total Residential Developable Lands

	Dagsboro Today (acres)	Proposed Annexation (acres)
Total Vacant Lands	515.6	455
Total Constrained Lands (such as wetlands and floodplains)	96.6	82
Already developed or non-residential lands	0	141
Total Developable Lands	419	233

Design Flexibility

Dagsboro is unique in that it contains many sizable parcels that may be suitable for large-scale development. The town acknowledges that it is desirable to allow more design flexibility and bulk standards for large properties in order to encourage them to be planned in a coordinated and efficient manner. It is also desirable to allow more flexibility regarding the types of housing units, the residential density, and the mixture of land uses in order to encourage well designed communities that are well integrated into the town. The benefits of such an approach are many: infrastructure can be coordinated

more efficiently; the quality of the design can be better; large areas of the town will be planned at one time; and the town will have more control over the design and phasing-in of the construction. In order to realize these goals, this plan recommends that the town develop and adopt a “Residential Planned Community Floating Zone (RPC/FZ)” as a part of its zoning ordinance concurrently or shortly after the adoption of the comprehensive plan.

To achieve the town’s goals, the RPC/FZ should have the following characteristics:

- 1) The RPC/FZ would be applicable to any large property over a certain size. The actual minimum size of the parcel may be set through the actual ordinance, but it is suggested to be between 10 and 25 acres. It may be difficult to achieve the design, infrastructure enhancement, and mixed-use objectives of the zone on parcels smaller than ten acres.
- 2) Property owners and/or developers would have to apply to the town to be considered under the RPC/FZ standards. The approval process should be a conditional use, granting the town officials the authority to consider the quality, type, and desirability of the proposal and its compatibility with the comprehensive plan and the surrounding neighborhood in the town.
- 3) The maximum gross residential density allowed in an RPC/FZ proposal should be no more than ten dwelling units per acre.
- 4) Each proposal for an RPC/FZ must demonstrate that there is adequate water, sewer, and transportation capacity available for the new development, taking into account other proposals being considered by the town, and assuming the remaining vacant property in the town will be developed at an overall density of three units per acre. RPC/FZ proposals should also include a plan that clearly delineates how construction will be phased-in so that adequate utility infrastructure is available throughout construction.
- 5) In order to promote a variety of housing choices for a wide range of socio-economic classes (including affordable housing for working families and the elderly), proposals in the RPC/FZ may include single-family attached or detached homes, townhomes, apartments, condominium housing units, and other similar housing styles.
- 6) It should be permissible for RPC/FZ proposals to include commercial uses that are accessory to the residential community. Any commercial uses should be designed to serve the residential community and town residents and should be accessible by pedestrians and bicycles as well as by automobiles.
- 7) It should be permissible and encouraged for RPC/FZ proposals to include recreational amenities such as parks, playgrounds, golf courses, and similar facilities.
- 8) Each RPC/FZ proposal should require that a percentage of land be set aside for active open space, which may be defined as usable open space that is free from any environmental constraints. Parks, playing fields, town greens, playgrounds, greenway corridors, and similar

uses would qualify. Wetlands, stormwater ponds, and golf courses would not qualify as active open space.

- 9) In order to assist the town, the county, and the state in planning critical infrastructure, the total number of new dwelling units permitted in the town (including lands to be annexed into the town) should be capped at 3029. The density cap was developed based on a buildout analysis (described below) and is intended to reflect the desired mixture of land uses and housing density in the town. Some of these new units are expected to be constructed in the R-Residential zone at an average density of three units per acre, and some are expected to be constructed in RPC/FZ proposals at a maximum of ten units per acre. Each RPC/FZ proposal should include a calculation of the impact of the proposal on the overall cap, taking into account other proposals currently being considered by the town and assuming that the remaining acreage will be developed at a gross density of three units per acre. Once the new unit cap is met, the RPC/FZ should be closed until such time as new infrastructure capacity is available.

- 10) The Dagsboro Town Council and Planning Commission should consider the following criteria when reviewing RPC/FZ proposals:
 - a) The extent to which the proposal is integrated with the existing town in general, and the specific neighborhood in which it is located.
 - b) The extent to which the proposal furthers the goals of the comprehensive plan.
 - c) The impact of the proposal on the town’s critical infrastructure facilities, including sewer, water, and transportation.
 - d) The impact of the proposal on other town services including police and emergency services as well as town administration.
 - e) The quality and character of the designed residential units and their appropriateness for Dagsboro in general and the specific neighborhood.
 - f) The type, style, and size of any proposed parks and recreational facilities and their benefit to both new and current residents of the town.
 - g) The type, style, and size of any proposed non-residential use, and whether or not it is demonstrated that these uses are accessory and incidental to the residential uses proposed.

Figure 7 shows the recommended density ratios under the proposed RPC/FZ, for a maximum of 3029 new dwelling units on vacant lands within both the current town boundaries as well as proposed annexed lands

Figure 7: RPC/FZ recommended density ratios

Density	Percent of land	Acres	Total Dwelling units (du)
3du/acre	65	423	1269
6du/acre	25	130	780
10du/acre	15	98	980
Total	100	652	3029

The dwelling-unit (du) cap should never be allocated such that other remaining landowners cannot achieve their base density of three du/acre. The following example shows how the town or a developer can determine the maximum allowable density for a proposed property within the RPC/FZ.

Mr. Smith has 100 acres he wants to develop at 6 du/acre. The total available acres is 651, and the total cap on dwelling units is 3029.

- 1) 651 total acres minus 100 proposed acres = 551 remaining available acres throughout town and annexation areas.*
- 2) 551 remaining acres times 3 du/acre = 1653 total units at the base density to be reserved for remaining lands.*
- 3) 3029 dwelling unit cap minus 1653 reserved dwelling units = 1376 total possible dwelling units on Mr. Smith's 100 acres. A total of 780 dwelling units are allowed at 6 du/acre under the proposed ratio.*
- 4) Mr. Smith wants 6 du/acre or 600 du; therefore, his proposal would be acceptable under the cap. The Town Council would have to decide if it wants to allocate the full 600 units at 6 du/acre for this particular development or if it prefers to reserve some of those 6 du/acre units for other areas of the town.*

Area of Concern

The Town of Dagsboro recognizes that land use and development activities outside the town's boundaries have the potential to impact the town and its residents. Map 7—Area of Concern—identifies an area of concern wherein the town would like to have some degree of input or control on land use and development activities. This area follows Pepper Creek to the south and extends approximately one half mile to the west of the current town limits, as well as a few additional parcels to the northeast of town. It consists of approximately 2450 acres of primarily agricultural land with some strip residential and a few subdivisions.

The Town of Dagsboro requests that it be notified of any land use proposals submitted to Sussex County relative to this area and that the County work with the town to incorporate any issues and input. Additionally, Dagsboro agrees to notify and coordinate with Sussex County if it becomes aware of any development activity in this area. Dagsboro envisions that some of these parcels may be considered for annexation into the town in the mid- to long-term future.

Secondary Annexation Areas

Although Dagsboro prefers that developable lands within the town be developed first and has identified on Map 6 lands most likely to be annexed within the five-year planning period, Dagsboro has no legal tools to ensure that development occurs in this fashion. As a result, if landowners of parcels within the area of concern (as defined above) apply for annexation, Dagsboro would like the opportunity to consider them for annexation if the parcel meets the following criteria:

- It is adjacent to Dagsboro’s town boundaries.
- It is a logical extension of the town and the utility system.
- It does not create any enclaves.
- It can be served with water and sewer without reducing water and sewer capacity of developable lands already within the town or already slated for annexation.
- It complies with the recommendations of the transportation study.
- If located within the Sussex County Environmentally Sensitive Area, it must comply with environmental protections equal to or stricter than Sussex County’s regulations.

Dagsboro recognizes that any annexation within the secondary areas will still involve notification of the Office of State Planning Coordination and require a plan of services. However, (if currently proposed legislation is passed) it is anticipated that neither a Comprehensive Plan Update, nor a full State review would be required, unless there was some greater issue of concern to the State.

Land Use and Annexation Recommendations

- Zone appropriate parcels along Main Street and Clayton Street to the railroad tracks for mixed-use neighborhood commercial uses, including:
 - Community services such as restaurants, dry cleaner, video rental, etc.
 - Senior services such as drug stores, beauty parlor, card shop
 - Tourist-related businesses such as antique stores, craft stores, gift stores, restaurants, art galleries and bed & breakfasts
- Zone vacant and annexed parcels along U.S. 113 for Highway Commercial.
- Zone the remainder of vacant and annexed lands for Residential uses.
- Review and revise the town’s development code to assure that as vacant lands are developed, they enhance the character of the town (see additional suggestions in the COMMUNITY CHARACTER AND DESIGN section of this document).
- Revise the Zoning Code and zoning map classification R-Residential to allow up to three dwelling units per acre.
- Develop and adopt a “Residential Planned Community Floating Zone” (RPC/FZ) into the Zoning Code.
- Develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Sussex County to notify, coordinate, and jointly address issues related to land use and development activities within the AREA OF CONCERN as shown on Map 7.
- Area 1: Lands west of Route 113/DuPont Boulevard totaling 129 acres of residential, including some existing homes, and 10 acres of commercial land.
- Area 2: Lands to the north of town located between Route 113 and SR 20/Dagsboro Road. These lands total 214 acres, and include some existing homes along both roads.
- Area 3: The intent of annexations in this area to the south and east of town is to clean up the town boundaries and eliminate jurisdictional confusion. Parcels include:
 - Two small enclaves on the south side of Armory Road
 - Two split parcels on the north side of Vines Creek Road
 - Three split parcels on the west side of Main Street, extending back to the creek

- The Hudson Development, a small subdivision split by the town/county boundary, including nine existing parcels off of Vines Creek Road
- The new high school parcels which are currently split between the town and the county
- The Armory
- Revise the Dagsboro Subdivision Ordinance to require that annexations follow parcel boundaries, and if annexation of an entire parcel is not desirable, Dagsboro should require it to be subdivided so that corporate boundaries and property lines are coterminous.

2-4. Provision of Utilities, Community Facilities & Services, and Transportation

Ensure utilities, community services, and facilities are adequate to serve the existing community as well as planned future growth.

Phase-in all new development based on the availability of adequate infrastructure.

2-4a. Utilities

For Water, sewer, and transportation planning calculations, Dagsboro needs to plan for the existing 240 dwelling units, the current non-residential uses, the 3029 total dwelling units allowed under the cap, and approximately 75 existing homes proposed for annexation for a total of 3344 residential units, (see Figure 8 below). Using the Census 2000 figure of 2.3 people per household, we can calculate the potential population of Dagsboro at buildout to be approximately 7658 residents.

Additionally, utility planning needs to account for both the old and new high schools, the Armory site, ten acres of commercial land proposed for annexation, and any commercial conversions or mixed uses to be accommodated either in the Main Street Area or along U.S. Rt. 113.

Figure 8: Total dwelling units and population growth for planning utilities and community services.

	Dwelling units	Population
Existing in Dagsboro	240	519
Existing proposed for annexation	75	172
New planned dwelling units	3029	6967
Total	3344	7658

Sewer

The Piney Neck Regional Wastewater Facility is located on the north side of County Road 336, approximately 0.2 miles east of County Road 336A. The facility was created through a referendum approved by the citizens of Dagsboro and Frankford. As a result, there is no formal sewer agreement between the county and the two towns. In 1988, the Sussex County Council passed a resolution establishing the Dagsboro-Frankford Sewer District. The sewer district is an independent legal entity that the County operates and maintains on behalf of the users in the district. Included in the district are the towns of Dagsboro and Frankford, both old and new high schools, and the Frankford Elementary

School. Wastewater from the Dagsboro-Frankford service area is collected via gravity sewers. The gravity sewers then pass the flow to lift stations located throughout the wastewater collection system. Finally, a force main sends the waste to Piney Neck Wastewater Facility. In 1999, the facility implemented a spray irrigation system on a 16.67-acre section of loblolly pine trees adjacent to the plant. This has increased the flexibility of the system, allowing irrigation during crop planting and harvesting.

Each town is not specifically allocated a usage maximum, rather the facility has a maximum to which the towns jointly must adhere. The design capacity for the facility is 200,000 gallons per day (gpd). The current summer flow average is 88,000 gpd and the winter flow average is 100,000 gpd. The new high school, when opened, is expected to use approximately 15,000 gpd, and any new commercial uses would also require some of this available capacity. If we assume available residential capacity to be approximately 75,000 gpd, this is roughly equivalent to 250 new homes that could be built within the towns of Dagsboro and Frankford without significant sewer investment.

Further complicating matters, when the current sewer district was planned and constructed, the system was designed for additional growth to occur in the lands to the south, between Dagsboro and Frankford. As a result, new growth occurring to the north of town may require significant investment by the town or the developers to increase the size of the sewer pipes or other components of the wastewater transmission system serving this area.

Water

Dagsboro is not currently served by a public water system. Presently, homeowners and businesses in town obtain water from individual private wells. These wells are typically less than 110 feet deep and obtain water from an unconfined aquifer. Water quality is poor with nitrates ranging from 1.0 to 10.3 mg/l (the maximum contaminant level or “MCL” for nitrate is 10 mg/l). Also, the water is typically high in iron with levels ranging from .4 to 27.8 mg/l (MCL for iron is .3 mg/l). In addition to water quality issues, fire protection is impacted due to the lack of fire hydrants and the absence of a centralized water distribution system.

After a detailed evaluation of several options for providing the town with water service, the recommendation was made to pursue an interconnection with Millsboro. This proposal involves a water main extension to the Town of Millsboro, and the construction of a water distribution system and a water tank in Dagsboro. The residents of Dagsboro voted through a referendum to proceed with the new water system, and subsequently financing was obtained through grants and loans from the State of Delaware Revolving Loan Fund, the State of Delaware 21st Century Fund, and the USDA. The cost of the project is approximately \$3.5 million.

The water system is presently being designed. The Town’s engineer, Davis Bowen and Friedel, Inc., indicates that the distribution system is being designed to accommodate the additional growth that is expected in Dagsboro. However, the current agreement with the Town of Millsboro is only for amount of water (measured in EDUs, or “equivalent dwelling units) for the exiting town. As new development activity is proposed, the Town will have to renegotiate this agreement to obtain additional EDUs from Millsboro. It may also be necessary for the Town to work with developers to upgrade or enhance the

storage capacity in the Town's water tank, or perhaps consider potential future expansion of the system (including in-town production wells) to serve new development. Conectiv Power Delivery currently provides electricity to Dagsboro residents and businesses.

Critical Issues and Future Needs

Developable lands within the town

With more than 400 available acres already within the town that could be developed, it is important for the town to be able to provide sewer and water to these lands before allocating limited available capacity to annexed lands.

Current development proposals

Dagsboro is aware of a development proposal for 120 townhomes on land within the current boundaries of the municipality. There is a proposal for a golf course community of about 1000 dwelling units on lands both inside and outside of town to the north. In addition, the town has been approached about annexing land across U.S. Route 113 for 192 homes plus some highway-oriented commercial.

Frankford development plans and sewer use

While we have calculated that approximately 250 new homes could be served by the existing sewer system, this estimate is applicable to both Dagsboro and Frankford. In 1999 the town of Frankford adopted a Comprehensive Land Use Plan with the intent of attracting additional residential growth. Although the plan has not been certified by the state, nor does it provide any quantities, it does identify some significant vacant parcels that Frankford has targeted for residential growth.

Total Maximum Daily Load

It is possible that any expansion of the Piney Neck Regional Wastewater Facility could be limited by Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) regulations administered by the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC).

Cost to provide additional utility upgrades

The cost to upgrade sewer and water systems as well as other city services will be high, and developers should share the burden of expanding these services. Dagsboro should initiate area-wide planning studies with the developers and service providers to determine the overall costs of expanding essential services and utilities. The developers should be willing to help pay for these studies. This information may also be used to develop impact fees to help fund the costs of development.

Utility Recommendations

- Require developers to fund a study of the town-wide sewer system in coordination with the town and county to determine long-range sewer needs to support appropriate development in the town.
- Begin working with Sussex County and the Town of Frankford to have additional sewer capacity in place to accommodate anticipated new development and annexations when needed.

- Phase-in new development based on the availability of water and sewer through a managed-growth or concurrency approach.
- Consider developing and implementing impact fees to help pay for the costs of providing infrastructure and utilities to new development.
- Adopt an adequate public-facilities ordinance for water, sewer, and transportation to make sure utility capacity is available before development occurs.
- Enter into annexation agreements with developers to address short-term water and sewer limitations in return for annexation.

2-4b. Public Safety and Community Services

Ensure that utilities, community services, and facilities are adequate to serve the existing community as well as planned future growth.

Community services, and facilities to be discussed below include public safety, trash collection, stormwater management, parks, recreation and open space, as well as libraries, schools and medical facilities.

Public Safety

There is one full-time Police Chief, one full-time police officer, and one part-time police officer employed by the Town of Dagsboro. The shifts are staggered so that the town’s residents get close to 24-hour police coverage. If no Dagsboro officer is on duty in the case of an emergency, the Delaware State Police provide service. Sussex County runs the 911 service for the entire county, which covers all of the residents of Dagsboro.

There is a volunteer fire department in Dagsboro, with a volunteer ambulance service connected with the fire department. There is one certified, paid paramedic in Dagsboro, who works through the fire department. If a paid paramedic is not on duty in the event of an emergency, the volunteer service responds. Sussex County also provides ambulance and paramedic services to the entire county.

Critical Issues and Future Needs

Police

The town can expect to receive more calls as more land is developed. Isolated communities have the potential for greater police presence due to the isolation and fewer “eyes on the street.” Crime was noted as an important issue in the surveys.

Fire

Throughout the state, volunteer fire and ambulance personnel are getting harder to find as older members retire and new residents don’t have the time or interest to get involved. As the town grows, the fire and ambulance services will also need to grow.

Public Safety Recommendations

- Keep new development close to the existing core of town to minimize response times and take advantage of the “eyes on the street.”
- Support the volunteer fire and ambulance services as they grow to serve the growing town.

Community Services

The residents of Dagsboro must contract individually with a private company for their trash removal.

Stormwater quantity and quality management in the developing areas of town are being addressed through the typical stormwater retention/detention ponds. However, typical of other communities of similar size and age, the historic town core and industrial areas currently have no stormwater management system.

Critical Issues and Future Needs

Individual trash collection

Residents have noted that property maintenance is sometimes a problem in town. Instituting regular town-wide trash collection for all residents will ensure that all residents can properly dispose of trash, reduce improper storage, as well as improve the efficiency of the trash-collection efforts.

Stormwater Management

The older core area of town, as well as industrial properties, has no mechanism for stormwater management. As a result, soil and pollutants are free to enter both surface waters and the underground aquifers from which the town gets its drinking water.

Transportation Construction

DelDOT is required by Federal law to improve stormwater management systems when constructing or upgrading projects. Plans are currently underway for realignment of the Main Street/SR 26 intersection and will include stormwater facilities to address this transportation improvement.

Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs)

Total Maximum Daily Loads, or pollution control limits, were established by the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control to reduce the total maximum allowable pollutants for the Indian River Watershed in 1998. The western part of the watershed surrounding Dagsboro was determined to be in a high reduction area, meaning that targets have been set to reduce non-point-source pollutants by 85% for nitrogen and by 65% for phosphorus. To this end, DNREC recommends best management practices (BMPs) for all land uses. Pollution control strategies, being developed by DNREC, will help to pinpoint some of these best practices.

Community Services Recommendations

- Negotiate a contract for trash removal throughout the town, to take advantage of bulk rates, improve the efficiency of service, and ensure that all residents are served.
- Work with DelDOT and the Conservation District to ensure that stormwater management activities associated with the SR 26 realignment are in keeping with the character of the town (see section 2-5. COMMUNITY CHARACTER AND DESIGN for more specific suggestions).
- Coordinate with DNREC and the Sussex Conservation District to implement Best Management Practices (BMPs) that could be used to reduce pollutants into the Pepper Creek and the Inland Bays Watershed.
- Dagsboro is encouraged to participate with the Inland Bays Tributary Action Team as recommendations are developed and implemented to reduce pollutants into the waterways.

Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

Increase access for residents to local parks, recreation, open space, and improve landscaping.

Currently there is a vacant lot located directly on Main Street/Route 26 that the town owns and uses for recreational purposes, such as the annual Christmas festivities in the winter. The town is working to improve and expand upon the land to provide a more complete park to the residents, which may include playground equipment and other facilities.

The present high school lies between Dagsboro and the Town of Frankford, and the ball fields associated with the school are on the Frankford portion of the property. However, the new high school that is presently under construction will be partially within Dagsboro and will have new ball fields available for public recreation use.

Great Cypress Swamp is located less than two miles southwest of Dagsboro. This area is owned and managed by Delaware Wild Lands, Inc., a nonprofit conservation organization. Cypress Swamp's access is limited, as it is a private conservation area. The area contains the northernmost stands of cypress trees in North America.

Holt's Landing State Park, located less than ten miles northeast of Dagsboro, is the closest state park. This 204-acre park became a state park in 1965 and boasts diverse terrain that includes a bayshore beach, grassy fields, and a hardwood forest. Holt's Landing is located on the Indian River Bay and also includes the Assawoman Canal, which connects the Indian River Bay with Little Assawoman Bay to the south. A privately owned marina operates on a leased portion of the Assawoman Canal and includes a fuel pump and a small boat-launching ramp (fee required) for boaters and park visitors. The park is also the home to the only pier on Delaware's Inland Bay that was built specifically for crabbing. This pier, opened in 2001, contributes to the popularity of crabbing at the park. Other amenities at Holt's Landing include a boat ramp, fishing, nature trails, picnicking, a playground, a pavilion, and restroom facilities.

Critical Issues and Future Needs

Parks and recreation

Residents have expressed a need for additional parks facilities and amenities for kids. In addition, some facilities should be geared towards seniors as well. Additional parks and open space should be added as the town grows.

Recreation and Open Space Recommendation

Require all new developments to dedicate a percentage of land for active open space and provide amenities (tables, play equipment, ball courts, etc.) as appropriate to the community. If the new development is very small, require the developer to contribute a fee in lieu of land, so the town can acquire new park lands and/or develop amenities on existing park lands.

Other Community Needs and Services

There is no library in the Town of Dagsboro. There are libraries in both Frankford and Millsboro that are accessible to the residents of Dagsboro. The County Bookmobile also makes regularly scheduled visits to Dagsboro.

The Pyle State Service Center in Roxana also serves the needs of residents in Dagsboro. There are no senior services specifically for the Town of Dagsboro. The closest countywide senior services network, CHEER, is located in Roxana, four miles south on SR 20. The Center provides Meals on Wheels to the homebound as well as weekly transportation to the bank, post office, drug store, and grocery store. There is also an active senior center in Millsboro.

There is one private medical practitioner in Dagsboro from whom residents can attain medical care. There is also a private practitioner who works out of a satellite office of Peninsula Regional Medical Center, located in Dagsboro. There are several easily accessible medical centers in nearby Millsboro, including a satellite of the Nanticoke Mid-Sussex Health Center and a satellite of the Beebe Hospital. The nearby hospitals include Milford Memorial Hospital (30 miles north), Beebe Hospital in Lewes (10 miles east), Nanticoke in Seaford (10 miles west) and Peninsula General Hospital in Salisbury, Maryland (30 miles south).

Dagsboro is located in the Indian River School District, which serves southeastern Sussex County. Indian River is one of the largest school districts in the state of Delaware. Currently, students from Dagsboro attend Frankford Elementary in Frankford, about three miles south of the town. Older students attend Selbyville Middle School in Selbyville, about seven miles south of the town. High school students attend Indian River High School, which is located between Dagsboro and Frankford. A new high school is planned to be built across the street from the existing high school, which is projected to be complete by the start of the 2004-2005 school year. The old high school will continue to be used as a school facility, but the grade configuration has not yet been determined.

A branch of the United States Postal Service serves the Town of Dagsboro. It is located at 102 Clayton Street, near the town's main intersection of Main Street and Clayton Street.

There are three facilities that are available for meeting and/or banquet space in the town of Dagsboro, the National Guard Armory on Route 20, the Bethel Center on Route 26, and the Town Fire Hall. The Town Hall is too small to accommodate large community meetings, so other buildings must be scheduled for community uses. The Town also owns a building on Vines Creek Road near the cemetery. This facility has been designated to be upgraded to a community center, and construction is expected to start as soon as the town's new water system is in place.

Community Services Recommendation

If it becomes available at some time in the future, Dagsboro may want to consider acquiring all or part of the old high school site.

2-4c. Transportation

Minimize the impact of beach traffic on residents and work to improve the safety of and access to pedestrian and transit facilities.

The State maintains the primary streets in Dagsboro—Clayton Street, Main Street and Vines Creek Road (see Map 8—Roads and Boundaries). All other streets and sidewalks, including any new subdivision streets, are maintained by the town using Municipal Street Aid funds that are provided by the state. There is no street-sweeping service in the town. Snow removal and maintenance activities are contracted by the town on an as-needed basis through private contractors.

The current rail line that runs through Dagsboro is the Indian River Secondary line operated by the Norfolk-Southern Railroad. Approximately two trains per day travel through Dagsboro, mostly hauling grain for the poultry industry. No major complaints have been voiced about noise, safety, or trains blocking town streets, although blockages have been noted just outside the town's boundaries.

Most of the residents of Dagsboro are employed within a 30-mile radius of the town, in larger cities such as Salisbury, Md., or commute to Dover about 50 miles north. As is true with many small towns in the area, Dagsboro can be considered a "bedroom community," a place where the majority of residents live but do not work.

There is no regular, fixed-route bus service to or through Dagsboro. However, paratransit service is available through DART First State by reservation to eligible elderly and disabled residents as well as kidney dialysis patients. The Roxana CHEER Center provides weekly transportation to the bank, post office, drug store, and grocery store.

The core of the town lacks adequate pedestrian or bicycle facilities, as the sidewalk system is either in great need of repair or, in most places, non-existent. The town is not laid out in such a way that it is easily navigable or simple to travel within the town limits on foot.

Critical Issues and Future Needs

Beach traffic

The town is overwhelmed with beach traffic on SR 26 during the beach season. As shown in Figure 9 below, key intersections in town experience traffic increases of 110% to 132% between the weekday fall morning peak hour and the summer peak weekend hour. DelDOT has near-term plans to realign the SR 26/Main Street intersection and long-term plans for a bypass from the Clarksville intersection to SR 1 to the south of SR 26. However, the proposed bypass could increase the desirability of SR 26 as a route to the beach with possible further detriment to the town.

Figure 9: Summer versus fall traffic counts at key Dagsboro intersections (1998)

Location	Fall weekday a.m. peak hour vehicles	Summer weekend peak hour vehicles	Change
Main & Clayton Intersection	872	1876	115%
Main & Vines Creek Intersection	928	1948	110%
U.S. Rt. 113 & Clayton Intersection	880	1160	132%

Source: Delaware Department of Transportation

Growth and Transportation

Traffic congestion was the number-one issue of concern identified by respondents of the surveys. Currently, as shown in Figure 10 below, the average annual daily traffic (AADT) on Main Street, a two-lane town street, exceeds the AADT for the four-lane segment of U.S. Route 113 that passes through the town’s boundaries. New development can be expected to exacerbate existing transportation problems and potentially cause new problems. Dagsboro should work with DelDOT to conduct an area-wide transportation study to identify transportation issues, problems, and solutions and work to reroute beach traffic away from the town. With this information, the town can then ask developers to contribute to improvements and/or revise development plans to minimize problems.

Figure 10: Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) on key roads (1999)

Road Segment	AADT	Road Functional Classification
Clayton Street, 113 to Main	4348	Rural Minor Arterial (2 Lanes)
Main Street, Clayton to Vines Creek	16453	Rural Minor Arterial (2 Lanes)
U.S. Rt. 113, northern Dagsboro boundary to Southern town limit	13795	Rural Principal Arterial (4 Lanes)

Source: Delaware Department of Transportation, Traffic Summary 2000

Bike and Pedestrian needs

Pedestrian safety was rated as an important concern to survey respondents. The town has high percentages of elderly (18.3%) and disabled (27.1%) residents who may have somewhat limited mobility. Additionally, 3.5% of Dagsboro households have no vehicle available, and 22.2% of residents are children 17 years or younger. Combined, as many as 40% to 50% of residents may have some limits on their use of a motor vehicle for transportation. As SR 26 and other streets are upgraded, it is important that any resulting projects be bike and pedestrian-friendly.

New Maintenance Responsibilities

As new development occurs, Dagsboro will become responsible for additional miles of subdivision streets, requiring additional funds and staff time. At the same time, the town has the right to inspect and accept new subdivision streets before assuming responsibility for maintenance and can require high construction standards. The town code currently specifies that streets be built to DelDOT standards.

Transportation Recommendations

- Work with DelDOT to assure that the SR 26/Main Street plans meet the needs of the town and are in keeping with the character of the town.
- Pressure state officials to provide funding for an SR 26 bypass.
- Work with the state Department of Health & Social Services and Dart First State to ensure acceptable access for elderly and disabled residents to the State Service Center, medical facilities, and other key destinations.
- Prepare to maintain and plow additional local streets as the town grows. This includes preparing a capital improvements program and budget, providing funding, and contracting for services (the Delaware Transportation Institute and Technology Transfer Center at UD can assist with this).
- Require sidewalks with all new development.
- Begin a program to provide sidewalks throughout the town and repair and update existing sidewalks for handicapped accessibility.
- Extend current town streets into new development as much as possible.
- Contact DelDOT to initiate a transportation study of the area to identify issues, problems, and solutions, and begin working to reroute beach traffic away from the town.

2.5 Community Character and Design

Manage the timing, location, and design of future growth to enhance Dagsboro’s small-town, residential character.

Manage the location, design, and type of future non-residential development to serve the residents’ needs with minimal negative impact and enhance Dagsboro’s small-town character.

Support the preservation and maintenance of the town’s historic homes and structures.

A distinctive characteristic of Dagsboro is its central location amidst larger towns such as Georgetown and Salisbury, Md., and its proximity to the Delaware beaches. This location has also brought an increase in development in and around Dagsboro and neighboring towns. As Dagsboro plans for the future, it must address both the historic character of the community as well as the implications of expected growth and development. Finding a balance in these two areas can be addressed through the use of the community’s goals, the Municipal Comprehensive Plan, and the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances.

The Town of Dagsboro is a small, quiet community whose residents are comfortable with the size and atmosphere of the town. It primarily comprises single-family homes, most of which were built before 1960. Scattered among these homes are some commercial uses and public facilities. There are some brick structures, which are mostly for commercial or public uses, such as the Town Hall, a church, the firehouse, the Post Office, and a bank. The majority of the structures in the town are wood-frame buildings with wood or wood-look siding. There are no highway-scale strip malls, large office buildings, or apartment complexes; all existing commercial buildings are of a residential scale.

Dagsboro has several significant historic structures that add to its community character and image (see Map 9—Historic Resources). In addition, a potential historic district was identified around the core of the town in 1998. A major historic focal point in the town is Prince George’s Chapel, which was built in 1757. The chapel has since been restored and placed on the National Register of Historic Places. Another building worth noting is the Clayton Theater, a 1948 vintage movie house, which now plays first-run movies.

A potential historic district was identified in 1998 in response to an increase in federal expenditures in the district. Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act states that the impact of such expenditures on a potential historic district must be assessed and mitigated prior to construction. No further actions will be automatically taken with regards to the potential historic district, unless the community desires to pursue formalization of the historic district.

Within the town limits are many vacant parcels, some of which are overgrown and unkempt. Decisions about the possible development of this land are very important to the future of Dagsboro and they impact heavily on the character of the community. The buildings within the town have various styles and setbacks. These two factors erode the visual unity of the town. The vacant parcels, in particular, have the potential to make or break the town, depending on how they are maintained and/or developed.

The Town of Dagsboro is rich in environmental resources (See Map 10—Environmental Features). Pepper Creek and its tributaries run through the center of town, as well as along the northern boundary, creating a fairly wide flood plain as well as some wetlands. Just to the northeast of town, a large area has been designated as an “Excellent” recharge area. All of these lands are influential on the visual character of the town and residents’ quality of life. In addition, they 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. Although there are some federal and state regulations that govern the use of some of these resources, the town does not currently regulate or protect these important resources. In addition, it appears that there may be a number of homes located within the 100-year flood plain.

Critical Issues and Elements

Historic District

This district has been defined but was never listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Finishing this nomination process would allow owners of historic buildings to take state and federal tax credits for the cost of making repairs to these structures. Additionally, the district could form the basis for an

overlay zoning district with specific design standards within the zoning code that would provide additional protections for the character of the town.

Enhancing a pedestrian orientation

One reason why new development so often looks different from older development is the switch from a pedestrian to a vehicular orientation. It is possible to create new pedestrian-oriented developments without sacrificing vehicular convenience. The presence of sidewalks and street trees is one aspect of pedestrian orientation. Other elements include small lot sizes, maintaining a residential building scale, placing garages to the rear of a home or property, residential driveways that are only one-vehicle-wide at the curb (9-ft. to 12-ft. maximum), shorter block lengths (200 ft. to 500 ft.), and pedestrian cut-throughs on cul-de-sacs and long blocks. Architectural detailing such as gables, dormers, porches, interesting entryways and windows also enhance the pedestrian scale and character of development. Finally, large parking lots and expanses of asphalt are very uncomfortable for pedestrians. The town can mitigate these by minimizing their size, placing them to the rear or side of buildings, screening them from the sidewalk with attractive walls, fences or landscaping, and providing landscaped pedestrian walks through parking lots where needed. These elements can be regulated through the Zoning and Subdivision Codes.

Community design to enhance perceptions of personal safety

Crime was rated as an important issue by the majority of the survey respondents. Community design and character can play a key role in reducing crime and enhancing perceptions of safety. Some key concepts include seeing and being seen, “eyes on the street,” and a pride of ownership expressed in the physical environment. These can be implemented with appropriate signage and lighting, mixed uses, use of windows, public art and murals, as well as with good maintenance practices and minimizing trash and graffiti. Some of the same elements of pedestrian orientation also enhance personal safety.

Landscaping

Landscaping was rated as desirable by the majority of survey respondents. The town may want to consider adopting landscaping requirements as part of the development code. If appropriately designed, landscaping can also enhance the pedestrian orientation as well as personal safety.

Signage

Some commercial signage throughout the town appeared to be erected by the town. As a result, it appears that the town might be endorsing certain local businesses. In addition, many signs of various shapes, sizes and colors compete for attention and detract from the town’s image, especially within the historic district.

Environmentally Sensitive Area

Sussex County and the state have designated a large area of the county near the coast as an Environmentally Sensitive Area. Dagsboro is very close to this area, especially along Pepper Creek. It is anticipated that Sussex County will adopt stricter environmental protections in this area. Dagsboro should consider adopting similar/complementary environmental regulations to preserve this unique amenity.

Excellent Recharge Area

Sussex County has a spray irrigation facility within this environmentally sensitive area that may need to be expanded in response to planned growth. It is highly likely that any activities or development within this recharge area could affect the drinking water of the town or other residents in the area.

Stormwater Facilities

Above-ground stormwater facilities are not especially attractive and generally not compatible with the character of the town. In spite of their importance to protecting the environment, they are often a no-man's land and an attractive nuisance for children. Efforts should be made during site design to minimize the size of facilities needed and locate them in an unobtrusive manner. Stormwater facilities should be located to the rear of the property, as far from the road and sidewalks as possible. This allows buildings to be closer to the street, contributing positively to the community's character, personal safety, and minimizing walking distances for pedestrians.

Community Character Recommendations

- Complete the process, with the State Historic Preservation Office, of adopting the historic district as a National Register site, so that building owners can be eligible for tax credits.
- Initiate a streetscaping study to create a unified set of street amenities, including street trees, landscaping, sidewalks, street furniture (benches, trash cans, light posts, planters), and municipal signage. Money for implementation may be available through the DeIDOT TEA-21 program.
- Review and revise the town's development code to ensure that as vacant lands are developed, they enhance the character of the town. Include provisions to protect and enhance a pedestrian orientation.
- Consider hiring a part-time code-enforcement officer, either as town staff or through the town engineer to ensure that new development and vacant parcels maintain minimum standards of design and upkeep.
- Develop a signage ordinance to minimize the effect of commercial signage within the town limits.
- Enact environmental protections for wetlands, streams, floodplains, and well-head recharge areas similar to the new Sussex County regulations.
- Adopt landscaping standards as part of the development code.
- Work with the Sussex Conservation district to maximize the use of best practices for stormwater management and locate above-ground facilities to be as unobtrusive as possible.
- Keep informed regarding activities occurring within the Excellent Recharge area and notify Sussex County of any concerns.
- Update the Dagsboro Subdivision Ordinance to establish regulations for the preservation of historic structures.

2.6 Redevelopment

Support the preservation and maintenance of the town's historic homes and structures.

Maintain development codes and a development process to ensure that all new development and redevelopment enhances Dagsboro's small-town residential character.

For the most part, the businesses currently within Dagsboro are relatively healthy, so redevelopment is not really an issue. However, residents have expressed an interest in attracting some additional services such as restaurants and gift shops that would be resident-oriented. Of great importance is the fact that the town contains a high percentage of buildings more than 40-years-old that have specific maintenance needs.

Critical Issues and Future Needs

Older buildings

About half of the buildings in the town are more than 40-years-old. These buildings have specific maintenance requirements.

Maintenance of older homes

It is clear from the 2000 US Census data that Dagsboro has a significant number of residents who may have trouble properly maintaining their homes. These include households having no vehicle available (3.5%), elderly living alone (17.1%), single-parent households (7.5%), and residents with disabilities (27.1%). Older folks have less agility and money to effect needed maintenance and repairs, and those who can afford to pay a contractor are also most likely to be the targets of construction scams. Others who might have trouble maintaining their homes include those who don't speak English very well and those who live below the poverty level. Dagsboro may want to consider taking some low-cost steps to help residents keep their buildings and properties in good repair.

There are a number of housing programs administered by the State that may help some town residents maintain their homes. The Delaware State Housing Authority administers the Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program. It provides a 3% loan either as a conventional loan with regular repayment schedule or as a deferred loan registered as a lien on the property to be satisfied at the time of resale. Owners of buildings contributing to the Dagsboro National Register Historic District, if adopted, are eligible for state and federal tax credits for rehabilitating their homes or businesses. Applications and information for both are available through the State Historic Preservation Office. Finally, there are some non-profit agencies that provide a wide range of housing assistance and counseling programs, including Interfaith Housing Delaware Inc., and Community Housing Inc.

New businesses

Residents have expressed the desire for a few more resident-oriented businesses such as restaurants. These would be most appropriate within the town core on Main and Clayton Streets, and vacant land is available.

Redevelopment Recommendations

- Encourage businesses to develop along major streets for neighborhood commercial uses including:
 - Community services such as restaurants, dry cleaner, video rental, etc.
 - Senior services such as drug stores, beauty parlor, card shop
- Work with DNREC, DelDOT, and Delaware Greenways to encourage the development of greenways connecting Sussex County parklands and open spaces, with connections to Dagsboro.
- Consider providing some maintenance support to owners of older homes such as:
 - Start a library of information on the repair and upkeep of older homes and products.
 - Publicly recognize well-maintained and newly fixed-up properties.
 - Maintain a list of approved contractors.
 - Start a warehouse of donated and recycled building parts for older homes (windows, doors, hardware, paint); solicit donations from local contractors and others. (The City of New Castle has initiated this type of activity and may be a good resource.)
 - Investigate low- or no-cost loans for repairs to historic homes or for elderly, disabled, or low-income homeowners. Advertise that these resources are available and bring in the providers for a workshop.
 - Publish and distribute a brochure to all homeowners explaining the Ordinance requirements for maintenance and listing resources for help.
 - Ask the churches, Boy Scouts, or other community groups to provide maintenance assistance to residents in need.
 - Sponsor occasional informational workshops for residents to acquaint them with the various state, county, and non-profit agency programs and services available to residents to assist with maintaining and rehabilitating their homes and businesses.
- Consider requests for reuse of older homes on a case-by-case basis working with the State Historic Preservation Office and the Sussex County Historic Preservation planner. It will be important for all parking areas to be to the rear of buildings and screened from the street with fences, walls, or landscaping that is in keeping with the style of the structure.

CHAPTER 3: IMPLEMENTATION

3.1 Summary of Recommendations and Actions

Dagsboro has some serious challenges ahead as it grows from a town of 520 to a town of 6950. Just as a home-remodeling project can severely strain a marriage, so major development can severely strain a community. How successfully Dagsboro is able to meet the coming challenges as it grows will depend in large part on the steps it begins to take today to ease the transformation. To help the town put its best foot forward, all of the recommendations outlined in this plan are listed below, sorted by short-term activities, mid- and long-term activities, and Land Use and Annexation Recommendations.

Short-term Activities (from adoption through first two years of the plan)

- Begin to determine long-term governance needs and city services to determine the desired level of service and plan how to institute or upgrade those services as needed to serve the growing population.
- Shift the prescreening process for Board of Adjustment applications to the Building and Zoning Officer.
- Before considering annexations, reserve existing sewer capacity for existing vacant parcels within the current town limits to maximize efficiency of system.
- Require developers to fund a study of the town-wide sewer system in coordination with the town and county to determine long-range sewer needs to support appropriate development in the town.
- Begin working with Sussex County and the Town of Frankford to have additional sewer capacity in place to accommodate anticipated new development and annexations when needed.
- Phase-in new development based on the availability of water and sewer through a managed-growth or concurrency approach.
- Adopt an adequate public facilities ordinance for water, sewer, and transportation to make sure utility capacity is available before development occurs.
- Work with DelDOT and the Conservation District to ensure that stormwater management activities associated with the SR 26 realignment are in keeping with the character of the town.
- Coordinate with DNREC and the Sussex Conservation District to implement Best Management Practices (BMPs) that could be used to reduce pollutants into Pepper Creek and the Inland Bays Watershed.
- Dagsboro is encouraged to participate with the Inland Bays Tributary Action Team as recommendations are developed and implemented to reduce pollutants into the waterways.
- Require all new developments to dedicate a percentage of land for active open space and provide amenities (tables, play equipment, ball courts, etc.) as appropriate to the community. If the new development is very small, require the developer to contribute a fee in lieu of land, so the town can acquire new park lands and/or develop amenities on existing park lands.
- Require sidewalks with all new development.
- Extend current town streets into new development as much as possible.

- Work with DelDOT to assure that the SR 26/Main Street plans meet the needs of the town and are in keeping with the character of the town.
- Contact DelDOT to initiate a transportation study of the area to identify issues, problems, and solutions, and begin working to reroute beach traffic away from the town.
- Review and revise the town's development code to ensure that as vacant lands are developed, they enhance the character of the town. Include provisions to protect and enhance a pedestrian orientation.
- Enact environmental protections for wetlands, streams, floodplains, and well-head recharge areas similar to the new Sussex County regulations.
- Work with the Sussex Conservation district to maximize the use of best practices for stormwater management and locate above-ground facilities to be as unobtrusive as possible.
- Develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Sussex County to notify, coordinate, and jointly address issues related to land use and development activities within the AREA OF CONCERN as shown on Map 7.
- Enter into annexation agreements with developers to address short-term water and sewer limitations in return for annexation.

Mid- and Long-term Activities (three-to-ten years from adoption)

- Consider developing and implementing impact fees to help pay for the costs of providing infrastructure and utilities to new development.
- Negotiate a contract for trash removal throughout the town, to take advantage of bulk rates, improve the efficiency of service, and ensure that all residents are served.
- If it becomes available at some time in the future, Dagsboro may want to consider acquiring all or part of the old high school site.
- Pressure state officials to provide funding for an SR 26 bypass.
- Prepare to maintain and plow additional local streets as the town grows. This includes preparing a capital-improvements program and budget, providing funding, and contracting for services (the Delaware Transportation Institute and Technology Transfer Center at UD can assist with this).
- Work with the state Department of Health & Social Services and Dart First State to ensure acceptable access for elderly and disabled residents to the State Service Center, medical facilities, and other key destinations.
- Begin a program to provide sidewalks throughout the town, and repair and update existing sidewalks for handicapped accessibility.
- Complete the process, with the State Historic Preservation Office, of adopting the historic district as a National Register site, so that building owners can be eligible for tax credits.
- Initiate a streetscaping study to create a unified set of street amenities including street trees, landscaping, sidewalks, street furniture (benches, trash cans, light posts, planters), and municipal signage. Money for implementation may be available through the DelDOT TEA-21 program.
- Consider hiring a part-time code-enforcement officer, either as town staff or through the town engineer to ensure that new development and vacant parcels maintain minimum standards of design and upkeep.

- Develop a signage ordinance to minimize the effect of commercial signage within the town limits.
- Adopt landscaping standards as part of the development code.
- Keep informed regarding activities occurring within the Excellent Recharge area and notify Sussex County of any concerns.
- Sponsor occasional informational workshops for residents to acquaint them with the various state, county, and non-profit agency programs and services available to residents to assist with maintaining and rehabilitating their homes and businesses.
- Consider requests for reuse of older homes on a case-by-case basis working with the State Historic Preservation Office and the Sussex County Historic Preservation Planner. It will be important for all parking areas to be to the rear of buildings and screened from the street with fences, walls, or landscaping that is in keeping with the style of the structure.
- Encourage businesses to develop along major streets for neighborhood commercial uses including:
 - Community services such as restaurants, dry cleaner, video rental, etc.
 - Senior services such as drug stores, beauty parlor, card shop
- Work with DNREC, DelDOT, and Delaware Greenways to encourage the development of greenways connecting Sussex County parklands and open spaces, with connections to Dagsboro.
- Consider providing some maintenance support to owners of older homes such as:
 - Start a library of information on the repair and upkeep of older homes and products.
 - Publicly recognize well-maintained and newly fixed-up properties.
 - Maintain a list of approved contractors.
 - Start a warehouse of donated and recycled building parts for older homes (windows, doors, hardware, paint); solicit donations from local contractors and others. (The City of New Castle has initiated this type of activity and may be a good resource.)
 - Investigate low- or no-cost loans for repairs to historic homes or for elderly, disabled, or low-income homeowners. Advertise that these resources are available and bring in the providers for a workshop.
 - Publish and distribute a brochure to all homeowners explaining the Ordinance requirements for maintenance and listing resources for help.
 - Ask the churches, Boy Scouts, or other community groups to provide maintenance assistance to residents in need.
- Update the Dagsboro Subdivision Ordinance to establish regulations for the preservation of historic structures.

Land Use and Annexation Recommendations

- Zone appropriate parcels along Main Street and Clayton Street to the railroad tracks for mixed-use neighborhood commercial uses including:
 - Community services such as restaurants, dry cleaner, video rental, etc.
 - Senior services such as drug stores, beauty parlor, card shop
 - Tourist related businesses such as antique stores, craft stores, gift stores, restaurants, art galleries and Bed & Breakfasts

- Zone vacant and annexed parcels along U.S. Route 113 for Highway Commercial
- Zone the remainder of vacant and annexed lands for Residential uses.
- Review and revise the town’s development code to ensure that as vacant lands are developed, they enhance the character of the town (see additional suggestions in the Community Character section of this document).
- Develop and adopt a “Residential Planned Community Floating Zone (RPC/FZ)” into the Zoning Code.
- Revise the current R-Residential zoning classification to accommodate the desired density of three dwelling units per acre, and zone appropriate lands accordingly.
- Annex lands that are natural extensions of the town and provide services and utilities as part of a phased-in growth strategy. This plan recommends that the following lands, totaling approximately 455 acres, be annexed by the town if the land owners wish to become part of Dagsboro.
 - Area 1: Lands west of U.S. Route 113/DuPont Boulevard totaling 129 acres of residential, including some existing homes, and 10 acres of commercial land.
 - Area 2: Lands to the north of town located between U.S. Route 113 and SR 20/Dagsboro Road. These lands total 214 acres and include some existing homes along both roads. A golf course community has been proposed for the remainder of these lands.
 - Area 3: The intent of annexations in this area to the south and east of town is to clean up the town boundaries and eliminate jurisdictional confusion. Parcels include:
 - Two small enclaves on the south side of Armory Road
 - Two split parcels on the north side of Vines Creek Road
 - Three split parcels on the west side of Main Street, extending back to the creek
 - The Hudson Development, a small subdivision split by the town/county boundary, including nine existing parcels off of Vines Creek Road
 - The new high school parcels, which are currently split between the town and the county
 - The Armory

3.2 Coordination

Dagsboro already coordinates with Millsboro and Sussex County for the provision of water and sewer. A number of recommendations outlined herein will require additional coordination efforts by Dagsboro to be successful. These initiatives are repeated here.

- Require developers to fund a study of the town-wide sewer system in coordination with the town and Sussex County to determine long-range sewer needs to support appropriate development in the town.
- Begin working with Sussex County and the Town of Frankford to have additional sewer capacity in place to accommodate anticipated new development and annexations when needed.
- Work with DelDOT and the Conservation District to ensure that stormwater-management activities associated with the SR 26 realignment are in keeping with the character of the town (see section 2-5: COMMUNITY CHARACTER AND DESIGN for more specific suggestions).

- Coordinate with DNREC and the Sussex Conservation District to implement Best Management Practices (BMPs) that could be used to reduce pollutants into Pepper Creek and the Inland Bays Watershed.
- Dagsboro is encouraged to participate with the Inland Bays Tributary Action Team as recommendations are developed and implemented to reduce pollutants in the waterways.
- Contact DelDOT to initiate a transportation study of the area to identify issues, problems, and solutions, and begin working to reroute beach traffic away from the town.
- Work with the state Department of Health & Social Services and Dart First State to ensure acceptable access for elderly and disabled residents to the State Service Center, medical facilities, and other key destinations.
- Work with DelDOT to ensure that the SR 26/Main Street plans meet the needs of the town and are in keeping with the character of the town.
- Complete the process, with the State Historic Preservation Office, of adopting the historic district as a National Register site, so that building owners can be eligible for tax credits.
- Work with the Sussex Conservation district to maximize the use of best practices for stormwater management and locate above-ground facilities to be as unobtrusive as possible.
- Keep informed regarding activities occurring within the Excellent Recharge area and notify Sussex County of any concerns.
- Work with DNREC, DelDOT, and Delaware Greenways to encourage the development of greenways connecting Sussex County parklands and open spaces, with connections to Dagsboro.
- Consider requests for reuse of older homes on a case-by-case basis working with the State Historic Preservation Office and the Sussex County Historic Preservation planner. It will be important for all parking areas to be to the rear of buildings and screened from the street with fences, walls, or landscaping that is in keeping with the style of the structure.
- Develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Sussex County to notify, coordinate, and jointly address issues related to land use and development activities within the AREA OF CONCERN as shown on Map 7.

APPENDIX A. OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE

Letter 1. from Office of State Planning Coordination

Letter 2. from University of Delaware Institute for Public Administration

Letter 3. from Sussex County Planning & Zoning Commission

APPENDIX B. MAPS

- Map 1. Aerial View
- Map 2. Existing Land Use
- Map 3. Developable Land
- Map 4. State Investment Strategies
- Map 5. Future Land Use
- Map 6. Growth and Annexation
- Map 7. Area of Concern
- Map 8. Roads and Boundaries
- Map 9. Historic Resources
- Map 10. Environmental Resources