

2004 Update to the 2001

Town of
Millsboro
Comprehensive Plan

adopted and certified

June 2004

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TOWN, COUNTY, AND STATE OFFICIALS

Town of Millsboro

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 The Honorable Ralph G. Redden, Vice Mayor
 The Honorable Tish McQuay, Council Member and
 Secretary
 The Honorable John Wilkins, Council Member and
 Treasurer
 The Honorable Larry D. Gum, Council Member
 The Honorable John Thoroughgood, Council Member
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 The Honorable Finley B. “Butch” Jones, 2nd District
 The Honorable Lynn J. Rogers, 3rd District, President
 The Honorable George B. Cole, 4th District
 The Honorable Vance Phillips, 5th District

County Administrator Robert Stickels

State of Delaware

Governor The Honorable Ruth Ann Minner
Senate Senator The Honorable George H. Bunting Jr., 20th District
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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. Jerome R. Lewis is the director of the Institute.

Alexander Settles, AICP, served as the project manager and authored the plan. Nicole Minni and Andrew Homsey of the Geographic Information System staff from the IPA's Water Resources Agency provided technical advice and developed the maps for the plan.

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Executive Summary

The Town of Millsboro recognizes the importance of long-range planning and with this document updates the 2001 Comprehensive Plan for the town. The 2004 Millsboro Comprehensive Plan provides a guide for future annexation, infrastructure, zoning, and subdivision decisions. Recommendations in the plan include having town-focused development activities in the Millsboro town area and that the town area be provided with adequate infrastructure and annexed as appropriate into the corporate limits of Millsboro. The Town recommends that Sussex County and the State of Delaware focus development in the corporate limits of the town and provide mechanisms to discourage scattered residential, commercial, and industrial development that cannot be efficiently served by public sewer and water systems. The Town further recommends that Sussex County, through the implementation of its comprehensive plan, direct growth into the corporate limits of Millsboro with appropriate infrastructure investments and clear indication of Millsboro's vision of growing, well-planned town.

The Town of Millsboro became a municipality when its first charter was passed by the General Assembly in 1909. The Charter has, from time to time, been revised with its most wholesale revision occurring at the time of reincorporation in 1976. The Town first developed a comprehensive plan and zoning code in 1973. In 2001 the Town adopted a new comprehensive plan to guide land use and public investment decisions. The 2001 comprehensive plan was prepared under state enabling legislation in effect prior to the passage of House Bill 255 of the 141st General Assembly. In 2003 the plan was reviewed and certified by the Office of State Planning Coordination and Governor Ruth Ann Minner. Recent growth in the town and the southern Delaware coastal region has created the need to further revise comprehensive plan.

The planning update process has included a public participation effort and intergovernmental coordination effort. In the fall of 2003, the Town Council and Mayor of Millsboro re-established its Planning Committee. The committee has held public meetings beginning in from January 2004 and continuing through the spring of 2004. The plan was presented at a public workshop in the April 2004 and adopted by the Town Council and Mayor on May 17, 2004.

Vision

The vision of the 2004 Plan update does not differ greatly from the 2001 Plan but incorporates the added development pressure that Millsboro faces. Based on the outreach efforts in developing the 2001 Comprehensive Plan and the Planning Committee meetings of the 2004 Plan update, a number of factors were identified as being important to the Town of Millsboro. The Planning Committee and many citizens, who provided input into this process, voiced an appreciation for the small town character of Millsboro. The Town and its citizens welcome growth and economic diversity but intend to pursue these qualities while preserving small town characteristics. There was strong support for maintaining the traditional downtown and improving its appearance. Housing concerns were noted frequently with housing diversity (including more choices for higher-end

markets) and the quality of the rental market being among the concerns with high priority.

Economic development continues to be a key issue for the Town as it updates its plan. The natural setting and parks have been identified as a key part of Millsboro's character, and there exists a desire to expand the park system. Transportation issues remain an important concern to the Town, and the plan addresses issues related to all modes of transportation including automobiles, trucks, bicycles, pedestrians, and transit. A frequently cited problem in the 2001 plan was truck traffic in town and the appearance and safety along US 113; this continues to be a problem. Greater mobility choices and east-west circulation issues have been identified as needs, and the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT) has attempted to address these through upgrades to US 113 since the 2001 Plan. Local schools continue to be an issue especially concerning the location of new facilities and investment in existing facilities within Millsboro.

The Comprehensive Plan addresses each of these elements in separate chapters. For each element, a set of goals and actions has been identified to guide the Town and its decision-makers. In addition to these goals, a vision statement has been developed that guides the town in its mission and development of the Comprehensive Plan. The vision statement was developed using input from the public, town leaders, and stakeholders who were engaged in the plan development.

Vision for the Town of Millsboro, Delaware

The Town of Millsboro strives to be a place where economic growth and diversity are balanced with small town familiarity and natural beauty and where families, retirees, vacationers and people from all walks of life can live safely and comfortably.

Plan Goals

1. Remain a center for appropriate and planned growth within Sussex County. The Town recommends to Sussex County and the State of Delaware the mapping of accurate and substantial representation of Millsboro's capacity and ability to accept growth in residential, commercial and employment activities.
2. Encourage an adequate supply of a range of residential uses and housing types. Maintain existing multi-family developments and encourage a mix of high quality housing for families and individuals of all ranges of income. Encourage residential development in appropriate areas as designated by the future land use plan that will be integrated with existing residential developments. The first phase of residential development shall be guided to areas in the west of town along Delaware Avenue and Old Landing Road and in the east along Old Landing Road between the railroad and State Street. The second phase of residential development will occur along Godwin School Road to the west and northwest of town, along Hickory Hill Road and Handy Road.

3. Focus office and major employment developments in areas that have adequate or planned infrastructure upgrades and that are located adjacent to existing uses. The area along south Mitchell Street to Industrial Street shall be designated for office and industrial uses.
4. Concentrate downtown commercial development in the Main and Washington Street corridor from Railroad Street to the junction of Main and Washington Streets. Highway commercial development will be concentrated on US 113. The addition of a Town Center Commercial district may be considered at the junction of US 113, State Route 20 (Hardscrabble Road), and Sheep Pen Road on the west side of US 113. The impact on the transportation system will of special importance to development on the US 113 corridor.
5. Maintain and expand open space and recreation facilities to meet current and future needs. Recreation needs on the west side of US 113 will need to be addressed through the development of a local park. Open space shall be a required component of major residential subdivisions of greater than fifty dwelling units.
6. Protect the natural environment and prevent the destruction of natural resources through the preservation of ecological systems and mitigation of development impact on the natural environment.
7. Preserve historic properties and archeological resources through regulations to manage the development, rehabilitation or redevelopment activities that impact these resources.
8. Protect transportation investments and improve access to transportation resources through connecting land use decisions and transportation investment decisions, developing interconnected residential neighborhoods, consolidating entrances for commercial properties where appropriate, and providing access to alternative transportation modes.
9. Continue to be a center for educational, medical, and other institution uses. Encourage the siting of school and other public facilities inside the town limits where and when appropriate.
10. Work with Sussex County, adjoining municipalities, the Indian River School District, and the State of Delaware to develop and implement coordinated long-range plans that focus planned development within the town limits of Millsboro and discourage scattered development patterns in the immediate vicinity of Millsboro.

Summary of Recommendations

Growth

1. Investigate and pursue annexation of developed areas to provide services and create contiguous smooth boundaries without pockets of unincorporated areas within the town boundaries.
2. Investigate and pursue annexation of currently developing areas to provide services.
3. Encourage the annexation of properties to provide land served by public infrastructure for residential, office, commercial and industrial uses.
4. Encourage development within the town limits of Millsboro, where it can be served by existing and planned infrastructure. The plan further recommends that Sussex County discourage medium and high-density residential, commercial and industrial development within the immediate area of Millsboro. Municipal water and sewer would better serve this type of development.
5. Continue the policy of evaluating and planning for needed municipal services on properties prior to annexation.

Land Use

1. Maintain a diversity of land uses during the processes of development and redevelopment.
2. Encourage interconnected residential infill development of vacant parcels adjacent to existing residences. Particular attention should be paid to the areas on the southeast of Old Landing Road and on the southwest side of town. As properties develop on the west side of town, a network of streets shall be designed to interconnect new developments.
3. Encourage residential development of similar scale to existing development on undeveloped parcels within the boundaries of Millsboro and upon parcels immediately adjacent to Millsboro.
4. Revise land use regulations to allow for clustering of residential development to preserve open space for community uses.
5. Work with the Indian River School District on the location of schools.
6. Provide for a range of commercial uses throughout the town. In the town center along Main Street the plan recommends the support of existing downtown commercial development through parking and street improvements and the

management of available land for office space and neighborhood commercial properties along US 113 and SR 24 outside of the downtown. Large-scale regional retail shall be concentrated in existing areas along US 113 due to the suitability of sites along that corridor. The plan recommends limitations on new office commercial and residential conversion on the US 113 corridor to balance the market for office and smaller scale commercial in favor of the Main Street corridor between Railroad and Dodd Streets. The addition of a Town Center Commercial district may be considered at the junction of US 113, State Route 20 (Hardscrabble Road), and Sheep Pen Road on the west side of US 113.

7. Industrial land and land for large-scale office employment should be set aside for the development of employment centers. The Town of Millsboro wishes to develop an expanded industrial park to further diversify employment. Appropriate properties are designated in the plan for future investment.

Conservation, Open Space, and Recreation

1. Revise the zoning and subdivision regulations to include a provision for open space and recreation in new residential subdivisions. Set minimum standards for open space dedication or payment in lieu of land dedication for residential subdivisions. The open space requirements should result in public open space for use by all residents.
2. Revise the zoning and subdivision regulations to increase the requirements for preservation of riparian corridors, conservation of natural resources, and preservation of water recharge areas. Include in these revisions increased standards for landscaping, including increased screening of industrial and commercial uses.
3. Expand recreational facilities, making greater use of existing facilities and waterways.
4. Expand active recreation programs through town-sponsored programs or the development of a public-private facility such as a Boys and Girls Club or YMCA.

Utilities and Services

1. Amend the Wastewater Facilities Master Plan to address the accelerating growth rate. Re-evaluate the wastewater disposal alternatives with regard to the area's rapidly rising land costs. Implement the amended plans to comply with the TMDL regulation and to accommodate growth. Expand the wastewater collection and transmission system in planned increments to serve future annexations. Upon completion of the Wastewater Facilities Master Plan amendment, proceed directly with design and construction of the recommended plant expansion, upgrades, and effluent disposal system.

2. Amend the Master Water Plan to include the proposed interconnection to the Town of Dagsboro and address the increased rate of growth. Expand the town's water supply, treatment and storage capacity in order to provide bulk water service to Dagsboro and to meet increased demand associated with future annexations. Enlarge the water distribution in planned increments to serve future annexations. Initiate an application process with DNREC to increase the allocation of water to supply the residents and businesses of Millsboro and Dagsboro.
3. Prepare and implement an annexation fee system to equitably distribute the cost of infrastructure expansion and upgrades among those creating the need.
4. Initiate allocation process with DNREC to increase permit for withdrawing water to be used for supplying drinking water to the residents and businesses of Millsboro.
5. Coordinate with the State and Sussex County to identify funding sources for water/wastewater capacity upgrades.
6. Develop a wellhead protection ordinance.
7. Develop a water resource protection area ordinance to provide increased protection of groundwater resources relied upon for municipal water supply.
8. Develop a stormwater management plan for the town. Prior to improvements in roads, sidewalks or new development, require the creation of a stormwater impact statement.

Community Services

1. Work with the Indian River School District to secure funding for school expansion and renovation.
2. Work with the Indian River School District to identify locations for future school construction, particularly west of US 113 within the existing or future town limits.

Economic Development

1. Encourage job development within the town limits of Millsboro.
2. Identify an appropriate location for an industrial park development with appropriate rail and highway access.
3. Identify appropriate locations for office development, including adaptive reuse in downtown Millsboro that can be provided with appropriate parking, road access, and transit service.

4. Explore funding opportunities through state agencies, grants, and public-private partnerships that can implement streetscape improvements in downtown Millsboro. This could include a local campaign soliciting private donations to support downtown beautification.
5. Develop a program of special events and festivals to take place downtown to attract visitors and residents.
6. Initiate a study of the downtown business mix to identify the ideal diversity of business types, potential for office development, and the role of locally owned businesses.
7. Initiate a study of downtown parking needs and solutions.
8. Actively participate in regional tourism campaigns and facility development.
9. Work with state and local economic development agents to encourage realization of other critical community development including emergency/urgent medical care facilities, housing and medical service options for senior citizens, lodging, conference facilities, and expanded recreational facilities.
10. Identify underutilized commercial structures and develop marketing plans, incentives, and other tools to encourage their redevelopment.

Transportation

1. Improve internal road standards for subdivisions within the town to meet the needs of fire equipment and school buses. Recommend that all developments greater than ten units have interconnection to adjoining properties included in subdivision plan.
2. Develop a municipal street plan to interconnect existing development with future development.
3. Pursue possible Transportation Enhancement funds for elimination of sidewalk gaps and construction of critical missing segments.
4. Explore opportunities to develop shared access and assemblage of small redeveloping parcels on US 113 in order to minimize ingress/egress conflicts in conjunction with Delaware Department of Transportation's (DelDOT) Standards and Regulations for Access to State Highways and Corridor Capacity Preservation Program. Develop opportunities for the provision of service roads along US 113.
5. Initiate an east-west traffic study focusing on SR 24 and SR 20 and consider improvements on Delaware Avenue/SR 82, Hickory Hill Road, and other alternatives.

6. Develop land development regulations that require the creation and connection of local street networks through and between developing areas.
7. Continue to coordinate with DeIDOT on on-going improvements to US 113 to address crossover safety and access issues.
8. Work with the Delaware Transit Corporation to institute transit service to Millsboro for commuter traffic in the near term and beach access in the future. Millsboro should pursue the provision of appropriate infrastructure and land use access around proposed transit stops.
9. Work with DeIDOT on the development of a truck route or bypass for truck traffic on SR 24.

Housing

1. Increase building code enforcement and monitor eligibility for state grants through the Delaware State Housing Authority to support this effort.
2. Explore the range of landlord regulatory and licensing options to ensure the quality and fairness of rental housing practices.
3. Identify locations where single-family detached and condominium attached housing would be appropriate.
4. Develop improved site design standards and incentives to providing high-end amenities in residential developments.
5. Examine the existing development codes and ordinances to identify opportunities to encourage a greater range of housing types including large lot single-family, accessory dwelling units, condominiums, and other alternatives.
6. Coordinate with the Delaware State Housing Authority to identify and participate in programs that increase homeownership among eligible renter households.

Urban Design

1. Develop and adopt site plan review guidelines that address the following:
 - Submission of accurate and informative subdivision plans
 - Parking lot configuration
 - Placement of garages and driveways in single-family residential developments
 - Provisions for on-street parking in single-family residential developments
 - Emergency access
 - Provision of sidewalks on site, within developments and connections to existing sidewalk segments

- Infrastructure improvements required for development
 - Commercial signage
 - Preservation of historic structures
2. Improve the consistency of house numbering systems in new and existing developments to facilitate emergency identification.

Implementation Actions

1. Establish a Planning and Zoning Commission under the requirements of the Millsboro Town Charter and Delaware State Code Title 22.
2. Review and revise zoning and subdivision regulation to implement land use, urban design, open space, transportation, and growth recommendations.
3. Work with Sussex County on the implementation of the Sussex County Comprehensive Plan.
4. Review the Comprehensive Plan on an annual basis and report to the Mayor and Town Council, Sussex County, and the State of Delaware on implementation progress or modifications. The Comprehensive Plan shall be reviewed every five years and revised ten years from date of adoption in accordance with the State Code.
5. Continue to coordinate with the Office of State Planning Coordination. Implement the memorandum of understanding with the Office of State Planning Coordination for the Preliminary Land Use Service review process for major planning and development actions.

Chapter One: Getting Started

Background

The Town of Millsboro became a municipality with the passage of its first charter by the General Assembly in 1909. The Charter has, from time to time, been revised with its most wholesale revision occurring with reincorporation in 1976. The Town has also been managing land use within its corporate limits under the provisions of a zoning ordinance first established in 1973. This zoning ordinance was updated thirty-one times between 1980 and 1997, but at no time has the Town had a Comprehensive Plan to guide land use and public investment decisions. Recent growth in the town and the southern Delaware coastal region has created the need for a comprehensive guide to decision-making. The number of recent zoning ordinance amendments partly attests to the pressures of growth on the small town.

Millsboro is a small town with a Council and Town Manager form of government. Its 2000 population was 2,360, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. The Town provides basic public services related to police, parks, public works (including streets, sidewalks, stormwater, drinking water and wastewater), land use regulations, building inspection, animal control, and garbage collection. Basic community services such as the Town Hall, Library, Post Office, Police Station, and Fire Department are located near the center of town.

Location and Description

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

The Town has a traditional downtown encompassing four blocks around the intersection of SR 24 and State Street. The downtown is thriving with few vacancies and a range of storefronts including restaurants, antique shops, printers, five & dime, hairdressers, banks, video rental, and other such locally oriented enterprises. Frontage along US 113 is primarily commercial buildings, including several large shopping centers. Some of the US 113 frontage is still transitioning from single-family residential to commercial. Traditional single-family neighborhoods exist around the downtown core and also to the west of US 113 around SR 24. Newer subdivisions and multi-family developments are interspersed throughout the town and along its developing edges. The Green Valley Terrace Nursing Home is located near the intersection of US 113 and SR 24. The town is within the Indian River School District and is home to the East Millsboro Elementary School and Sussex Central Middle School that are located along State Street in the southeastern portion of town. Major employers are located on the south and north ends of town, with the major agricultural industries of Mountaire, Inc. and Vlastic Foods, Inc. located just outside of town to the south and east. Medical services and pharmacies are

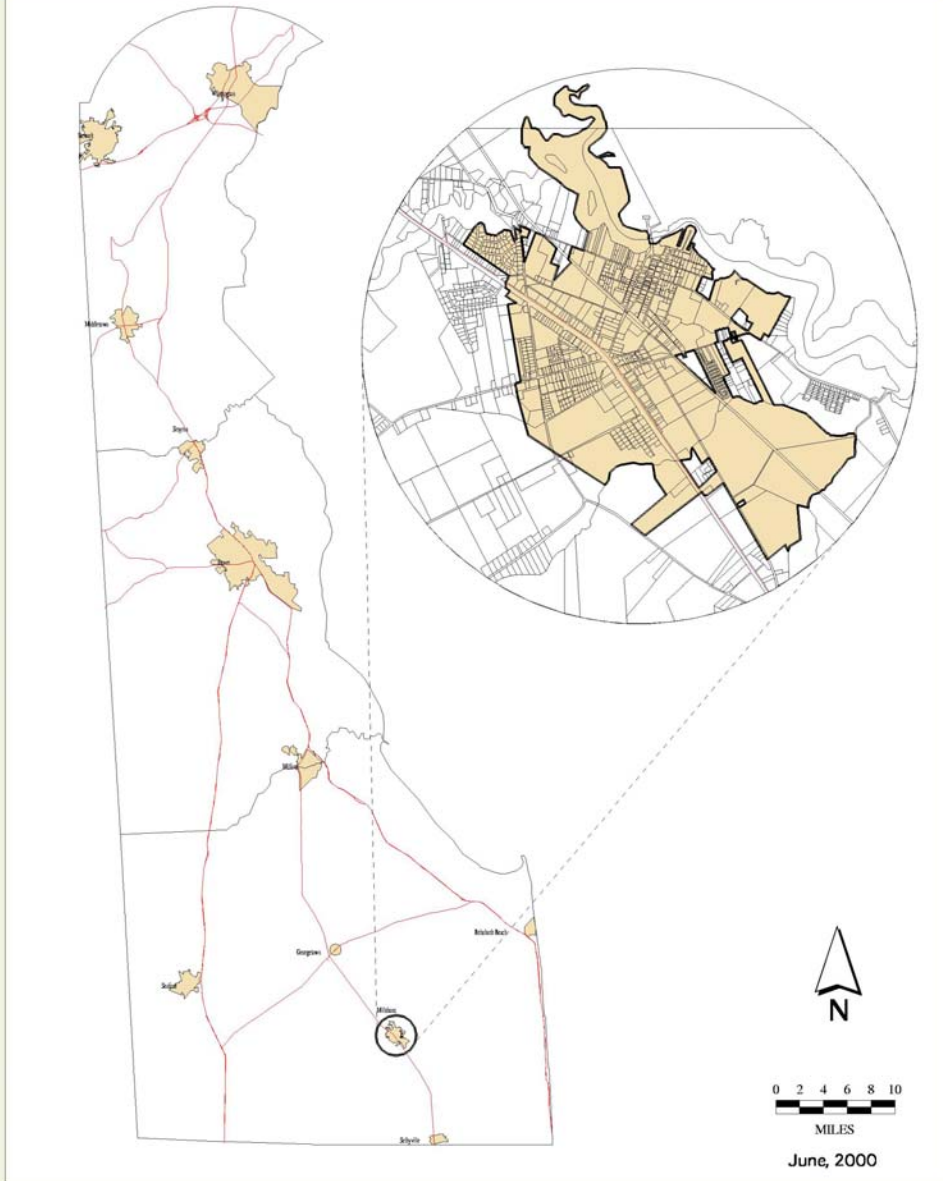
concentrated on the southern end of town around the Beebe Medical Health Center's Mid-Sussex Medical Center.

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

The following map displays the location of the Town of Millsboro within Sussex County. The importance of Millsboro as a regional commercial center is evidenced by its central location in southeastern Sussex County away from other large urbanized areas.



Millsboro, Delaware



Planning Process

The first task was to update the inventory of current land use in town. This is summarized in a land use map within the land use section of the plan. A public participation effort consisted of presentations to the Town Council and meetings of the Town Planning Commission. These outreach efforts were aimed at reviewing and updating the issues and priorities for the Town of Millsboro and incorporating any changes from the 2001 update. Coordination with state and local agencies was intended to integrate the long-range plans and capital investment strategies of these agencies together with the vision for Millsboro's future.

Intergovernmental Planning Context

The State of Delaware has taken a pro-planning stance in recent years and encourages the coordination of planning efforts between state, county, and municipal agencies. The Livable Delaware program is the centerpiece of the state strategy to curb sprawl, provide for coordinated and proactive planning, and foster appropriate development within existing communities. According to the state website, Livable Delaware "is a positive, proactive strategy that seeks to curb sprawl and direct growth to areas where the state, counties and local governments are most prepared for it in terms of infrastructure investment and thoughtful planning. It builds on the foundation laid by the Strategies for State Policies and Spending, which were adopted in 1999."¹ The Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Millsboro supports the Livable Delaware program and statewide goals and puts forth a strategy for attracting growth to an existing community while preserving quality of life and the environment.

As part of the Livable Delaware program, state agencies have developed their own Livable Delaware Implementation Plans. These implementation plans and other state agency long-range plans have been consulted as part of the process to develop the Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Millsboro.

The Town of Millsboro has incorporated the recommendations from the 1999 and 2004 update of the *Strategies for State Policies and Spending* in the plan. The goals, strategy statements, and strategy maps from 1999 and 2004 have been addressed through the goals and future land use plan for the town. The plan recommends growth to be concentrated in areas targeted for state investment within the Level 1, 2, and 3 areas as outlined in the 2004 State Strategy update. The Plan has included a set of goals and recommended actions that parallel the state goals and prescribe implementation actions to meet their intent.

In July 1995, the General Assembly passed legislation requiring each county to develop a comprehensive plan to identify its growth and investment strategies. The comprehensive plan for Sussex County was revised in 2002. This document incorporates the recommendations of the 2002 plan update and provides guidance about Sussex County's anticipation of growth, expansion of services, and potential annexation around the town.

¹ Downloaded from the web site www.state.de.us/planning/livedel/details.htm on March 12, 2004

Authority to Plan

Millsboro has the authority to plan granted by the Delaware General Assembly in Title 22 of the Delaware Code. In a continued effort to encourage comprehensive planning, Governor Minner and the General Assembly, in 2001, revised the requirements for municipalities to make comprehensive plans through HB 255 Comprehensive Plan Implementation and Annexation Standards. The 2000 U.S. Census population of the Town of Millsboro is above the 2,000 threshold for requiring the development of a full comprehensive plan based on the enabling legislation. The following is the section of the Delaware Code relevant to the development of municipal comprehensive plans.

Title 22, Delaware Code, § 702. Comprehensive development plan.

(a) A planning commission established by any incorporated municipality under this chapter shall prepare a comprehensive plan for the city or town or portions thereof as the commission deems appropriate. It is the purpose of this section to encourage the most appropriate uses of the physical and fiscal resources of the municipality and the coordination of municipal growth, development and infrastructure investment actions with those of other municipalities, counties and the State through a process of municipal comprehensive planning.

(b) Comprehensive plan means a document in text and maps, containing at a minimum, a municipal development strategy setting forth the jurisdiction's position on population and housing growth within the jurisdiction, expansion of its boundaries, development of adjacent areas, redevelopment potential, community character, and the general uses of land within the community, and critical community development and infrastructure issues. The comprehensive planning process shall demonstrate coordination with other municipalities, the county and the State during plan preparation. The comprehensive plan for municipalities of greater than 2,000 population shall also contain, as appropriate to the size and character of the jurisdiction, a description of the physical, demographic and economic conditions of the jurisdiction; as well as policies, statements, goals and planning components for public and private uses of land, transportation, economic development, affordable housing, community facilities, open spaces and recreation, protection of sensitive areas, community design, adequate water and wastewater systems, protection of historic and cultural resources, annexation and such other elements which in accordance with present and future needs, in the judgment of the municipality, best promotes the health, safety, prosperity and general public welfare of the jurisdiction's residents.

(c) The comprehensive plan shall be the basis for the development of zoning regulations as permitted pursuant to Chapter 3 of this title. Should a jurisdiction exercise its authority to establish municipal zoning regulations pursuant to Chapter 3 of this title, it shall, within 18 months of the adoption of

a comprehensive development plan or revision thereof, amend its official zoning map to rezone all lands within the municipality in accordance with the uses of land provided for in the comprehensive development plan.

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

(e) At least every 5 years a municipality shall review its adopted comprehensive plan to determine if its provisions are still relevant given changing conditions in the municipality or in the surrounding areas. The adopted comprehensive plan shall be revised, updated and amended as necessary, and re-adopted at least every 10 years.

(f) The comprehensive plan or amendments or revisions thereto shall be submitted to the Governor or designee at such time as the plan is made available for public review. The municipality shall provide sufficient copies for review by the Governor's Advisory Council on Planning Coordination. The Advisory Council, within 30 days of plan submission, shall conduct a public meeting, at which time the municipality shall make a presentation of the plan and its underlying goals and development policies, except when the Advisory Council determines that the comprehensive plan, amendments or revisions are fully consistent with statewide land development goals, policies and criteria as adopted by the Governor or Cabinet Committee on State Planning Issues. Following the public meeting the plan shall be subject to the state review and certification process set forth in § 9103 of Title 29. If the Advisory Council determines that a public meeting is not required as provided above, the plan shall be submitted directly to the Governor or his or her designee for certification provided in § 9103 of Title 29. Any proposed comprehensive plan that has been submitted to the Office of State Planning Coordination prior to July 13, 2001, for review shall be exempt from the requirements of this subsection.

(g) Municipalities shall provide to the Office of State Planning Coordination by December 31 of each year a report describing implementation of their comprehensive plan and identifying development issues, trends or conditions since the plan was last adopted or amended. (22 Del. C. 1953, § 702; 49 Del. Laws, c. 415, § 1; 71 Del. Laws, c. 477, § 1; 73 Del. Laws, c. 186, §§ 7-9.)

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

Chapter Two: Growth and Demographic Trends

Growth

Demographic information used in this planning document was collected from the 2000 U.S. Census and 2003 Delaware Population Consortium report. The population of the Town of Millsboro was 2,360 according to the 2000 U.S. Census. The town population has been estimated by the U.S. Census to increase to 2,420 by July 2002. From 1990-2000, Millsboro grew by 44 percent, which translates into a 3.7 percent annual growth rate compared to a 2.5 percent growth rate for Sussex County and a 1.5 percent growth rate for the State during the same period. Historically, Millsboro has experienced this rapid growth for several years, as demonstrated by an even higher 3.3 percent annual growth in the period of 1980-1990.

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

The following tables display population data and projections for the Town of Millsboro, Greater Millsboro (defined as the two census tracts surrounding and including the incorporated Millsboro limits), Sussex County, and the State of Delaware from existing sources.

Total Population and Population Projections 1960-2020

	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2020	2030
Town of Millsboro	536	1,073	1,233	1,643	2,360	n.a.	n.a.
Sussex County	73,195	80,356	98,004	113,847	157,430	165,539	258,924
Delaware	446,292	548,104	594,338	669,069	786,448	973,659	1,032,974

Source: 2000 U.S. Census and 2003 Delaware Population Consortium Report

A greater understanding of the town population is gained by examining the context of its surrounding area.

Municipal Population Projections

Population projections are often difficult and unreliable for small geographic areas because there is a large margin for error when manipulating relatively small numbers. Therefore, state sources do not typically calculate population projections for the Town of Millsboro. However, official population projections are available for Sussex County. One method of estimating future municipal population is to project it as a percentage of

the growth projected in its larger surrounding area. Another way is to project forward the existing trend line for growth within the municipality. The following table provides three different methods for projecting future population in Millsboro. Each estimate provides similar results that have been summarized in an average population projection.

The first scenario uses the U.S. Census information for Millsboro for 1990 and 2000. The population counts for the 1990 and 2000 U.S. Censuses indicate that population has grown at an annual rate of 3.7 percent. The second scenario calculates the town’s portion of the official county population projection to 2030 based upon the portion of population residing in Millsboro according to the 2000 U.S. Census count of Sussex County population (1.7 %). The third scenario incorporates the recommended future land use plan. This scenario uses the current proposals submitted to the town and lowest residential density permitted under the current zoning code for the remaining land within the Phase I annexation boundary. There are 4,404 proposed dwelling units on approximately 1054 acres and an additional 675 acres of land recommended for residential development. Under this scenario approximately 7,415 dwelling units and 17,129 persons would be added to Millsboro population. The third scenario projects a 7.3 percent growth in population. The averages of these calculations suggest Millsboro’s population growing by 4.2 percent annually to a total for a 2030 population of 8,153.

**Population Projection Scenarios
Town of Millsboro, 2000-2030**

Scenario	Rate	2000	2010	2020	2030
Trend Projection Based on Past Decade’s Population Growth	3.7%	2,360	3,390	4,869	6,994
Portion of Projected Sussex County Population	1.7%	2,360	2,788	3,293	3,889
Future Land Use Recommendations Build Out by 2030	7.3%	2,360	4,770	9,642	19,489
Average of the Three Scenarios	4.2%	2,360	3,568	5,393	8,153

Source: University of Delaware, Institute for Public Administration, U.S. Census, 2000, and the 2003 Delaware Population Consortium Report

Race and Age

The town’s population is fairly well spread out across age categories, although the largest population segment is in the 65 years-of-age and older category (26.6%, according to 2000 U.S. Census data). This population group has special needs within the community for facilities and services. However, similar peaks in the 30-39 age group, 10-19 age group, and other wage-earning age categories balance this population peak. Compared to state figures, the Town of Millsboro has more senior citizens (26.57%) than the state (12.98%), and slightly fewer children (22.75%) than the state (27.85%). On balance, Millsboro has slightly fewer residents in the wage-earning years of 20-59 (46%) than the state as a whole (55.1%).

Population by Race, 2000

	White		Black		Other	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Town of Millsboro	1,738	73.6	458	19.4	164	6.95
Sussex County	125,857	80.3	23,319	14.9	7,462	4.76
Delaware	584,773	74.6	150,666	19.2	48,161	6.1

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

Population by Age and Gender 2000

AGE	MILLSBORO		TOWN TOTAL	DELAWARE		STATE TOTAL
	Male	Female		Male	Female	
Under 5 years	58	95	153	26,278	25,253	51,531
5 to 9 years	77	75	152	28,712	27,101	55,813
10 to 14 years	52	82	134	28,302	26,972	55,274
15 to 19 years	54	44	98	27,944	27,688	55,632
20 to 24 years	46	69	115	25,616	26,049	51,665
25 to 29 years	58	80	138	25,436	25,783	51,219
30 to 34 years	64	66	130	28,433	29,188	57,621
35 to 39 years	76	87	163	31,757	32,897	64,654
40 to 44 years	57	85	142	30,928	32,019	62,947
45 to 49 years	61	77	138	26,500	28,275	54,775
50 to 54 years	55	70	125	23,779	25,445	49,224
55 to 59 years	53	81	134	18,770	20,550	39,320
60 to 64 years	52	59	111	15,220	16,979	32,199
65 to 69 years	62	79	141	14,081	15,871	29,952
70 to 74 years	52	94	146	11,938	14,525	26,463
75 to 79 years	51	83	134	8,767	12,481	21,248
80 to 84 years	35	53	88	5,130	8,384	13,514
85 to 89 years	12	48	60	2,138	4,824	6,962
90 years and over	6	52	58	812	2,775	3,587
Total (all ages)	981	1,379	2,360	380,541	403,059	783,600

Source: U.S. Census, 2000.

Discussion

The Town of Millsboro has been growing steadily and rapidly. The future appears to hold continued growth, but to an extent that is manageable. The residents of Millsboro welcome growth and the diversification of jobs and housing that growth promises. However, they have concerns about the pattern of land use, design of development, and

the infrastructure (particularly transportation) required to support growth. They are concerned about losing their small town charm, which residents define as familiarity with neighbors, short travel times to meet daily needs, and support of active community organizations. Many of the residents' concerns also involve attracting growth and specific types of growth in jobs and housing. They would like to see expanded medical services, housing choice, recreational opportunities, and other amenities that will attract new jobs and residents.

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

Chapter Three: Land Use

Existing Conditions

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

As part of the planning process, the Town conducted a land use survey for the 2001 for the areas within town and in adjacent areas. This survey was completed in 1998 and updated in 1999. The information from the 2001 Plan has been updated in 2004 and combined with the information from the 2002 Land Use Land Cover survey conducted by the State of Delaware. This information has been summarized in the following table and map included in the Map Appendix entitled Current Land Use.

Land Use Land Cover Summary for the Town of Millsboro

Land Use Land Cover Designation	Acres	Percentage
Residential	254.24	15.03%
Commercial	87.61	5.18%
Industrial	117.38	6.94%
Roads	146.94	8.68%
Other Urban	21.12	1.25%
Institutional and Governmental	42.92	2.54%
Recreational	20.63	1.22%
Vacant (Agricultural)	784.85	46.39%
Forest	71.78	4.24%
Water	129.02	7.63%
Wetlands	15.43	0.91%
Total	1691.92	
Total Square Miles	2.64	

The land use survey identified areas of residential, commercial, institutional, industrial, recreation uses, and those properties that were either vacant or used for agriculture. The largest portion of land in Millsboro is currently in vacant (primarily agriculture land to be developed) with residential use next in land area. The numbers within the table are approximate and do not constitute a summary of acreage listed on property deeds.

The Current Land Use map (map appendix) indicates that there exists a commercial core along Main and Washington Streets and a highway commercial district along US 113 from SR 24 (Laurel Road) to the area north and south of the Iron Branch Stream. Industrial uses are concentrated along the railroad at the intersections of Delaware and Monroe Streets and Washington and Monroe Streets. An existing and developing industrial and business park is located at the south end of town along Mitchell Street.

Residential development began in the town centered along the Indian River and extending through SR 24. This area is bounded by the Indian River to the east and the railroad to west and runs from Sussex Alley to Wilson Highway. Surrounding this core on the east side of US 113 is a second ring of development which includes new mixed residential developments, townhouses, apartments, and small single detached and semi-detached housing. In these areas primarily single-family detached housing of a suburban pattern predominates, while scattered apartments and townhouses exist within the areas.

Future Conditions of the State of Delaware

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

The Cabinet Committee on State Planning Issues has developed a set of strategies to guide state spending and policies. Millsboro has been designated through this process as a community area with a developing area surrounding the town. The state policy on community areas is:

Overall, it is the state's intent to use its spending and management tools to maintain and enhance community character, to promote well-designed and efficient new growth, and to facilitate redevelopment in communities.

A summary of state strategies is included in this plan to demonstrate the connection between goals and objectives of the Millsboro Comprehensive Plan and the State

Strategies. The State Strategies are designed to encourage state investments and policies that support and encourage a wide range of uses and densities, promote alternative transportation options, foster efficient use of existing public and private investments, and enhance community identity and integrity. In communities, the State will provide the greatest number of transportation options with an emphasis on public transportation, walking, and bicycling. The State will also make existing infrastructure and planned improvements as safe and efficient as possible. The State will direct maximum assistance to upgrades, reconstruction, treatment improvements, and system expansions within communities. Priority will be for investments in existing water and wastewater systems for improved efficiency, enhanced water quality management, and additional capacity for redevelopment, infill, and for new community development that supports efficient and orderly land use patterns. Communities are priority locations for new public uses and expanded existing uses, except where a particular use is otherwise incompatible (such as a prison). The State should promote locations for schools and other facilities that would enhance community integrity and encourage the use of more than one transportation option. The State supports development and maintenance of recreational and open space facilities to serve community needs, including urban parks and recreational areas, waterfronts, and links between uses and throughways (greenways, bikeways, etc.).

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

The Town of Millsboro and a portion of its adjacent land areas have been designated for Community, Developing, and Secondary Developing Areas as indicated on the State Strategy Map located in the map appendix. The areas immediately adjacent to Millsboro are likely to develop within the time frame of the plan and the plan recommends actions include these properties be incorporated into the fabric of the town as development is considered. The Town has designated on the Future Land Use Map and the Annexation Limit Map an annexation limit for the town. The annexation has been divided into two phases. The Plan recommends that areas within Phase 1 are the first phase of annexation to be considered by the town during the planning period of the 2004 Plan Update. Parcels within Phase 2 will only be considered after parcels within Phase 1 have been annexed and developed. Developed parcels within the Phase 2 area will also be

considered for annexation on the basis of health and safety concerns. Inside the current town limits there exists approximately 785 acres of developable land. Within Phase 1 of the annexation area there is a total of 2193 acres with approximately 1009 acres available for development. The land use land cover information for the Town and Phase 1 is included in the next table.

Land Use Land Cover within town limits and within Phase 1 of 2004 Annexation Limit by Acres

Land Use Land Cover Designation	In Town		Total In
	Limits	In Phase 1	Town and Phase 1
Residential	254.24	175.16	429.40
Commercial	87.61	126.93	214.54
Industrial	117.38	57.48	174.86
Roads	146.94	106.07	253.01
Other Urban	21.12	1.18	22.30
Institutional and Governmental	42.92	13.29	56.21
Recreational	20.63	0.00	20.63
Vacant (Agriculture)	784.85	1009.70	1794.55
Forest	71.78	354.60	426.38
Water	129.02	80.82	209.84
Wetlands	15.43	268.23	283.66
Totals	1691.92	2193.45	3888.34

Source: DNREC Land Use Land Cover 2002, Town of Millsboro Boundary February 2004, Town of Millsboro Comprehensive Plan 2004

The Plan recommends that an addition of approximately 158 acres more than Developing and Secondary Developing Areas indicated on the 1999 State Strategies Map be included with the Phase 1 area of the annexation plan. This area is in the west side of Millsboro along State Route 24. The plan also recommends that 1377.5 acres of the Secondary Areas and 38.5 acres of Developing Area be removed from consideration for development by Millsboro during the time frame of the plan. Some these areas are in the Phase 2 area. The majority of this area is already developed as residential, commercial, and industrial uses, and annexation would be based on the availability of infrastructure and the willingness of existing property owners. If the vacant parcels within these areas are proposed for development in Sussex County, the Plan recommends that the Town participate in the decision-making process and review the possibility of providing infrastructure to serve these properties.

The Strategies for State Policies and Spending Map for Sussex County provides a guide for investment decisions for the state government that are countywide. The Community, Developing, and Secondary Developing Areas of the State Strategies correspond to the Sussex County comprehensive plan areas slated for development. East of Millsboro there is an extensive Environmental Sensitive Area that is under intense development pressure.

Under the state strategy, development in this area will need to be balanced with environment and public health concerns. A comparison of the Phase 1 Annexation Limit and the 1999 and 2004 State Strategy Maps are included in the Map Appendix. Additional information on the State Strategies is available from the Office of State Planning Coordination and on the Internet at <http://www.state.de.us/planning>.

The Town accepts in principle the state strategies with modifications already stated, and the Plan recommends additional growth in the Millsboro area to be within the town's corporate limits with connections to public water and wastewater treatment. The target areas for development in the Community and Developing Areas are within the plan recommended areas for annexation. The plan recommends changes in the Sussex County plan that would encourage a larger share of development to be focused in Millsboro and away from environmentally sensitive areas. The size of the area scheduled for development in relationship to other areas in Sussex County may lead those state decision-makers and private sector investors to over look the potential for new growth within Millsboro. Millsboro has historically attempted to attract compatible development into the town limits.

The next map referenced is the Sussex County Comprehensive Plan of 2003 Future Land Use Plan for the Millsboro area. This map is available from Sussex County on the web at <http://www.sussexcounty.net/comprehensiveplanupdate/>.

The Sussex County Comprehensive Plan indicates that Millsboro and the surrounding areas are to be developed in a manner consistent with town center development. The plan indicates areas of industrial development on the east side of Millsboro that includes the Indian River power station of Conectiv and the Mountaire, Inc. agricultural processing plant and associated lands.

Discussion and Recommendations

The Town of Millsboro recommends that future development be concentrated within the town boundaries and immediate areas to be annexed and served by town services.

Growth

1. Investigate and pursue annexation of developed areas to provide services and create contiguous smooth boundaries without pockets of unincorporated areas within the town boundaries.
2. Investigate and pursue annexation of currently developing areas to provide services.
3. Encourage the annexation of properties to provide land served by public infrastructure for residential, office, commercial and industrial uses.

4. Encourage development within the town limits of Millsboro, where it can be served by existing and planned infrastructure. The plan further recommends that Sussex County discourage medium and high-density residential, commercial and industrial development within the immediate area of Millsboro. Municipal water and sewer would better serve this type of development.
5. Continue the policy of evaluating and planning for needed municipal services on properties prior to annexation.

Future Land Use Plan

Land Use Recommendations

The Future Land Use map, located in the map appendix, contains the recommended land use plan for the Town of Millsboro. The plan recommends that Millsboro consider annexations within areas toward the west of town on SR 24 and to the southeast of town along Old Landing Road. This policy reinforces existing patterns of development and is compatible with the layout of water and wastewater infrastructure. The plan recommends that annexation occur in an orderly fashion and that the decision be contingent on the availability of infrastructure and town services to prevent satellite development. The issues of transportation and interconnection of new and existing subdivisions will become increasingly important as development is directed into these two areas. Existing developments have problems with internal circulation and access for emergency vehicles. As developments are proposed in these areas, attention shall be paid to the transportation circulation and the development of new through streets. All new developments should be required to set aside land for public recreation and open space usable by all residents of town.

The Plan makes the following recommendations:

1. Maintain a diversity of land uses during the processes of development and redevelopment.
2. Encourage interconnected residential infill development of vacant parcels adjacent to existing residential. Particular attention should be paid to the areas on the southeast of Old Landing Road and on the southwest side of town.
3. Encourage residential development of similar scale to existing development on undeveloped parcels within the boundaries of Millsboro and upon parcels immediately adjacent to Millsboro.
4. Revise land use regulations to allow for clustering of residential development to preserve open space for community uses.
5. Encourage communication with the Indian River School District on the location of schools.

6. Establish annexation agreements that provide funds for capital expenses for improvements in infrastructure and town services and that sets aside land for public uses.
7. Provide for a range of commercial uses throughout the town. In the town center along Main Street the plan recommends the support of existing downtown commercial activities through parking and street improvements and the management of available land for office space and neighborhood commercial along US 113 and SR 24 outside of the downtown. Large-scale regional retail shall be concentrated in existing areas along US 113 due to the suitability of sites along that corridor. The plan recommends limitations on new office commercial and residential conversion on the US 113 corridor to balance the market for office and smaller scale commercial properties in favor of the Main Street corridor between Railroad Street and Houston Alley. Provide a second town center commercial development at the junction of US 113 and SR 20.
8. Set aside industrial land and land for large-scale office employment for the development of employment centers. The Town of Millsboro wishes to develop an expanded industrial park to further diversity the employment. Appropriate properties are designated in the plan for future investment.
9. Encourage the preservation of high value farmland beyond the town's annexation limit.

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

The Town of Millsboro, through its planning process, has determined that the Indian River School District may consider a school site on the west side of town as indicated on its future land use map if the need arises. There are properties on this side of town that meet the size constraints for an elementary, middle, or high school as the district may propose to meet its needs in the future. These sites are close to existing town services and are within the area recommended by the plan for future residential development.

Commercial Development Recommendations

The Plan recommends that the Town concentrate on office, small business, and restaurant businesses within the downtown business district, as defined as the Main Street and

Washington Street corridor bounded by the railroad tracts in the west and Houston Alley in the east. The Plan recommends that commercial district along US 113 remain with smaller businesses from Delaware Avenue to Laurel Road and that larger commercial enterprises be located on larger parcels to the south of Laurel Road. The Plan recommends limitations on additional conversions of existing residences into business and office uses. In all commercial areas along US 113, the plan recommends the development of service roads and alternative access to reduce the negative traffic impacts on new and existing business uses to US 113. Particular attention should be paid to the SR 24 and US 113 intersection and the crossovers along US 113.

The Plan recommends that a town center commercial district be established at the corner of SR 20 and US 113 just beyond the northern boundary of town. This area designated for Town Center Commercial development is approximately 50 acres. The Plan recommends that development on this parcel be mixed use with possibility of commercial, office, and high-density residential development. The recommended town center commercial district will allow use similar to the current Highway Commercial District. In addition to existing Highway Commercial District zoning standards, the Plan recommends that design and architectural standard be developed to ensure an appropriate pattern of uses, encourage mobility friendly pedestrian and vehicle transportation circulation, develop a building environment that provide architectural value, provide for appropriate parking, and provide high quality landscaping.

Permit Use Comparison Table

Highway Commercial	Town Center Commercial
Service stations and auto repair shops	Service stations, with car washes as an accessory use
Mobile home sales	Restaurants, excluding drive through
Restaurants, including drive-in or drive through	Hotels and Motels
Motels	Lumberyards and building materials stores
Lumberyards and building materials stores	Furniture sales
Furniture sales	Bowling alleys
Bowling alleys	Clinics
Clinics	Nursery, garden and farm supply sales, excluding sale of farm implements
Nursery, garden and farm supply sales, including sale of farm implements	Indoor theaters and movie cinemas
Indoor theaters	Funeral homes
Funeral homes	Supermarkets
Supermarkets	Dry cleaners
Dry cleaners	Professional and business offices
Professional and business offices	Shopping centers
New and used car sales	Boardinghouse
Shopping centers	General merchandise stores for the sale at retail
Car wash	Personal service shops
Boardinghouse	Instructional, business, or trade schools.
Indoor auction sales	Police and fire stations
General merchandise stores for the sale at	

retail Personal service shops	Municipal and public services and facilities including Town Hall Public and private schools Libraries, museums, art galleries, and public information centers Churches, and other places of worship Social club, fraternal, social service, union or civic organization Studio for artists, designers, photographers, musicians, sculptors, and related uses
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Study Area

The Town of Millsboro realizes that there are areas beyond its annexation boundary that are under consideration for development. Properties along SR 20 to the northwest of town and on US 113 north of town have potential for development. The Plan recommends that this area be preserved for extension of public service either by the town or in cooperation and coordination with Millsboro. The Plan further recommends that the Town seek Certificates of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN) for water and wastewater for properties along SR 20 and US 113 as appropriate. This area is listed as a “Study Area” on Map 8 Annexation Areas.

The plan recommends that land beyond the town’s annexation limit and the area to be preserved for extension of public services and in Sussex County’s low-density development area be considered for farmland preservation. The Town is particularly concerned about scattered rural subdivisions that may rely on town and fire company services and are beyond the practical limits of annexation.

Chapter Four: Conservation, Open Space, and Recreation

This chapter details the natural features of Millsboro and the immediate surrounding area. The town is within the Inland Bays Watershed at the head of the Indian River. Development limitations exist along stream corridors, in wetlands surrounding the Indian River, Millsboro Pond, and Betts Pond. The Iron Branch Stream presents a limitation to development due to stormwater issues and soil limitations. An examination of soil types indicates areas where development may be limited. These constraints have been incorporated into the future land use plan for the town of Millsboro.

Topography for Millsboro Area

Topography information for the Town of Millsboro is included in the map appendix as part of the Environmental Features Map.

The Plan recommends that prior to approval for development subdivision plans and building permits should be evaluated to determine limitations to development due to steep slopes, soils and other natural feature limitations. The Plan also recommends that riparian corridors and areas surrounding lakes and ponds be preserved through the addition of regulations to the zoning and subdivision code. The riparian corridor includes the stream, associated wetlands, and the flood plain.

Parks and Recreation

The Town of Millsboro recognizes the need to provide parks, open spaces, and recreation facilities to its residents. Millsboro has worked in the past for the creation of adequate park and open space and has cooperated with other organizations to provide these amenities. Incorporation of open space, greenways, and recreation facilities into the design of new development and the provision of adequate facilities and space for existing residents are main priorities for Millsboro. Also, it is a high priority for commercial, manufacturing, and office parks to use environmental and visually appealing open space and landscaping screening.

The Town has worked with private individuals and non-profit organizations to develop areas for recreation and open space. Outdoor recreation in the town has been primarily focused on the use of ballfields and the development of the Cupola Park along the Indian River waterfront. The Town, through this planning process, has determined that a need exists for additional open spaces and recreation areas. At this time there are no recreation or open space areas west of US 113.

The existing facilities within the town limits for outdoor recreation include the Cupola Park, Millsboro Pond, W.B. Atkins Memorial Park, and the fields associated with Sussex Central Middle School. Open spaces exist in multi-family developments, near the town library, and in areas surrounding the municipal utilities property and the East Millsboro Elementary School. Cupola Park consists of a waterfront facility with bulkheads, boat

ramp, parking areas, and picnic areas. The W.B. Atkins Memorial Park includes ballfields and a parking area.

The Plan recommends that new standards for open space be adopted through the revision of subdivision regulations to require open space dedication in new subdivisions. These regulations would require that new developments set aside land for open space and recreation uses in developments with greater than ten units. The Town, as part of the subdivision review process, must review the plans for open space. This review would determine the usability and quality of the open space. In areas where open space has been determined not to be either usable or feasible, the Plan recommends that the Town collect a fee in lieu of the land dedication for the construction of neighborhood open space or parks.

The Plan recommends that the Town implement these provisions by requiring the reservation of open space, recreation and other public facilities as a condition of approval for all single-family, two-family, and multiple-family residential developments requiring conditional use approval, site development plan approval, or land subdivision approval by the Town of Millsboro. The Plan recommends that all residential developments shall provide recreational areas in a size equal to 275 square feet per dwelling unit or one-half acre of land, whichever is greater. As an upper limit, the Town should not require more than ten percent of the gross area of the development be so dedicated or reserved when the gross area is greater than five acres.

The following are illustrative of the types of recreation areas and subsequent facilities that will be deemed to serve active recreational needs and therefore count toward satisfaction of the recreation area requirements: tennis courts, handball courts, racquetball courts, swimming pools, saunas and exercise rooms, meeting or activity rooms within clubhouses, baseball and soccer fields, basketball courts, volleyball courts, swings, slides and play apparatus, and developed walking, jogging or biking trails. Recreation areas should be accessible within the development and arranged in a manner, which affords reasonable access to all residents within the development. Recreation areas can be dispersed throughout the development, provided that each remote location is accessible. Recreation areas should be pedestrian oriented and designed with linkages to existing and planned public walkways and with other existing or planned recreation areas.

If the Town determines that the construction of recreation is not practical due to close proximity to existing available recreation facilities, infeasible due to natural characteristics of the land, or will not benefit the residents of the development, it may require a full or partial cash payment to be made by the developer in lieu of a full or partial dedication of land. The Plan recommends that the cash donation be equivalent to the appraised value of land area required. The land area value shall be based on the appraisal prepared for the developer to secure construction financing.

In addition to recreation areas, the Plan recommends that the Town preserve areas of open space within residential developments. These open spaces are to be designed to provide buffer spaces between developing areas, preserve existing natural and historic

features, establish a network of open spaces within the built environment, provide a balance between developed and undeveloped lands and wildlife habitat conversation, the preservation of scenic view corridors, and provide residents opportunities to engage in passive recreation activities. Open space shall include land or an area of water, or combination of land and water within a development site, and be designed and available for the use and enjoyment of residents of the development, not including off-street parking, areas set aside for public facilities and rights-of-way, and areas to be preserved as wetlands as required. The following are illustrative of the types of open space areas that would be deemed to serve buffering and preservation of natural features to count toward satisfaction of the open space requirements: mature forests and groves, hedge rows, water courses, historic landmarks and resources, landscaped buffers and berming designed to promote privacy, open landscaped areas suitable for being used and enjoyed for purposes of informal and unstructured recreation and relaxation, stormwater detention ponds when suitably designed to emulate natural features by incorporating irregular shapes, gradual slopes (no greater than 1:4) and appropriate landscape plantings, and irreplaceable environmental assets with value that have been adequately documented. The Plan further recommends that stormwater retention ponds should not count for more than 60 percent of the area dedicated for passive open space.

The Plan also recommends that land be set aside for public facilities when appropriate. The location of these public facilities may be part of the town's comprehensive plan, in any other plan or study accepted by the Mayor and Town Council, designated by the Millsboro Fire Company, the Indian River School District, or other public body. The town may require the dedication or reservation of the land for public facilities be made in lieu of the lands required for recreation and open space activities.

The Plan recommends that the Town use these recreation and open space requirements to explore sites on the west side of US 113 for the development of regional park to serve the residents the area. Undeveloped areas exist on the west side of town along Delaware Avenue and Old Landing Road for the siting of a neighborhood park. The development of the tract of land bordered by Old Landing Road and Sussex County Road 338 would provide one option for open space or recreation areas.

Recommended Actions

1. Revise the zoning and subdivision regulations to include a provision for open space, recreation, and public facilities in new residential subdivisions.
2. Revise the zoning and subdivision regulations to increase the requirements for preservation of riparian corridors, conservation of natural resources, and preservation of water recharge areas. Include in these revisions increased standards for landscaping, including increased screening of industrial and commercial uses.
3. Expand recreational facilities making greater use of existing facilities and waterways.

4. Expand active recreation programs through town-sponsored programs or the development of a public-private facilities, such as a Boys and Girls Club or YMCA.

Chapter Five: Utilities and Municipal Services

Background

The Town of Millsboro provides municipal water and wastewater service to homes and businesses located within its boundaries. The town's sources of electrical supply are Conectiv and the Delaware Electric Cooperative. The Delaware Solid Waste Authority handles solid waste disposal, and Verizon provides local telephone service. Natural gas is provided by the Chesapeake Utilities Corporation. The 2000 U.S. Census indicated that electricity was the primary heating source for housing (652 units) followed by fuel oil and kerosene (181 units), and utility or bottled gas (187 units combined). The census also indicated that 99.3 percent of the housing units in Millsboro received telephone service. Residents seem to be satisfied with the quality and cost of these services.

The Water System

According to the town, as of March, 2004, 1,600 units were served by the Millsboro municipal public water system, an increase of 553 units from the number reported by DNREC's December, 2003 Public Water Supply Source Water Assessment for the town. A review of DNREC files indicates that Millsboro operates three wells for its source of water supply. Two of the wells were drilled several decades ago and are less than 100 feet deep, utilizing the Columbia Formation. The third well was drilled in May 1979, is about 300 feet deep, and draws water from the Manokin Aquifer.

Well #	Permit #	Allocation #	Year Constructed	Well Capacity (gpm)	Diameter (inches)	Screen Interval (fbgs)	Aquifer
1	10357	88-0006AM2	1953	225	8	72-84	Columbia
2	4310	88-0006AM2	1973	250	8	74-94	Columbia
3	42542	88-0006BM2	1979	325	10	205-255	Manokin

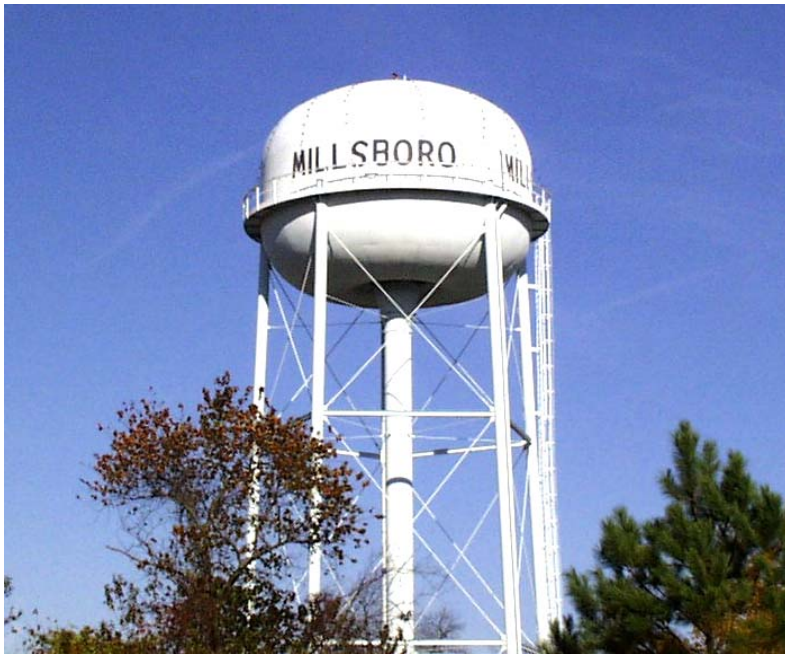
* fbgs = feet below ground surface

These three wells have a total annual allocation permit from the DNREC of 174 million gallons, or an average of 476,700 gallons per day. The 2003 water demand was about 155.75 million gallons, or an average of 426,700 gallons per day. Millsboro has agreed to provide the Town of Dagsboro up to 90,000 gallons per day when that town's planned public water is completed. Accordingly, Millsboro plans to submit an application to DNREC for an increased groundwater allocation to serve the needs of both towns.

The town appears to have adequate source water quantity available for increasing its allocation. The town is able to pump 1.15 million gallons per day. However there may be an issue of quality and treatment capacity. According to the DNREC, Wells #1 and 2, which are located in the shallower Columbia Aquifer, have shown elevated levels of

nitrates in past testing. Nitrates are regulated by the state as a primary standard and can cause health problems. Well #3, which is in the deeper Manokin Aquifer, is used to blend water from the other wells to dilute the nitrate level. Well #3 does not have nitrates in it but must be treated for an elevated concentration of iron, a naturally occurring substance that is common in water from the Manokin. Iron is regulated by the state as a secondary standard and is usually more of a nuisance than a health problem since it will stain clothing and appliances. Although there is probably an adequate quantity of water available from Well #3 (the well is capable of pumping 325 gpm), the iron treatment facility for Well #3 can only treat 0.23 mgd and that is the limiting factor in determining the quantity available from this well. Thus, the current levels of nitrates and iron in the source waters used by Millsboro will need to be considered in evaluating the water system needs for meeting future demands.

Millsboro's Master Water Plan was originally adopted in 1982. The Plan recommendations have been systematically implemented and updated, with the most recent revision adopted in 1999. The construction of a new deep well and expansion of the water treatment plant are two high-priority projects expected to be implemented in 2004 as part of the Dagsboro Interconnection project. The increase in annexation requests will create demands not considered in the original plan. The Town therefore intends to prepare a comprehensive Master water plan update.



Water storage is provided by a 100,000-gallon elevated tank on Washington Street west of Route 113, and a 250,000-gallon elevated tank at the Church Street water plant site. Both tanks are in good condition and receive regular inspection and upkeep through maintenance contracts. Dagsboro's proposed water system will include a 500,000-gallon elevated storage tank that, when the systems are interconnected, will benefit Millsboro as well.

The Wastewater System

The majority of the Millsboro sanitary sewer system was built in the early 1960s, consisting of primary and secondary treatment facilities. In the 1980s, a \$1.6 million project upgraded the system to an advanced secondary treatment level. In the early 1990s, \$1.7 million was spent to further upgrade these facilities to tertiary treatment, including the addition of phosphorus removal and ultraviolet (UV) disinfection facilities. The UV facilities enabled the town to stop using chlorine as its disinfectant, thereby removing chlorine from the effluent discharged into the Tiger Branch, a tributary of the Indian River. The treatment facility has a design capacity of 0.65 million gallons per day (mgd) and a DNREC permit for discharging 0.55 mgd. The Town of Millsboro typically discharges 0.45 mgd of treated effluent, including the flow from East Elementary School and the Stockley Center, which averages 50,000 gallons per day itself. The highest monthly average daily flow was 0.511 mgd in August.

A recent study of the Millsboro water and wastewater services indicates that expansion of service to the north, east, west, and south of town may be necessary to serve areas threatened by failing septic systems. The Delaware Wastewater Facilities Advisory Council (WFAC) in a 1997 survey identified two un-sewered communities adjacent to the town. The first area is north of the existing town limits and includes properties fronting on Delaware Route 30, Delaware Route 24 and Road 305. The second area is east of town and includes Riverview, Possum Point, Colonial Estates Mobile Home Park, and Holiday Acres Mobile Home Park. The WFAC ranked the need for sewers in these areas as medium among 35 un-sewered communities identified in Sussex County. The study also examined the potential to expand service up to three miles west of Millsboro to accommodate new development. According to Millsboro 2003 Wastewater Master Plan, town officials are of the opinion that growth is most likely to occur west of US 113 and possibly to the south. According to the recently updated Strategies for State Policies and Spending and the Livable Delaware initiative, both the state and county should support, both politically and fiscally, infrastructure investments in those same areas.

Millsboro's recently renewed DNREC wastewater discharge permit requires the town's stream discharge of effluent to be eliminated by May 31, 2005. Accordingly, this will require significant changes in the town's wastewater disposal strategies. Three methods of aquifer recharge and watershed trading were considered as means of meeting the TMDL directive to eliminate the current NPDES permit conditions in the town's 2003 Wastewater Facilities Master Plan: spray irrigation, rapid infiltration basins (RIBs), and injection wells. Watershed trading is the practice of purchasing agricultural property and trading the associated fertilizer nutrient loads in return for continued discharge of an equivalent amount of the same nutrients into the Indian River. The plan selected spray irrigation as the most viable disposal option.

Since the plan's completion, Millsboro has experienced a significant increase in applications for new development both within the existing town limits and on adjacent properties proposed for annexation. Sussex County is experiencing similar development

pressure on unincorporated lands in the area. This activity has brought a significant increase in land prices. These factors have dramatically increased the probable cost of the spray irrigation disposal option. The Town has directed its engineer to prepare a Wastewater Facilities Master Plan amendment that revises the expected growth rate and reevaluates the disposal options with regard to current conditions.

Discussion and Recommendations

Minor upgrades aside, Millsboro currently has sufficient and safe drinking water and adequate wastewater treatment. The Town recognizes that modifications in wastewater treatment will need to be undertaken in order to be in compliance with its DNREC wastewater discharge permit by May 31, 2005. The town understands that state regulations will require modification of the current state approved practice of discharging tertiary treated effluent into the Inland Bays to reduce the Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL) of nutrients. The town has a history of investment in wastewater treatment technology to meet Clean Water Act requirements, and the plan recommends prior to any future investment that an agreement between the town and DNREC on the type of wastewater treatment to be used, service area, location of facilities, and amount to be treated be finalized. The plan further recommends the identification of sites for land application. Prior to final site selection the town would require agreement with state on the site and technology used for treatment.

Recommended Actions

1. Amend the Wastewater Facilities Master Plan to address the accelerating growth rate. Re-evaluate the wastewater disposal alternatives with regard to the area's rapidly rising land costs. Implement the amended plans to comply with the TMDL regulation and to accommodate growth. Expand the wastewater collection and transmission system in planned increments to serve future annexations. Upon completion of the Wastewater Facilities Master Plan amendment, proceed directly with design and construction of the recommended plant expansion, upgrades and effluent disposal system.
2. Amend the Master Water Plan to include the proposed interconnection to the Town of Dagsboro and to address the increased rate of growth. Expand the town's water supply, treatment and storage capacity in order to provide bulk water service to Dagsboro and to meet increased demand associated with future annexations. Enlarge the water distribution in planned increments to serve future annexations. Initiate an application process with DNREC to increase the allocation of water to supply the residents and businesses of Millsboro and Dagsboro.
3. Prepare and implement an annexation fee system to equitably distribute the cost of infrastructure expansion and upgrades among those creating the need.
4. Initiate allocation process with the DNREC to increase permit for withdrawing water to be used for supplying drinking water to the residents and businesses of Millsboro.

5. Coordinate with the state and Sussex County to identify funding sources for water/wastewater capacity upgrades.
6. Develop a wellhead protection ordinance.
7. Develop a water resource protection area ordinance to provide increased protection of groundwater resources relied upon for municipal water supply.
8. Develop a stormwater management plan for the town. Prior to improvements in roads or sidewalks or new development require the creation of a stormwater impact statement.

Chapter Six: Community Services

Public Schools

Indian River School District

The town is within the Indian River School District, which has its administrative office in Selbyville. Information used in this chapter was collected in 2003 and refers to the 2002-2003 academic year. Geographically, this district is the largest in the state covering approximately 361 square miles (excluding the Polytech School District and the New Castle County and Sussex County Vocation Technical School Districts that overlap several others for high school attendance). Its total district-wide enrollment was 7,534 students in the 2002-2003 academic year. Number of choice students enrolled was 375. During this period, the student-to-teacher ratio was 13.3 (statewide student-to-teacher ratio was 16.9). The district's expenditure per pupil was \$8,600 in 2002-2003.

Facilities

Public schools serving the town are East Millsboro Elementary School, Sussex Central Middle School, Sussex Central Senior High School, and Sussex Technical High School. Of these, East Millsboro Elementary and Sussex Central Middle School are within the town limits.

The attendance area for East Millsboro Elementary School is quite large, encompassing a small area to the east and northeast of the town and a large area to the south and southeast including Gumboro and beyond to the Maryland State Line. The northern attendance boundary for East Millsboro Elementary roughly follows SR 20. Students living north of this boundary attend Georgetown Elementary School. The Howard T. Ennis School, also located in Georgetown, serves special needs students from throughout the Indian River School District. The new Sussex Central High School will be located on 158.6 acres across from the Stockley Center immediately to the north of Millsboro. Georgetown provides wastewater service to this new high school.

Any potential annexations by the Town of Millsboro have implications for students residing in town. Currently, every student within Millsboro proper attends East Millsboro Elementary School. Any annexations to the south along SR 331 would quickly bring in neighborhoods attending Frankford Elementary School. Similarly, annexations to the east would be in the Long Neck Elementary School attendance area and to the north would be in the Georgetown Elementary School attendance area.

The siting of any future school facilities should consider the location of residential growth, both existing and potential, in order to maximize proximity between students' residences and schools. This will reduce transportation costs and maintain the close association between town and schools that has been traditional of small towns. Development of school facilities in the western portion of the town could provide easy access and municipal services in this growing part of town. The Plan recommends that

the Indian River School District consider properties within town or within the annexation limit outlined in this plan for new school sites. The Town will work with the school district to provide appropriate new schools through the new public facilities dedication process propose in this plan update.

The Indian River School District currently owns developable land northwest of Millsboro in the vicinity of Ingram's Pond. The district proposed to construct a school on this facility about twenty years ago, but has since abandoned the proposal. The Plan recommends that this land be considered for public open space.

Indian River School District engaged in the process of school planning and expansion during the 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 school years. A new high school is in the process of construction on a site adjacent to the Stockley Center. Additional improvements to existing schools within Millsboro have also been proposed and approved in a district referendum in 2000. The new high school may impact the provision of police services and local fire services. The site is not immediately adjacent to the town.

Private Schools

There were 411 students residing in the Indian River School District that were enrolled in non-public schools during the 2002-2003 school year.

Institutions of Higher Learning

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

Discussion and Recommendations

The Plan recommends that the Town coordinate with the school district to find suitable sites for new schools within the town limits or at a minimum served by public facilities of the town. Future new schools should be within town limits or served by town services. The Plan recommends that major developments proposed to the town consider the setting aside of land for schools as a condition of annexation.

Recommended Actions

1. Work with the Indian River School District to secure funding for school expansion and renovation.
2. Work with the Indian River School District to identify locations for future school construction, particularly west of US 113 within the existing or future town limits.

Chapter Seven: Economic Development

Employment

Overall unemployment rates in the town are low with the 2000 U.S. Census reporting 2.9 percent total unemployment. Unemployment was higher for females (3.9%) than males (2.9%). Black females had the worst unemployment rating at 10.8 percent, but black males reported full employment.

Employment Status by Age by Gender, Town of Millsboro, 2000

	Both sexes	Male	Female
Population 16 years and over	1,836	694	1,142
In labor force	983	436	547
Armed forces	0	0	0
Civilian labor force	983	436	547
Employed	946	431	515
Unemployed	37	5	32
Not in labor force	853	258	595
Population 16 to 19 years	50	17	33
Employed civilian	38	15	23
Unemployed	8	2	6
Not in labor force	4	0	4
Population 20 to 24 years	147	59	88
Employed civilian	120	53	67
Unemployed	3	3	0
Not in labor force	24	3	21
Population 25 to 54 years	843	338	505
Employed civilian	662	299	363
Unemployed	18	0	18
Not in labor force	163	39	124
Population 55 to 59 years	95	28	67
Employed civilian	50	14	36
Unemployed	0	0	0
Not in labor force	45	14	31
Population 60 to 64 years	111	52	59
Employed civilian	24	10	14
Unemployed	0	0	0
Not in labor force	87	42	45
Population 65 to 69 years	139	75	64
Employed civilian	35	31	4
Unemployed	8	0	8
Not in labor force	96	44	52
Population 70 years and over	451	125	326
Employed civilian	17	9	8
Unemployed	0	0	0

Source: U.S. Census 2000

Employment By Sector

The management and professional sector provides the most jobs in the town (29%), followed by sales (25%) and production (19%). Agriculture, forestry, and fisheries account for a small part of overall employment in town (0.7%), which also represents a decline from 1990 (2.8%). However, many of the reported manufacturing jobs rely on agricultural enterprise in the surrounding region. The services sector includes medical, research and development, tourism, recreation, and a variety of occupations that exist or have been suggested for the Town of Millsboro.

Employment by Sector, Town of Millsboro, 2000

	Total	%	Male	Female
Management, professional, and related occupations	276	29.2	114	162
Service occupations	174	18.4	45	129
Sales and office occupations	239	25.3	89	150
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	7	0.7	2	5
Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations	70	7.4	66	4
Production, transportation, & material moving occupations	180	19.0	115	65
Employed civilian population 16 years and over	946	100	431	515

Source: U.S. Census 2000

Employment By Location

The majority of Millsboro residents work within the town (29%) or surrounding Sussex County (55%). Of those working outside of the county, more went outside of Delaware (presumably into Maryland) than into Kent or New Castle Counties. These trends in employment location are significant for determining needs for housing, transportation, and other municipal services. Communities with a high level of out-migration for employment are often identified as bedroom communities that often do not provide a full range of municipal services and do not have the commercial tax base to support expanded services. Municipalities with a high influx of employees reap the benefit of commercial enterprise with fewer services, but lack the populace to support community activities and initiatives. A balanced jobs-to-housing ratio is particularly important in managing traffic growth. The daily work commute accounts for nearly all of the morning and afternoon peak hour traffic. When those peak trips are local in nature, they may more easily be shifted to alternate modes and shorter in duration.

Place of Work for Millsboro Workers 16 years and over, 2000

	Number of Workers Residing in Millsboro	Percent of Workers Residing in Millsboro
Worked within Town of Millsboro	269	28.9%
Worked within Sussex County	517	55.6%
Worked in Kent or New Castle Counties	54	5.8%
Worked out of Delaware	90	9.7%
Total Workers	930	100%

Source: U.S. Census 2000

Income

Household incomes in Millsboro are primarily middle-range with the \$5,000-19,999 being the most common range. The median income for all households is \$27,379, and the mean income is \$33,613. Incomes are higher on average for family households (\$46,875) than for non-family households (\$14,651). When examined by race, white households earn more than the overall average for the area (mean income equals \$27,693), while black households earn considerably less than average (mean income equals \$12,251). Households of American Indian race have the lowest mean incomes, and households of Asian or Pacific Islander race have the highest mean incomes.

Number of Households by Income, Town of Millsboro, 2000

Income Range	Number of Households
Less than \$10,000	177
\$10,000 to \$14,999	130
\$15,000 to \$19,999	116
\$20,000 to \$24,999	57
\$25,000 to \$29,999	78
\$30,000 to \$34,999	95
\$35,000 to \$39,999	37
\$40,000 to \$44,999	44
\$45,000 to \$49,999	63
\$50,000 to \$59,999	79
\$60,000 to \$74,999	65
\$75,000 to \$99,999	45
\$100,000 to \$124,999	18
\$125,000 to \$149,999	12
\$150,000 to \$199,999	0
\$200,000 or more	3

Source: U.S. Census 2000

The majority of households are above poverty status in the town (80.7%). Households most likely to be below poverty status are elderly people living alone and family households headed by a female.

**Households by Poverty Status
Town of Millsboro, 2000**

	Total	Above Poverty	Percent of Total	Below Poverty	Percent of Total
All Households	1,019	822	80.7%	197	19.3%

Source: U.S. Census 2000

**Poverty Status by Householder Age and Type of Household
Town of Millsboro, 2000**

	Age of Householder					
	15-64		65-74		75+	
	Above Poverty	Below Poverty	Above Poverty	Below Poverty	Above Poverty	Below Poverty
Married-couple Family	908	69	129	5	88	9
Male Householder (no wife present)	61	5	0	0	0	0
Female Householder (no husband present)	264	190	3	5	5	0
Unrelated Individuals	180	51	79	32	73	33
TOTAL	1,413	315	211	42	166	42

Source: U.S. Census 2000

Note: Data includes population for whom poverty status is determined.

Regional Economic Development

The Town of Millsboro functions as a regional service provider for many shopping, medical, employment, and other needs. The town is surrounded by a sparse but rapidly growing area, for which Millsboro is a convenient resource. Population within various radii of downtown Millsboro (defined as the intersection of State and Main Streets) is presented on the following table to demonstrate the large market area immediately surrounding the town.

**Population Within a Specified Radius
Around the Intersection of Main and State Streets, 2000**

	5 Miles	10 Miles	15 Miles	20 Miles
Total Persons	14,477	53,973	121,759	178,434
Total Households	5,594	20,890	49,814	72,582

Source: U.S. Census, IPA

Community Development

Downtown Redevelopment

Downtown redevelopment and business retention are strongly supported in the community. Currently, there are a variety of restaurants and businesses that occupy the downtown. While turnover may be an issue, there are not large numbers of vacant storefronts, as seen in many older downtowns. Recruitment and retention of local businesses are particularly important to keep turnover at a minimum. Programs and policies that assist in the establishment of incubator businesses could benefit the downtown business community. Special events and festivals are also important to developing a downtown identity and attracting visitors who may not otherwise know which businesses are operating in the downtown area.

The appearance of the downtown is of concern to many Millsboro residents. Well-designed streetscape improvements, including landscaping, sidewalk upgrades, benches, pedestrian-scale lighting, and other pedestrian improvements can greatly enhance the attractiveness of downtown for residents and visitors. The downtown is divided by SR 24 (Washington Street and Main Street) and, therefore, has a high volume of through traffic. Some of the passers-by may be enticed to visit downtown Millsboro, if it is attractive and parking is convenient. The National Main Street program provides an approach for downtown redevelopment that can be modeled by communities whether or not they are officially designated as a Main Street Town. Very often funding for streetscape improvements comes from private sources and public-private partnerships. Examples of these are “buy a tree,” “buy a bench,” and “buy a brick” fundraiser campaigns that have been successful in many other communities. Another common approach for landscaping improvements is to solicit businesses to sponsor the cost of installing and maintaining landscaping in exchange for small, visually pleasing signage thanking the sponsor.

Tourism and Relocation Development

The Town of Millsboro is in a prime location to capitalize on tourist-related economic development. It is in close proximity to and along major transportation corridors leading to the beach resorts. Restaurants, antique shops, specialty shops, and water recreation assets in the community already are beginning to cater to tourists. These efforts can be expanded with the addition of new recreation opportunities and lodging. These could include golf courses, expanded water sports, hotels, bed & breakfast lodging establishments, and conference facilities. The town has some resources to host meetings,

including the Millsboro Civic Center, the Delaware Technical Community College/Williams Conference Center, and at least one restaurant with banquet facilities. Natural and cultural amenities, such as the nearby Nanticoke Indian Museum and newly established Millsboro Art Museum, can also attract tourists. The recently established Southern Delaware Heritage Trail passes through Millsboro, bringing additional visitors by auto, bicycle, and canoe. Realizing a role in regional tourism efforts such as this can establish an identity and market for Millsboro tourism. Other special events of local or regional significance, such as the Chicken Festival, Nanticoke Pow-Wow, and Big Thursday Festival, can also be important in attracting first-time visitors to the community who may return after seeing what the area has to offer.

Tourism can generate in-migration to the community by both creating jobs and enticing visitors, particularly retirees, to relocate. However, in order to be a welcoming and attractive community, the Town of Millsboro must facilitate the ease of relocation and the accessibility of pertinent information about the community. This can be accomplished in cooperation with established tourism and economic development organizations, and by establishing a local welcome and information center.

The Town of Millsboro has two existing facilities that may be considered for a welcome and information center or other tourist-oriented amenities. These facilities are the currently rented train station and the former library, now home to the Millsboro Art League. The Art League's activities may be quite compatible with expanded tourism or recreation activities. Redevelopment and adaptive reuse of the train station building could be funded through the federal Transportation Enhancement Program. These federal resources are dispersed through a competitive grant program in the Delaware Department of Transportation. Recent changes to the federal legislation specifically permit this category of funds to be spent on welcome centers and the rehabilitation of historic transportation facilities.

In terms of attracting vacationing retirees to the area, there must be sufficient access to medical care and appropriate housing. In addition to the nursing home in Millsboro, a significantly sized assisted living facility is being developed east of Millsboro near Long Neck. Other options for step-down senior citizen living arrangements should be sought for the community to offer a range of housing and medical resources for retirees living in Millsboro.

Industrial and Office Park

Currently, Sussex County industrial parks exist in Georgetown, Seaford, and Selbyville. The Town of Millsboro has an existing base of industrial activity associated with Mountaire, Inc., Vlastic Foods, Inc., the granary, and other activities associated with agricultural support. Veterinary research and development activities supply a significant amount of employment in the town. Office employment is found in the All First Bank complex and several medical facilities.

There seems to be great support for expanding employment in the town, particularly for non-polluting, high-paying jobs. Clearly, higher paying jobs are a necessity for many minorities living in the area. Industrial park development would benefit greatly by a location on the southern end of town with rail and highway access. Roadway access requiring the use of SR 24 through town should be discouraged, as should the development of high employment areas north and east of town near sensitive waterways. Locating an office park is somewhat more flexible without concern for trucking and rail needs, but it should be sited with consideration to roadway and transit access.

Downtown Millsboro may be one possible location to recruit office employment, since this area provides many support services, such as restaurants, printers, and office supplies as well as nearby housing. Many Millsboro residents feel strongly about retaining the vitality of downtown and would support office construction or reconstruction here. The downtown also offers the opportunity for adaptive reuse of existing structures, which is also supported by local residents. However, a downtown location would only be viable for smaller office needs, such as conglomerations of legal, medical, FIRE, and other such services. It would not have sufficient capacity for large corporate office complexes that would require similar facilities as an industrial complex.

Medical Facilities

The Town of Millsboro relies on neighboring communities of Lewes, Milford, Seaford, and Berlin, Md. for hospital and emergency medical services. The Beebe Medical Center, in Lewes, has expanded its services into the Millsboro area including centers for imaging, outpatient surgery, and occupational health. Nanticoke Health Services also has established facilities in the Mid-Sussex Medical Center for advanced medical diagnostic and treatment services. This facility includes a Veterans Administration clinic. However, the community would benefit from the establishment of an emergency or urgent care facility, since the nearest such facilities are at the larger hospitals in towns that are 20 to 30 miles away.

Discussion and Recommendations

The Plan recommends that the town remain a center for industrial, office and commercial developments. Areas already zoned for industrial and commercial use should remain zoned in this manner. The area along Mitchell Street south of the existing office development shall remain as a focus for future office and industrial use due to the location of public services, character of the existing land uses, and current separation from residential uses, location of properties in relation to US 113, and previous industrial uses.

The Plan further recommends that the downtown business district remain a focus of commercial activities and office uses. Office and commercial uses along US 113 should remain in areas already in commercial or office use and further spread into residential areas contained. Office uses should be focused downtown or within existing or recommended commercial and office areas.

Recommended Actions

1. Encourage job development within the town limits of Millsboro.
2. Identify an appropriate location for an industrial park development with appropriate rail and highway access.
3. Identify appropriate locations for office development, including adaptive reuse in downtown Millsboro, which can be provided with appropriate parking, road access, and transit service.
4. Explore funding opportunities through state agencies, grants, and public-private partnerships that can implement streetscape improvements in downtown Millsboro. This could include a local campaign to solicit private donations to supporting downtown beautification.
5. Develop a program of special events and festivals to take place downtown to attract visitors and residents.
6. Initiate a study of the business mix in downtown to identify the ideal mix of business types, potential for office development, and the role of locally owned businesses.
7. Initiate a study of downtown parking needs and solutions.
8. Actively participate in regional tourism campaigns and facility development.
9. Work with state and local economic development agents to encourage realization of other critical community development including emergency/urgent medical care facilities, housing and medical service options for senior citizens, lodging, conference facilities, and expanded recreational facilities.
10. Identify underutilized commercial structures and develop marketing plans, incentives, and other tools to encourage their redevelopment.

Chapter Eight: Transportation

The future of the town will be shaped by quality of transportation facilities and interconnection between land use decisions and the provision of appropriate transportation investments. The regional impacts of development outside of town limits will continue to have profound seasonal vehicular traffic impacts. The importance of the US 113 corridor for transportation and as a tool for economic development will continue in the future and, therefore, the capacity and access to US 113 will need to be preserved. SR 24 provides a vital east-west link between western Sussex County, US 113, and the Long Neck and beach communities. Increased traffic on this roadway, which bisects the town, will need to be managed to preserve the quality of life of the town. The intersection of US 113 and SR 24 has been an issue for traffic congestion, roadway management, and stormwater management that is currently being addressed.

Transportation Goals

- Maintain and improve the existing transportation and circulation pattern within the town.
- Encourage mobility friendly design that interconnects new development and the existing street pattern. The development of new road, pedestrian, and bicycle connections should provide for alternative routes to relieve congestion from internally generated trips.
- Connect land use and transportation decisions to preserve the capacity of existing and future transportation investments.
- Support the town's and region's economic well being by preserving and enhancing the internal transportation network and connections to the regional transportation network.
- Protect the capacity of US 113 and State Routes 24, 20, and 30.
- Continue to work with the Sussex County Association of Towns, Sussex County government, and the Delaware Department of Transportation in implementing the county and statewide long-range plans. Continue to have input in transportation plans that affect transportation routes through Millsboro, especially with plans to upgrade US 113.

Journey to Work

Travel Time to Work for Workers 16 years and over

Travel Time	Number	Percent of Total
0-4 minutes	63	6.8%
5-9 minutes	159	17.1%
10-14 minutes	152	16.3%
15-19 minutes	105	11.3%
20-24 minutes	124	13.3%
25-29 minutes	63	6.8%
30-34 minutes	112	12.0%
35-39 minutes	21	2.3%
40-44 minutes	34	3.7%
45-59 minutes	38	4.1%
60-89 minutes	13	1.4%
90 or more min.	27	2.9%
Worked at home	19	2.0%
TOTAL	930	100%

Source: U.S. Census 2000

The journey-to-work data from the 2000 U.S. Census indicates that one-half of Millsboro residents have a commute of less than 20 minutes. This commute would be in the immediate Millsboro region and includes places such as Georgetown and Selbyville. This information indicates that the majority of Millsboro residents work in businesses in Millsboro or the immediate area. A spike in the distribution occurs at the 30- to 34-minute commute that may indicate commuting patterns to the beach communities or places, such as Seaford. Comparative analysis of the 1990 and 2000 commute trends demonstrates that while in 1990 only 5.4 percent of Millsboro residents traveled to work 35 minutes and longer, this number grew to 14.4 percent by 2000. Nonetheless, in comparison to national averages, commute times are short distances for residents in Millsboro in 2000.

Means of Transportation for Workers 16 years and over

	Number	Percent of Total
Drove Alone	744	80.0%
Carpool	122	13.1%
Public Transit	3	0.3%
Motorcycle	0	0%
Bicycle	0	0%
Walked	33	3.5%
Other	9	1.0%
Worked at Home	19	2.1%
TOTAL	930	100%

Source: U.S. Census 2000

**Private Vehicle Occupancy for Journey to Work
Town of Millsboro, 2000**

Vehicle Occupancy	Number	Percent of Total
Drove alone	744	80.1%
2-person carpool	82	8.9%
3-person carpool	34	3.5%
4-person carpool	4	0.4%
5-person carpool	0	0%
6-person carpool	0	0%
7-or-more carpool	2	0.2%
Other means	64	6.9%
TOTAL	930	100%

Source: U.S. Census 2000

The means of transportation for the journey to work table indicate that vast majority of Millsboro residents (80%), as expected for Sussex County residents, used their own car for their commute journey in 2000. The limited amount of public transportation in 2000 and now has led Millsboro residents to choose cars, carpools, or walking as the means to reach employment sites. The continuation of high single occupancy vehicles for the trips to and from work sites will translate into traffic congestion at peak travel times at key intersections. At the same time, a positive trend should be noted: two and three person carpools, which constituted 8.4 percent in 1990, increased to 12.4 percent by 2000.

Roadway Facilities

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

A grid network of municipal streets exists in the core historic parts of Millsboro. A wider grid-like system has also developed in part on the western side of US 113. The more recent development has occurred in modern suburban stem and leaf pattern of local streets with limited access to the existing road pattern. Not listed on the official DelDOT road map are a number of private street systems of developments. These private developments have one access point to a municipal street. The Plan recommends that existing and new development be interconnected with the existing pattern of roadways. Future development proposals will need to meet higher roadway standards for streets within housing developments. The Plan also recommends that all future subdivision streets within new developments serving Millsboro residents become public streets meeting municipal and state standards. This recommendation does not include current state-maintained streets or any future state-maintained streets. The Plan does not recommend that the town accept maintenance responsibilities for any current state-maintained streets.

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

SR 24 and SR 20 are minor arterials. This designation means that access will be provided in accordance with safety regulations. Through traffic will be expected on these roads, and access to property shall be designed to reduce conflicts between through traffic and entering and exiting traffic. Signalization is expected along these corridors. In Millsboro these roads function as minor arterial roads that interconnect US 113 and municipal streets and provide east-west regional connections. Sidewalks and bicycle facilities should be provided where appropriate. The remaining minor state roads are local streets. The primary purpose of these roads and similar municipal streets is to provide access to properties. Through traffic is limited and traffic calming mechanisms are expected to reduce speeds on these roads. Pedestrian and bicycle facilities are expected as roads are improved in Multimodal Transportation Improvement Areas.

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

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

US 113 North/South Study

DelDOT has undertaken a planning study to consider improvements for the US 113 corridor from the vicinity of SR 1 north of Milford to the Delaware/Maryland State Line. This is a follow-up to the 2001 Sussex County North-South Transportation Feasibility Study. In the 2001 Transportation Feasibility Study, Sussex County and DelDOT examined the local and regional transportation needs for the US 113 corridor and determined that major north-south upgrade was feasible from an engineering standpoint. The Feasibility Study recommended that a more detailed planning project be completed. This recommendation led to the US 113 North/South Study that began in 2003. The study area for the US 113 North/South Study includes all of Millsboro and the areas under consideration for annexation and will have significant impact of the town's transportation infrastructure and future land use pattern.

The Feasibility Study indicated that further study should be done on potential corridors for US 113 upgrades along the current route of US 113 and on routes to the east and west of Millsboro. The designation of these corridors was completed through an analysis of the transportation, environmental, State Strategies, and Sussex County plan considerations. The current US 113 North/South Study will need to incorporate the 2004 plan update recommendations. Current development proposals and the 2004 plan update recommendations will significantly impact the western corridor. These areas to the west are planned to be developed as a residential extension of the town. The potential upgrade of US 113 through town is of significant concern. The Plan recommends against the consideration of grade separation for roads crossing US 113 and that the town continues to have adequate crossing along the US 113 corridor. The Town will work with DelDOT on the US 113 North/South Study.

Railroad Facilities

Norfolk Southern operates the railroad route in Millsboro. This line is known as the Indian River secondary line. The line serves the Conectiv power station at Indian River and provides access to a nationwide rail system for properties within the industrial zoned properties in Millsboro.

Recommendations

1. Improve internal road standards for subdivisions within the town to meet the needs of fire equipment and school buses. Recommend that all developments greater than ten units have interconnection to adjoining properties included in subdivision plan.

2. Develop a municipal street plan to interconnect existing development with future development.
3. Pursue possible Transportation Enhancement funds for construction of sidewalk gaps and critical missing segments.
4. Explore opportunities to develop shared access and assemblage of small redeveloping parcels on US 113 in order to minimize ingress/egress conflicts in conjunction with DelDOT's Standards and Regulations for Access to State Highways and Corridor Capacity Preservation Program. Develop opportunities for the provision of service roads along US 113.
5. Initiate an east-west traffic study focusing on SR 24 and consider improvements on Delaware Avenue/SR 82, Hickory Hill Road and other alternatives.
6. Develop land development regulations that require the creation and connection of local street networks through and between developing areas.
7. Continue to coordinate with DelDOT on current improvements to US 113 to address crossover safety and access issues.
8. Work with the Delaware Transit Corporation to institute transit service to Georgetown for commuter traffic in the near term and beach access in the future. The Town should pursue the provision of appropriate infrastructure and land use access around proposed transit stops.
9. Work with DelDOT on the development of a truck route or bypass for truck traffic on SR 24.

Chapter Nine: Housing

Households

In 2000, the number of persons per household was lower in Millsboro than in its surrounding area, Sussex County or the state. This could, in part, be due to the larger number of persons over 60 in the town that would typically be living in one- or two-person households.

The number of persons per household has policy implications relating to the total number of needed housing units, the type of housing required, the anticipated travel behavior, and other planning considerations.

Number of Households and Persons Per Household, 2000

	Households	Population	Persons Per Household
Town of Millsboro	1,045	2,360	2.13
Greater Millsboro	8,222	19,558	2.40
Sussex County	62,577	156,638	2.45
Delaware	298,736	783,600	2.54

Source: U.S. Census 2000

Note: Greater Millsboro is defined as Census Tracts 506 & 507

Number of Households by Persons Per Household Town of Millsboro, 2000

Number of Persons Per Household	Number	Percent
1 person	386	36.94%
2 persons	381	36.46%
3 persons	125	11.96%
4 persons	98	9.38%
5 persons	37	3.54%
6 persons	9	0.86%
7 or more persons	9	0.86%
TOTAL	1,045	100.00%

Source: U.S. Census 2000

Housing Stock

The number of housing units in Millsboro has been growing rapidly and consistently for several years. The number increased by 50 percent from 1970 to 1980 and by an additional 45 percent between 1980 and 1990 for a total of 815 housing units in 1990. The last decade brought another major leap in housing, bringing the number of units up to 1,153.

Number of Housing Units, 1970-2000

	1970	1980	Change 1970-80	1990	Change 1980-90	2000	Change 1990- 2000
Number of Units, Town of Millsboro	375	562	50%	815	45%	1,153	41%

Source: U.S. Census 1970, 1980, 1990, and 2000

The primary type of housing units in the town is a single-family detached house. Of these, the majority are owner-occupied. The second most common type of housing is apartment buildings with five or more units. All of these units are renter-occupied. There are several other types of multi-family and attached housing as well as mobile homes available to accommodate lower income residents and small households. Overall, the balance between owner-occupied and renter-occupied housing is achieved (414 owner-occupied and 350 renter-occupied). However, the type of housing varies greatly by ownership category.

**Housing Stock by Type and Ownership
Town of Millsboro, 2000**

Units in Structure	Total Units	Percent of Total	Vacant Units	Occupied Units		
				Total	Owner	Renter
1 Detached	473	40.81	59	414	350	64
1 Attached	220	18.98	46	174	98	76
2	10	0.86	0	10	0	10
3 or 4	78	6.73	6	72	0	72
5 or more	232	20.02	5	227	0	227
Mobile Home, Trailer	146	12.60	10	136	123	13
Other	0	0.00	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	1159	100.00	126	1033	571	462

Source: U.S. Census 2000

The 2000 U.S. Census recorded a growth in the number of housing units from 815 to 1159 an increase of 42 percent in ten years. New construction of structures with five or more units housing units increased the number of multi-unit structures from 174 to 232, a 33 percent increase. Millsboro also witnessed an increase in single-family attached homes from 78 units to 220 units, a 185 percent increase. The Town has demonstrated its commitment to developing a range of housing types that include affordable housing.

**Housing Stock by Type and Ownership
Town of Millsboro, 1990**

Units in Structure	Total Units	Percent of Total	Vacant Units	Occupied Units		
				Total	Owner	Renter
1 Detached	477	58.5	34	443	368	75
1 Attached	78	9.6	48	30	4	26
2	4	0.5	0	4	2	2
3 or 4	41	5	4	37	0	37
5 or more	174	21.4	10	164	0	164
Mobile Home, Trailer	35	4.3	12	23	17	6
Other	6	0.7	0	6	0	6
TOTAL	815	100	108	707	391	316

Source: U.S. Census 1990

Housing Age, Quality and Affordability

By 1990, the median year built for owner-occupied housing was 1980 and renter-occupied housing was 1984. A large number of owner-occupied units (primarily single-family detached) were built before 1940. Renter-occupied units (primarily apartments and other multi-family structures) were built more recently with construction booms in 1970-1979, 1985-1990, and 1990-1998.

**Housing Stock by Age and Ownership
Town of Millsboro, 2000**

Year Built	Total Units	Percent of Total	Vacant Units	Occupied Units		
				Total	Owner	Renter
Built 1999 to March 2000	25	2.16	10	15	15	0
Built 1995 to 1998	131	11.30	40	127	69	58
Built 1990 to 1994	206	17.77	18	188	91	97
Built 1980 to 1989	263	22.69	29	234	108	126
Built 1970 to 1979	180	15.53	5	175	86	89
Built 1960 to 1969	105	9.06	9	96	40	56
Built 1950 to 1959	81	6.99	23	58	43	15
Built 1940 to 1949	47	4.06	20	37	31	6
Built 1939 or earlier	121	10.44	18	103	88	15
TOTAL	1159	100.00	172	1033	571	462

Source: U.S. Census 2000

The median value for housing in the town was \$92,200 in 2000. The majority of housing was valued in the \$60,000-125,000 range, with no housing valued below \$30,000 or above \$400,000.

Owner-occupied Housing Units, 2000

	Number	Percentage
VALUE RANGE		
Less than \$30,000	0	0
\$30,000 to \$34,999	8	1.8
\$35,000 to \$39,999	0	0
\$40,000 to \$49,999	8	1.8
\$50,000 to \$59,999	5	1.1
\$60,000 to \$69,999	36	8.2
\$70,000 to \$79,999	74	16.8
\$80,000 to \$89,999	74	16.8
\$90,000 to \$99,999	67	15.2
\$100,000 to \$124,999	83	18.9
\$125,000 to \$149,999	29	6.6
\$150,000 to \$174,999	26	5.9
\$175,000 to \$199,999	9	2
\$200,000 to \$249,999	8	1.8
\$250,000 to \$299,999	4	0.9
\$300,000 to \$399,999	9	2
\$400,000 to more	0	0
Total	440	100
Median (dollars)	92,200	

Source: U.S. Census 2000

Housing Need

Future Need Based on Population Growth

There continues to be solid growth in housing units within the town. From 1970 to 1980 housing stock in the town increased by 50 percent and by another 45 percent from 1980-1990 followed by 42 percent growth from 1990-2000. If housing units continue to increase at 40 percent per ten years, there will be about 1,622 units available in 2010. The population projection for the town for 2010, based on the current pattern of growth, is 3,390. This would result in a household size of 2.09 persons per household, which is similar to the current household size of 2.04 persons per household. There are proposals by landowners and developers to increase the size of the town by over 4,000 new housing units. These proposals, if implemented, would be an increase in the rate of housing construction. The rate of growth to absorb these new developments would be slightly higher than the historic growth pattern from 1970 to 2000 period. At the 1970 to 2000 period growth rate, over 4,000 new housing units would be absorbed by 2040.

The Town of Millsboro and Sussex County should work together to determine the best location, type, and price range necessary to accommodate housing need without overbuilding or over zoning for housing. Failure to plan for anticipated housing need could result in decreased property values, unnecessary loss of open space, and proliferation of deteriorating vacant housing.

Discussion and Recommendations

The Planning Committee recognized the need to provide a wide range of housing types within the town. During the public outreach for the 2001 Plan, Millsboro residents voiced concern over two primary issues relating to housing. First, there was concern over the quality, upkeep, and reasonableness of rates for rental housing. Secondly, there was concern that larger single-family housing was not available to accommodate higher-income, white-collar workers relocating to corporate jobs in the community.

The Town of Millsboro has a high number of rental housing units, most of which are multi-family. Although many of these have been constructed in the last 10-20 years, the large number of rentals could give rise to concerns about the quality of construction and management. Often, quality of rental units can be accomplished simply by aggressive enforcement of existing building codes. Sussex County has obtained funding for this activity through the state's Community Development Block Grant program and has, in some cases, passed this funding through to municipalities. However, eligibility for participation in this program is contingent upon meeting population thresholds in low- and moderate-income ranges.

The current housing development patterns within the town provide some areas of relatively dense attached and detached housing. Higher-density development is an efficient land use pattern in terms of transportation, access to goods and services, and open space preservation. Increasing lot size is neither the only, nor the most efficient, way to encourage development of higher-end housing. Very often on-site amenities and quality design are the most critical factors, especially in a market where household sizes tend to be small. Owner-occupied condominiums are one example of an alternative high-quality housing type that is not widely available in Millsboro.

Care should be taken in any municipal actions to ensure that a mix of housing types and price ranges is maintained. Often, garage apartments, granny flats, and other accessory uses can be incorporated into the lots of single-family homes to provide a variety of housing options. This arrangement can also provide additional income to help families afford to live in larger single-family homes. Other combinations of flexible regulations, market incentives, and participation in state housing programs can help to satisfy the need for diversity in the housing market. The need to improve the quality and affordability of rental housing as well as the opportunity for home-ownership at lower income levels is also supported in the data for the Millsboro area. Millsboro has a history of providing a mix of housing types within developments and allowing for density substantially higher than typically approved in similar areas in Sussex County.

Housing Recommended Actions

1. Continue to require a mix of housing types through the development process.
2. Increase building code enforcement and monitor eligibility for state grants through the Delaware State Housing Authority to support this effort.
3. Explore the range of landlord regulatory and licensing options to ensure the quality and fairness of rental housing practices.
4. Identify locations where large lot single-family detached and condominium attached housing would be appropriate.
5. Develop improved site design standards and incentives to providing high-end amenities in residential developments.
6. Examine the existing development codes and ordinances to identify opportunities to encourage a greater range of housing types, including large lot single-family, accessory dwelling units, condominiums, and other alternatives.
7. Coordinate with the Delaware State Housing Authority to identify and participate in programs that increase homeownership among eligible renter households.

Urban Design

1. Develop and adopt site plan review guidelines that address the following:
 - Submission of accurate and informative plat plans
 - Parking lot configuration
 - Placement of garages and driveways in single-family residential developments
 - Provisions for on-street parking in single-family residential developments
 - Emergency access
 - Provision of sidewalks on-site, within developments and connections to existing sidewalk segments
 - Infrastructure improvements required for development
 - Commercial signage
 - Preservation of historic structures
2. Improve the consistency of house numbering systems in new and existing developments to facilitate emergency identification.

Chapter Ten: Historic and Cultural Resources

History

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

The area had a much earlier Native American presence. As English settlement pressures increased in the area now known as Worcester County, Maryland, Native Americans who had originally been known as Assateagues began moving from that area northwest to areas along Assawoman Bay and near the head of Indian River. Once there, they became known as “Indian River Indians,” and it is probable that the river was named for them. In 1711, the Maryland Colonial Assembly established a reservation for the Native Americans on the southwestern side of the river, encompassing much of what is now the southwestern side of Millsboro. Over the years this “Indian Land” was gradually purchased by members of the Burton family and together with their other lands, served as a major plantation. Their home farm stood just west of US 113 near present-day Hickory Hill Road. The farm road that ran from this farm to their landing on the Indian River became in later years the public road known as “Old Landing Road.” It is probable that surviving elements of the Native American community joined with other groups, such as the Nanticokes, to form the original Indian River Hundred Nanticoke community.

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

The mills were quickly augmented by other industries including a tannery, iron furnace, foundry, and a business that shipped hand-hewn cypress shingles made from the vast cypress stands in nearby Great Cypress Swamp. The foundry and forge, which operated until after the Civil War, were located at what is now known as Cupola Park. The word “Cupola” refers to the iron stack atop the brick furnace. An outgrowth of the iron business was the charcoal business that continued until shortly before the Second World War. However, the great mainstay of the local economy was the same in the eighteenth

and nineteenth centuries as it is today – agriculture and timber. In the late 1890s two large lumber mills began operation. One of them, the Houston-White Company, continued as Millsboro’s largest industry until the 1950s. The Vlastic Foods, Inc. cannery on the edge of town and H. E. Williams granary continue to operate today to serve the agricultural activities in the area. Millsboro had always been a market center for the outlying area because of its river location; thus, it was natural for the railroad to be routed through town when it was developed after the Civil War. The presence of the railroad has further enhanced the role of Millsboro as a market and distribution center. Even now, the railroad passes through town hauling agricultural products to market, grain to poultry farmers, and coal to the local generator.

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

In recent years Millsboro has experienced substantial economic growth. One setback occurred when the town’s National Cash Register plant ceased operation several years ago. However, All First Bank now uses the building as the site of its credit card and other banking operations.

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

Historic and Cultural Resources

The following table lists the properties listed on the US Department of the Interior’s National Register of Historic Places. The town does not have an established historic district. Only the Perry-Stockley House is located within the current boundaries of the town.

Historic Resources Listed in the National Register of Historic Places in the Millsboro Area

	<i>RESOURCE NAME</i>	<i>ADDRESS</i>
1	Carey’s Camp Meeting Ground	W of Millsboro off DE 24
2	Davis, Robert, Farmhouse	S of Rt. 24
3	Harmon School	S of jct. of Rt. 24 and CR 297
4	Harmon, Isaac, Farmhouse	CR 312A
5	Harmony Church	Rt. 24, E of CR 313
6	Hitchens, Ames, Chicken Farm	N of Rt. 24
7	Indian Mission Church	Jct. of Rt. 5 and CR 48
8	Indian Mission School	Rt. 24 between CR 312A and 313A
9	Indian River Archeological Complex	Address Restricted
10	Johnson School	Rt. 24 between CR 309 and 310
11	Perry-Shockley House	219 Washington St.
12	Warren’s Mill	NW of Millsboro on DE 326
13	Wright, Warren T., Farmhouse Site	Address Restricted

Source: US Department of the Interior, National Register of Historic Places
<http://www.nr.nps.gov/>, March 2004

The Plan recommends that historic properties and places of cultural significance be protected as development is approved. For new annexations, the Town will rely on the guidance of the State Historic Preservation Office for places of archeological significance or properties registered or eligible to be registered on the National Register of Historic Places. The Town of Millsboro recognizes the historic significance of properties in the downtown area and will work with homeowners, commercial property owners, and institutional owners to preserve historically significant resources. The Plan recommends that the town study its building and subdivision codes to preserve the historic pattern of development with respect to setbacks, building heights, building types, parking requirements, and other standards.

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

Chapter Eleven: Implementation

The Plan effectiveness in guiding development and growth will be based on the implementation of recommendations and incorporation of the principles in the decision-making process of the Town of Millsboro. There are recommendations for modifications of town policies and codes within the Millsboro Comprehensive Plan.

The implementation strategy for the town begins with the continuation of Planning and Zoning Commission to provide the mechanism for adopting, updating, and implementing the Plan. The range and number of new development applications and the area considered for annexation by the town requires that it have a Planning and Zoning Commission that meets on a regular, scheduled basis and fulfills the requirements of the Delaware Code Chapter 22 Section 7 and provisions of the Millsboro Charter. The Planning and Zoning Commission shall provide a venue to review annexation requests, zoning and subdivision actions, implement the required site plan review process, and update the zoning code, zoning map and subdivision regulations based upon recommendations in the updated Plan.

The Town is in the process of revising the zoning code and subdivision regulations based on the recommendations of the 2001 Plan. It is further recommended that the open space, recreation area, public facilities, and infrastructure fees be implemented to ensure orderly development. The recommendations for updating of the codes are detailed in the Plan. The review of zoning and subdivision request and the process of granted variances would need to be restructured to conform to the existing code and proposed updates. The role of the Board of Adjustment, the new Planning and Zoning Commission, and the Mayor and Town Council will need to conform to Delaware Code and Town of Millsboro Code provisions.

The Plan also recommends that the Town continue to strengthen the relationship with state agencies and the Office of State Planning Coordination on coordinating state agency planning activities with the town. One part of this relationship will be to make annual updates of planning, annexation, and zoning activity to the Office of State Planning Coordination.

Implementation Actions

1. Reappoint a Planning and Zoning Commission under the requirements of the Millsboro Town Charter and Delaware State Code Title 22.
2. Review and revise zoning and subdivision regulation to implement land use, urban design, open space, transportation, and growth recommendations.
3. Review the Comprehensive Plan on an annual basis and report to the Mayor and Town Council, Sussex County, and the State of Delaware on implementation progress or modifications. The Comprehensive Plan shall be reviewed every five years and revised ten years from date of adoption in accordance with the State Code.