

## **Town, County & State Officials**

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Ralph G. Redden, Vice Mayor

Christopher V. Truitt, Council Member and Secretary

Larry G. Gum, Council Member

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### **Senate**

George Bunting

### **House of Representatives**

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### **Cabinet Committee on State Planning Issues**

Lee Ann Walling, Chair

### **State Planning Coordinator**

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## **Institute for Public Administration**

This plan was prepared by the Institute for Public Administration of the College of Human Services, Education & Public Policy at the University of Delaware. The Institute 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. The Institute provides assistance to agencies and local governments through direct staff assistance and research projects as well as training programs and policy forums. Dr. Jerome R. Lewis is the Institute Director.

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## Executive Summary

The town of Millsboro recognizes the importance of long range planning and with this document updates the 1973 Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Millsboro. The 2001 Millsboro Comprehensive Plan provides a guide for future annexation, infrastructure, zoning and subdivision decisions. The plan recommends that development activities in the Millsboro town area be town focused with appropriate infrastructure provided and annexed as appropriate into the corporate limits of Millsboro. The town recommends to Sussex County and the State of Delaware to focus development into the corporate limits and provide for mechanisms to discourage scattered residential, commercial and industrial development that cannot be efficiently served by public sewer and water systems. The plan further recommends that when Sussex County updates its comprehensive plan that growth be directed into the corporate limits of Millsboro with appropriate infrastructure investments and clear indication of Millsboro's vision of growing, well planned town contained with the county's plan update.

The Town of Millsboro became a municipality with the passage of its first Charter by the General Assembly in 1909. This 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 has been 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 for the Town. The number of recent zoning ordinance amendments partly attests to the pressures of growth on the small town.

The Town of Millsboro contracted with the University of Delaware's Institute for Public Administration to complete an update of the town's plan. Funding assistance was provided by the Cabinet Committee on State Planning Issues' Limited Funding Pool of the Infrastructure Planning Account.

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

In the winter of 1999, the Town Council and Mayor of Millsboro appointed a planning committee. This action was undertaken to increase the involvement of the public in the plan development process. This committee has met in public meetings from the spring of 1999 through 2000 and into the spring of 2001 to provide guidance to develop the vision and goals, review land use and growth objectives, review the town zoning and subdivision practices, and to make revisions in the comprehensive plan.

## **Vision**

Based on the outreach efforts for developing the Comprehensive Plan, 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 that future while preserving small town characteristics. There was strong support for maintaining the traditional downtown and improving its appearance. Housing was noted frequently with concerns for housing diversity (including more choices for higher-end markets) and the quality of the rental market.

Economic development was a key issue for many citizens. Chamber of Commerce representatives identified specific service industry economic development needs. The natural setting and parks were a noted highlight of Millsboro's character, but many citizens expressed desire for an expanded park system. Transportation issues garnered a number of responses dealing with all modes including automobiles, trucks, bicycles, pedestrians and transit. Greater mobility choices were identified as a need. Frequently cited problems were truck traffic in town and the appearance and safety along US 113. Also, east-west circulation issues were identified as a transportation need. The local schools were often discussed during the planning process, and while people felt that the quality of education was good, they were concerned that the facilities were in need of upgrades. Other community services including police, fire, libraries, and utilities were satisfactory to most residents.

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 individual goals, a vision statement has been developed to describe an overarching policy, or mission statement, for the Comprehensive Plan. This vision statement was developed based upon input from the public, town leaders, and stakeholders engaged in the plan development.

### *Vision for the Town of Millsboro, Delaware*

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

## Plan Goals

1. To remain a center for appropriate and planned growth within Sussex County. The Town recommends to Sussex County and the State of Delaware to map an accurate and substantial representation of Millsboro's capacity and ability to accept growth in residential, commercial and employment activities.
2. To encourage an adequate supply of range of residential uses and housing types. To maintain existing multi-family developments and encourage a mix of high quality housing for families and individuals of all ranges of income. To encourage residential development in appropriate areas as designated by the future land use plan that will be integrated with existing residential developments. 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. Residential development will also be considered in the north and to the east over the longer term as appropriate.
3. Office and major employment developments will be focused 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. Downtown commercial development will be concentrated in the Main and Washington Street corridor from Railroad Street to the junction of Main and Washington Streets. Highway commercial will be concentrated on US 113. The impact on the transportation system will of special importance to development on the US 113 corridor.
5. Open Space and recreation facilities will be maintained and expanded 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 part of major residential subdivisions.
6. Protect 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 identification of resources and protection through the development, rehabilitation or redevelopment activities that impact these resources. The Historical Preservation Committee shall serve in an active role in assisting the town to preserve threaten historical and cultural 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 to provide access to alternative transportation modes.
9. To 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. To 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 that should be annexed 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 that should be annexed to provide services.
3. Encourage the annexation of properties to provide land served by public infrastructure for residential, office, commercial, and industrial uses.
4. The plan recommends that development occur 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. This type of development would be better served by municipal water and sewer.
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 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 communications 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 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 in favor of the Main Street corridor between Railroad Street and Dodd Street.

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 the 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.
2. Revise the zoning and subdivision regulation 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. Undertake a planning study in cooperation with the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control, Water Resources Division to determine the future treatment of wastewater for the town of Millsboro. Identify and receive in writing agreements from the State of Delaware and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on type of treatment system that will be usable for the length of time to recover the costs of investment in the system at minimum 15 years.
2. Expand municipal water and wastewater services to adjacent areas to the north, south, east, and west of town through annexation in order to satisfy Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) requirements and improve service quality.
3. 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.

4. Coordinate with the State and Sussex County to identify funding sources for water/wastewater capacity upgrades.
5. Develop a wellhead protection ordinance.
6. Develop a water resource protection area ordinance to provide increased protection of groundwater resources relied upon for municipal water supply.
7. Develop a storm water management plan for the town of Millsboro. Prior to improvements in roads or sidewalks or new development required the creation of a storm water 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 to solicit 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 business mix in downtown to identify the ideal mix of business types, the 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 of Millsboro to meet the needs of fire equipment and school buses. Recommend that all developments greater than 10 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 Access Management Policy and Corridor 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 also considering 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 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 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 S.R. 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 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 and existing traditional-style housing
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 development of the 2002 update 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.

## 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. This 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 have created the need for a comprehensive guide to decision-making for the Town. 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 1990 population was 1,643 according to the U. S. Census Bureau. The Town has recently appointed a comprehensive plan committee. The Town does not have a planning commission, but the Town's Mayor and Town Council make land use decisions. The Town provides basic public services related to police, parks, public works (including streets, sidewalks, storm water, drinking water and wastewater), land use regulations, building inspection, animal control and garbage collection.

Map 1, contained in the map appendix, displays the current incorporated limits of the Town of Millsboro along with parcel boundaries and landmarks. The map reveals the traditional development of Millsboro with a core downtown and decreasing densities away from the core. 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 U. S. 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 10 miles from Georgetown, the County Seat, to the north.

The Town has a traditional downtown encompassing four blocks around the intersection of S. R. 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 U. S. 113 is primarily commercial including several large shopping centers. Some of the U. S. 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 U. S. 113 around S. R. 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 U. S. 113 and S. R. 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 Vlasic 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 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 completed was an 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 began in June 1998 with the development of citizen surveys distributed initially at the Chicken Festival and subsequently in other venues. This effort continued in the fall of 1998 and spring of 1999 with a Town Council Workshop, Public Workshop, articles in the Chamber of Commerce newsletter and meetings with various stakeholders. These stakeholders included the Greater Millsboro Chamber of Commerce, the Indian River School District, Sussex County, and state agencies such as the Delaware Department of Transportation and State Housing Authority.

These outreach efforts were aimed at determining issues and priorities for the Town of Millsboro. Coordination with state and local agencies was intended to coordinate the long-range plans and capital investment strategies of these agencies together with the vision for Millsboro's future. After an initial draft of the plan and map were prepared the recommendation was made and accepted by the town to form a planning committee. The committee was formed in the fall of 1999 and held a series of meetings in 2000 and 2001 to consider the second draft of the plan and plan maps.

## **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 State summarized its planning goals in the "Shaping Delaware's Future Report" issued in August 1995 by the Cabinet Committee on State Planning Issues. This report listed ten goals and a number of action statements that would guide the future of Delaware's growth, economic development, infrastructure investments and quality of life. Key to this strategy is the targeting of public investments to support wise land use practices. The Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Millsboro supports those statewide goals and puts forth a strategy for attracting growth to an existing community while preserving quality of life and the environment.

In response to the "Shaping Delaware's Future Report," many state agencies have developed their own long-range planning documents. One of the most influential of these is the Department of Transportation's "Transportation and the Future of Delaware" plan. The long-range plan identifies goals and strategies to focus the State's transportation investments and support existing communities. Other state agencies have adopted policies and programs that begin to implement the State's goals. In late 1998, the Cabinet Committee on State Planning Issues released a draft "Investment and Resource Management Strategy" map. This map is a composite illustration of the investment strategies of each State agency and demonstrates the State's on-going commitment to its 1995 recommendations. This map was also consulted in the development of the Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Millsboro.

The following are the Shaping Delaware's Future Goals as adopted in December 1999.

1. Direct investment and future development to existing communities, urban concentrations and growth areas.
2. Protect important farmlands and critical natural resource areas.
3. Improve housing quality, variety and affordability for all income groups.
4. Ensure objective measurement of long-term community effects of land use policies and infrastructure investments.
5. Streamline regulatory processes and provide flexible incentives and disincentives to encourage growth in desired areas.
6. Encourage redevelopment and improve livability of existing communities and urban areas, and guide new employment into underused commercial and industrial sites.
7. Provide high quality employment opportunities for citizens with various skill levels to retain and attract a diverse economic base.
8. Protect the state's water supplies, open spaces, farmlands and communities by encouraging revitalization of existing water and wastewater systems and the construction of new systems.
9. Promote mobility for people and goods through a balanced system of transportation options.
10. Improve access to educational opportunities, health care and human services for all Delawareans.
11. Coordinate public policy planning and decisions among state, counties and municipalities.

The Town of Millsboro has addressed the goals, strategy statements, and strategy maps through the goals and land use plan for the Town. The plan recommends growth to be concentrated in areas targeted for state investment and within the Sussex County development areas. 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 adopted in 1996. This document provides guidance about the County's anticipation of growth, expansion of services and potential annexation around the Town of Millsboro.

### **Authority to Plan**

The town of Millsboro has the authority to plan granted by the Delaware General Assembly in Title 22 of the Delaware Code. In a continued effort to encourage comprehensive planning, the General Assembly, in 1998, revised the requirements for municipalities to make comprehensive plans. The current population of the Town of Millsboro is estimated to be near the 2,000 threshold for requiring the development of a comprehensive plan based on this mandate. The Town has undertaken a comprehensive

plan update based upon the Delaware Code. 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.

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

(f) Municipalities shall file their adopted comprehensive plan with the Office of State Planning Coordination within 90 days of the effective date of this section, and within 90 days after any re-adoption or revision, update, or amendment thereto. Municipalities shall further 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.

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 in 1998 and 1999. The 2000 Census and 2000 Population Projections from the Delaware Population Consortium will need to be examined in the near future by the town to determine the actual impacts of population growth. This data will become available late in 2001 and in 2002. The plan recommends, in the first review of the plan by the planning commission and town council, that the 2000 Census figures replace the data used in this plan.

The population of the Town of Millsboro was 1,643 according to the 1990 U. S. Census. That population grew to 1,898 by July showing the largest percent growth of any municipality in Delaware. From 1990-1996, Millsboro grew by 15.5%, which translates into a 2.6% annual growth rate compared to a 2.5% growth rate for Sussex County and a 1.5% growth rate for the State during the same period. While Millsboro ranked first in the state for percent change in population from 1990-1996, it ranked ninth for the actual number of change in population. Historically, Millsboro has been experiencing this rapid growth for several years as demonstrated by an even higher, 3.3% 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 in Sussex County illustrate the rapid increase in population due to tourism and retirement growth along coastal Sussex County. Millsboro has already experienced the spill over 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 environmental and financial consideration will cause an increasing pressure on residential and office space market within the 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
Town of Millsboro	536	1,073	1,233	1,643	n.a.	n.a.
Greater Millsboro	n.a.	7,794	9,971	12,897	17,077	21,857
Sussex County	73,195	80,356	98,004	113,847	139,970	165,539
Delaware	446,292	548,104	594,338	669,069	759,800	859,188
Note: Greater Millsboro is defined as Census Tracts 506 & 507						
Source: DE Population Consortium, Sussex County. Economic Development Office						

Growth Rates and Projected Rates  
1980-1996

	Change 1980-90		Change 1990-1996	
	Number	% Annual	Number	% Annual
Town of Millsboro	410	3.3	255	2.6
Greater Millsboro	2177	2.8	n.a.	n.a.
Sussex County	15,843	1.6	17,334	2.5
Note: Greater Millsboro is defined as Census Tracts 506 & 507				
Source: U. S. Census Bureau and Delaware State Data Center				

A greater understanding of the Town population is gained by examining the context of its surrounding area. From 1970 to 1990, the incorporated area of Millsboro has accounted for a greater percentage of overall population in Sussex County. Similarly, state projections for Greater Millsboro anticipate the incorporated area of the Town will continue to include larger portions of the regional population growth.

Population and Projections as a Percent of County Population  
1970 - 2020

	1970	1980	1990	2000	2020
Town of Millsboro	0.73%	1.34%	1.44%	n.a.	n.a.
Greater Millsboro	n.a.	n.a.	11.33%	12.20%	13.20%
Source: Sussex County Economic Development Office					
Note: Greater Millsboro is defined as Census Tracts 506 & 507					

### **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 Greater Millsboro and 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 of these estimates provides similar results that have been summarized in an average population projection.

The population of the Town of Millsboro has been estimated for the years 1990 and 1996 based upon the U. S. Census and official estimates published by the Delaware State Data Center. Based upon this information, population has been projected forward based upon the 2.6% annual growth rate observed for the period 1990-1996. The second scenario calculates the Town's portion of the official County population projection based upon the 1990 percent of County population residing in Millsboro (1.4%). The third scenario performs a similar calculation based on the 1990 percent of Greater Millsboro's population residing in Millsboro (12.7%). The averages of these calculations suggest Millsboro's population growing by 2.3% annually to a total of 2,075 by the year 2000 and by 1.6% annually from 2000-2020 for a 2020 population of 2,759.

Population Projection Scenarios  
Town of Millsboro, 2000-2020

	1990	1996	2000	2020
Estimated Population	1,643	1,898		
Trend Projection of 2.6% Annual Growth			2,095	3,185
1.4% of Projected County Population			1,960	2,318
12.7% of Projected Greater Millsboro Population			2,169	2,776
Average of the Three Scenarios			2,075	2,759
Source: University of Delaware, Institute for Public Administration, US Census, Sussex County Tax Assessment				

**Race and Age**

Millsboro’s population has a greater proportion of non-minority persons than for the rest of Sussex County or the State of Delaware. The Town’s population is fairly well spread out across age categories, although the largest population segment is in the 70 years-of-age and older category. 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 slightly more senior citizens (31%) than the state (16%), and slightly fewer children (24%) than in the state (28%). On balance, Millsboro has slightly fewer residents in the wage-earning years of 20-59 (45%) than in the state as a whole (56%). The census tracts that make up Greater Millsboro, ranked fifth (Eastern Millsboro) and seventeenth (Western Millsboro) for having the highest number of persons aged 65 and over in the State of Delaware (source: Legg Mason Realty Group and U. S. Census Bureau).

Population by Race  
1990

	White		Black		Other	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Town of Millsboro	1,368	83.3	241	14.67	34	1.1
Sussex County	93,421	82.1	19,176	16.8	1,250	1.1
Delaware	543,911	81.3	113,893	17	11,265	1.2
Source: Delaware Population Consortium, 1998						

Population by Age and Gender  
1990

AGE	Millsboro		TOWN TOTAL	Delaware		STATE TOTAL
	Male	Female		Male	Female	
0-9	94	81	175	49,752	47,382	97,134
10-19	127	85	212	45,053	44,265	89,318
20-29	79	104	183	56,694	57,479	114,173
30-39	115	155	270	55,580	57,123	112,703
40-49	76	74	150	41,211	43,224	84,435
50-59	76	67	143	29,021	31,176	60,197
60-69	76	125	201	27,140	31,556	58,696
70+	74	235	309	19,969	32,444	52,413
TOTAL	717	926	1643	324,420	344,649	669,069
Source: Delaware Population Consortium, 1998						

**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 seem to welcome growth and the diversification of jobs and housing that growth promises. However, they have concerns about the pattern of land use, the design of development, and the infrastructure (particularly transportation) required to support growth. They are concerned with losing the 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 areas within town and in adjacent areas. This survey was completed in 1998 and updated 1999. This information has been summarized in the following table and map included in the map appendix entitled Current Land Use.

<b>Land Use Summary for the Town of Millsboro</b>		
	Acres	Percent
Residential	253.06	32.13%
Commercial	165.08	20.96%
Institutional	42.95	5.45%
Industrial	10.80	1.37%
Recreation	20.63	2.62%
Vacant and Agricultural Uses	231.47	29.39%
Transportation and Utilities	63.69	8.09%
<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>787.68</b>	
<b>Total Square Miles</b>	<b>1.23</b>	
Source: University of Delaware and Sussex County		

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 residential usage with vacant or commercial uses 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 Street 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 Street. An existing and developing industrial and business park is located at the south end of town along Mitchell Street.

The residential areas can be seen in three areas. 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 nature predominates while scattered apartments and townhouses exist within the areas.

## **Future Conditions**

### **State of Delaware**

Agencies of the State of Delaware are attempting to identify locations where state-supported growth should occur. To this end, the Cabinet Committee on State Planning Issues has developed policies and mapped these issues to indicate the State's priorities for a variety of planning, infrastructure and service investments. 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 and 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. In its analysis, the State has used an average of 3-4 dwelling units per acre to examine the capacity of existing infrastructure and services. Compared to the Town of Millsboro and the amount of currently vacant land, this translates to 400 to 500 new housing units.

The Strategies for State Policies and Spending Map for Sussex County provides a guide for investment decisions for the state government that are county wide. 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 copy of the state strategy map is included in the Map appendix. Additional information on the State's strategies is available from the

Office of State Planning Coordination and on the Internet at <http://www.state.de.us/planning>.

The town of Millsboro accepts in the principle the state strategies 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 areas target 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. The town of Millsboro has historically attempted to attract compatible development into the town limits. .

The next map referenced is the Sussex County Comprehensive Plan of 1996 Future Land Use Plan for the Millsboro area and is located in the Map appendix.

Sussex County Comprehensive Plan indicates that Millsboro and the surrounding areas are to be developed in a manner consistent with town center development. The areas within the plan are consistent with areas included in the state plan for Community, Developing, and Secondary Developing. In addition 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. The plan recommends that during the 2001-2002 revision of the Sussex County plan that a greater emphasis be placed within the development of recommended land use maps for the concentration of development within the town of Millsboro and areas recommended for annexation.

### **Discussion and Recommendations**

The town of Millsboro recommends that future development be concentrated within the town boundaries and served by town services.

### **Growth**

1. Investigate and pursue annexation of developed areas that should be annexed 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 that should be annexed to provide services.
3. The plan recommends that development occur 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. This type of develop would be better served by municipal water and sewer.

## **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 the town of 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 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.

### **Land Use 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 communications 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 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 in favor of the Main Street corridor between Railroad Street and Houston Alley.

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 diversity the employment. Appropriate properties are designated in the plan for future investment.

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 target 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 Indian River School District has proposed the construction of a new high school in the Millsboro–Georgetown area. The site proposed in May of 2000 is on the Stockley Center property to the north of town. The town of Millsboro, through its planning process, has determined that a site on the west side of town as indicated on it is future land use map may be considered by the Indian River School District as a site for a school. The property meets the size constraints for a high school or other school as the district may propose to meet its needs in the future. This site is closer to existing town services and is within the area recommend 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 offices 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.

## Chapter Four

### **Conservation, Open Space and Recreation**

This chapter details the natural features of Millsboro and the immediate surrounding area. The town of Millsboro 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 present a limitation to development due to storm water 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**

A topography map for the town of Millsboro is included in the map appendix.

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 limitation in the zoning and subdivision code. The riparian corridor includes the stream, associated wetlands, and 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 organization 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 is a main priority 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 of Millsboro 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 ball

fields and a parking area. The Parks and Greenways map included in the map appendix details the location of existing park and recreation facilities.

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 10 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 further recommends that the town explore sites on the west side of US 113 for the development of neighborhood park to serve the residents on the west side of town. 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 and recreation in new residential subdivisions.
2. Revise the zoning and subdivision regulation 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.

## 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 source of electrical supply is Conectiv and the Delaware Electric Cooperative. The Delaware Solid Waste Authority handles solid waste disposal and Bell Atlantic-Delaware provides local telephone service. The 1990 U.S. Census indicated that electricity was the primary heating source for housing (358 units) followed by fuel oil and kerosene (238 units). This census also indicated that 95% 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 1990 census, 793 housing units were served by the Millsboro municipal public water system, while 22 housing units within the town corporate boundary were served by individual wells. 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. These three wells have a total annual allocation permit from the DNREC of 174 million gallons.

<b>Millsboro Public Water Wells</b>				
<b>Well #</b>	<b>Date Drilled</b>	<b>Depth (feet)</b>	<b>Aquifer</b>	<b>Capacity</b>
1	9/1/53	72 – 84	Columbia	225 gpm
2	unknown	74 - 94	Columbia	250 gpm
3	5/2/79	205 – 255	Manokin	325 gpm

In 1998, Millsboro had a total annual water usage of about 157 million gallons, with an average daily demand of 0.43 million gallons per day (mgd) and an average daily demand for its maximum month of 0.6 mgd (July). Since the margin between the amounts of water that Millsboro is permitted to withdraw and the amount it is using is now only about 10% and steadily decreasing, the Town will need to soon consider requesting an increase in its DNREC allocation.

The town appears to have adequate source water quantity available for increasing its allocation, 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 operates two water storage tanks-they have a combined capacity of 350,000 gallons.

### **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 mgd and a DNREC permit for discharging 0.566 mgd. The Town of Millsboro typically discharges about 0.4 mgd of treated effluent

The 1990 Census notes that 788 households were connected to this public sewer system, while 27 households disposed of sewage through a septic tank or cesspool. 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. These areas include the area of Oak Road and neighborhoods south of town along SR 331 such as Riverview. The study also examined the potential to expand service up to three miles west of Millsboro to accommodate new development.

The Town's wastewater system will be affected by a new state policy that specifies the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) of effluent that a water body can accommodate without causing environmental impacts. This policy is administered by the DNREC and is still in the development phase. Early analysis seems to indicate that the Vlastic facility may need to be brought into the City's water and sewer system in order to meet state thresholds. The State and Sussex County have expressed support to expansions of the Millsboro wastewater system capacity.

Maps of the Water Distribution and Sewer Systems are included in the map appendix. These maps indicate locations that are currently served and pumping stations required to serve the system.

### **Discussion and Recommendations**

The town of Millsboro has sufficient and safe drinking water and adequate wastewater treatment. The Town recognizes from communication received from the DNREC, Water Resource Division that modifications in wastewater treatment will need to be undertaken. The State of Delaware operates under a consent decree that the State and Environmental groups that initiated legal action to force the state to implement regulations concerning the federal Clean Water Act. The town understands that these regulations will at some point require the town to modify 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.

The plan also recommends further clarification of the agreement for wastewater treatment for the Stockley Center and adjoining state properties. The Indian River School District has proposed a high school for this site and assumed that the existing wastewater transmission and treatment systems are adequate. The transmission of wastewater from the Stockley Center and associated state properties has been the responsibility of the state through a state maintained transmission system. All upgrades and modifications are the responsibility of the State. The plan recommends that a wastewater and water plan be part of a master plan for the Stockley Center and associated state properties.

## Recommended Actions

1. Undertake a planning study in cooperation with Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC), Water Resources Division to determine the future treatment of wastewater for the town of Millsboro. Identify and receive in writing, agreements from the State of Delaware and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on type of treatment system that will be usable for the length of time to recover the costs of investment in the system. (At minimum 15 years)
2. Expand municipal water and wastewater services to adjacent areas to the south, east and west of Town through annexation in order to satisfy Total Maximum Daily Load requirements and improve service quality.
3. Initiate an allocation process with DNREC to increase the current permit for withdrawing water to be used for supplying drinking water to the residents and businesses of Millsboro.
4. Coordinate with the State and Sussex County to identify funding sources for water/wastewater capacity upgrades.
5. Develop a wellhead protection ordinance.
6. Develop water resource protection area ordinance to provide increased protection of groundwater resources relied upon for municipal water supply.
7. Work with Sussex County to have new development outside of town equipped with appropriate infrastructure to prepare for possible future service or annexation and service provision.
8. Develop a storm water management plan for the town of Millsboro. Prior to improvements in roads or sidewalks or new development required the creation of a storm water impact statement.

## Chapter Six Community Services

### Public Schools

#### Indian River School District

The Town of Millsboro is within the Indian River School District, which has its administrative office in Selbyville. Information used in this chapter was collected in 1999 and refers to the 1996-97 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 7,208 students in the 1996-97 academic year. During this period, the student to teacher ratio was 15.2 (statewide student to teacher ratio was 16.8). Minority enrollment was 30.9% (36% statewide), and the overall attendance rate was 93.7% (93.3% statewide). The District's expenditure per pupil, excluding special schools, was \$6,249. This amount was just slightly below the statewide average of \$6,989 for the same year. These statistics indicate a strong overall academic program, and recent trends demonstrate continued improvement as shown in the following table.

#### Indian River School District Performance Trends

<b>MEASURE</b>	<b>1981-82</b>	<b>1989-90</b>	<b>1996-97</b>
Attendance Rate	92.0	93.8	93.7
Student to Teach Ratio	17.3	16.6	16.8
Expenditure Per Pupil	\$ 1,978	\$ 4,320	\$ 6,249

### Facilities

Public schools serving The Town of Millsboro 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 of Millsboro, 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 S. R. 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.

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 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. Siting of any future school facilities should consider the location of residential growth, both existing and potential, in order to maximize proximity between student's residence and school. This will reduce transportation costs and maintain the close association between town and school that has been traditional of small towns. Development of school facilities in the western portion of the Town of Millsboro could provide easy access and municipal services in this growing part of town.

Indian River School District engaged in a process of school planning and expansion during the 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 school years. A new high school has been proposed adjacent to the Stockley Center on state property. Additional improvements to existing school within Millsboro have also been proposed and approved in a district referendum in 2000. The impact of the new high school to the town will be in the provision of public services. Wastewater from the Stockley Center flows into the town sewer system. The new high school may also impact the provision of police services and impact the local fire services. The site is not immediately adjacent to the town.

### **Private Schools**

There are eight private schools within the Indian River School District that enrolled 448 students in 1996-97.

### **Institutions of Higher Learning**

Residents of the Town of Millsboro 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**

Regarding the public school system, overcrowding and near-capacity buildings are a concern. Trends in student growth seem to indicate that the problem will only get worse as growing enrollments in the elementary schools begin to enter the middle and high school.

The Indian River School District has considered construction of a set of new schools throughout the District. In the spring of 2000, the voters of the School District approved a referendum for new construction that included a high school on the Stockley Center

site. The plan recommends that the town of Millsboro negotiate with the school district to find a suitable site for a new high school 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 of Millsboro 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 of Millsboro are low with the 1990 U.S. Census reporting 2.9% total unemployment. Unemployment was higher for females (3.9%) than males (2.9%). Black females had the worst unemployment rating at 10.8%, but black males reported full employment. Unemployment for males and females of other races was also 0.0%.

Employment Status by Race and Gender  
Town of Millsboro, 1990

	Employed	Unemployed	Unemployment Rate	Not in Labor Force
TOTAL	708	21	2.9%	589
Male	362	7	1.9%	163
Female	346	14	3.9%	426
WHITE	625	17	2.6%	522
Male	316	7	2.2%	161
Female	309	10	3.1%	361
BLACK	70	4	5.4%	57
Male	37	0	0.0%	0
Female	33	4	10.8%	57
OTHER RACE	17	0	0.0%	15
Male	11	0	0.0%	2
Female	6	0	0.0%	13
Source: U. S. Census Bureau				

### Employment By Sector

The service sector provided the most jobs in the Town of Millsboro (26%), followed by retail (23%) and manufacturing (19%). Agriculture, forestry and fisheries accounted for a small part of overall employment in town (2.8%), however, many of the reported manufacturing jobs rely on agricultural enterprise in the surrounding region. Employment in the finance, insurance and real estate arena (FIRE), which includes the First Omni Bank, accounted for 7.9% of the employment of Millsboro residents. 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, 1990

Sector	Number	Percent
Agriculture, forestry & fisheries	20	2.8%
Construction	60	8.5%
Manufacturing	136	19.2%
Transportation	12	1.7%
Communications & other public utilities	25	3.5%
Wholesale trade	14	2.0%
Retail trade	163	23.0%
Finance, insurance & real estate	56	7.9%
Services	187	26.4%
Public Administration	35	4.9%
<b>TOTAL EMPLOYED</b>	<b>708</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
Source: U. S. Census Bureau 1990		

**Employment By Location**

The majority of Millsboro residents work within the Town of Millsboro (37.2%) or surrounding Sussex County (51.7%). 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 to 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 will be shorter in duration.

Place of Work for Millsboro Residents  
Town of Millsboro, 1990

	Number of Workers Residing in Millsboro	Percent of Workers Residing in Millsboro
Worked within Town of Millsboro	257	37.2%
Worked within Sussex County	357	51.7%
Worked in Kent or New Castle Counties	2	0.3%
Worked out of Delaware	74	10.7%
Total Workers	690	100.0%
Source: U. S. Census Bureau 1990		

**Income**

Household incomes in Millsboro are primarily middle-range with the \$15,000-24,999 being the most common range. The median income for all households is \$20,270, and the mean income is \$25,411. Incomes are slightly higher on average for family households than for non-family households. When examined by race, white households earn more than the overall average for the area (mean income equals \$27,693) while black households earn considerable 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, 1990

Income Range	Number of Households
\$0 - 4,999	80
\$5,000 - 9,999	109
\$10,000 - 14,999	82
\$15,000 - 24,999	126
\$25,000 - 34,999	111
\$35,000 - 49,999	100
\$50,000 - 74,999	62
\$75,000 - 99,999	15
\$100,000+	5
Source: U. S. Census Bureau 1990	

The majority of households are above poverty status in the Town of Millsboro (82.5%). 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, 1990

	Total	Above Poverty	Percent of Total	Below Poverty	Percent of Total
All Households	690	569	82.5	121	17.5
Source: U. S. Census Bureau					

Poverty Status by Householder Age and Type of Household  
Town of Millsboro, 1990

	Age of Householder					
	15-64		65-74		75+	
	Above Poverty	Below Poverty	Above Poverty	Below Poverty	Above Poverty	Below Poverty
Married-couple Family	236	14	58	0	19	3
Male Householder (no wife present)	2	11	0	0	0	0
Female Householder (no husband present)	33	22	6	0	4	0
Non-family Households (living alone)	107	25	36	16	53	30
Non-family Households (not living alone)	9	0	0	0	6	0
TOTAL	387	72	100	16	82	33
Source: U. S. Census Bureau						

### 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 of Millsboro.

**Population Within a Specified Radius  
Around the Intersection of Main and State Streets  
1990**

	5 Miles	10 Miles	15 Miles	20 Miles
Total Persons	9,321	32,725	76,881	133,179
Total Households	3,651	12,510	30,099	51,962
Source: Delaware State Data Center				

**Community Development**

**Downtown Redevelopment**

Downtown redevelopment and business retention is 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 is 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 see what businesses are operating in the downtown.

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, it has a high volume of through traffic. Some of these 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 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, and conference facilities. The Town of Millsboro 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. Recognizing 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, as well as an effort to establish 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. Additionally, the University of Delaware Research Park is located in Lewes. The Town of Millsboro has an existing base of industrial activity associated with Mountaire Inc., Vlastic Foods Inc., H.E. Williams 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 of Millsboro, 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. An office park is somewhat more flexible in locating 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, of Lewes, has expanded 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 also 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 20-30 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 recommend 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 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 to solicit 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 business mix in downtown to identify the ideal mix of business types, the 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 of Millsboro 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 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 manage 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 storm water management that is currently being addressed.

### Transportation Goals

- To maintain and improve the existing transportation and circulation pattern within the town of Millsboro.
- To 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.
- To connect land use and transportation decisions to preserve the capacity of existing and future transportation investments.
- To support the town's and region's economic well being while 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.

## Journey to Work

Travel Time for Journey to Work  
Town of Millsboro, 1990

Travel Time	Number	Percent of Total
0-4 minutes	91	13.2%
5-9 minutes	168	24.3%
10-14 minutes	73	10.6%
15-19 minutes	92	13.3%
20-24 minutes	66	9.6%
25-29 minutes	25	3.6%
30-34 minutes	126	18.3%
35-39 minutes	17	2.5%
40-44 minutes	8	1.2%
45-59 minutes	12	1.7%
60-89 minutes	2	0.3%
90 or more min.	0	0.0%
Worked at home	10	1.4%
TOTAL	690	100.0%
Source: U. S. Census Bureau		

The Journey-to-Work data from the 1990 U.S. Census indicates that the majority of Millsboro residents have a 0-20 minute commute. This commute would be in the immediate Millsboro region and include places such as Georgetown to 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 24 minute commute that may indicate commuting patterns to the beach communities or places such as Seaford. In comparison to national averages, commute times are short distances for residents in Millsboro in 1990. The town should examine the 2000 US Census information to determine if patterns have changed where more residents commute outside of Millsboro

Means of Transportation for Journey to Work Trip  
Town of Millsboro, 1990

	Number	Percent of Total
Drove Alone	573	83.0%
Carpool	58	8.4%
Public Transit	0	0.0%
Motorcycle	0	0.0%
Bicycle	0	0.0%
Walked	37	5.4%
Other	12	1.7%
Worked at Home	10	1.4%
TOTAL	690	100.0%
Source: U. S. Census Bureau		

Private Vehicle Occupancy for Journey to Work  
Town of Millsboro, 1990

Vehicle Occupancy	Number	Percent of Total
Drove alone	573	83.0%
2-person carpool	47	6.8%
3-person carpool	11	1.6%
4-person carpool	0	0.0%
5-person carpool	0	0.0%
6-person carpool	0	0.0%
7-or-more carpool	0	0.0%
Other means	59	8.6%
TOTAL	690	100.0%
Source: U. S. Census Bureau		

The Means of Transportation for the Journey to Work tables indicate that vast majority of Millsboro residents, as expected for Sussex County residents, used their own car for their commute journey in 1990. The limited amount of public transportation in 1990 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.

Vehicles Available Per Housing Unit  
Town of Millsboro, 1990

Number of Vehicles Available	Total	Percent of Total	Owner-Occupied Housing	Renter-Occupied Housing
None	72	10.2	11	61
1	272	38.5	119	153
2	272	38.5	188	84
3	79	11.2	61	18
4	12	1.7	12	0
5 or More	0	0	0	0
Average Vehicles Available	1.56		1.86	1.19
Source: U. S. Census Bureau				

Age of Householder by Vehicles Available  
Town of Millsboro, 1990

Number of Vehicles Available	Total	15-64 Years	65+ Years
None	72	31	41
1 or More	635	422	213
Source: U. S. Census Bureau			

Gender and Age by Mobility Limitation by Employment Status  
Town of Millsboro, 1990

Employment Status	With A Mobility Limitation				No Mobility Limitation			
	Male		Female		Male		Female	
	16-64	65+	16-64	65+	16-64	65+	16-64	65+
Employed	28	0	29	0	313	21	295	22
Unemployed	4	0	0	0	3	0	14	0
Not in Labor Force	12	14	23	76	54	67	108	123

Source: U. S. Census Bureau

The information on vehicle availability indicates that a majority of residents of Millsboro in 1990 had vehicles available. There were a higher proportion of people 65 and older who did not have access to vehicles in the household and those living in renter occupied housing were less likely to have access to vehicles. The majority of those residents with a mobility limitation were those over 65 and not in the labor force. The plan recommends, based upon this data and the current operation of transit facilities, to increase the efforts toward providing public transit to those over 65 and those in need of transportation to employment sites.

**Roadway Facilities**

The Transportation Base Map, located in the map appendix, details the existing transportation network within the town of Millsboro. 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 State Route 26 to the south of Millsboro and the northwest-southeast State Route 20 that runs through the town of Millsboro. 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.

The Transportation Base Map indicates that 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 this 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 streets within new developments serving Millsboro residents become public streets meeting municipal and state standards.

The town of Millsboro and the Delaware Department of Transportation have collected traffic counts for the Millsboro area to determine the extent of traffic and places of congestion. The AADT Counts map, located in the map appendix, displays count locations, segments counted, and segments with substantial count changes.

The US 113 and SR 24 intersection has had significant volumes at nearly 21,000 AADT (Average Annual Daily Traffic) counts in 1996 and 1997. In traffic counts in the June of 1998, the pattern of traffic indicates that traffic increases from 14,000 on Tuesday to over 20,000 on Thursday and 22,000 on Friday. The 1997 data also demonstrates that a significant portion of this traffic is turning onto SR 24 based on the drop in traffic on US 113 at the Sussex Road 334. The counts on SR 24 from US 113 to the east increase from 6000 at US 113 to 12000 at Main Street. The traffic count and other evidence shows that traffic is turning in significant numbers from US 113 to SR 24 in Millsboro. SR 24 through Millsboro acts as route to beach communities for travelers from the Millsboro region, Delaware and surrounding states.

In addition, roads within Millsboro have shown substantial increases in AADT counts. Old Landing Road has increased by approximately 3000 AADT. The increase along this road is indicative of the increased traffic on Washington and Main Streets and additional development along Old Landing Road. A similar increase has occurred along the section of SR 20 and Delaware Avenue on the north side of town. Development of new homes and search for alternative routes around the US 113 and SR 24 intersection may account for the significant increase in the daily count along Delaware Avenue on the west side of town.

The Preliminary Access Management Designations Map for the town of Millsboro reflects the 1998-1999 determinations of levels of access for state roads that pass-through the town. The Corridor Preservation program designation of US 113 has been overlaid on this map. These two programs impact how development can occur within and adjacent to the town of Millsboro. The programs can act as tool to connect land use decisions and transportation investments.

The Delaware Department of Transportation manages access to state maintained streets. In the late 1990s the Access Management Policy was developed 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.

The preliminary designations listed on this map indicate the types of access management policies for the state roads through Millsboro. SR 24 and 20 are categorized as Level 5 – 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 Level 6 – Local Streets. The primary purpose of these roads and similar municipal street 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 Access Management Program and the Corridor Preservation Program impacts the transportation and land use on the US 113 corridor. US 113 has been designated a Preservation Corridor to conserve the capacity of the roadway. Under the Access Management Program US 113 has been designated as Level 2 – Principal Arterial Highway. Under both of these programs, 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.

### **Recommendations**

1. Improve internal road standards for subdivisions within the town of Millsboro to meet the needs of fire equipment and school buses. Recommend that all developments greater than 10 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 Access Management Policy and Corridor 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 also considering 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 S.R. 24.

## Chapter Nine Housing

### Households

In 1990, the number of persons per household was lower in the Town of 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  
1990

	Households	Population	Persons Per Household
Town of Millsboro	690	1,643	2.38
Greater Millsboro	5,158	12,897	2.50
Sussex County	45,054	113,849	2.53
Delaware	249,062	669,069	2.69
Source: U. S. Census Bureau			
Note: Greater Millsboro is defined as Census Tracts 506 & 507			

Number of Households by Persons Per Household  
Town of Millsboro, 1990

Number of Persons Per Household	Number	Percent
1 person	267	38.69
2 persons	210	30.43
3 persons	106	15.36
4 persons	65	9.43
5 persons	33	4.79
6 persons	3	0.44
7 or more persons	6	0.87
TOTAL*	690	100.01
Source: U. S. Census Bureau		
* May not equal 100% due to rounding		

## Housing Stock

The number of housing units in Millsboro has been growing rapidly and consistently for several years. The number increased by 50% from 1970 to 1980, and by another 45% between 1980 and 1990 for a total of 815 housing units in 1990. According to a recent study by the Delaware State Housing Authority, the number of households in Greater Millsboro is expected to grow by 50% between 1995 and 2020. The same study notes that the census tract covering eastern Millsboro and its environs ranked sixth in the state for anticipated household growth between 1995 and 2000. This Eastern Millsboro tract ranks third in the state when household growth is projected to the year 2020. (Source: Legg Mason Realty Group and DE Population Consortium).

Number of Housing Units  
1970-1990

	1970	1980	Change 1970-80	1990	Change 1980-90
Number of Units, Town of Millsboro	375	562	50%	815	45%
Source: U. S. Census Bureau					

The primary type of housing units in the Town of Millsboro are single-family detached houses. Of these, the majority are owner-occupied. The second most common type of housing are apartments in buildings with 5 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 (391 owner-occupied and 316 renter-occupied). However, the type of housing varies greatly by ownership category. A recent study estimated that in 1995 there were 288 renter households in Greater Millsboro that were income eligible for homeownership (defined as annual household income greater than \$25,000 – Source: Legg Mason Realty Group and DE State Housing Authority).

While the number of mobile homes within the Town of Millsboro is not overwhelming, the census tracts that make up Greater Millsboro ranked first (E. Millsboro) and twelfth (W. Millsboro) in the state for the number of mobile homes. (Source: Legg Mason Realty Group, U. S. Census Bureau, and the Delaware State Housing Authority).

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
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>815</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>707</b>	<b>391</b>	<b>316</b>
Source: U. S. Census Bureau						

**Housing Age, Quality and Affordability**

By 1990, the median year built for housing stock in Millsboro is 1971 (source: U. S. Census Bureau). 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 and 1985-1990. According to a recent study for the Delaware State Housing Authority, the census tract including the eastern portion of Millsboro and its surrounding area ranked fifth in the state for the number of new housing units built between 1990 and 1995. The majority of this construction likely took place east of town toward the beach area.

Housing Stock by Age and Ownership  
Town of Millsboro, 1990

Year Built	Total Units	Percent of Total	Vacant Units	Occupied Units		
				Total	Owner	Renter
1989 to March 1990	62	7.6%	37	25	12	13
1985-1988	118	14.5%	5	113	32	81
1980-1984	47	5.8%	3	44	15	29
1970-1979	195	23.9%	29	166	85	81
1960-1969	75	9.2%	10	65	43	22
1950-1959	105	12.9%	2	103	61	42
1940-1949	57	7.0%	13	44	34	10
Before 1940	156	19.1%	9	147	109	38
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>815</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>707</b>	<b>391</b>	<b>316</b>

Source: U. S. Census Bureau

The median value for housing in the Town of Millsboro was \$72,200 in 1990 (source: U.S. Census Bureau). The majority of housing was valued in the \$50,000-99,000 range, with no housing valued below \$15,000 or above \$299,999.

Housing Stock by Value  
Town of Millsboro, 1990

Value Range of Owner-Occupied Units	Number of Units	Percent of Total
Less Than \$15,000	0	0.0%
\$ 15,000 - 49,999	49	13.5%
\$ 50,000 - 99,999	235	64.9%
\$100,000 - 149,999	37	10.2%
\$150,000 - 199,999	22	6.1%
\$200,000 - 299,999	19	5.2%
\$300,000 +	0	0.0%

Source: U. S. Census Bureau

## Housing Need

### Unsatisfied Existing Need

In 1990, Greater Millsboro consisted of 5,158 households. By 1995, there were an estimated 744 households (14.4%) that did not have their housing needs met because of substandard conditions, overcrowding or affordability issues. These households were nearly evenly split between renter and owner-occupied units. The census tracts that make

up Greater Millsboro, ranked second (Eastern Millsboro) and twelfth (Western Millsboro) for having the highest number of substandard housing units in the State of Delaware in 1995.

Estimated Housing Needs for Households at 0-60% of Median Income  
Greater Millsboro, 1995

	Renters			Homeowners		
	Sub-standard	Other	Total	Sub-standard	Other	Total
Greater Millsboro	120	244	364	176	204	380
Note: Greater Millsboro is defined as Census Tracts 506 & 507. "Housing Needs" defined as 1) substandard housing unit and 2) other, meaning a housing cost burden greater than 30% of household income or overcrowding.						
Source: Legg Mason Realty Group, U. S. Census Bureau and DE State Housing Authority						

**Future Need Based on Population Growth**

At the current rate of growth in housing units, the housing supply may be saturated by the year 2000. In 1990, there were 815 housing units available to 690 households with a vacancy rate of approximately 13-15%. In 1995, a Delaware State Housing Authority study revealed that approximately 14.4% of households in Greater Millsboro were in need of housing because they lived in housing that was either substandard, too small or too expensive. This would suggest that the current balance between housing units and households is near equilibrium, although there is likely some need for diversity and newer housing units.

From 1970 to 1980 housing stock in the Town of Millsboro increased by 50%. It increased another 45% from 1980-1990. If housing units continue to increase at 45% per ten years, there will be about 1,182 units available in 2000 to serve approximately 871 households (at the current 2.38 persons per household). This would translate to 311 housing units that would either be vacant or provide alternatives for "under-housed" families and seasonal residents. If that housing unit growth continued to 2020, there would be 1,325 more housing units than year-round households. Clearly, the growth in housing units will taper off at some point by the year 2000 if current population projections prove correct.

Based on these population projections and analysis, new population growth would only require 76 new housing units between 1990 and 2000. Projected population growth suggests that another 121 housing units will be needed between 2000 and 2020. Currently, there are 39 vacant lots available for home construction in the neighborhood of Mill Landing, and 23 planned and unbuilt duplex units in Magnolia Meadows. These two currently approved and developing neighborhoods will supply an additional 62 housing

units in the coming years. Of course, there are other sources of housing demand beyond simple population growth such as seasonal housing, and existing housing needs as described above. However, 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 of Millsboro. During the public outreach for this 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 their 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.

In terms of owner-occupied housing, these units tend to be much older in construction and have not been the subject of recent construction activity. The median value and maximum range of values also supports the observation that higher-end housing may be needed in town. Only 21.5% of housing units are at \$100,000 or greater, and only 11.3% of housing is valued from \$150,000-299,999.

However, the housing data also recognizes the significance of small household sizes in Millsboro. There are a large number of one- and two-person households that would be most efficiently housed in small detached units or multi-family housing. Presumably, many of these households correspond to the older population in Millsboro that may be on fixed incomes and not desirous of large expensive homes.

The current housing development patterns within the Town of Millsboro 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 not 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 a family afford to live in a larger single-family home. 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 substantial higher than typically approved in similar areas in Sussex County.

### **Housing Recommended Actions**

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 large lot 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 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 and existing traditional-style housing
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 Indian presence. As English settlement pressures in the area now known as Worcester County, Maryland, the Indians 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 them 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 Indian River became in later years the public road known as “Old Landing Road.” It is probable that surviving elements of the Indian community joined with other Indian 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 the 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 grist mill 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 1890’s two large lumber mills began operation. One of them, the Houston-White Company, continued as Millsboro’s largest industry until the 1950s. The 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, and 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 to the present day, 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 that now uses the building as the site of its credit card and other banking operations purchased the vacant plant.

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 U.S. Department of the Interior’s National Historic Register. The town of Millsboro does not have an established historic district. Only the Perry-Stockley House is located within the current boundaries of the town of Millsboro.

**Historic Resources Listed on  
National Register Information System  
in the Millsboro Area**

	<b>RESOURCE NAME</b>	<b>ADDRESS</b>
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: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Register of Historic Places  
<http://www.nr.nps.gov/>, March 2001

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.

## Chapter Eleven Implementation

The plan effectiveness in guiding development and growth will be based in the implementation of recommendations and incorporation of the plan's 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 appointment of Planning and Zoning Commission to provide the mechanism for adopting, updating and implementing the plan document.

The immediate action of appointing a Planning and Zoning Commission will allow restructuring the development and annexation review process to conform to the existing zoning and subdivision code and the Delaware Code. The establishment of the Planning and Zoning Commission will 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 next implementation set will be a review of the zoning code and subdivision regulations based upon the recommendations in this plan. Recommendations for update of the codes are detailed in the plan. An important issue will be the evaluation of zoning of vacant land that has been recommended by this plan for a land use not consistent with existing zoning. Rezoning may be required based upon changes in the zoning code and to implement the future land use recommendation of this 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 update of the Sussex County Comprehensive Plan is scheduled for the summer and fall of 2001. The plan recommends that as implementation step that the Mayor and Council and the new Planning and Zoning Commission communicate the town plan recommendations and changes recommended in the part of the Sussex County Plan that directly effect the town of Millsboro. This communication should consist of sending copies of the plan to Sussex County officials, scheduling meetings with the Sussex County Administrator and County planners, and the presentation of Millsboro positions in appropriate forms.

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. 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 development of the 2002 update 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.