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Approved by the Georgetown Planning Commission, Mayor and Council -- October 2001
Preface

The intention of this comprehensive plan is to guide the officials of Georgetown in making decisions concerning the present and future of the town. This plan includes a description of existing conditions, the identification of issues, and the formulation of goals and specific actions to deal with identified issues. Together these plan elements provide a long-term decision-making basis and strategy for the Town's actions, investments, ordinances, and policies relating to development and growth.

The goal of this plan is to engage a wider community discourse about the future of the town. In particular it addresses the questions of how existing qualities can be preserved and enhanced, where and how future growth should take place, and which uses and qualities are desired by the community.

Planning Efforts

In 1995, state funds became available for municipal comprehensive planning efforts. The Cabinet Committee on State Planning Issues awarded Georgetown a matching grant from the Limited Funding Pool of the Infrastructure Planning Account. These funds are earmarked to assist municipalities to conduct basic comprehensive planning activities, begin updating plans older than five years, or write an overall strategy for development. The Office of State Planning Coordination administers these planning grants.

In 1996, the Town of Georgetown contracted with the Institute for Public Administration in the College of Human Services, Education and Public Policy at the University of Delaware to undertake an effort to create a town comprehensive plan. The Institute assembled a team of professional staff and graduate research assistants to work on this task. The planning team has met with town officials and staff over the time period to learn Georgetown policies and determine major issues to be addressed by the plan.

In a series of public meetings with the Planning Commission and Town Council, the Institute has requested input from town officials and the public for the development of the plan and the major issues that need to be addressed. The planning team's presentations were based upon comments from members of the planning commission, mayors, town council members, town staff and concerned local citizens.
The Authority to Plan

The preparation of a comprehensive development plan is the legal responsibility of the Town of Georgetown Planning Commission under Delaware enabling legislation. Title 22 of the Delaware Code Chapter 7 Section 702 specifies that

“[a] planning commission established in any incorporated city or town under this chapter shall make a comprehensive development plan for the development of the entire area of such city or town or of such part or parts thereof as said commission may deem advisable.”

Section 702 also establishes the contents of such a comprehensive development plan as the following:

“Such comprehensive development plan shall show, among other things, existing proposed public ways, streets, bridges, tunnels, viaducts, parks, parkways, playgrounds, sites for public buildings and structures, pierhead and bulkhead lines, waterways, routes of railroads and buses, locations of sewers, water mains and other public utilities, and other appurtenances of such a plan including certain private ways.”

Section 703 provides additional legal authority for the planning commission as stated:

“The planning commission shall have the full power and authority to make such investigations, maps and reports of the resources, possibilities and needs of the city or town as it deems desirable...”

In 1996, the Mayor and Council of the Town of Georgetown received a Limited Funding Pool of the Infrastructure Planning Assistance Fund grant from the Governor’s Cabinet Committee on State Planning Issues. The following excerpts from the grant application define the requirements for the grant:

“The Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Georgetown will include an analysis of the Town’s demographic data as well as a statement of the Town’s position on growth, expansion of its boundaries, development of adjacent areas outside the Town of Georgetown, potential for redevelopment and revitalization within the Town, and the overall character of the Town. The Comprehensive Plan will also address critical community issues, including the condition and adequacy of transportation infrastructure, water and wastewater facilities, affordable housing, health and welfare services, public safety, recreation and open space, and economic development.”

The grant especially highlights the need for intra- and intergovernmental coordination:

“Guided by the Shaping Delaware's Future goals for the State, the Town and Institute for Public Administration will seek coordination among the Governments and agencies impacted by the Town’s planning decisions, as well as those which impact the Town’s decisions about future growth.”

Approved by the Georgetown Planning Commission, Mayor and Council -- October 2001
Summary of the Planning Process

The process for the development of an updated comprehensive plan for the Town of Georgetown is described below:

March 2001 - Draft

This document was formally presented to the Planning Commission and Mayor and Council at a properly advertised public meeting on March 6, 2001. The preliminary draft consisted of the background study, recommendations for future land use and annexation proposals, a detailed analysis of 11 neighborhood areas in Georgetown, and an intergovernmental coordination policy for land use, infrastructure and development. The preliminary draft was available for review by the public and was submitted to the State of Delaware for review through the Land Use Planning Act procedures.

The March 2001 Draft of this plan was the subject of numerous public meetings which led to a series of revisions suggested by town residents, staff, the Planning Commission and the Town Council.

September 2001 – Draft

The Georgetown Planning Commission held public hearings on the draft plan on April 24, 2001 and August 22, 2001. At those hearings they approved a number of revisions to the March 2001 Draft based largely on public commentary and suggestions. The IPA revised the plan to incorporate these revisions, and issued the September 2001 Draft at a public meeting on September 19, 2001.

Adopted and Approved Comprehensive Plan

The Georgetown Planning Commission at its regularly scheduled meeting on September 19, 2001 approved the plan. The Georgetown Town Council approved the plan at its meeting on October 24, 2001. This document incorporates all comments, edits, and revisions approved by the Planning Commission, Mayor, and Council throughout the planning process. As such, it represents the final draft of the approved and adopted Town of Georgetown Comprehensive Plan, and shall serve as a guide for making land use, development, and infrastructure decisions by the Town of Georgetown.
**Town, County & State Officials**

**Town of Georgetown**

**Elected Officials**

Bob Ricker, Mayor  
John B. Roach, Jr., First Ward Council Person  
Michael Wyatt, Second Ward Council Person  
Gary Tonge, Third Ward Council Person  
Lee Turek, Fourth Ward Council Person

**Planning Commission**

Edwin Lambden, Chairperson  
Lynda Messick, Commissioner  
Sue Barlow, Commissioner  
Gary McCrea, Commissioner  
Larry McCool, Commissioner

**Town Staff**

David W. Baird, Town Manager  
Debbie Pfeil, Director of Planning and Zoning  
William Topping, Chief of Police  
William Bradley, Public Works Director  
Keith Hudson, WWT Plant Supervisor

**Sussex County**

Finley Jones, County Council Member, Second District  
Robert Stickles, County Administrator  
Lawrence Lank, County Planning Director

**State of Delaware**

Ruth Ann Minner, Governor, State of Delaware  
Thurman Adams, Jr., Senator, Nineteenth District  
Charles P. West, Representative, Forty-First District  
George Carey, Representative, Thirty-Sixth District  
Lee Ann Walling, Chair, Cabinet Committee on State Planning Issues  
Constance Holland, AICP, State Planning Coordinator
Institute for Public Administration

This plan was prepared by the Institute for Public Administration of the College of Human Services, Education and 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.

Jerome R. Lewis is the director of the Institute. Alexander M. Settles, AICP, served as project planner, coordinated efforts of the staff and was the Institute liaison with officials and staff from the Town of Georgetown. Christian Schlosser, a doctoral student, prepared the plan maps and served as the primary technical writer for the draft plan. David L. Edgell, AICP, assisted with the review and editing of the draft of the plan, revised the plan documents based on comments from the town, and directed the public review and plan adoption processes. Lisa Moreland edited the final drafts for punctuation and grammar. Graduate students who worked on the plan included Bettina Burger, James Purcell, and Karina Halvorsen, and Leonard Frohlich.

Institute Director

Jerome R. Lewis, Ph.D.

Georgetown Comprehensive Plan Team

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