2025 Update Delaware Strategies for State Policies and Spending

A Brief History and Overview of Update Process

February 2025



Looking Back – 30+ years ago

- Not all local governments developed comprehensive plans, or updated them regularly.
- The State and its agencies did not have a unifying plan or policy regarding land use, infrastructure and services.
- There was little coordination between the State and local governments regarding land use and infrastructure.



Looking Back – 30+ years ago

- December 1994 Shaping Delaware's Future Planning Conference
 - 120 attendees
- Interest Group Meetings
 - 40 meetings
- Interactive County Workshops
 - 250 attendees
- Telephone Survey
 - 1000 households



Goals of "Shaping Delaware's Future"

- **Goal 1** Direct investment and future development to existing communities, urban concentrations, and growth areas.
- Goal 2 Protect important farmlands and critical natural resource areas.
- Goal 3 Improve housing quality, variety and affordability for all income groups.
- **Goal 4** Ensure objective measurement of long-term community effects of land use policies and infrastructure investments.
- **Goal 5** Streamline regulatory processes and provide flexible incentives and disincentives to encourage development in desired areas.
- **Goal 6** Encourage redevelopment and improve the livability of existing communities and urban areas and guide new employment into underused commercial and industrial sites.



Goals of "Shaping Delaware's Future"

- **Goal 7** Provide high quality employment opportunities for citizens with various skill levels to retain and attract a diverse economic base.
- **Goal 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.
- **Goal 9** Promote mobility for people and goods through a balanced system of transportation options.
- **Goal 10** Improve access to educational opportunities, health care and human services for all Delawareans.
- **Goal 11** Coordinate public policy planning and decisions among state, counties and municipalities.



Origination of the State Spending Strategies

- Cabinet Committee on State Planning Issues 1994
- Responsibilities from Del Code, §9101, Title 29:
 - "The Committee shall consider matters relating to the orderly growth and development of the State, including, but not limited to:" recommendations for the most desirable general pattern of land use
- Instructed the Office of State Planning Coordination to develop the **Strategies for State Policies and Spending** to guide decisions.



Delaware Code Requirement

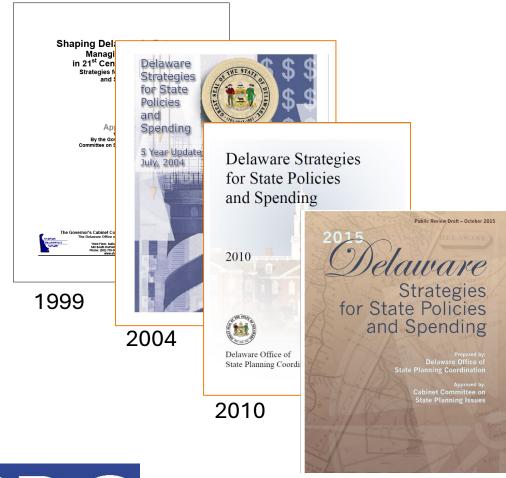
- Today the State Strategies is required by Delaware Code
- Title 29, Chapter 91, Section 9101 (c) (5):

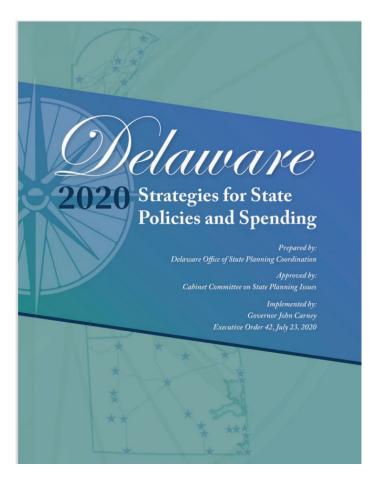
... The Committee shall consider matters relating to the orderly growth and development of the State, including, but not limited to:

Preparing the Strategies for State Policies and Spending document and maps, which shall serve as the primary policy guide that summarizes the State's land use goals, policies and strategies and directs State spending into investment levels that support the most efficient use of State resources, be they physical, fiscal, or natural, except that county and municipal governments shall retain their existing autonomy with respect to the land use designations set forth in their proposed and/or adopted comprehensive plans. The Strategies for State Policies and Spending shall be updated at least every five years, provided that the Governor may extend the deadline at his or her discretion.



Previous Strategies Versions







2015

Strategies Purpose

 To coordinate the provision of infrastructure and services with land-use decisions at the local level.

- Why Coordinate:
 - Land use decisions are a local responsibility;
 - The provision of infrastructure and services is a State responsibility
 - If the above aren't coordinated, then waste and inefficiency can occur
 - Quality of life is impacted



In other states, local governments fund these items. Often, they utilize property tax as primary funding. In Delaware, the legislature funds them through various revenue streams that are not tied directly to growth and services.

¹Updated Sussex County MOU with State Police provides 50% funding for 50 officers by FY2026. Current budget is \$4.1 million.



Figure 9: By the Numbers

State Funding for Services and Infrastructure

Explore the Financial Investments Dashboard <u>Here</u>

Delaware's State government funds many services and infrastructure needs...



90%

State Roads

\$750,500,000

Federal and state capital transportation funding for FY24



\$152,963,400

State police personnel and budget for FY24

100%

State's Largest Police Force



\$16,028,455

State paramedic program funding for FY24

30% Paramedics

Including a variety of support for public education...



90%

Public School Transportation

\$166,833,900

School transportation funding for FY24



\$224,781,456

Education capital funding for FY24

60-80%

Public School Construction



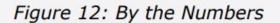
70%

Public School Operations

\$1,985,193,200

Education operating funding for FY24

Delaware's Demographics



Delaware Demographics and Housing

Sources: American Community Survey, Delaware Population Consortium

Housing costs are rising as Delaware's population ages and becomes more diverse.

Between 2012 and 2022...

149% vs 141% in median home value household income

Delaware's rising housing costs outpaced household incomes.

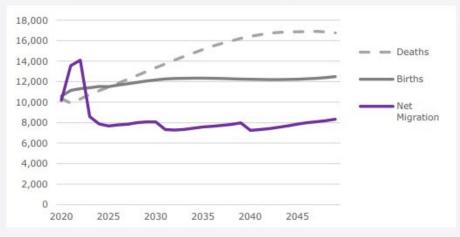
Delaware's 65+ population increased from 15% to 21%.

Delaware's Population by Race

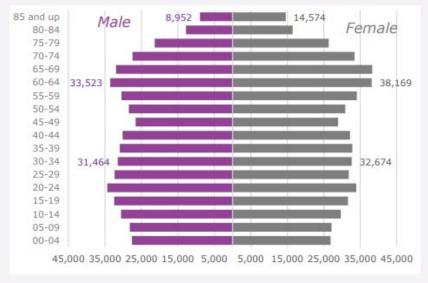
9% 10% Hispanic 10% 2 or More Races

Delaware's population is aging, and net migration is on the rise.

Factors in Population Change



2024 Population Distribution by Age and Sex





State Spending Strategies Use by Agencies

Agency	PLUS	Capital Budget Requests and Reviews	School Site Approvals	Infrastructure and Public Facility Locations
Agriculture	X	X		
Economic Dev.	Χ	X		
Transportation	X	X		X
Health and Social Services	X	X		X
Natural Resources	Χ	X		X
Education	X	X	X	X
Housing	X	X		
Budget		X	X	
Planning	X	X	X	
Public Safety	X	X		X



State Strategies and Local Government Planning

 Local governments use the Strategies as they are developing their comprehensive plans

 Governor certifies plans based on consistency with State Strategies





2025 Update

- Delaware Code: Title 29, Chapter 91, Section 9101 (c) (5) requires an update every 5 years
- Incorporate updated data
 - Comprehensive Plans certified since 2020
 - State Agency data layers
 - New data not available in 2020
- Review and refine State Agency policies tied to State Strategies
- Incorporate Feedback from Data Analysis Workgroup Process



Our update process

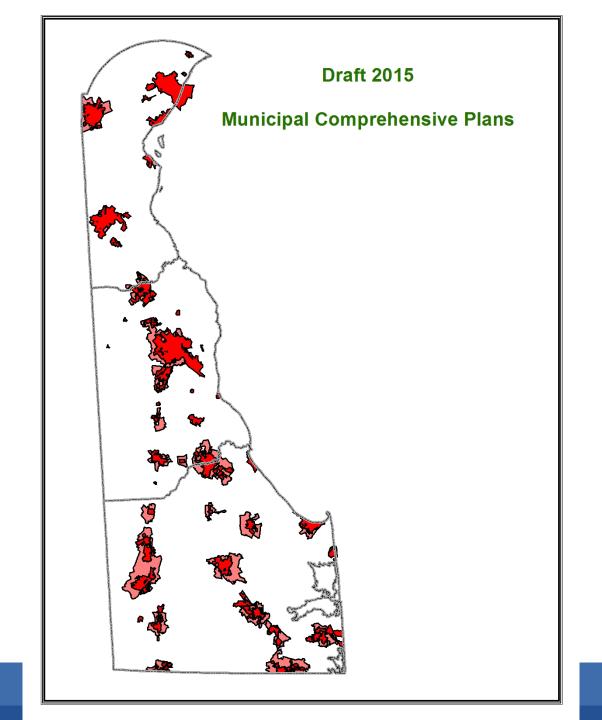
- Data collection
- Data Analysis Workgroup outreach
- Consult with state agencies, MPOs, counties, local governments
- GIS apply appropriate map overlays, including certified comprehensive plan maps
- Public Workshops
- Review of draft document and maps
- Approval by the Cabinet Committee and the Governor



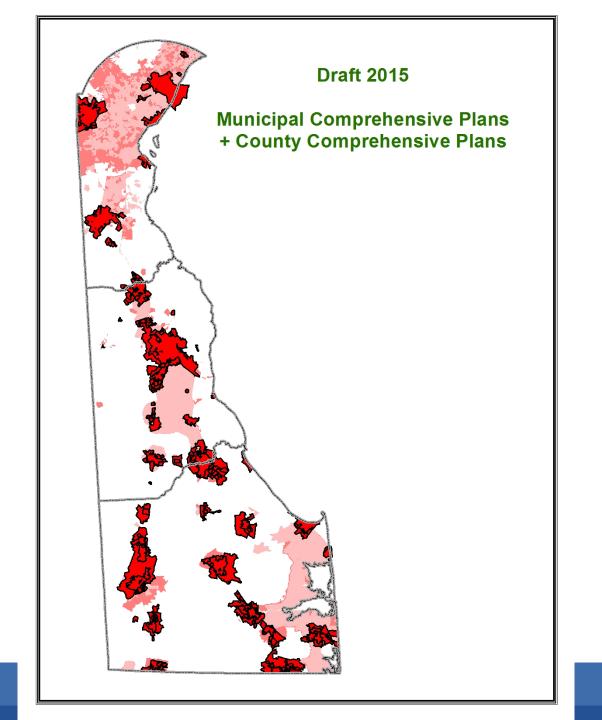
Data used to make maps include:

- School Sites
- Transit Routes
- Social Service Centers
- Police/Fire/EMS Facilities
- Corridor Capacity Preservation Areas
- Ag Preservation Districts
- Green Infrastructure
- Parklands
- Municipal and County certified comprehensive plans

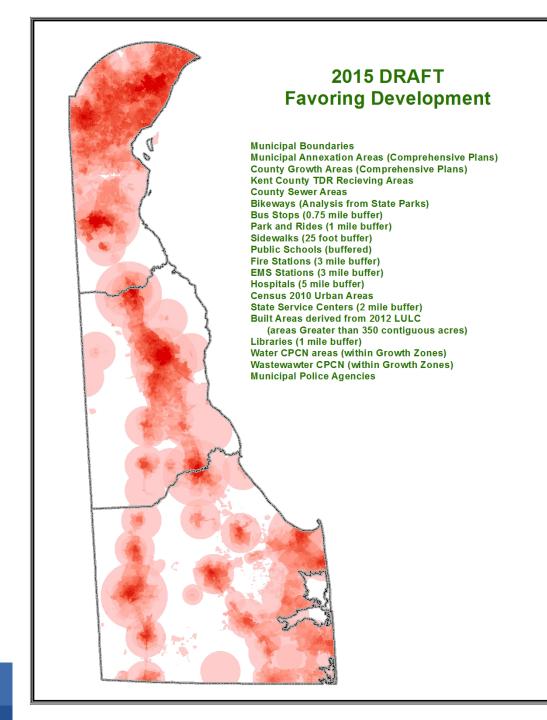




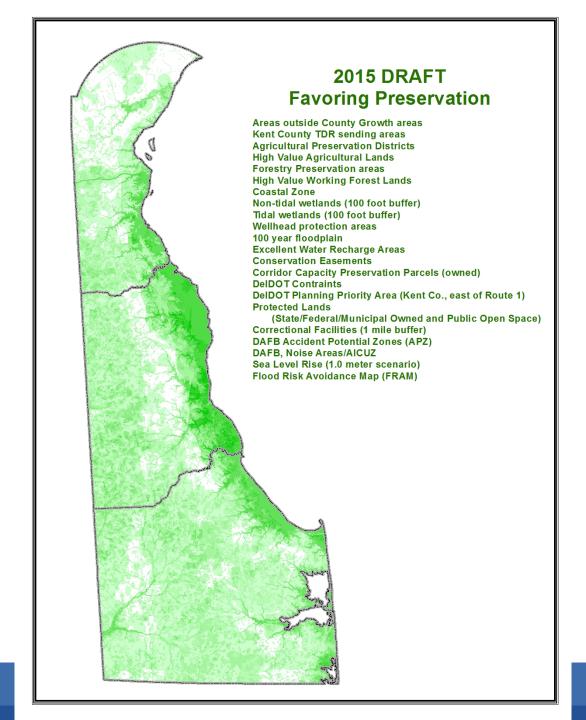




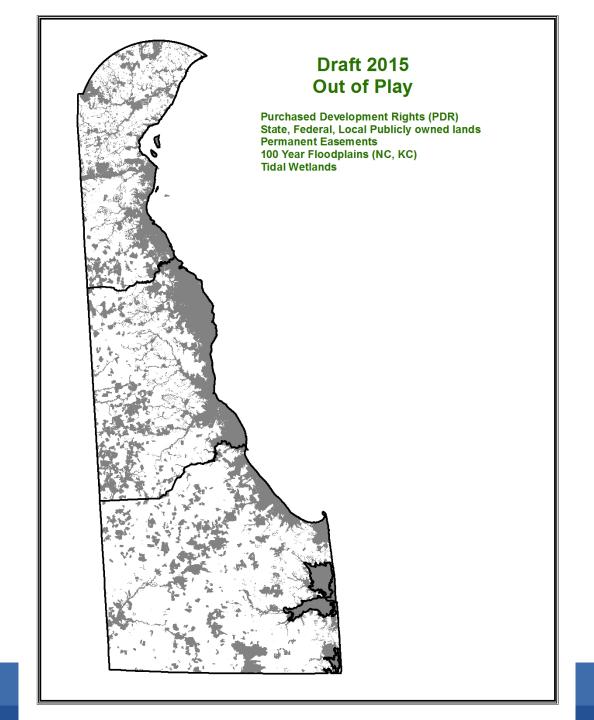




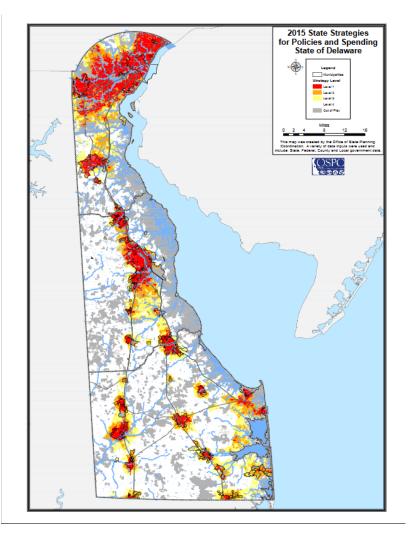








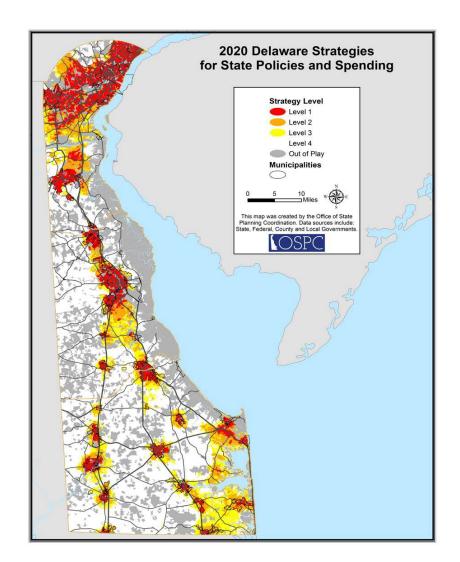




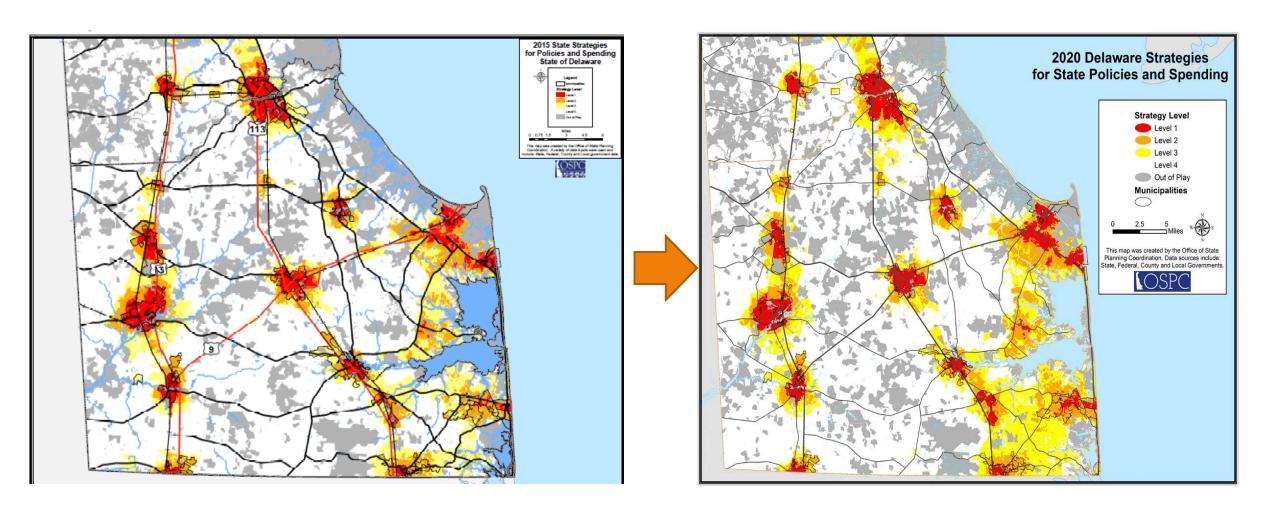


2015 Strategies





2020 Strategies



2015 Strategies 2020 Strategies

Components:

- Urban/Urbanizing Growth (Levels 1, 2, & 3)
- Preservation and Rural (Level 4 [white areas])
- "Out of Play" (Grey areas)



Main Street, Newark



Level 1:









Wilmington



Level 2:



Paynter's Mill, Milton



Cannery Village, Milton



Pike Creek, New Castle County



The Village of Five Points, Lewes

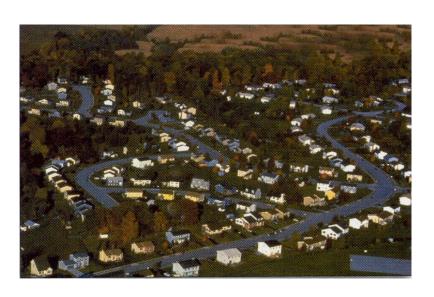


Level 3:











Level 4:









Out of Play:











Important Considerations

- These maps are not parcel based
 - You must check with local government for information about use and development of specific parcels
 - Even in growth-oriented Investment Levels, not all parcels can or should be developed. Again, check with local government
- Circumstances may exist, on a case-by-case basis, where State and other investments may be warranted to address unforeseen circumstances involving public health, safety or welfare.



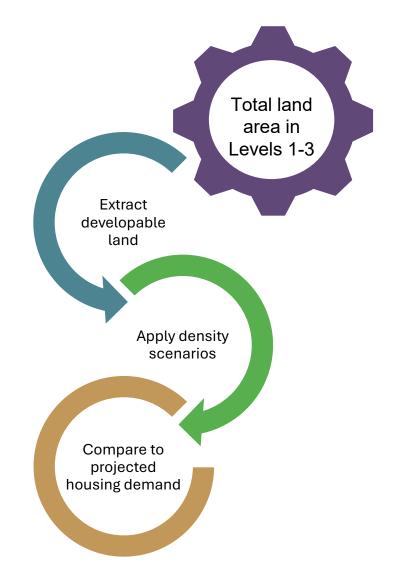
Calculating Residential Development Capacity

State Strategies

Level 1

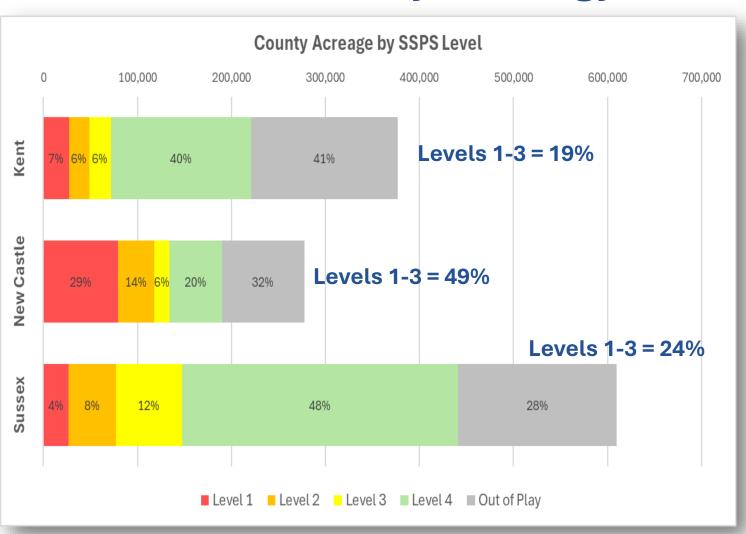
Level 2

Level 3





Total Land Area by Strategy Level



	Land Area (acres)					
SSPS Level	Kent	New Castle	Sussex			
Level 1	27380	79293	27665			
Level 2	21561	38694	51464			
Level 3	22904	16228	72358			
Level 4	149446	55539	301384			
Out of Play	155810	87880	173105			
Total	377,100	277,635	625,976			
Level 12&3	71845	134215	151487			

Housing Demand

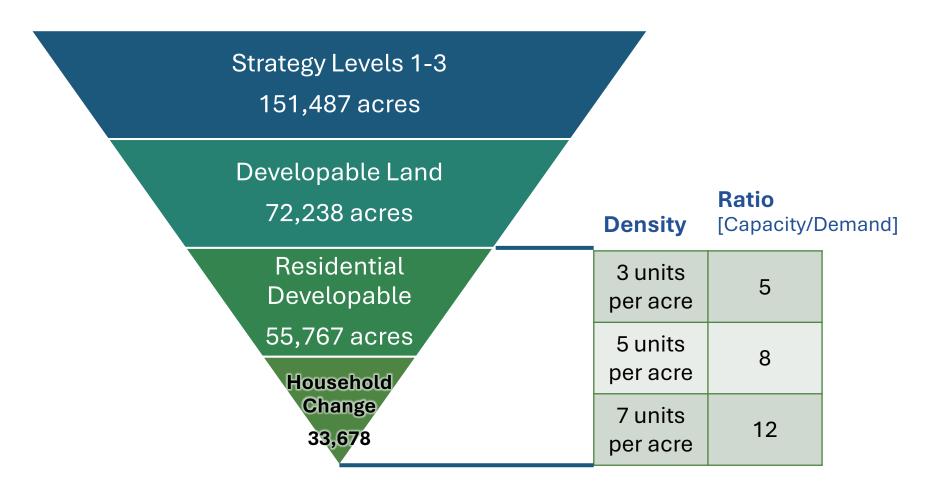
Calculate the total household change by county

DPC 2023 (Household Change*)							
	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	Total	
New Castle	6,076	2,975	-330	-3,054	-3,657	9,051	
Kent	5,662	3,472	2,646	1,735	1,336	14,851	
Sussex	13,332	8,695	5,957	4,022	1,672	33,678	
			•	•			

^{*}This analysis excludes negative projections of household change.

Assessment of Capacity vs Demand

Sussex County



Out-of-Play Lands in Sussex County (2020)

• Level 1: 27,665 acres

• Level 2: 51,464 acres

Level 3: 72,358 acres

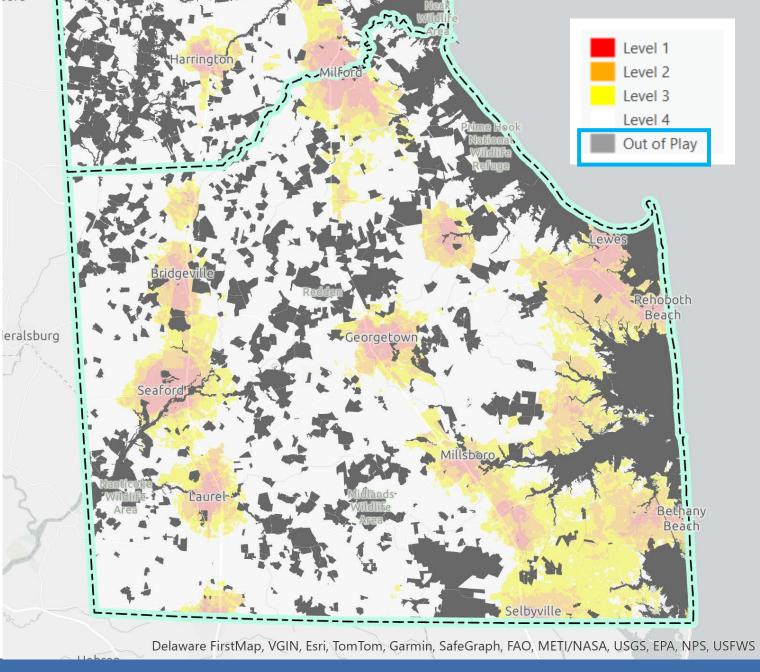
Level 4: 301,384 acres

Out-of-Play: 173,105 acres

Layers Included (in Sussex):

- Permanent agricultural and forestry easements
- Protected lands and dedicated open space
- Tidal wetlands
- DelDOT preservation lands and purchased dev. rights
- Includes water features





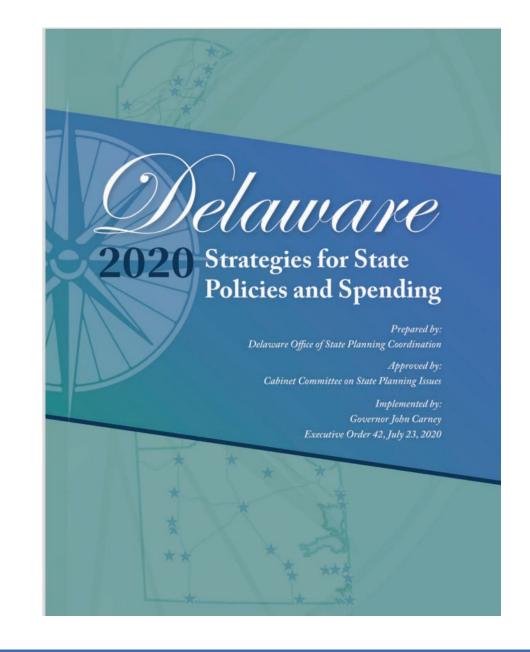
Sussex County as our Partner

- Understand that the state is investing in Sussex County, but we will not make progress if development occurs everywhere.
- Maintain a steadfast commitment to the comprehensive plan.
 - Pro-actively plan areas where growth will be encouraged.
 - Create incentives to encourage land development and growth in designated "Growth Areas"
 - Ensure that land-use policies encourage agriculture and agricultural industry in in Level 4 areas; and discourage land development in these areas.
- Share any data with OSPC that indicates the county's growth and preservation priorities.
- Think of the state as your partner in success.



Thank You

Questions and Comments?

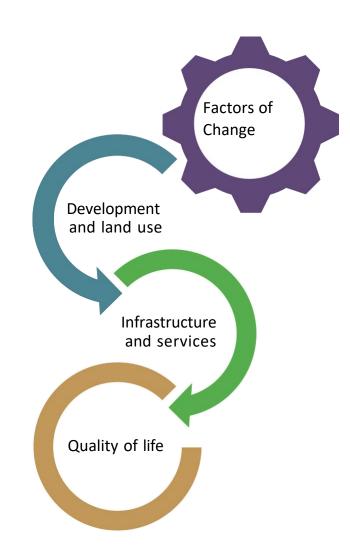






Data-Backed Insights

External factors and their effects on Delaware communities



Factors Affecting Delaware

- Real estate market demand:
 - Lower taxes attracting influx of new residents from surrounding region
 - Especially retirees
 - Especially Sussex County
- Technology changing work and shopping patterns:
 - E-commerce spurring warehousing presence and logistics activity
 - Remote work changing commuting habits
- Sea-level rise, climate change and flooding:
 - Rising water levels on our coastal state caused by GHG emissions are causing more frequent / severe flooding, including sunnyday flooding
 - Sea levels will continue to rise and days with heavy precipitation expected to increase





Data Insight: Demographics are Changing

- People relocating to Delaware
 - About 27,000 net domestic migration to Delaware (2020-2022)
- Increasing share of population is older
- Demand for high-price point housing product

What are the implications?

- Mismatch in housing being provided relative to local need
- Increasingly unbalanced, feedback loop effect:
 - Housing
 - Development / land consumption
 - Essential services and infrastructure

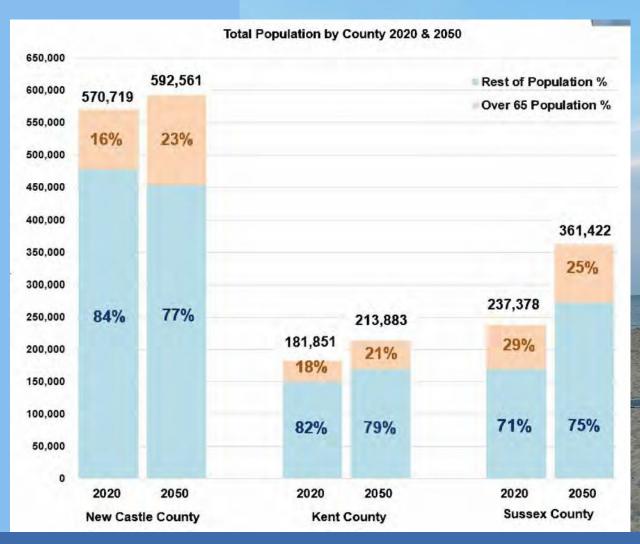
Distribution of Home Sale Prices and Renters Who Can Afford to Buy Homes by AMI Range, 2022



Note: Assumes a 30-year mortgage at a rate of 6.5% with a 20% down payment and 25% of monthly payment is used for property taxes, utilities, and insurance.

Source: Root Policy Research, 2021 ACS 5 year estimates, and HMDA.

What's Going on Here?



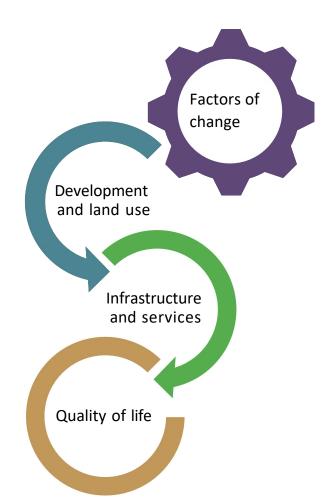
Relative to other states, locating in Delaware is appealing:

- low taxes
- access to services, amenities, etc.



Source: Delaware Population Consortium

Adapting to Factors of Change



State can't control the external factors, but:

- Collaborates with local authorities on development and land use
 - Monitoring change (eyes on horizon)
 - Planning support (comprehensive plans)
 - PLUS process (provide support and insights on project basis)
- Monitors, plans, budgets/programs, provides infrastructure and services

...and inasmuch works to support communities across the state toward high quality of life



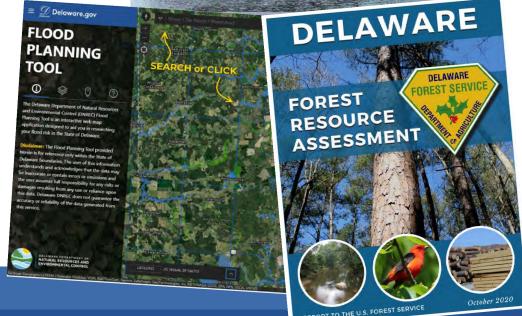


Preliminary Land Use Service



adding value and knowledge to the process without taking

State Planning Issues



Office of State Planning Coordination Role



STATE STRATEGIES FOR POLICIES AND SPENDING DOCUMENT AND MAP



REVIEW LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMPREHENSIVE PLANS

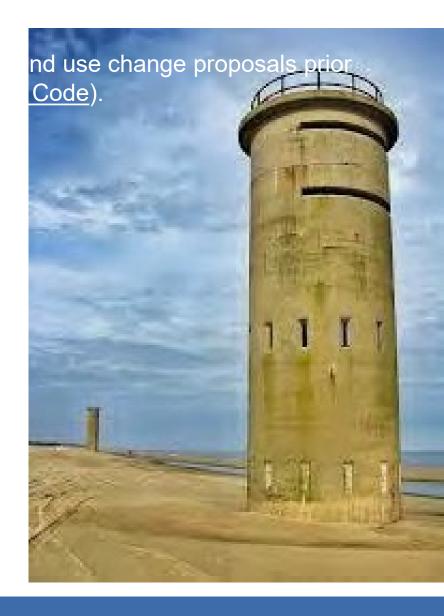
FORWARDS REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION TO GOVERNOR FOR CERTIFICATION *



ORGANIZE COMMENTS FROM STATE AGENCIES VIA THE PRELIMINARY LAND USE SERVICE (PLUS)



PROVIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

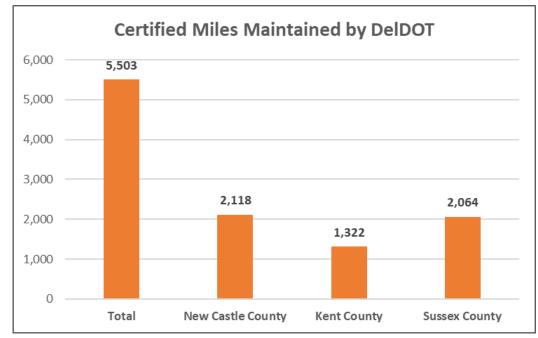


Transportation

Delaware DOT manages 89% (national average of state-maintained roads: 20%)

Trends:

- Costs for infrastructure rising
- Funding forecasts trending down
- Frequently flooded roadways 250 road segments were prioritized based on flood risk and several other factors (AADT, evacuation routes, essential facilities, etc.)
- Transit is evolving



^{*}HPMS certified miles, or Certified Public Mileage (CPM), are the total length of a state's public roads as certified by the state's governor.





Market reviews (2010-2030)

Transportation

Transportation Improvement Districts (TID) – a proactive, collaborative approach to planning / funding transportation infrastructure.

14 TIDs statewide – 4 In Sussex, once approved

Forecasted development in new TIDs:

SE Milford - 8,864 residential units

Roxana TID - 12,797 residential units

Milton TID - 4900 residential units

Henlopen TID - Original number planned was about 13,000. Approximately 4153 building permits have been issued in this area.

1.2 million square feet of Commercial/industrial planned for the TID areas once approved

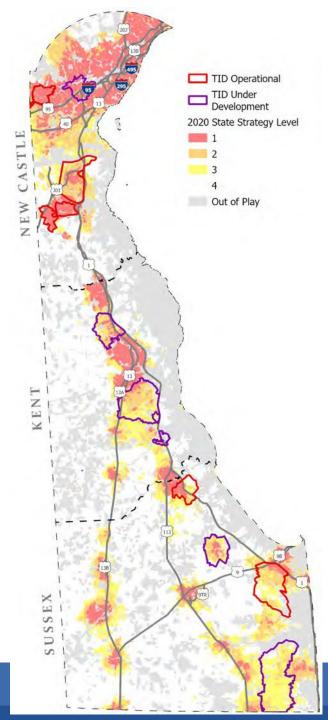
Over \$1 Billion in projects identified so far statewide.

TID Operational

- Newark
- Southern New Castle County
- Hyetts Corner
- Westown
- Eastown
- SE Milford
- Henlopen

TID Under Development

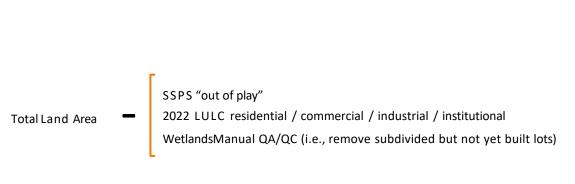
- Little Heaven
- South Frederica
- Cheswold Area
- Magnolia
- Milton
- Roxana Area
- Churchman's Crossing



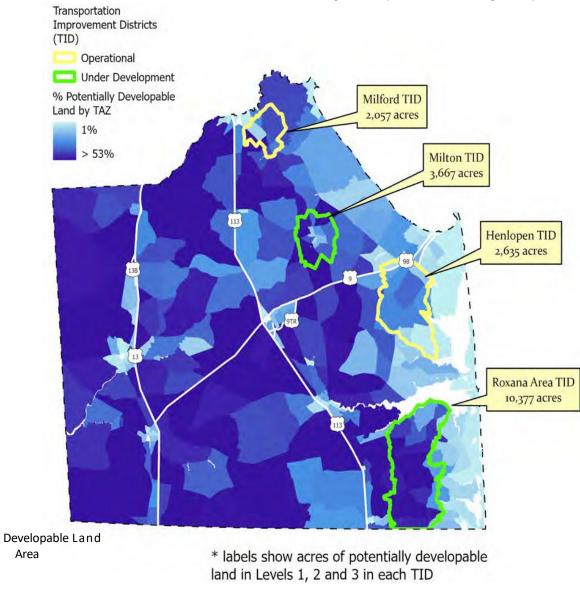
Transportation

Dwelling Units

Transportation Improvement District (TID)		Forecast Year	SUPPLY		DEMAND
NEW CASTLE	:	2040		20,697	5,667
KENT		2045		16,206	14,851
	SE Milford	2045	8,864	39,633	22 670
SUSSEX	Henlopen	2045	13,000		
3033EX	Milton	2045	4,972		33,678
	Roxana Area	2045	12,797		
			TOTAL	76,536	54,196

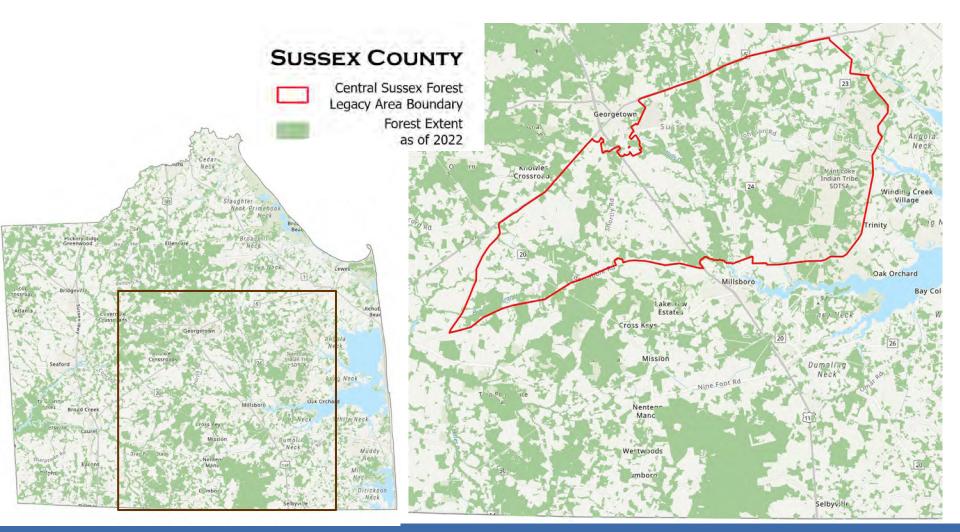


Percent of land developable (estimated by TAZ)



Environment – Land / Resources at Risk

Delaware Statewide Forest Strategy



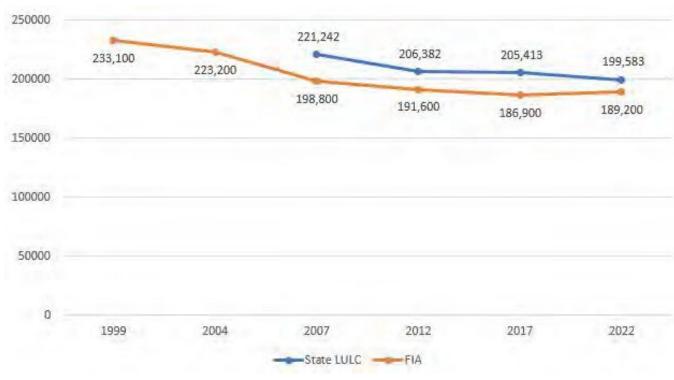
First done in **2010** and updated in **2020**, this strategy combines the work of non-profits along with local, county, state, and federal governments to address forestland issues and threats in both rural and urban areas. Forest Legacy Areas are of high priority for preservation / conservation.

2020 Key Threats:

- Conversion
- Fragmentation
- Forest Health pests
- Impacted wetlands

Environment – Land / Resources at Risk

Total Forest Acres by Year, Sussex County





Land Use Land Cover data

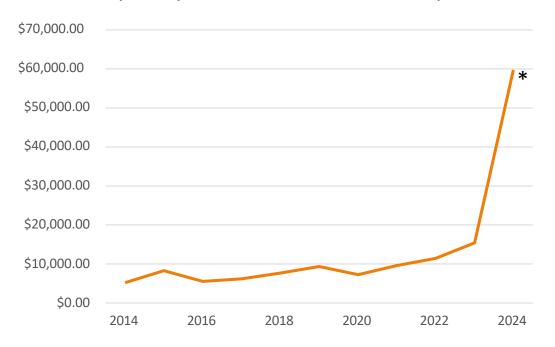
LULC - Land Use Land Cover

FIA - Forest Inventory and Analysis

Source: Forest Cover Data Analysis, 2024. Delaware Forest Service.

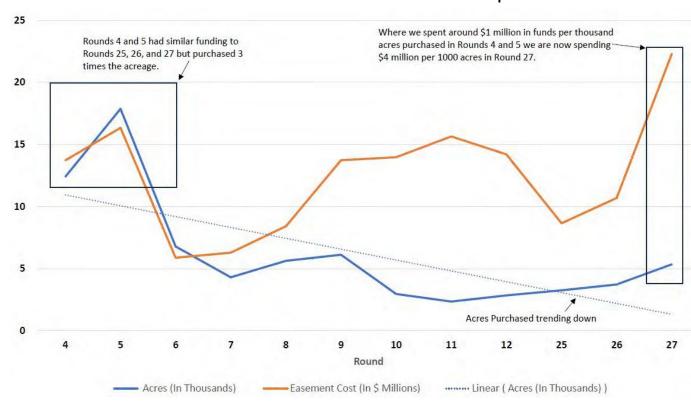
Environment – Preservation Efforts and Challenges

Open Space Preservation - Price per acre



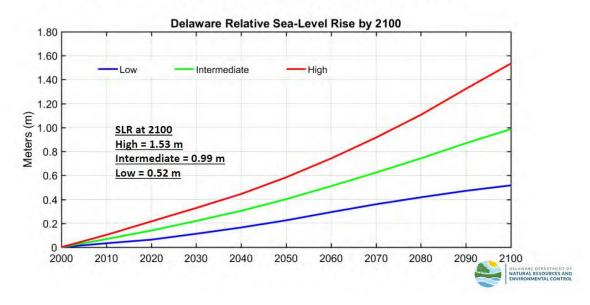
^{*}Note: Price spike in 2023 and 2024 due to a key 285-acre land purchase adjacent to White Clay Creek State Park.

Agricultural Land Preservation Program – Acres Purchased vs. Funds Spent



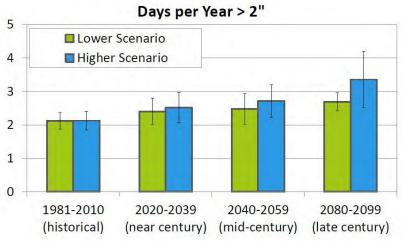
Environment – Resiliency and Adaptation

Sea Levels will continue to rise



- Marsh migration
- Saltwater intrusion
- Coastal development and infrastructure
- Accessibility regular travel, emergency, and evacuation

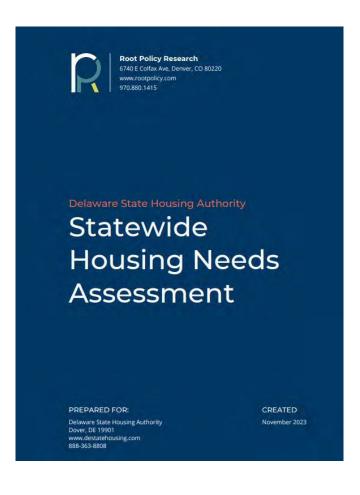
Days with very heavy precipitation are expected to increase







Housing – Statewide Needs





That's an average of 2,400 new units per year.

Where are these residential units needed?

4,016 New Castle County
6,941 Kent County
13,392 Sussex County

*These 24,400 units are in addition to the existing shortage of ~19,400 rental units affordable to households making 0-50% Area Median Income (AMI).

Over half of these new builds need to be affordable for households below 100% AMI...



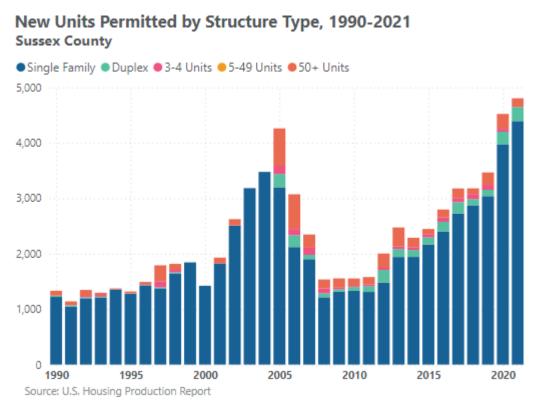
must be affordable to households making less than 100% AMI (or \$66,400 for 2 people). 7,523 ownership units



That's an average of 1,200 new units per year.

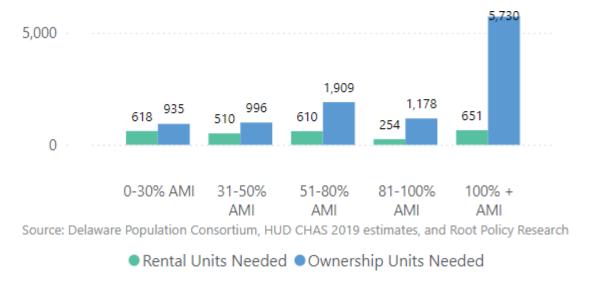
5,200 rental units

Housing – Sussex County



Only about 15% of the permitted units over the last 5 years were multi-family units, which suggest a greater diversity of housing is needed in the county.

Projected new housing units needed by 2030:



Total: 13,392 needed, of which:

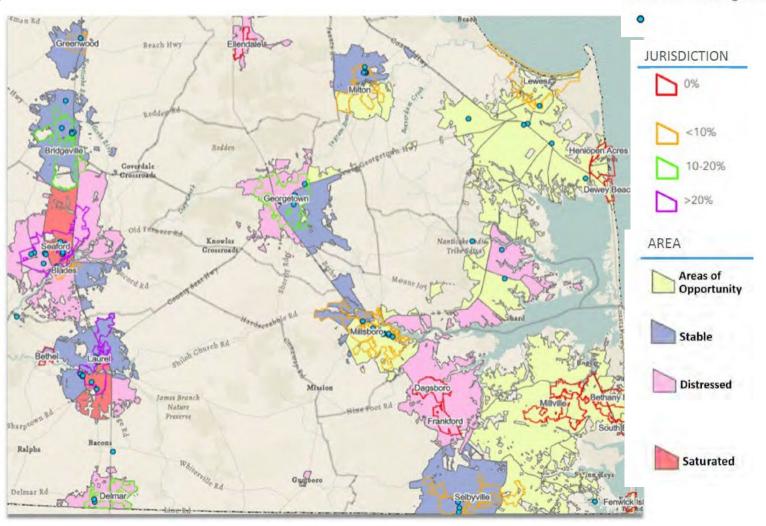
- 80% should be for homeownership
- 20% should be for renters

In addition, Sussex is projected to need an additional 5,788 seasonal units

Housing – Strategies

Current distribution of affordable housing:

- Western Sussex County is saturated with affordable housing
 - bears more than 'equitable share'
 - distressed areas need stabilization and supportive infrastructure
 - school proficiency is substantially lower than eastern half
- Coastal Resort Areas have very few affordable housing options (< 1%)
 - strong, presence of:
 - high-value markets
 - · employment centers
 - high-performing schools
 - affordable housing should be encouraged in Areas of Opportunity

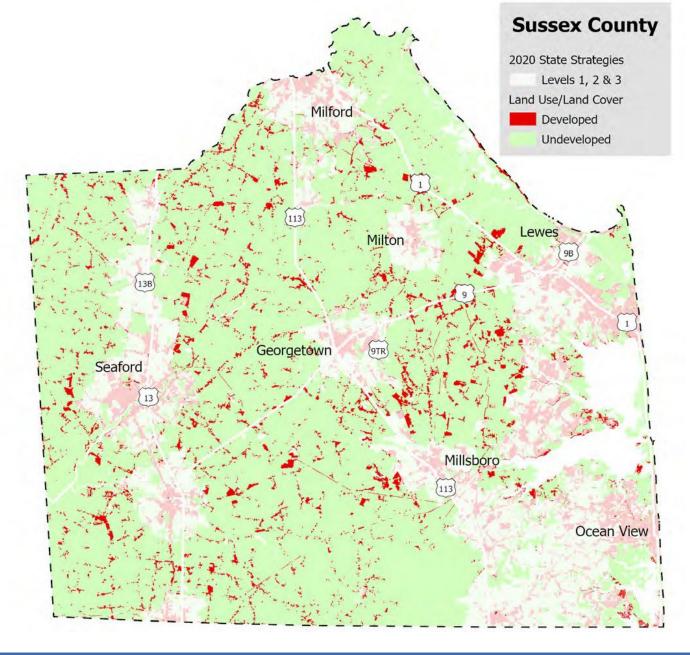


Affordable Housing Sites

Sussex County

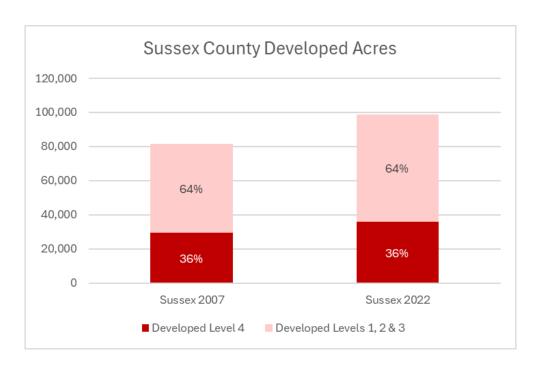
Developed Land

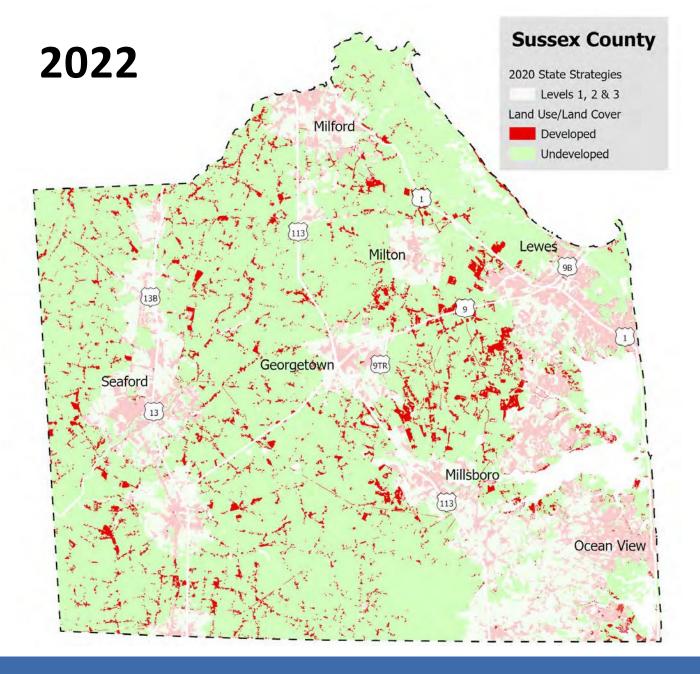
2007



Developed Land

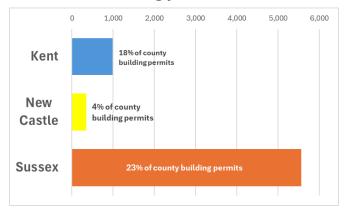
- Between 2007 and 2022, about 17,000 acres were developed in Sussex County
- About 6,500 acres of that occurred in Level 4 areas

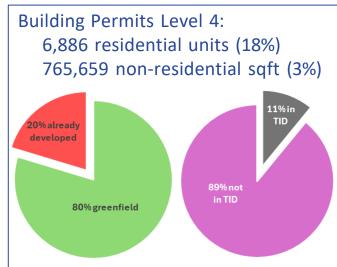




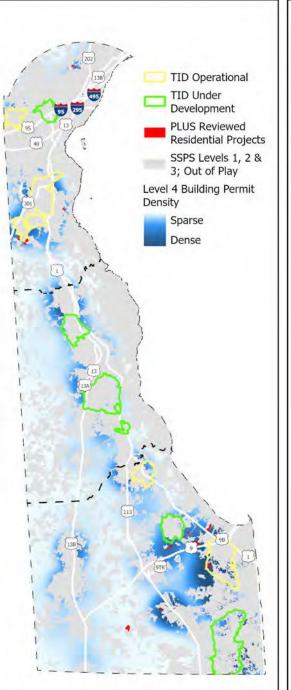


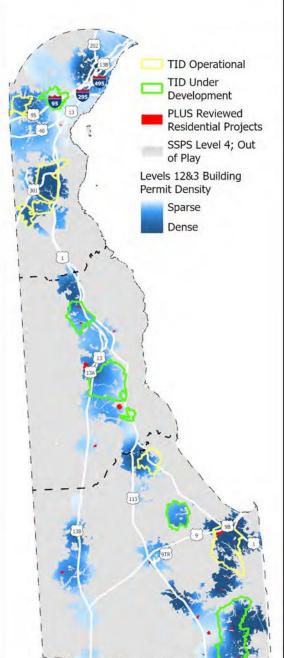
Development Trends in **Strategy Level 4**



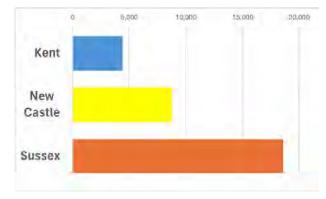


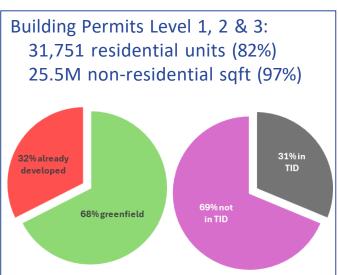
Reviewed PLUS Dev't Level 4: 8,685 residential units (46%) 814,100 non-residential sqft (13%)





Development Trends in Strategy Levels 1, 2 and 3

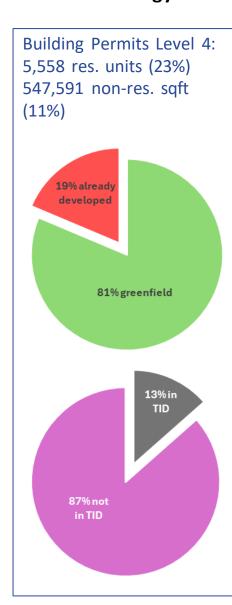




Reviewed PLUS Dev't Level 1, 2 & 3: 10,353 residential units (54%) 5.4M non-residential sqft (87%)

SUSSEX COUNTY

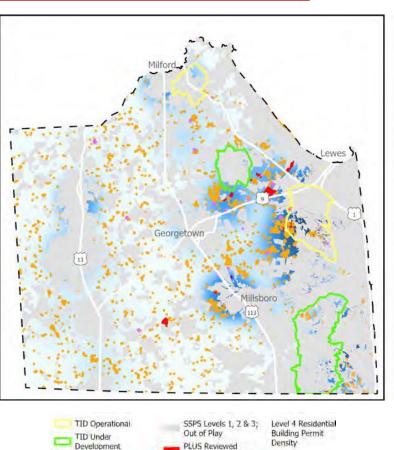
Development Trends in Strategy Levels 1, 2 and 3



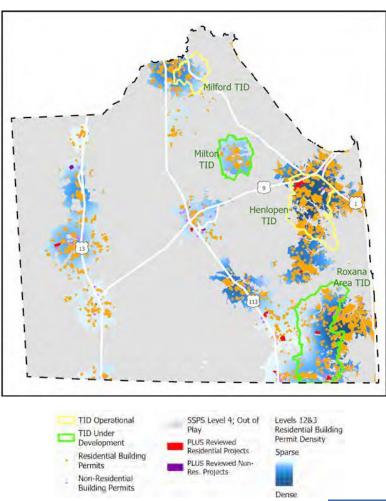
Reviewed PLUS Dev't Level 4: 7,410 residential units (58%) 845,145 non-residential sqft (20%)

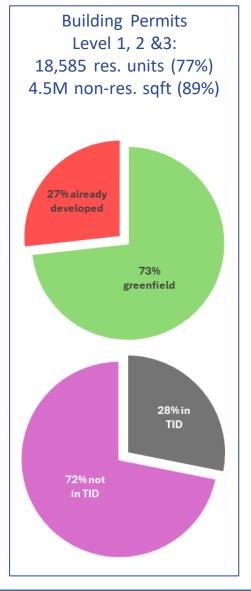
Residential Building

Non-Residential



Reviewed PLUS Dev't Level 1, 2 &3: 5,394 residential units (42%) 3.5M non-residential sqft (80%)





*includes building permits 2019-2023 and reviewed residential PLUS developments 2023-June 2024

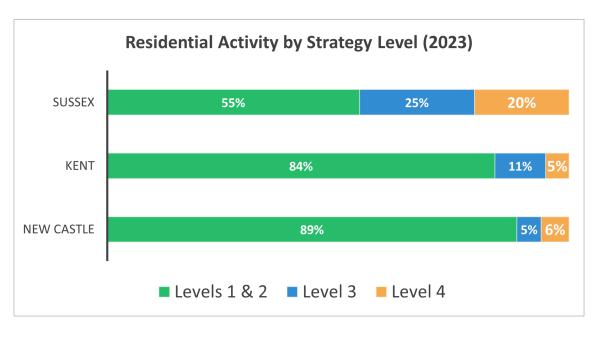
Growth by County 2019-2023

Residential Units by State Strategy Level in Development Applications

County	Levels 1 & 2	Level 3	Level 4	All Levels	
	Residential Units, 2019-2023				
New Castle County	7,247	440	266	7,953	
Kent County	3,851	461	35	4,347	
Sussex County	10,807	4,508	5,530	20,845	
Totals	21,905	5,409	5,831	33,145	

Residential Units by State Strategy Level in Building Permits

County	Levels 1 & 2	Level 3	Level 4	All Levels	
	Residential Units, 2019-2023				
New Castle County	8,128	631	469	9,228	
Kent County	4,028	386	1,051	5,465	
Sussex County	12,307	6,278	5,686	24,271	
Totals	24,463	7,295	7,206	38,964	



2019 – 2023, Sussex accounts for **86%** of Level 4 development

Conclusions and Discussion

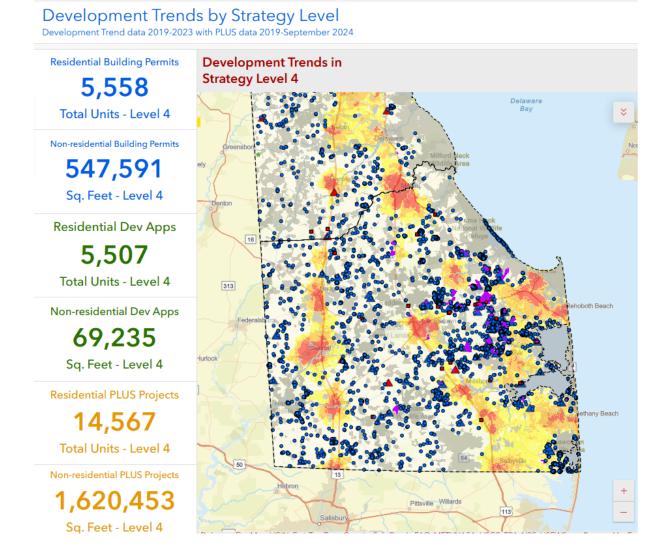
What resonates? What is your experience?

Data Insight: Conclusions

- Level 4 development = Sprawl
- Level 4 development is unsustainable

What are the implications?

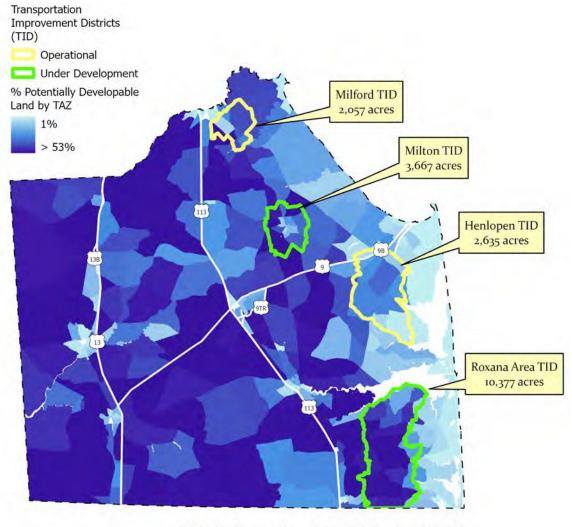
- Inefficiencies and rising costs to provide the infrastructure
- Associated impacts:
 - Increasing motor vehicle traffic and vehicle miles traveled
 - Affordable housing (living) challenges
 - Environmental degradation (forest, ecosystem, water, etc.)
 - Risk (in light of climate change)
 - "Crowding out" of industry, farming



Concluding Points

Dwelling Units Transportation Improvement Forecast SUPPLY **DEMAND** District (TID) Year SE Milford 8,864 2045 2045 13,000 Henlopen SUSSEX 39,633 33,678 Milton 2045 4,972 Roxana Area 2045 12,797

 Greenfield development in TIDs plus redevelopment and infill should accommodate significantly more development than what is forecasted by the Delaware Population Consortium



* labels show acres of potentially developable land in Levels 1, 2 and 3 in each TID