

Town of  
**Dagsboro**  
**Comprehensive Plan**

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**Update 2015**

Adopted January 2015

Town of  
Dagsboro

# Comprehensive Plan

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Update 2015

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# Town, County and State Officials

## **Dagsboro Town Council**

Norwood Truitt, Mayor  
Brian Baull  
William Chandler  
Pat Miller  
Theresa Ulrich

## **Planning and Zoning Commission**

Gayle Chandler, Chair  
Scott Crater  
Janice Kolbeck  
Nancy Marvel

## **Board of Adjustments**

Ed Burton  
Diane Carey

## **Sussex County Council**

Robert B. Arlett  
George B. Cole  
Joan R. Deaver  
Michael H. Vincent  
Samuel R. Wilson, Jr.

## **Sussex County Administrator**

Todd F. Lawson

## **Delaware State Officials**

Jack Markell, Governor  
Richard G. Collins, 41<sup>th</sup> Representative District  
Gerald W. Hocker, 20<sup>th</sup> Senatorial District  
Constance C. Holland, Director, Office of State Planning Coordination

## **Town Attorney**

Robert Witsil, Esq.

## **Consultant**

**URS**

## Vision Statement & Introduction

### Vision Statement

Over the years, the Town of Dagsboro has strived to protect its most prized possession, its small town charm. Dagsboro has developed its own identity through its historic character and by being proactive in the preservation of the natural greenery found throughout the community. With the anticipation of the Town expanding in the future, positive growth and development is encouraged. Smart growth will only help to improve and enhance community livability. A balance between vibrant businesses and a variety of housing, services and amenities, will help create places for current and future residents to enjoy.

### Introduction

In August of 2003 the Office of State Planning Coordination certified the Town of Dagsboro's current Comprehensive Plan under a Delaware law requiring municipalities to update their comprehensive plans every five years. The Town of Dagsboro's updated plan addresses opportunities and challenges the Town will be facing in the following years. The plan also serves as an official statement as to the direction the Town is progressing toward, as well as an informational document for the public.

First and foremost, the plan is a basis for Town Council and Planning and Zoning Commission decisions on land use and growth issues. It should be used to guide future development decisions, rezoning activities, annexations, capitol improvements throughout the Town and the surrounding areas within the desired growth area.

The plan also functions as an informational document for the public. Citizens, developers, business entrepreneurs, potential new residents and government officials can turn to the plan to learn more about the Town of Dagsboro, its policies for future land use decisions, schools, design characteristics, public facilities, population growth, housing and employment.

By utilizing this document, Town, County and State officials will be able to continue to work towards the common goals of the Town for the betterment of the citizens of Dagsboro. Knowing that development will continue to happen in and around Dagsboro, continuing a good working relationship with County officials and the utilization of this document will all contribute to the Town of Dagsboro being a special place to work and live for its citizens.

The Delaware Code specifies that, "the comprehensive plan shall be the basis for the development of zoning regulations..." and the code further specifies that, "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." This document is a combination of the adopted Comprehensive Plan of March 2003 with the updated data and maps.

## Chapter 1: Background

### 1-1 Authority to Plan

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

This update created for the Town of Dagsboro is a document in text and maps, containing at 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, critical community development and infrastructure issues. In addition, the Town's updated comprehensive planning process shall demonstrate coordination with other municipalities, the County and the State during plan preparation.

### 1-2 Overview of the Community

#### 1-2a Location

Dagsboro is located in the southeastern portion of Sussex County along the Route 113 corridor with Route 20 and Route 26 intersecting the Town. Route 26 is an east-west corridor running from Sussex County's inland towns to the State's coastal resorts. Delaware Route 20 travels from the Maryland state line through the Town of Dagsboro to Fenwick Island which is the last municipality in Delaware before entering Ocean City, MD. Dagsboro is approximately 49 miles south-southeast of Dover, the Capitol of Delaware; approximately 13 miles south-southeast from Georgetown, the County seat; approximately 10 miles west from the Atlantic Ocean; and approximately 27 miles from Salisbury, MD. The Town lies at the head of Pepper Creek, a tributary of the Indian River. Dagsboro is located within a division of land historically known as the “Dagsboro (or Dagsborough) Hundred.” The Town is the center of a large agricultural region, and is connected by railroad and highway to larger markets in northern Delaware, Pennsylvania, and Maryland.

#### 1-2b History

Prior to 1785, the area that is now Dagsboro was called Blackfoot Town, named after the Native American village of earlier days. After the death of General John Dagworthy in 1784, the Town was named Dagsborough in honor of him. Dagworthy served in the French and Indian War and the American Revolution and was a prominent landowner in the area. The modern spelling of Dagsboro began to be used upon the Town's incorporation in the 1900s.



The land that General Dagworthy owned was called “Dagworthy's Conquest” and included 20,390 acres of land given to Dagworthy by Governor William Sharpe of Maryland for his services rendered. Dagworthy's Conquest also bordered Pepper Creek, which during this period of time was navigable to ships that took part in trade between this region of the Atlantic Coast and northern cities like New York and Philadelphia. The most common freight

for those ships was shingles made from the giant cypress trees that were once abundant in the area. The sawmill that produced these shingles was operated by General Dagworthy for many years. It is said that the stream was not used very much after the death of General Dagworthy in 1784.

Prince George's Chapel, built in 1755 as an Anglican chapel-of-ease, is a historical focal point for Dagsboro. It was named in honor of the infant Prince George who later became King George III of England. General Dagworthy financed an addition to the church, and he and his wife are buried under the original building. The Chapel has since been restored, and was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1971. It serves as a museum under the administration of Delaware's Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs and is open to the public.

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

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

### 1-3 Existing Land Uses

The original land use survey was conducted by students from the University of Delaware in July of 2002. At that time the Town consisted primarily of single-family residential homes with a small core of commercial uses along the main street.

The Town of Dagsboro has seen additional residential and commercial growth over the years. The Town still consists of primarily single-family residential homes, however with the additional annexation of land new construction includes townhouse communities as well as commercial structures. There are two main commercial districts located within the Town boundaries. One is along the Route 113 corridor which has experienced new construction and the redevelopment of existing buildings. The second location is the Town Center Commercial District which is located on Clayton Street (Route 26) from the railroad tracks to Main Street (Route 26/Route 20) and along Main Street. The Town Hall, Post Office and a bank are located at the intersection of Clayton Street and Main Street. (See Map 3. Map 1. Aerial View and Existing Land Use).



The railroad tracks that run north and south through the Town near the commercial and industrial districts are a great advantage in the transportation and efficiency in the delivery of goods. These tracks are still used to transport goods and supplies to businesses and industries on the Delmarva Peninsula.

Of the approximately 900.78 acres within the Town of Dagsboro, about 270.61 acres are currently designated as vacant land. Residential land use encompasses about 462.88 acres, 220.46 of which is existing residential and 262.42 acres have been approved for residential development or are under construction. Commercial uses make up about 57.95 acres of land. Other land uses include industrial, institutional, and parks/recreation. Table 1 lists the number of acres and percent composition of the various land uses in the Town of Dagsboro. Existing land use information for parcels within the Town appears on Map 3.

**Table 1: Land Uses in the Town of Dagsboro**

Land Use	Acres	Percent of Total
Residential	462.88	54.49%
Existing (220.46 acres)		
Scheduled for development (242.42 acres)		
Vacant	266.77	31.40%
Commercial	57.95	6.82%
Institutional	46.77	5.50%
Industrial	11.55	1.36%
Parks/ Recreation	3.52	0.41%
<b>Total</b>	<b>849.44</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Land use survey, Spring 2003 and May 2008.

Parcel data provided by Sussex County Mapping & Addressing in May 2008.

Note: The difference between the 849.44 acres included in the above land use table and the 900.78 acres of land area in the Town of Dagsboro generally accounts for rights-of-way.

Residentially developed land is most prevalent in Dagsboro. Residential uses can be found mixed with the commercial uses along Main Street as well as throughout the periphery of the Town. With the development of townhouse communities, the Town of Dagsboro has become a well diversified mixed housing community offering housing of various architectural types and styles. As areas closer to the beach become more heavily developed, the Town of Dagsboro will become a more attractive location for the development of vacant parcels and tracts of land, and the redevelopment of existing houses will become even more common for seasonal living as well as the retirement community.

There are approximately 266.77 acres of vacant land in the Town, of which the majority is unconstrained and suitable for development (See Map 8. Vacant Land & Environmental Features). The disposition of this land will significantly impact the current and future character of Dagsboro. Most of the vacant land is outside of the central area of the Town and is currently used for agriculture or open space. There are also some highly visible smaller parcels of vacant land within the central part of Town, specifically around Main Street and Clayton Street.

**Table 2: Vacant Land**

Current Zoning	Number of Vacant Parcels	Total Acreage
Residential	80	209.37
High Density Residential	2	6.46
Town Center / Mixed-Use	15	21.08
Commercial	4	4.48
Highway Commercial	7	25.39
<b>Total</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>266.78</b>

## 1-4 Community Vision and Goals

Prior to the adoption of the Town of Dagsboro's 2003 Comprehensive Plan, a mass mailing questionnaire was sent out to receive the public's view on the growth of the Town. A similar survey was sent out for this updated plan. After reviewing the resident responses, this Plan concludes the following vision and goals:

### 1-4a Land Use and Annexation

A widespread suggestion among many of the residents in the Town is the use of vacant land for residential purposes. It is also suggested that redevelopment take place on existing parcels and structures that have already been selected. With the possibility of existing land being redeveloped, there is also a possibility of additional land being annexed. In both cases, the Town should keep in mind the continued preservation of agricultural and open spaces. It is also important to make sure all new development links the Town's current street and sidewalk network.

### 1-4b Commercial and Industrial Areas

In keeping with the small town spirit, the development of industrial sites is seen as unfavorable. A more encouraged idea is to create business parks for both commercial and industrial purposes. The residents would also like to see retail and professional business within the community to take advantage of the beach traffic and to better serve the overall community.

### 1-4c Transportation Planning

The two main concerns of residents when it comes to transportation are congestion and connectivity. Traffic traveling through the Town to the various beaches is a problem because it causes congestion making it hard for local residents to use the services provided in Town. Pedestrian connectivity is also an issue, so residents would like to see an increase in the number of sidewalks. Not only would residents like to see the community have better connectivity of sidewalks throughout their Town, but also to any neighboring communities. The community would encourage the Town and DelDOT to investigate options for alternative traffic patterns in the greater Dagsboro area to reduce traffic in the downtown area.

### 1-4d Neighborhoods and Community Design

Growth within and around Dagsboro is to be expected, however, the residents would like to maintain the small town atmosphere while growth occurs. The potential growth of the Town's infrastructure should include open spaces for parks, connectivity of sidewalks and streets to the adjacent neighborhoods, along with additional community landscaping. As for housing in Dagsboro, the preferred type of housing is low density single-family homes. Higher density housing in the form on townhouses is also accepted, but to a lesser degree. With all the possible growth, the community members would also like to see the preservation of historic sites and structures.



### 1-4e Overall Goals

- Manage the timing, location, design and type of future growth, both residential and non-residential developments.

- Serve residents' needs with minimal negative impact and enhance Dagsboro's small town residential character.
- Support the preservation of the Town's historic homes and structures.
- Increase access to local public amenities and improve community design.
- Maintain development codes and development process to ensure that all new developments and redevelopments enhance Dagsboro's character.

The implementation of these goals is ongoing, and the Town continues to strive to improve the quality of life for current and future residents.

## **1-5 Public Participation**

Public participation is an important component to the planning process. The opinions of residents help to identify what they think the important issues are that need to be addressed and how they think their community can be improved for the future. In the process of updating the Town of Dagsboro's comprehensive plan, public participation has come into play through several Planning Commission sessions that were open to the public as well as a community survey.

The final hearing on the updated comprehensive plan draft was held on August 25, 2008.

### **1-5a Public Open House**

On July 9, 2008, the Town of Dagsboro Planning Commission held a public open house for the residents of Dagsboro at the Bethel Center. The purpose of this open house was to get feedback from the residents of Dagsboro to see how they envisioned the Town in the future, especially focusing on future land use issues. The public open house also helps to prioritize what needs to be done to ensure the highest quality of life to current residents as well as future residents. There was an existing land use map, future land use map and annexation map for community members to review and ask questions. There was also a summary of the results from the community survey to read through that gave the key highlights of the survey.



### **1-5b Community Survey**

In April 2008, a public survey was sent out to all the residents and property owners of the Town of Dagsboro. The surveys were mailed out to 375 property owners. Of the 375 surveys mailed out (See Appendix A - Public Opinion Survey), 61 were returned, a respectable 16 percent return rate. The survey was divided into four different categories: 1.) demographic information, 2.) types of services needed, 3.) prioritizing services and development and 4.) additional comments. The purpose of this survey was to get feedback from the residents to see what they would like the future of their Town to be like and what they believe is necessary to make the Town of Dagsboro a more livable community.

The majority of respondents, 52.5 percent, were between the ages of 46 and 65 years of age. About 85 percent of the people who completed the survey said they currently live in Dagsboro, and 98.2 percent said that they own the home that they are living in.

The top three reasons people gave for living in the Town of Dagsboro is the small town atmosphere (95.8%), access to surrounding towns (85.4%) and friendly neighborhoods

(77.5%). On the lower end of reasons for living in Town is the availability of needed services. When asked what amenities the residents would like, the ability to walk to stores, shopping along the outskirts of Town and on Main Street, and a community park were ranked as the most desired needs. In the additional comments section, several residents made remarks about the need for more open space and that future development should be geared towards creating or preserving open space. It is important for residents to have some kind of park or open space for people to visit, especially children. Ranking among the lowest amenities needed in Town were anything that would be considered private, like private communities (8.5%) or any private open spaces (15.3%) and private playgrounds (15.3%).

Several residents strongly agreed that there should be incentives to encourage new businesses in Town. This opinion also coincides with the community members strongly agreeing that the Town should actively promote job growth. Residents were relatively neutral about promoting tourism. If tourism was promoted, residents agreed that the Town should be able to capitalize from a tourism industry.

Residents were not only asked what amenities they would like to see in the future, but also asked to rank the types of services, housing developments and businesses they would prefer to be in Town. The majority of residents said they would like a medical facility, town trash service and a town library. Throughout the survey, a medical facility consistently ranked as the one of the most needed services.

Currently, residents strongly agreed that there is an adequate amount of housing supply. As for future housing development, single-family homes are the most desired type of housing with neighborhoods of predominately single-family homes on modest to large lots. Even though the majority of residents would like single-family homes, many people mentioned in the comments section that they thought more multi-unit or townhomes are going to be built in the future.

For future businesses, community members would like more family restaurants (97.9%), professional offices, such as law and accountants (93.5%), a grocery store (91.8%) and a coffee shop (91.3%) to come to Town. Among the businesses that were not preferred as much included, research facilities, retail clothing store and service stations. When asked where residents would like potential businesses to be located, the majority said restaurants, barber/beauty shops and coffee shops should be on Main Street. For Clayton Street, residents would like to have more professional offices, and bakery and coffee shops, while they would like Route 113 to have fast food restaurants and grocery stores.

As mentioned before, many of the residents said the reason they live in Dagsboro is for the small town atmosphere. When asked "which characteristics would you rate the highest for preserving the rural character?" the residents ranked the best preservation being a balance between the need to grow and the need to preserve the small town character. Clean appearance, and quietness and solitude also ranked as important ways in preserving the character of the community.

Besides preserving the character of the Town, another big issue concerning residents is the traffic problem. To the question about vehicle traffic being a problem in Town, 71.4 percent of the respondents agreed that it is a problem. In the comments section, many people also made remarks about transportation being an issue. Several people made comments about a change in stoplight patterns being a part of the solution to the problem. Some other concerns mentioned by residents are the need for a larger police force and discouraging the development of big box stores.

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## Chapter 2: Development Strategy

*“To provide for the orderly growth and development of the Town; to promote the health, safety, prosperity and general open lands, water resources and recreational facilities; to ensure conservation of property values and natural resources; to afford adequate provisions for public utilities and infrastructure; to ensure proper educational needs and facilities for town staff.”*

### 2-1. Current Land Use Planning and Regulation Process

Town business is conducted by the Town Council, the Planning and Zoning Commission and the Board of Adjustment. The Town Council representatives hold a term for two years and are selected by the community through holding an annual election each year. At the annual meeting, held on the first regular meeting following the Annual Municipal Election, the Town Council shall organize and elect a Mayor, who shall hold office for the term of one year or until his successor shall be duly elected. The Town Council shall likewise select a Vice-Mayor who shall hold office for the term of one year or until his successor shall be duly elected. Council meetings are held regularly on the fourth Monday of the month and special meetings or workshops are scheduled as required. There are five Planning and Zoning Commission members who are appointed by the Mayor and approved by the Town Council. Planning and Zoning members hold their position for a period of three years and meet monthly. The Board of Adjustment consists of five members who are appointed by the Mayor and approved by the Town Council. Board of Adjustment members hold their position for a period of three years and hold their hearings on an as-needed basis.

The Comprehensive Zoning Plan that was originally adopted in October 1994 was later updated in 2006. The 2006 update consisted of comprehensive rezoning of the Town to reflect changes to the future land uses plan as approved in the 2003 Comprehensive Plan. The Subdivision Ordinance was adopted in November 1998 and amended as necessary. Numerous improvements and amendments have been made to the Town’s Zoning Code. The Mayor and Council continue to review and update these Ordinances to improve the development standards and encourage positive growth within the Town. In 2008, the Mayor and Town Council adopted Design Standards for all new and substantially improved structures.

### 2-2. Demographics, Future Population and Housing Growth

Outlined in this section are the past and estimated current and future demographics for the Town of Dagsboro. Comparisons with the State of Delaware and Sussex County have been used to provide a snap shot picture of the Town’s growth.

#### 2-2a Historic and Current Estimated Data

##### *Total Population*

Based on the 2006 U.S. Census Bureau estimates, the populations in the State of Delaware and Sussex County have seen substantial growth over the past five years. Dagsboro has also experienced growth at a rate consistent with the State. This growth rate is due to the development of vacant land and the approvals of four large subdivisions. With continued development of land within the Town, future growth is imminent (See Tables 3a and 3b).

**Table 3a: History of Population and Housing for Delaware, Sussex County and Dagsboro**

Year	Population			Housing Units		
	Delaware	Sussex County	Dagsboro	Delaware	Sussex County	Dagsboro
2000	783,600	156,638	519	343,072	93,070	240
2001	795,450	160,459	525	348,930	95,202	250
2002	805,591	164,119	532	353,681	97,325	270
2003	816,861	168,190	540	359,871	100,099	278
2004	828,762	171,912	546	367,448	103,473	284
2005	841,741	176,185	553	374,872	107,118	302
2006	853,476	180,288	559	382,828	111,617	310
2007	N/A	N/A	568	N/A	N/A	327
Increase from 2000 to 2007	8.1%	13.1%	8.6%	10.3%	16.6%	26.6%

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau population estimates by County, 2006.

U.S. Census Bureau Annual Estimates of Population for Incorporated Places in Delaware, July 2008

Dagsboro geographic ranking was 33 of 57 in population size based on the Census Bureau.

**Table 3b: New Construction Building Permits**

	Single Family Homes	Townhouses	Multi Family Home/ Apt.	Commercial Buildings
2001	4	6	0	1
2002	8	12	0	1
2003	2	6	0	3
2004	6	0	0	1
2005	8	10	0	0
2006	2	6	0	1
2007	1	16	0	3

As indicated in Table 3b, the housing stock has continued to increase within the Town of Dagsboro. This increase in housing stock has had a major impact on the Town in regards to staffing and infrastructure. The Mayor and Town Council have worked diligently at increasing their staff and improving the Town's infrastructure to accommodate this new growth. Since the publication of the 2003 Comprehensive Plan, the Town has employed a part-time code enforcement officer to ensure that the residents and any development remain in compliance with the Town's ordinances. The installation of the Town public water system in 2005 is another factor which contributed to the Town's substantial growth.

### *Population Projections*

When deciding how to calculate a town's potential population projection several factors need to be considered. In the 2009 Comprehensive Plan the estimated population projection was based on 2007 U.S. Census estimates, the Sussex County Comprehensive Plan Update and Dagsboro's 2003 Comprehensive Plan. In that comprehensive plan, the estimated population for 2010 was 590 people and the projection for 2020 was 662. The 2010 Census population total for Dagsboro was 805 residents, exceeding the projections from the previous comprehensive plan. The updated Census total was used as a base number in determining a new population projection.

The updated 2010 Census also provided a 2013 Population Estimates Program. According to the 2013 population estimate as of July 1, 2013, 842 people were living in Town which is

an increase of 37 people from 2010. It is reasonable to assume that within three years more than 30 people have moved to Town. This figure was also used when calculating the population projection.

Besides current population totals, proposed and estimated development are the second factor in determining a population project. Section 2-2b further explains how the Town's population projection was calculated based on population totals and development potential.

## 2-2b Future Housing and Population Build-Out

Over the past several years on average about five new residential units have been built annually. This was calculated into the population projection figuring the rate of approximately five units built every year will remain the same. Along with general residential development there are several proposed subdivisions, some of which are in the process of being built. Vines Creek Village and Village on Pepper Creek are both single family developments with 50 and 87 units respectively. The Woodlands, a 48 twin-home development, and Chapel Crossing, a 98 unit townhome development, have both started construction. In projecting future build-out, it can be assumed that 15% of each development will be completed each year. The population projection figures shown in Table 6 is approximations based on current development trends.

**Table 4: Population Projection with Approved & Preliminary Subdivision Potential Rate**

	2010	2013	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
Dagsboro Population Projections	805	842	946	1,037	1,115	1,185	1,239	1,286
5 New General Residential Units	---	---	5	5	5	5	5	5
15% of Potential Development for Subdivisions (234 units)	---	---	35	30	25	22	18	16
Population Increase (based on 2.59 individuals per household)	---	---	104	91	78	70	54	47
Percent Increase Per Period	---	---	11.0%	8.8%	7.0%	5.9%	4.4%	3.7%

Based on U.S. Census 2010 Total Population & Annual Estimates of Residential Population 4/1/10 – 7/1/13.

### *Other Demographic Characteristics*

Table 5 outlines selected demographic characteristics for the Town of Dagsboro and how they compare to Sussex County and the State of Delaware in the 2010 Census.

**Table 5: Profile of Demographic Characteristics for Delaware, Sussex County of Dagsboro**

	Delaware	Sussex County	Dagsboro
Total Population	897,934	197,145	805
<b>Age</b>			
Population 18 years and under (percent)	26.0	22.5	25.6
Population 65 years and older (percent)	14.4	20.8	15.0
Median Age (years)	38.8	45.4	41.1
<b>Households</b>			
Total Households	342,297	79,368	311
Households with children under 18 years	32.5	27.0	31.8

Households with single parent families	10.0	8.4	8.3
Households with 65 and older living alone	9.6	12.1	9.0
Average household size (# of people)	2.55	2.45	2.59
<b>Housing Units</b>			
Total Housing Units	405,885	123,036	364
Renter Occupied Units	27.9	21.4	28.6
Vacant Housing Units	15.7	35.5	14.6
Seasonal or Recreational Units	8.9	28.3	3.6
<b>Income</b>			
Median Household Income	\$ 60,119.00	\$ 52,692.00	\$ 55,375.00
<b>Selected Characteristics</b>			
Population 25 and over - High School Graduate or Higher	87.7%	85.8%	90.3%
Population 25 and over - Associate or Bachelor's Degree or Higher	28.5%	22.0%	32.2%

As shown in Table 5, Dagsboro's Census demographic data is more similar to those of the State than the County. The age of the Town population has remained approximately the same, as well as the overall make-up of households. The one change in categories was to "Households with Single Parent Families." The 2010 Census has included male householder, with no wife present, with own children under 18 years, oppose to previous surveys that just counted female householders. The income and education numbers are from the 2008-2012 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates. Even though these numbers are estimates and not exact the Town, County and State have seen a significant rise in median household income. However, unlike the State and County, Dagsboro has also seen a major rise in education attainment whereas the State and County have stayed the same or seen just a slight increase.

#### Critical Issues and Future Needs

A survey was mailed to the property owners of the Town in May 2008. Based on this survey, 38 percent of the responses indicated they were in favor of the Town creating an incentive for developers to encourage affordable housing, while 53 percent of the responses are not in favor of any incentives. In fact, 71 percent believe there is an adequate supply of housing stock currently located in the Town.

The Town survey asked what types of housing would be preferred for the Town, and 80 percent would like to see more single-family homes on modest sized lots, 68 percent agree with single-family homes but on a large lot and 49 percent would like to see an assisted living center or retirement community within the Town. The majority, 81 percent, does not want condominiums or an apartment building, and 45 percent are not in favor of multi-family homes or townhouses.

#### *High proportion of elderly and disabled residents*

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

### *Housing stock greater than 40 years old*

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

### Recommendations

The types of homes preferred by the respondents indicate that an incentive program should be investigated by the Town's officials to help create more affordable single-family homes on modest lots.

## **2-3. Future Land Use and Annexation**

### Goals

- Manage the timing, location and design of future growth to enhance Dagsboro's small town, residential character.
- Manage the location, design and type of future non-residential development to serve resident's needs with minimal negative impact, and enhance Dagsboro's small town character.
- Support the continued affordability of housing in Dagsboro by encouraging the maintenance of existing homes and working with developers to provide new housing affordable to people with a wide range of incomes.
- Ensure ongoing compatibility and coordination with other local and state jurisdictions and agencies.

### Critical Issues and Future Needs

The Town has made great strides in the adoption of three new zoning districts to assist the development of land currently in Town as well as future lands annexed into the Town. The Residential Planned Community District (RPC), Cluster Residential District (CRD) and Town Center Zone District were created to give developers flexibility in design, while maintaining the character of the Town. Since the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan in March 2003, the Town has worked diligently in implementing the Plan's recommendations and to address the future needs as milestones toward the continued development of the Town. To date, the majority of the recommended implementation tools and strategies from the 2003 Plan have been completed or adopted by the Town.

### *Future Land Uses and Density*

Based on the recommendations of the adopted Comprehensive Plan, the Town approved and adopted the Town Center District. This new district incorporates commercial uses with residential uses, thereby encouraging the continuation and establishment of small businesses, professions and skilled craft occupations in conjunction with residential uses on a small town pedestrian oriented scale. These regulations will make a substantial difference in creating a downtown area that people will want to reside within, visit, shop and work.



The Residential Planned Community District (RPC) and Cluster Residential District (CRD) were adopted to encourage large-scale developments as a

means of creating an enhanced living environment through unified developments and to preserve desirable open spaces, conservation areas, unique natural features, floodplains, recreation and park areas, and lands for other public purposes. These two new zoning districts are to be superimposed over the current zoning district to enable the district to operate in harmony with the plan for land use and population density embodied in these regulations. The RPC and CRD regulations were created as a special set of regulations to apply to other districts within these regulations and are to be so designated by a special symbol for their boundaries on the Zoning District Map.

A survey was mailed to property owners of the Town of Dagsboro to provide input on the types of businesses that they feel would be appropriate for the Town. The results of the survey were overwhelming. The vast majority of the residents would like to see restaurants, bakeries, delicatessens, cafés and grocery stores located along Main Street and Clayton Avenue and the big box retail stores and fast food restaurants located along Route 113. The respondents were not as supportive towards bars or liquor stores.

#### *Vacant Lands*

The Town has a number of vacant parcels throughout the Town that may be built upon or developed. The majority of these lots are designated for residential use; however, there are a few parcels along Main Street, Clayton Street and the Highway corridors that will accommodate appropriate commercial development. A few large parcels and numerous individual lots remain vacant at this time.

#### *Annexation (Short-term Growth Area)*

The annexation of additional parcels into the Town will be considered if the annexation is contiguous with the current Town boundaries, the lands comply with the Comprehensive Plan, public services are available to that parcel, the welfare of the Town is met and the goals of the Comprehensive Plan are followed by the applicant. The priority annexations for the Town should be those parcels that are currently enclaves and where the parcel is split between Sussex County and the Town.

Map 4, Future Land Use and Annexation, indicates that the majority of land that could be annexed into the Town is located to the north of Town with small areas located to the east, west and south of Town. The Town has, however, identified lands adjacent to the future annexation lands that are considered by Town Planners to be areas of concern. These areas, if developed within Sussex County, could have a major adverse impact on the Town's public services.

The entire proposed annexation area consists of approximately 782 acres. The Town currently consists of about 900 acres and would grow to approximately 1,682 acres should the Town annex all the parcels. The proposed annexation area includes plans to annex 560 acres for residential use, 155 acres for commercial use and 67 acres for institutional use.

#### *Build-out Capacities*

A density of four dwelling units per acre (du/acre) is utilized as a base planning number to estimate build-out of the annexation area, to evaluate the capacity of infrastructure and facilities, and to provide a framework for a plan of services. It is noted that a density of four du/acre is generally accepted as viable to provide for the efficient provision of sewer and water systems, and is likely a worst case scenario factoring in environmental and physical site constraints, as well as areas necessary for rights-of-way.

With approximately 267 vacant developable acres within the Town's boundaries, 1,068 houses could be constructed at four du/acre. With an estimated 560 acres in the proposed residential annexation area, 2,240 houses could be built.

It is estimated that the development of the vacant land uses in Town and lands with development potential in the growth area would result in 3,308 additional housing units in Town. It is projected that, at full build-out, development of the annexation area would result in a population increase of 7,154 persons (assuming 2.1625 persons per household utilizing the 2000 U.S. Census data).

#### *Area of Concern (Long-term Growth Area)*

The Town of Dagsboro recognizes that land use and development activities outside the Town's boundaries have the potential to impact the Town and its residents. Map 7—Area of Concern—identifies an area of concern wherein the Town would like to have some degree of input or control on land use and development activities. It consists of approximately 4,178 acres of primarily agricultural land with some strip residential and a few subdivisions.

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

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

- It is adjacent to Dagsboro's Town boundaries.
- It is a logical extension of the Town and the utility system.
- It does not create any enclaves.
- It can be served with water and sewer without reducing water and sewer capacity of developable lands already within the Town or already slated for annexation.
- It complies with the recommendations of the transportation study.
- Any annexation within the secondary areas will involve notification of the Office of State Planning Coordination and require a plan of services.

#### *Utility Capacity*

Given that development cannot happen without the proper infrastructure in place, the Town of Dagsboro has taken the required steps to improve its water and sewer infrastructure for the current and future residents. This will be discussed in further detail in the next section.

#### *Relevance with Other Planning Documents*

In designating the Future Land Use and Annexation Areas, the Town considered the future land use and annexation plan with State Strategies, the Sussex County Plan, Town of

Frankford Comprehensive Plan (2007) and the Town of Millsboro Comprehensive Plan (2004), the State Transportation Plan, and other relevant State programs and policies.

The State of Delaware, in its Investment Strategies Map, has indicated the entire Town as being in a Level 1 or Level 2 investment area. The areas of concern for the Town are indicated as Level 3 (See Map 4). Although Levels 1 and 2 are the strategic areas for development, Level 3 areas have the potential to be developed. Due to the limits of finite financial resources, state infrastructure spending on “hard” or “grey” infrastructure such as roads, sewer, water and public facilities will generally be directed to Investment Level 1 and 2 areas during this planning period. The State will consider investing in these types of infrastructure in Investment Level 3 areas once the Investment Level 1 and 2 areas are substantially built out, or when the infrastructure or facilities are logical extensions of existing systems and deemed appropriate to serve a particular area.

Sussex County has updated their comprehensive plan and has indicated that the area for future development around the Town of Dagsboro will be similar to what the Town considers as their future annexation area.

As shown on Map 4, Future Land Use and Annexations, there is an overlap between the Town of Dagsboro Area of Concern and the surrounding municipal annexation areas of the Town of Millsboro and the Town of Frankford.

#### Recommendations

1. Review the list of permitted uses in the Town Center (TC) District and the Highway Commercial (HC) District to ensure alignment with the desired uses revealed through the public opinion survey.
2. Develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Sussex County to notify, coordinate and jointly address issues related to land use and development activities within the annexation area and area of concern as shown on Map 4, as well as the allocation of sewer EDUs. The MOU should ensure shared land use decisions, require the two jurisdictions to stay informed on development surrounding the Town, and ensure that development is compatible with the character and scale of Dagsboro.
3. Develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Town of Frankford and the Town of Millsboro. The MOU with each municipality would define coordination on development activity within the shared annexation areas and areas of concern. The MOU should ensure shared land use decisions that may impact each other, and require each to stay informed on development surrounding the Towns, and ensure that adjacent development and land uses are compatible with each other.
4. Revise the Dagsboro Subdivision Ordinance to require that annexations follow parcel boundaries, and if annexation of an entire parcel is not desirable, Dagsboro should require it to be subdivided so that corporate boundaries and property lines are coterminous.
5. Section 275-40 F. of the Town of Dagsboro Zoning Code sets forth provisions for sunseting of site plan approval. This section should be amended to include a provision for the duration of a preliminary site plan approvals. A preliminary site plan approval should be rendered null and void if an applicant has not submitted a final site plan within a specific period of time.

## 2-4 Utilities, Community Facilities and Services, Transportation

*Adequate public facilities and services are essential for the betterment of the community as well as any future growth.*

### Goals

- Ensure utilities, community services, and facilities are adequate to serve the existing community as well as planned future growth.
- Phase-in all new development based on the availability of adequate infrastructure.

### 2-4a Utilities

#### *Water*

Since the adoption of the 2003 Comprehensive Plan, the Town of Dagsboro has signed an agreement with the Town of Millsboro to supply potable water to the Town. The current agreement with the Town of Millsboro is to purchase up to 90,000 gallons of water per day. The installation of the Town's water system was completed in 2006. The water is supplied through a 12" water main which reduces down to 10" and traverses the Town. The water pressure is maintained by the use of the existing 500,000 gallon elevated storage tank. By installing the 10" water main, the Town can now adequately supply potable water to the residents who were previously on wells. Currently, the Town has 320 customers connected to the water system and receives on average of 2.2 million gallons per month to service them. This averages out to approximately 229 gallons per day per customer or 73,280 gallons per day which equates to 81.4 percent of their agreed upon water capacity with the Town of Millsboro.

#### *Sewer*

The Town's sewer system is operated by Sussex County and is part of the Dagsboro/Frankford Sanitary Sewer District. Waste is treated at the Piney Neck wastewater treatment facility, which is located on the north side of Piney Neck Road approximately 0.2 miles west of Adams Road. The facility was created through a referendum approved by the citizens of Dagsboro and Frankford and in 1988 Sussex County passed a resolution establishing the Dagsboro-Frankford Sewer District. The sewer district is an independent district operated by Sussex County on behalf of the users in the district. The sewer district serves the Town of Dagsboro, Frankford, the old and new high schools and Frankford Elementary School. The wastewater system was designed as a gravity feed system with lift stations placed in strategic locations. The sewer mains are connected to a force main which leads to Piney Neck treatment plant. The Piney Neck plant is a spray irrigation facility utilizing 19.0 acres of Loblolly Pine trees adjacent to the plant, and 38 acres of spray crops.

The plant has the capability to process 200,000 gallons per day. The County is in the process of submitting a re-rating permit to DNREC to allow additional capacity. The Town is not allocated any specific amount and shares the total availability with the other users within the District. Equivalent Dwelling Unit (EDU) consumption is the method by which the Town's sewer requirements are determined. The average EDU is based on total gallons of water consumed minus 10 percent. The average daily water consumption is 229 gallons per customer (total 320 water customers), which equals 206.1 gallons of wastewater exiting to the sewer system. Using this calculation, Dagsboro discharges approximately 65,952 gallons per day. With the continued development of the approved subdivisions, the Town

could be responsible for 95,218 gallons per day being treated and with the proposed subdivisions possibly 285,242 gallons per day being treated through the plant by the year 2038. Sussex County currently uses 225 gpd for planning purposes for all new connections.

Currently, Sussex County is performing a district wide planning study for the Piney Neck Wastewater Facility to determine capacity and expansion possibilities to better service the community in the future. The study will determine anticipated sewage needs for the Dagsboro-Frankford Sewer District based on zoning and current development projects. The results of the study and recommended course of action for expansion of the Piney Neck Facility should be available later in 2008. The findings of this study will have significant impacts on growth and the pace of development in Dagsboro, Frankford and surrounding areas of unincorporated Sussex County, specifically the Piney Neck area. The Town has worked very closely with Sussex County Engineering Department and their consultants to determine future wastewater needs for the Town based on zoning and proposed and approved development projects.

#### Critical Issues and Future Needs

Water supply in the Town most likely will not keep up with the demand based on approved subdivisions and potential new development. The Town is currently receiving 81 percent of the agreed upon water allocation from the Town of Millsboro. This averages out to potentially 73 additional homes being built within the Town before the agreement with Millsboro has exceeded its agreed upon quantity. With the addition of Savannah Square Shopping Center, Clayton Crossing Business Park and the permitted commercial uses in these buildings, it is possible the amount of water available for additional homes will be much less.

Sewer capacity or the availability of sewer could have a major impact on Dagsboro and the surrounding areas growth rate. The Piney Neck Wastewater facility does not allocate a certain amount of capacity to any specific area, therefore if a developer chooses to build a large subdivision within the Piney Neck area; it is possible that the availability of sewer discharge for Dagsboro subdivisions could be denied until Sussex County has the opportunity to expand the Piney Neck Facility.

#### Recommendations

1. Conduct a water study to determine the quantity of water needed for the next five years based on approved residential developments and build out analysis for vacant lands and annexation areas.
2. Create a water plan to determine the best alternatives for increased capacity, either by renegotiating with the Town of Millsboro, increasing storage capacity or by installing wells thereby creating their own supply.
3. Coordinate with the Public Service Commission to expand the Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN) service territory to include annexation areas.
4. Work with Sussex County Engineers and the Town of Frankford on the Piney Neck Wastewater Facility study to ensure that they have the most current population and water consumption data to better prepare the availability study.

## 2-4b Public Safety and Community Services

### *Public Safety*

Sussex County operates the Emergency Operations Center (EOC), giving the Town access to a three digit call number. The 911 system enables EOC to dispatch the local police and Delaware State Police to emergencies within the Town. The police force for the Town of Dagsboro consists of a full time police chief and one full time sergeant. With the assistance of the Delaware State Police, the Town of Dagsboro has 24 hour emergency coverage.

The EOC also dispatches the Town's Volunteer Fire Department and Ambulances when needed. The Town currently has one Volunteer Fire Company with 74 active members and 28 auxiliary members. The department has various apparatus including two ambulances. In 2007, the members of this Volunteer Fire Department responded to 155 fire calls and 426 ambulance calls.

Sussex County also operates the Emergency Medical System which provides paramedics throughout the County. Station 103 is located just north of the Town and is the primary paramedics for the Town. Station's 105 to the southeast, 108 to the north and 106 to the northeast are utilized as backup paramedics when needed.

### *Community Services*

The Town Hall and the Police Station are centrally located in Dagsboro at the intersection of Main Street and Clayton Street. The Town employs two police officers, a town clerk, a code enforcement officer and an administrative assistant. The hours of Town Hall are from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. The town clerk is responsible for a wide array of the Town's day to day activities. A few of the more important functions of a town clerk include: the Town's finances which includes accounts receivable, accounts payable, tax billings, payroll, grant writing, department supervisor, personnel services, special projects coordinator for Town Council as well as other duties. The code enforcement officer's duties include: the issuing of building permits, enforcing the Town Code and serving as an alternate on the Planning Commission. The administrative assistant helps to support the town clerk. Some of the duties include: processing business licenses, preparing the minutes from the various council meetings, written communications and receptionist for the Town.



The Town has three facilities available for community meetings or banquets: the National Guard Armory on Route 20, Bethel Center on Clayton Avenue, and the Volunteer Fire Hall on Waples Street. The Town Hall is used for office space only and its small size will not accommodate large community meetings. Therefore, the municipal meetings for Town Council, Planning Commission and Board of Adjustment are scheduled and held in other facilities.

The United States Postal Service has an office located at 102 Clayton Street, which is near the Town's main intersection of Main Street and Clayton Street.

Sussex County operates two libraries in the area, one in Frankford and the other in the Town of Millsboro, both of which are accessible to the residents. The County also has a bookmobile that makes regularly scheduled visits to the Town.

The Town of Dagsboro is located in the Indian River School District, which serves southeast Sussex County. The Indian River School District geographically is the largest school district in the State of Delaware and is also one of the largest by number of students. Students from the Town currently attend schools located in the surrounding area. Students in grades K-5<sup>th</sup> attend Frankford Elementary in Frankford, which is about three miles south of the Town of Dagsboro. Students in grades 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> attend Selbyville Middle School in Selbyville, which is about seven miles from Town, and grades 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> attend Indian River High School located in the Town of Dagsboro. There are several private elementary and secondary schools within twenty miles of the Town.

There are two private medical practitioners located in Town and two dentists located just outside the Town. Additionally there are several medical facilities located in the Town of Millsboro where residents can seek medical attention. The nearby hospitals include Beebe Hospital in Lewes (23 miles east), Nanticoke Hospital in Seaford (25 miles west), Peninsula General Hospital in Salisbury, MD (27 miles southwest), Atlantic General Hospital in Berlin, MD (18 miles south) and Milford Memorial Hospital (30 miles north).

The Town does not have a trash service contracted for the residents. Each individual resident must contract for trash removal services independently.

#### Critical Issues and Future Needs

Residents were asked to rank the types of services, housing developments and businesses they would prefer to be in Town. The majority of residents said they would like a medical facility, town trash service and a town library. Throughout the survey, a medical facility consistently ranked as one of the most needed services.

The Town currently has two full-time police officers and has initiated summer bicycle patrols. The residents of the Town would like to see a larger police force. The current conditions require the State Police Force to respond for emergencies when the paid staff is not available. This condition requires emergencies to be prioritized by the State Police, which could cause some community members to wait for periods of time before seeing an Officer of the law. In addition, an increase in population and traffic due to foreseen new residential developments will certainly increase the need for a greater police presence.

The current Police Department building adjacent to Town Hall does not have the adequate space to accommodate a larger Police force. This may present a security risk for the storage of evidence and the keeping of security weapons.

The Volunteer Fire Company is currently seeking to build a new fire station. This could be a great opportunity for the Town if the Fire Company decides to sell their current building and land. With the Town's water tower already located on this site and due to the size of the existing structure, the Town could possibly utilize this opportunity to create a "municipal complex," including a new police station, public works department and a public meeting hall. This opportunity would eliminate the need to use the other public buildings that occasionally creates scheduling challenges. It would also create a permanent location for the future public works department as well as permit the police department to relocate to a larger facility which will accommodate for the growth.

#### Recommendations

1. Seek opportunities to increase the current police force through grant funding and additional municipal funding sources.

2. Work with the Volunteer Fire Company and Police Department in creating a municipal complex including a police station, public works department and public meeting hall at the current Fire Company building.
3. The Town currently does not have a public works department for the maintenance of the water system, streets and sidewalks. As the Town continues to grow, the creation of this department with qualified personnel will be vital.
4. Establish a town trash service.

### *Stormwater Management*

The Town currently performs the multiple stormwater functions to varying degrees. The Planning & Zoning Commission, Code Enforcement Official and Town Engineer all have a role in plan review of stormwater management plans. The Code Enforcement Officer provides oversight of new construction of facilities, as well as inspections and maintenance of facilities. Maintenance responsibilities are governed under the State regulations with oversight provided by the Sussex Conservation District (SCD). The Town's consulting engineer reviews sediment and stormwater management plans in new developments, and further coordinates with the SCD to ensure compliance with Delaware's Sediment and Stormwater Regulations. In addition to plan review, the District inspects the construction and compliance of approved plans and conducts annual inspections of permanent stormwater facilities.

### Critical Issues and Future Needs

Currently, the Town does not experience serious flooding and there are no noted concerns with the existing infrastructure. However, stormwater management in the older core section of Town is non-existent. Older sections of Town continue to rely on a series of natural drainage, tax ditches, agricultural ditches and DeIDOT storm drains to provide stormwater management and general drainage. As a result, pollutants are free to enter both surface waters and the underground aquifers.

The Town recognizes that most of the statewide and local stormwater management regulations in the past have focused on regulating new development. However, many stormwater runoff problems are associated with existing developments that were built prior to the adoption of the recent source water protection and non-point pollution control strategies. The Town further recognizes that traditional stormwater management technologies significantly alter the natural hydrology of a site, which has regional impacts.

### Recommendations

1. Continue to coordinate with the SCD in ensuring new developments adequately address how stormwater quantity and quality treatment will be achieved.
2. Investigate the need for a County/Town drainage study that identifies any issues that need to be mitigated. The drainage study will provide an inventory of facilities and locate problem areas, such as flooding, infrastructure decay, lack of oversight and maintenance. Information from a study could be used to develop a capital improvements plan for specific improvements and would further identify sources of funding including, but not limited to developer impact fees, grants and loans.

3. Initiate discussion with the DNREC and SCD to develop stormwater management practices in the Town that address stormwater runoff impacts within the Pepper Creek and Inland Bays watershed. These efforts should strive to manage stormwater runoff in the most efficient and effective manner while respecting natural features and constraints. New developments that design, construct and maintain Best Management Practices (BMPs) would minimize impervious coverage and reduce the need for permanent stormwater management basins. BMPs further the impact of stormwater runoff, prevent erosion, and filter sediment, nutrients and pollutants. Example BMPs include, but are not limited to, bioretention facilities, filter strips and biofiltration swales.

#### *Parks, Recreation and Open Space*

The Katie Helm Town Park parcel is currently located along Main Street is used for public use, such as the annual Christmas festivities. This parcel is being developed to be a complete park type setting to include amenities such as playground equipment, benches and visual art. Besides the park, the new and old high schools located between the Town and Frankford have several athletic fields and courts available for public recreational use.



Holt's Landing State Park is located less than 10 miles east of the Town, and is the closest state park. This 204 acre park became a state park in 1965 and boasts diverse terrain that includes a bay shore beach, grassy fields and hardwood forest. Holt's Landing is located on the Indian River Bay and also includes the Assawoman Canal, a 97 acre canal that connects the Indian River with Little Assawoman Bay to the south. Amenities include a boat ramp, fishing, nature trails, picnicking, a playground, a pavilion, a crabbing pier and restroom facilities. A privately owned marina operates on a leased portion of the Assawoman Canal and includes a fuel pump and a small boat launching ramp for boaters and visitors.

Delaware Seashore State Park, Fenwick Island State Park and the public Atlantic Ocean beaches in the Towns of Bethany Beach and Fenwick Island are located less than 10 miles from Town.

The Great Cypress Swamp is located less than two miles southwest of the Town. This area is owned and managed by Delaware Wild Lands Inc., a non-profit conservative organization. Cypress Swamp's access is limited, as it is a private conservation area. The area contains the northern most stands of Cypress trees in North America.

#### *Critical Issues and Future Needs*

Financial consideration must take a priority when creating parks and playgrounds. The long term success of the Katie Helm Park will be in part of the annual budget prepared by the Town Council and Finance Committee.

Open space for parks and recreation facilities continues to be an important amenity for the Town of Dagsboro. In the Town survey, several residents expressed interest in the need for more community open space. Parks and recreation facilities that are centrally located with easy accessibility would be most beneficial to all residents.

#### *Recommendations*

1. Continue to pursue the plans for the Katie Helm Park.

2. Identify more parcels that could be used for municipal or neighborhood open space.
3. Create accessible walkways, bike paths and greenway corridors to get to the parks or recreation facilities. Possibly develop a "Rails with Trails" system, connecting Dagsboro to Frankford and Millsboro through pedestrian friendly walkways.
4. Pursue donations from businesses and the community to help fund the development and maintenance of parks. Apply for grants in the development and maintenance of open spaces such as the Katie Helm Park.
5. Amend the zoning code to require new developments to preserve open space and environmentally significant features.

### *Economic Development*

The Town currently has a variety of businesses ranging in size from owner operated to the largest employer, the Indian River School District. These various businesses include retail, professional services, general services and educational services. The majority of these businesses are located along Route 113 corridor, Clayton Street (Route 26) and Main Street (Route 26/Route 20). These businesses are economically healthy and appear to be stable in their positions. The newest commercial developments were created with mixed-use commercial activity in mind. They are Clayton Crossing and Savannah Square shopping centers. Both are designed on the concept of having multiple businesses located in a close proximity to allow customers to travel from business to business on the same grounds. They are expected to include a variety of different uses, once fully occupied.

Of the Town's major businesses, the five largest employers are:

Company	Number of Employees
Indian River School District	80
Mediacom	60
Royal Farms	21
Coastal Supply Company	16
Southern States	12

### *Critical Issues and Future Needs*

Economic development is a priority for the community drawing additional businesses to support the current and future residential growth in the Town. An economic development board should be established to communicate and entice additional businesses to Town.

If the Town was to establish an economic development board for the purpose of contacting various businesses to locate their establishment within the Town, the board should focus on the following types and locations, based on the April 2008 community survey:

Where would you like to see the following businesses located:	Main Street	Clayton Street	Route 113
Fast food restaurant	8.5%	10.2%	81.4%
Family restaurant	56.3%	19.7%	23.9%
Super market / Grocery store	18.0%	14.8%	67.2%
Retail clothing store	19.0%	12.1%	69.0%

Retail convenience store	30.8%	7.7%	61.5%
Service station	21.3%	8.5%	70.2%
Coffee shop	52.3%	29.2%	18.5%
Bakery	47.1%	30.9%	22.1%
Professional office, Medical, Law, Accountant	34.8%	34.8%	30.3%
Medical facility	62.7%	22.0%	15.3%
Barber / Beauty shop	62.7%	22.0%	15.3%
Large scale department store	0.0%	4.8%	95.2%
Hardware store	32.1%	18.9%	49.1%
Research and development facility	3.2%	6.5%	90.3%
Shopping center (Multiple stores in one building)	6.3%	6.3%	87.5%

Information requested in the survey asked if the Town should capitalize on the tourist industry and 58 percent of the respondents believe it should while 30 percent thinks the Town should not.

### Recommendations

1. Create an economic development committee for the purpose of pursuing various businesses to relocate or establish their business in the Town of Dagsboro. Work closely with the various local Chambers of Commerce to help entice the businesses.
2. Establish a Town of Dagsboro Chamber of Commerce or contact a local Chamber of Commerce to become affiliated with.
3. Review the Town's current Zoning Codes to determine if the permitted uses in the Town Center, Commercial and Highway Commercial Districts strive toward economic growth.

### **2-4c Transportation**

When considering current and potential transportation issues the Town must have a clear idea of where improvements and additional evaluation need to be made. The two issues the Town faces are congestion and lack of pedestrian connectivity. It is the Town's vision and goal to reduce traffic, truck traffic, and install sidewalks where there are currently none. It is expected that in the future Dagsboro will become a more pedestrian friendly community where residents can easily and safely walk to school and other destinations in Town, and passersby will want to stop and visit businesses in Town rather than to just passing through on the way to other towns.

The primary streets in Town, Main Street, Clayton Street, Vines Creek Road and Armory Road are maintained by DeIDOT. All the other streets and sidewalks within the Town are maintained by the Town and funded by the Municipal Street Aid funds from the State and Capitol Improvement accounts established by the Town. Any additional or new streets or sidewalks constructed as a result of redevelopment or subdivisions of lands shall be dedicated to the Town of Dagsboro and will be maintained by the Town in a similar manner.

The rail line that runs through the Town is the Indian River Secondary line operated by the Norfolk-Southern Railroad. On average, two trains travel through the Town on a daily basis hauling grain for the poultry industry and coal for the Indian River Power Plant. The Town should plan for and promote the use of this existing rail line which may prove to be more

heavily utilized in the future due to escalating fuel costs. With the increase use of the rail line, which is being seen locally and nationally, the Town should also work with the Dagsboro Volunteer Fire Company in developing a disaster plan in preparation for any potential emergency which may occur in or adjacent to Town.

The Town of Dagsboro, as with other small communities, could be considered a bedroom community. The majority of the Town residents are employed in other surrounding municipalities. The larger cities such as Salisbury, MD, Ocean City, MD and Dover, DE, are within a 30 to 45 minute commute. The ever increasing population of commuters is growing and some commuters will travel even a greater distance to enjoy the lifestyle of living in a rural setting and close to the ocean, such as the Town of Dagsboro, while working in cities as far away as Annapolis, MD or Wilmington, DE.

Currently there is no regular fixed-route bus service to or through the Town. DART First State offers Paratransit services for those eligible elderly and disabled residents, as well as those requiring kidney dialysis services. This service is available on a reservation basis. The Roxana CHEER Center also provides weekly transportation for senior citizens. The service destinations include trips to the bank, post office, drug store and grocery store.

The increase in traffic on Route 26 and Route 20 (Main, Clayton Streets., Vines Creek Rd.) through Town continues to be a problem for Town residents. Currently, these routes serve as the primary routes to the resort Towns along the Atlantic beaches. It is estimated that daily traffic counts through the Town of Dagsboro on Main Street approaches that of daily traffic counts on Route 113. Traffic through Town will continue to become more congested until alternative routes and improvements are made to the area's transportation network.

Route 26 is also utilized by delivery trucks servicing the development work in areas near the coastal resorts. There are plans for the Allen Harim Foods Company, a reuse and expansion of the now closed Vlastic Facility located on Iron Branch Road north of Town, and the proposed Southern Delaware Botanic Garden Arboretum, to be located on Piney Neck Road, which could potentially generate more general and truck traffic. It is possible that trucks will find it more accessible to travel through Dagsboro to get to these sites rather than driving through Millsboro, causing additional traffic on Iron Branch Road. This direct route for the truck traffic may result in an unsafe traffic condition for the local traffic as well as the pedestrians along the streets.

### Critical Issues

The primary critical issue for the Town is the overwhelming traffic congestion on Route 26 and Route 20. Each year the traffic count continues to rise on Route 26 and Route 20, and while DelDOT is currently working on alternative routes to direct traffic around the Town there is no short term plan in effect. Despite the feeling of an increase in traffic, according to the 2012 traffic summary report from DelDOT (See Table 6), traffic on the primary through streets within the Town of Dagsboro have remained approximately the same or have decreased. There has been a slight decrease of cars traveling on Main Street compared to the last traffic count taken, however there has been an increase in truck traffic through Town. According to the data there has been a major increase in traffic on US 113 from Dagsboro north to Millsboro.

**Table 6: Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) on Key Roads (2012)**

Road Segment	AADT	Year Last Count	Traffic Group
Clayton Street, From 113 to Main St	5,444	2005	8
Main Street, From Iron Branch Rd to Vines Creek	13,442	2010	2
Route 113, South of Dagsboro Limits	15,417	2010	5
Route 113, North of Dagsboro Limits	26,759	2010	5

Source: DelDOT Traffic Summary Report, 2012

The Town has several intersections that serve as the primary traffic arteries of the Town. Their function is to move the 17,000 vehicles of intra-town and inter-town traffic each day. However these streets were not designed to be major thoroughfares but rather access streets to provide access to abutting property. The intersections were never intended to carry the heavy volumes of traffic noted in Table 6, which has caused concern within the Town over safety and efficiency of these intersections.

- a. The first area of concern is the intersection of Vines Creek Road, Armory Road and Chapel Lane.

This intersection was part of DelDOT's capital transportation program improvement project that was completed in 2012. The project improvements included realigning the intersection to remove the current traffic calming lane shift along SR 26 at this intersection and signalization of the intersection. The results of this intersection created a 70 degree angle as Vines Creek



Road intersects traveling north bound. The project also resulted in the creation of an intersection that curves at the crossroads of Chapel Lane and Armory Road thereby not creating a straight through intersection. The intersection is controlled by a newly installed DelDOT traffic signal, and this signal is not equipped with a directional signal allowing traffic to turn left onto Armory Road from the West bound lane of Vines Creek Road or right from Vines Creek Road from the east bound lane. Further complicating the intersection, the east bound traffic on Vines Creek Road trying to turn onto Armory Road is directed to a short, narrow turn lane that is part of the road shoulder. This narrow turn lane creates a traffic hazard for larger vehicles attempting to make the right turn and its short length prohibits the smaller vehicles from merging onto the turn lane in a timely manner without utilizing the roads shoulder. While the design and construction of this intersection at the time it was built was a benefit to the Town and through traffic, it has since become a hazardous intersection. The heavy traffic volume located on Vines Creek Road and Armory Road, and the timing of the traffic signal creates long lines of vehicles trying to enter onto or exit from Vines Creek Road.

- b. The second area of concern is located at the intersection of Iron Branch Road, Main Street and Hudson Street. While Iron Branch Road has a right turn lane, vehicles trying to enter onto Main Street and turn left continually wait for long periods of time especially during the tourist season, thereby creating traffic congestion and causing the right turn lane to become inaccessible. Further complicating this intersection is Hudson Street. The intersection at Hudson Street if entering from Main Street is located approximately 65 feet from Main Street off of Iron Branch Road. While Iron

Branch Road is controlled by a stop sign the traffic on Main Street does not have any traffic control devices, thereby creating a safety problem for vehicles entering Main Street. All of these issues will be exacerbated if general and truck traffic continues to increase.

- c. The development of the Delaware Botanical Gardens at Pepper Creek, as well as new residential development along Piney Neck Road, will also contribute to increased traffic. During the PLUS process DeIDOT did not require a Traffic Impact Study (TIS) be completed for the Botanical Gardens due to the estimated traffic. A TIS is generally required for developments generating more than 400 vehicle trip ends per day, and the Botanical Gardens estimate was much less than 400 trips. In comments made by the County Planning and Zoning Commission it was noted that comparing the proposed project to similar botanic gardens in other states, approximately 83,000 should be expected to visit the site annually. The County Planning and Zoning Commission concluded that the site would have little to no impact on traffic or the nearby roadways.
- d. There are several intersections in Town that need to be evaluated for additional safety improvements. The intersections of Main and Clayton Streets and Route 113 and Route 26 (Royal Boulevard) have seen many accidents in recent years. The Town will need to work with DeIDOT to further examine these intersections, identify needed safety improvements with better functionality, and develop a plan to implement the necessary improvements.
- e. There are several streets and sidewalks throughout Town that are in need of maintenance and repair. Additional studies or surveys need to be completed to help the Town prioritize areas in need of maintenance. A lack of funding for street projects is the main reason the Town has been unable to make all the needed repairs. The Town should consider implementing a capital improvements plan to include street projects so that the Town can establish a schedule and a plan for funding needed street repairs and improvements.

### Recommendations

1. DeIDOT is currently working on the Route 113 bypass study as part of the Route 113 north/south bypass which may potentially reduce the amount of vehicles traveling through the Town. The Town Council should work very closely with DeIDOT in the design and location of this bypass. A draft of the US 113 North/South Study: Millsboro-South Area Environmental Impact Study has been completed and should be reviewed by the Town to identify potential impacts to the Town.
2. The Town should continue with the Town Center District theme and work with DeIDOT in the redesign of the downtown streetscape. This redesign will create a traffic calming effect plus add a pedestrian friendly environment for the businesses located in the Town Center District. It is possible that it will deter the tourist traffic from using the smaller roads to get to the southern beach areas and move them on to the larger, less congested roads even though it may minimally extend the distance traveled. The Town and DeIDOT have previously worked on a streetscape project for the intersection of Main Street and Clayton Avenue. This project was Phase I of a larger streetscape plan for Main and Clayton and was constructed early 2009. In 2012 Phase II of the streetscape project was completed for Main Street, which included new sidewalks and street trees. Phase II improvements extended from

Town Hall to just past Katie Helm Park. Additional streetscape improvements should be conducted throughout the Town Center District.

3. The Town should complete a street assessment to identify streets or segments in need of repair and improvements. The assessment should include a street prioritization to assist the Town in planning for future street projects. The Town should also identify a mechanism to fund these street repairs and improvements. The Town could consider using a percentage of building permit fees or impact fees to help fund the street repairs. These funds could be held in a transportation fund to be available for scheduled projects and emergency repair projects.
4. The Town should complete a sidewalk assessment to determine current conditions of existing sidewalks and identify where there are missing segments. The Town should also draft a sidewalk policy that would develop sidewalks where missing, and identify maintenance requirements and construction specifications. The Town should also seek sources of funding assistance to extend and repair sidewalks where needed.
5. The Town, working with the Dagsboro Fire Company and other County and State agencies, should develop a disaster preparedness plan for the railroad, and prepare plans for possible emergency scenarios and appropriate planned responses.

## 2-5 Community Character and Design

The Town of Dagsboro's central location amidst the larger Towns of Millsboro, Salisbury and Ocean City, MD, and the Delaware beaches helps give it its distinct characteristic. Due to this location, it has experienced an increase in development, as has the surrounding areas.



The Town of Dagsboro is a small, quiet community which gives it its added comfortable atmosphere and charm. The Town is primarily comprised of single-family homes, most of which were built before the 1960s. New developments have added townhouses and duplexes to the housing stock. This mixture of housing allows for a diverse cost of living and gives the opportunity for more individual home owners. The majority of the structures throughout the Town are wood framed with wood or wood-like siding. The few brick structures are mostly for commercial or public uses such as the Town Hall, Movie Theater, church, bank and the post office. There is one larger scale commercial development located along Route 113, but the overall height and scale of the buildings is in proportion to the rest of the community.

### *Historic Preservation*



Although the Town does not currently have a historic district, it does have the potential to create one. In 1998, an area was identified as the potential historic district for the Town. However, this district has yet to be formalized by the Town. Dagsboro has a few historic structures like Prince George's Chapel built in 1757, which is the only building in Dagsboro to currently be listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Clayton Theater built in 1948 is a vintage style movie house theater with one screen and a stage which plays first-run movies. Although it has a balcony, it is currently blocked off from use. This theater is one of many structures that have the potential to be listed on the National Register. It is important to look further into identifying historic

structures within the town boundaries, because the history of a town gives residents a sense of place and connects them to the past.

### *Design Standards*

In March 2008, the *Town of Dagsboro: Development Design Standards* was adopted to create guidelines for new development and redevelopment. The purpose of these new design standards is to create an attractive and charming community that meets the Town's visual objectives. Some of these design standards objectives include building upon the historic heritage, encouraging creative designs for sites and buildings, and supporting pedestrian movement. The design elements are broken into types of development categories of residential, multi-family residential, commercial, industrial and institutional, signage, and utilities and stormwater. It is the hope that the character and aesthetic of the Town will be preserved if these design standards are followed.

### *Environmental Protection*

The Town of Dagsboro receives much of its natural beauty from all the environmental resources found in and around the Town. Pepper Creek and its tributaries run through the center of Town and along the northern boundary, creating a fairly wide 100 year flood plain zone through the Town surrounding the waterway, as well as some areas of forested wetlands. Just to the northeast of Town, a large area has been designated as an excellent recharge area. These recharge areas are important for the role they play in mitigating flooding and maintaining the quantity and quality of water that recharges into the underground aquifers from which the Town draws its drinking water.

The Town of Dagsboro is located within the greater Inland Bays drainage. Under Section 303(d) of the 1972 Federal Clean Water Act (CWA), states are required to identify all impaired waters and establish total maximum daily loads (TMDLs) to restore their beneficial uses (e.g., swimming, fishing, and drinking water). A TMDL defines the amount of a given pollutant that may be discharged to a water body from point, nonpoint, and natural background sources and still allows attainment or maintenance of the applicable narrative and numerical water quality standards. A TMDL is the sum of the individual Waste Load Applications (WLAs) for point sources and Load Allocations (LAs) for nonpoint sources and natural background sources of pollution. A TMDL may include a reasonable margin of safety (MOS) to account for uncertainties regarding the relationship between mass loading and resulting water quality. In simplistic terms, a TMDL matches the strength, location and timing of pollution sources within a watershed with the inherent ability of the receiving water to assimilate the pollutant without adverse impact. Moreover, reducing the pollutants to the level specified by the TMDL(s) will ensure that a water body meets the water quality criteria and goals in the State Water Quality Standards.

A Pollution Control Strategy (PCS) is an implementation strategy that identifies the actions necessary to systematically reduce the pollutant loading rate for a given water body, and meet the TMDL reduction requirements specified for that water body. A variety of site-specific best management practices (BMPs) will be the primary actions required by the PCS to reduce pollutant loadings. The pollutants specifically targeted for reduction in the Inland Bays watershed are nutrients (e.g., nitrogen and phosphorus) and bacteria. The PCS for the Inland Bays was approved on November 11, 2008, and is now a regulatory directive containing enforceable provisions.

The Town of Dagsboro is located within the greater Inland Bays drainage (high nutrient reduction area). The Inland Bays drainage is assigned a range of nutrient (e.g., nitrogen and

phosphorus) and bacterial TMDL load reduction requirements that, as mentioned previously, must be met in order to meet the State Water Quality Standards (See table 7).

**Table 7: TMDL Nutrient (Nitrogen and Phosphorus) and Bacteria Reduction Requirements for the Inland Bays (high reduction area).**

Inland Bays Drainage (high reduction area)	N - reduction requirements	P - reduction requirements	Bacteria-reduction requirements
Indian River Bay watershed	85%	65%	40% Fresh; 17% Marine

DNREC oversees the State's Source Water Assessment Program (SWAP), which is primarily aimed at protecting water supplies from contamination. Central well protection areas and excellent recharge areas have been designated by DNREC. Sussex County has a source water protection ordinance that was recently adopted to meet a requirement of the State Source Water Protection Law of 2001. The ordinance is primarily designed to minimize the threats to major water supply wells from pollutants. The best type of land use around water supply wells is preserved open space or low density residential development. Ideally, the amount of impervious coverage around major water supply wells would be minimized to allow the groundwater to be recharged. Currently, two private water supply wells are found within the Town boundaries, however, neither is being used as drinking water sources.

Sussex County and the State have designated a large area of the County near the coast as an Environmentally Sensitive Area. Dagsboro borders this designated area on the northeastern boundary of Town. In the 2007 Sussex County Comprehensive Plan update, and again adopted June 24, 2008, it talks about the importance of the Environmentally Sensitive Area. The plan defines this area as a popular location for new housing, as well as an area that contains ecologically important resources that help absorb floodwaters and provides a place for wildlife habitat and overall health of the Inland Bays. One of the major concerns is stormwater runoff flowing into and polluting waterways. It is important for Dagsboro to be aware of how the Town might be affected by this area even though they are not located within the area's boundaries. In the future, Dagsboro might have the opportunity to annex land to the north of Town and would then be affected by the Environmentally Sensitive Area and the requirements for developing.

Regulatory protection of wetlands (tidal and nontidal) is mandated under Section 404 provisions of the Federal Clean Water Act through the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). Certain other wetlands (mainly in tidal areas) are accorded additional regulatory protection under Title 7, Chapter 66 provisions of the State of Delaware's Code.

Dagsboro is proud to say that since the 2003 Plan, the Town has been named a Tree City U.S.A. In 2007 the Town enacted several progressive ordinances to protect the greenery found spread throughout their community. One of these new protection plans is a comprehensive tree ordinance. The second is a landscaping, screening and buffering ordinance that has been added to the Town Zoning Code. This prohibits cutting any forested tracks and requires the replanting of trees that have to be cut down. It also requires that trees are planted as buffers between land uses and added to any new or expanded parking areas. The last ordinance is a woodlands preservation ordinance that works towards protecting the existing trees by restricting clearing of trees and requires replanting.

### Critical Issues

#### *Preserving the History*

The Town of Dagsboro has several historic structures, many eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Window surveys have determined that the Town has enough eligible historic structures existing to create a historic district. Currently only Saint George's Chapel in Dagsboro listed as a historic building. More research needs to be done on the possible historic buildings within the Town to help move ahead with creating a historic district. Developing a historic district will only add more to the character of the Town and preservation of historically and architecturally significant structures.



#### *Design Guidelines*

With the possibility of the Town growing and expanding, it is easy to think that the Town could lose some of its identity due to the loss of historically and architecturally significant resources. It is important to reinforce the use of design standards for rehabilitation, redevelopment and new development.

### Recommendations

1. Create an inventory of the possible historic structures within the Town that could be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. This will also help in possibly moving forward in creating a historic district. The Town should work with Sussex County and the State Historic Preservation office to conduct surveys.
2. Continue to reinforce the new *Development Design Standards* to keep with the aesthetics of the Town and preserve the overall Town character.
3. Develop strategies, ordinances and policies to control sediment or pollutants that might flow into the waterways found in Dagsboro.
4. Draft a source water protection ordinance in preparation for expansion to the Town's water system.
5. Keep enforcing the tree and woodland ordinances to preserve the greenery in Town.
6. Maintain Tree City U.S.A status.

## **2-6. Redevelopment**

Over the years, Dagsboro has been able to maintain healthy businesses, making redevelopment not as high a priority. Even though redevelopment is not a huge issue, The Town is always developing more ways to keep the businesses in Town successful and attractive to residents as well as visitors. Encouraging revitalization of the downtown (Main Street) is one way the Town is working to attract new businesses. The Town also supports infill for mixed-use development and also the reuse of existing structures for commercial use. Not only does the Town want to encourage redevelopment in the downtown area but also in the Highway Commercial District along Route



113. In the Highway Commercial District the additional development of retail services is ideal.

The Town has worked on rezoning areas like Main Street, Clayton Avenue and Vines Creek Road. These areas originally varied in their zoning with the majority of the zoning being commercial. Now the areas have been rezoned to Town Center, which encourages mixed-use development, while realizing that lot size, coverage and parking requirements are necessary to all redevelopment of the existing Town Center. There has been some discussion about the possibility of a downtown municipal parking lot to make patronizing downtown businesses more convenient and encourage visitors to walk through Town.

Town wide design standards are now required for all new and substantially improved structures. Some of the new design standards include parking and signage regulation and landscaping requirements. Other building requirements for new structures are making sure they are built close to the street and sidewalks with parking lots behind or to the side of the primary structures. Commercial parking lots are also now required to have considerable landscaping.

#### Critical Issues

There are high volumes of traffic through Dagsboro, especially during the summer months. With all the traffic, this discourages many people from stopping to frequent businesses in Town.

For older structures there are certain requirements that have to be followed in preserving them. Several older residential structures need to be renovated, but for the most part, Dagsboro's housing stock is good with only a few substandard units. Many residents are not able to keep up with the maintenance of these structures, whether it is due to their age, disabilities or being unable to afford repair charges.

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

#### Recommendations

1. Encourage businesses to develop along the major streets for commercial uses. Some ideal businesses would be family restaurants, beauty parlors and coffee shops.
2. Consider providing maintenance support to owners of older homes such as:
  - a. Start a library of information on the repair and upkeep of older homes.
  - b. Recognize the well-maintained and newly repaired properties.
  - c. Investigate low or no cost loans for repairs to historic homes for the elderly, disabled or low income homeowners. Advertise these available resources to all residents by providing informational meetings.
  - d. Apply for grants to help assist in needed preservation to the older structures.

- e. Publish and distribute a brochure to all homeowners explaining ordinance requirements for maintenance and listing resources for help.
  - f. Ask community organizations to volunteer their time to help with residential maintenance needed.
  - g. Conduct informational workshops and meetings to inform community members about state and county programs and services available to them that will help with the maintaining and rehabilitation of their homes and businesses.
3. Consider requests for reuse of older homes on a case by case basis working with the State Historic Preservation Office and the Sussex County Historic Preservation planner.

## Chapter 3: Implementation Plan

### 3.1 Summary of Recommendations

With the Town of Dagsboro's potential to grow in the future, it is important to prioritize what needs to be done to ensure smart and positive growth. How Dagsboro chooses to accomplish the goals and recommendations mentioned throughout this plan, will affect all the different components that go into improving Dagsboro as a livable community. The goals and recommendations are separated to help categorize what needs to be done immediately and what can wait to be accomplished in the future. These categories will ultimately act as a type of reference when the implementation process begins. The categories are separated as:

- Short term- implementation desirable within two years
- Mid/Long term- implementation desirable within three to ten years

These categories are based on what is necessary to the community to help enhance the quality of their Town.

#### Short term (within two years)

- Review the list of permitted uses in the Town Center (TC) District and the Highway Commercial (HC) District to ensure alignment with the desired uses revealed through the public opinion survey.
- Develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Sussex County, the Town of Frankford and the Town of Millsboro on issues related to land use and development activities within the annexation area and area of concern.
- Amend the Town of Dagsboro Subdivision Ordinance to require annexations to follow parcel boundaries.
- Amend the Town of Dagsboro Zoning Ordinance to include a sunset provision for preliminary site plan approval.
- Upon completion of Sussex County's Dagsboro/Frankford Sanitary Sewer District planning study concerning the Piney Neck Wastewater Facility, determine how sewer needs will affect future development in the Town.
- Conduct a water system study to determine the quantity of water needed for the next five years based on approved residential developments and build out analysis for vacant lands and annexation areas.
- Based on the water study, create a water plan for increased capacity by renegotiating with the Town of Millsboro.
- Coordinate with the Public Service Commission to expand the Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN) service territory to include annexation areas.
- Work with Sussex County Engineers and the Town of Frankford on the Piney Neck Wastewater Facility study to ensure that they have the most current population and water consumption data to better prepare the availability study.

- Coordinate with Sussex County to align phasing of development projects with planned wastewater capacity upgrades and increase in permit limits.
- Expand the Town's current CPCN to include future annexation areas based on the Comprehensive Land Use Plan.
- Seek opportunities to increase the current police force through grant funding and additional municipal funding sources.
- Establish a full time position of a finance director to research and apply for various municipality grants, prepare annual budgets, process accounts receivable and accounts payable, and audit the various tax and utility accounts.
- Create a public works department to help with the maintenance of water systems, streets and sidewalks.
- Continue to pursue improvements for the Katie Helm Park.
- Amend the zoning code to require new developments to preserve open space and environmentally significant features.
- Work with DelDOT on conducting a traffic pattern study to determine how congestion, mainly due to vacationers traveling to the beaches, can be minimized.
- Develop a historic preservation plan. Create an inventory of historic structures to help establish a historic district.
- Work with DelDOT to expand current streetscape plan as a phased approach for improvements to Main Street and Clayton Avenue. The plan should include additional sidewalks and landscaping improvements.
- Develop strategies to control any sediment or pollutants that might flow into the waterways found in Dagsboro.
- Investigate locations for possible water supply wellheads.

**Mid/Long term (within three to ten years)**

- Based on the water study, create a water plan for increased capacity by installing wells thereby creating own supply.
- Establish a town trash service.
- Investigate the need for a County/Town drainage study that identifies any issues that need to be mitigated.
- Initiate discussion with the DNREC and SCD to develop stormwater management practices in the Town that address stormwater runoff impacts within the Pepper Creek and Inland Bays watershed.
- Identify possible location for public works, police department and Town Hall center. Possible location could be current fire department parcel.

- Current Town Hall could be utilized as an information center to serve public needs. The Town Hall offices should be relocated to a larger facility more conducive to town meetings, providing council chambers and administrative offices.
- Keep enforcing the tree and woodland ordinances to preserve and expand the tree cover in Town.
- Maintain Tree City U.S.A status.
- Create an economic development committee for the purpose of pursuing various businesses to locate and establish their business in the Town of Dagsboro. Work closely with the various local Chambers of Commerce to help entice the businesses.
- Continue to reinforce the new *Development Design Standards* to keep with the aesthetics of the Town and preserve the overall Town character.
- Create an inventory of vacant/abandoned land to determine how the land would be best used for redevelopment.
- Designate land where possible parks could be located.
- Review all their current zoning code regulations to ensure they are compatible with the comprehensive plan and Town's needs.

### **3.2 Intergovernmental Coordination**

Dagsboro already coordinates with Millsboro and Sussex County to help provide services to the Town. A number of recommendations outlined here will require additional coordination efforts by Dagsboro to be successful in their future growth.

- Require developers to do a study of the sewer infrastructure in coordination with the Town and Sussex County to determine long term sewer needs to support future development.
- As part of the Dagsboro/ Frankford Sanitary Sewer District Study, begin working with Sussex County and the Town of Frankford to allocate sewer capacity in place to accommodate anticipated development.
- Work with DeIDOT and the Conservation District to ensure that stormwater management activities and improvements associated with Route 26 realignment are keeping with the character of the Town.
- Continue to coordinate with the SCD in ensuring new developments adequately address how stormwater quantity and quality treatment will be achieved.
- Participate with the Inland Bays Tributary Action Team as recommendations are developed to reduce pollutants in the waterways.
- Contact DeIDOT to initiate a transportation study to identify areas of concern and start to develop solutions to lessen the beach traffic that travels through Town.

- Complete the process with the State Historic Preservation Office to finalize a historic district.
- Consider requests for reuse of older homes on a case-by-case basis working with the Historic Preservation Office and Sussex County Historic Preservation planner.
- Keep informed of activities that might affect the Excellent Recharge area and notify Sussex County of any concerns.
- Work with DNREC, DeIDOT and Delaware Greenways to encourage the greenways to connect Dagsboro to Sussex County parklands and open spaces.
- Develop a Memorandum of Understanding with Sussex County to notify, coordinate and jointly address issues related to land use and development activities within the area of concern.

## **Appendix A. Public Opinion Survey**

# Town of Dagsboro

## Comprehensive Plan Update Community Questionnaire

The Town of Dagsboro adopted its first comprehensive plan in 2003. During the development of the plan a questionnaire was mailed to the residents for their response. You may remember completing the questionnaire yourself. Since that time the town has experience an increase in the development of housing stock and commercial buildings, the questionnaire helped guide the town in this direction.

The Town of Dagsboro is currently updating the comprehensive land use plan that will guide its growth and development for the next five to ten years. This is your opportunity to participate in the planning of your community's future. The first steps in preparing for the future is by asking the property owners of Dagsboro what type of community they would like to live in. Please take a moment to complete the questionnaire. It is the first step in planning the future for the Town.

**Demographic information:**

a. I live in the Town of Dagsboro:

Yes                       No

b. I own the home I am living in:

Yes                       No

c. I own property in town other than my home:

Yes                       No

d. I work in town, or in the immediate area (5 mile radius):

Yes                       No

e. My age is:

16-24     25-45     46-65     65-75     over 75

The following list of questions will help the Town determine some of the types of public services that you would like to have available to you.

What would you like to have in your town?

Please place an X in the boxes were applicable:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Community park
<input type="checkbox"/>	Community open spaces
<input type="checkbox"/>	Community playgrounds
<input type="checkbox"/>	Streets that connect subdivisions
<input type="checkbox"/>	Shopping along Main Street
<input type="checkbox"/>	Walk to the stores in town

<input type="checkbox"/>	Individual parks within subdivisions
<input type="checkbox"/>	Private open spaces
<input type="checkbox"/>	Private playgrounds within subdivisions
<input type="checkbox"/>	Private communities
<input type="checkbox"/>	Shopping along the outskirts of town
<input type="checkbox"/>	Drive to the stores in town

Please place an X in the appropriate boxes that apply to you;

*I live in the Town of Dagsboro because:*

	Yes	No
I was born here		
Close proximity to the beach		
Cost of living, Town taxes, utilities, ect.		
Land value (Cost to purchase home or rent home)		
Small town atmosphere		
Friendly neighborhoods		
Easy access to surrounding towns		
Availability to needed services (Medical, Social, Community, ect.)		

Strongly agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	2	3	4	5

*Using the scale above please circle your response to the below questions:*

Would you support incentives to encourage developers to build more affordable housing	1	2	3	4	5
Do you think the Town has an adequate amount of housing supply	1	2	3	4	5
Do you think the Town should actively promote job growth	1	2	3	4	5
Would you support incentives to encourage new businesses to the Town	1	2	3	4	5
Do you think tourism should be promoted more by the Town	1	2	3	4	5
Do you think the Town should capitalize from the tourist industry	1	2	3	4	5

The following questions are to help determine a priority base for services and developments with in the Town.

Please place in numeric order of priority with 1 being your first priority, 2 being your next priority, 3 being your next and so on.

*I would like the following in town:*

Medical facility	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Library	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Senior center (i.e. Cheer)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Community center	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Public park	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Town trash service	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Youth program (i.e. boys & Girls club, YMCA)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

*I would like to see the following housing types in the Town of Dagsboro:*

Single family home	1	2	3	4	5
Duplex or side by side homes	1	2	3	4	5
Multifamily home / Town house	1	2	3	4	5
Condominium	1	2	3	4	5
Apartment building	1	2	3	4	5

*What type of housing developments would you like to see within the town:*

All single family homes on large lots	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
All single family homes on modestly sized lots	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Mixture of single family homes and side by side homes (duplexes)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Mixed use community with single family homes, duplexes and townhouses	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Multifamily homes / Town houses	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Assisted living facility	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Retirement community	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Condominium building or condominium developments	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Apartment buildings	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

*I am concerned about:*

Traffic congestion within the town	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Crime / Safety	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Property maintenance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Pedestrian safety	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Public parking	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Drinking water	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Waste water treatment	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Adequate public transportation to other towns	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Not having a safe area for kids to play	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

*Where would you like to see the following located and would you do business with them:*

Place an X in the appropriate box.	Main Street	Clayton Street	Route 113	Yes	No
Fast food restaurant					
Family restaurant					
Super market / Grocery store					
Retail clothing store					
Retail convenience store					
Service station					
Coffee shop					
Bakery					
Professional office, Medical, Law, Accountant					
Medical facility					
Barber / Beauty shop					
Large scale department store					
Hardware store					
Research and development facility					
Shopping center (Multiple stores in one building)					

How many children live in the home under the age of 18: \_\_\_\_\_

How many adults live in the home: \_\_\_\_\_

What school or schools do your children attend: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Other: What other concern do you have that is not listed above:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What do you think will be the major development trend in the next 10 years?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Do you agree with the following statement?

Vehicle traffic in the town is a major problem:  
If you answered yes how would you correct it?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes
--------------------------	-----

<input type="checkbox"/>	No
--------------------------	----

Which attribute / characteristics would you rate highest for preserving the rural community character?  
Please mark your top five choices, 1-5 with 1 being most important.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> open lands  | <input type="checkbox"/> quietness and solitude            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> biking/hiking trails  | <input type="checkbox"/> clear scenic views                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> historic district standards   | <input type="checkbox"/> wildlife and its natural habitats |
| <input type="checkbox"/> clean appearance of town  | <input type="checkbox"/> public lands access               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> trees and ditches/streams<br>through town                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> clustered or compact development  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> balance between need to grow and<br>need to preserve small town character |  |

If you could bring one business into the Town what would it be?

(Please indicate either company name or type of business) \_\_\_\_\_

What one business would you not want to see come to town?

(Please indicate either company name or type of business) \_\_\_\_\_



## **Appendix B. Official Correspondence**

Resolution to Adopt

State Certification Letter

ORDINANCE NO. 2009-23

**ORDINANCE ADOPTING THE TOWN OF DAGSBORO COMPREHENSIVE  
PLAN UPDATE**

**WHEREAS**, the Town Council, in response to the requirements of the "Livable Delaware" legislation, on January 23, 2001, appointed a Planning Commission to develop a Comprehensive Plan incorporating the vision of the Town for its development over the next (5) years; and

**WHEREAS**, the Town Council entered into a consulting agreement with URS Corporation, on April 10, 2006, for services to assist the Planning Commission in developing the 2008 Dagsboro Comprehensive Plan Update; and

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission has met numerous times over the past twenty-four (24) months with URS Corporation's consultants, and including a public hearing on the proposed plan and its attendant map and recommendations; and

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission has recommended, by action at its meeting on February 11, 2009, that the Town Council accept the Comprehensive Plan Update as drafted, incorporating certain recommendations received from the State of Delaware Office of State Planning Coordination by letter dated January 16, 2009, including the following:

1. Statistical data to assist individuals in assessing public participation in the development of the Comprehensive Plan.
2. The modification to the Environmental Protection Section to include the new table and a statement to provide specifics and clarifying commentary on TMDLs.

**WHEREAS**, the Town Council deems it in the best interest of the Town to accept the recommendation of the Planning Commission to approve the Comprehensive Plan Update; and

**WHEREAS**, the Town Council acknowledges that the approved Comprehensive Plan Update must be forwarded, with the inclusions, to the Office of State Planning Coordination for certification.

**NOW THEREFORE;**

**BE IT ENACTED AND ORDAINED** by the Council of the Town of Dagsboro, that:

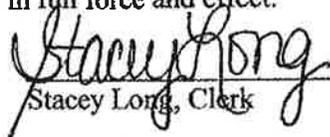
The 2008 Dagsboro Comprehensive Development Plan Update and Zoning Map is hereby approved and shall become effective upon the time and date of the final

certification and approvals as further set forth in 22 Delaware Code Section 702, et seq., and shall remain in effect until subsequently revised.

Ordained and enacted into law this 27<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2009 by a vote of 5 in favor, 0 opposed.

  
Wayne L. Baker, Mayor

I, Stacey Long, Clerk of the Town Council of the Town Of Dagsboro, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the ordinance adopted by the Town Council at its meeting on April 27, 2009, at which meeting a quorum was present and voting throughout and that the same is still in full force and effect.

  
Stacey Long, Clerk



STATE OF DELAWARE  
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
TATNALL BUILDING, SECOND FLOOR  
WILLIAM PENN STREET, DOVER, DE 19901

JACK A. MARKELL  
GOVERNOR

PHONE: 302-744-4101  
FAX: 302-739-2775

May 26, 2009

The Honorable Patti Adams  
Mayor  
Town of Dagsboro  
Post Office Box 420  
Dagsboro, Delaware 19989

RE: Certification of Comprehensive Plan

Dear Mayor Adams:

I am pleased to inform the Town of Dagsboro that as of April 27, 2009 per the recommendation of the Office of State Planning Coordination, the comprehensive plan for the Town of Dagsboro is hereby certified provided no major changes to the plan are enacted. The certification signifies that the comprehensive plan complies with the requirements of Delaware Code Title 22, Section 702.

I would like to thank the Town of Dagsboro for working with the State to incorporate our comments before adoption. We look forward to working with the Town of Dagsboro as you move into the implementation stage of your plan.

Once again, congratulations on your certification.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'JAM', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jack A. Markell  
Governor

## **Appendix C. Maps**

Map 1. Aerial View

Map 2. Zoning

Map 3. Existing Land Use

Map 4. Future Land Use & Annexations

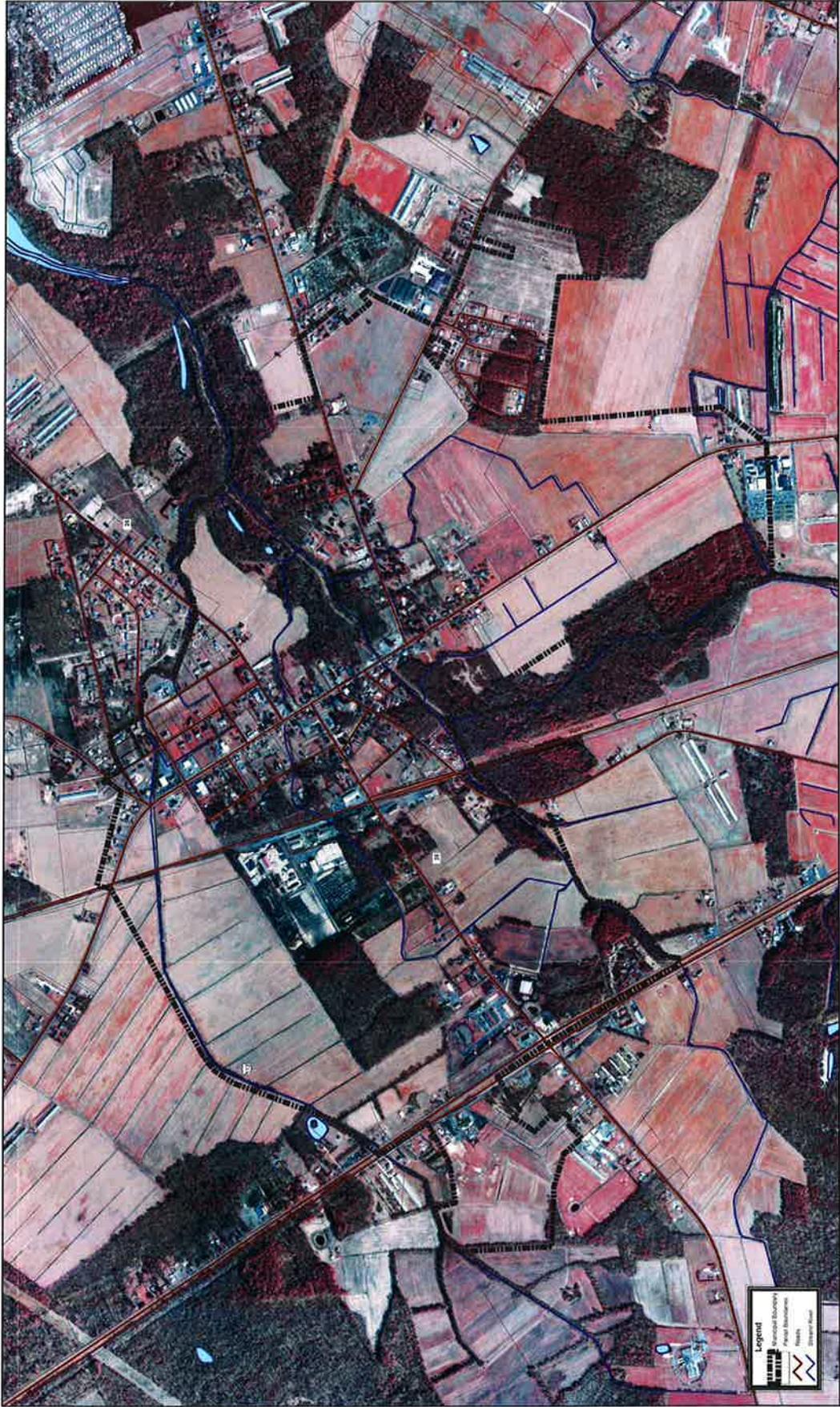
Map 5. State Investment Strategies

Map 6. Transportation

Map 7. Environmental Features

Map 7. Vacant Land & Environmental Constraints

Map 8. Vacant Land and Environmental Constraints



Map 1. Aerial View  
Town of Dagsboro, Delaware

APRIL 2009



URS  
1000 Pennsylvania Avenue, Suite 2000  
Washington, DC 20004  
Phone: 202.295.1000  
Fax: 202.295.1001  
www.urscorp.com

**Legend**

- Municipal Boundaries
- Parcel Boundaries
- Roads
- Water Bodies

Scale: 0 250 500 1000 Feet  
North Arrow

# Town of Dagsboro Delaware

## TOWN OF DAGSBORO OFFICIAL ZONING MAP

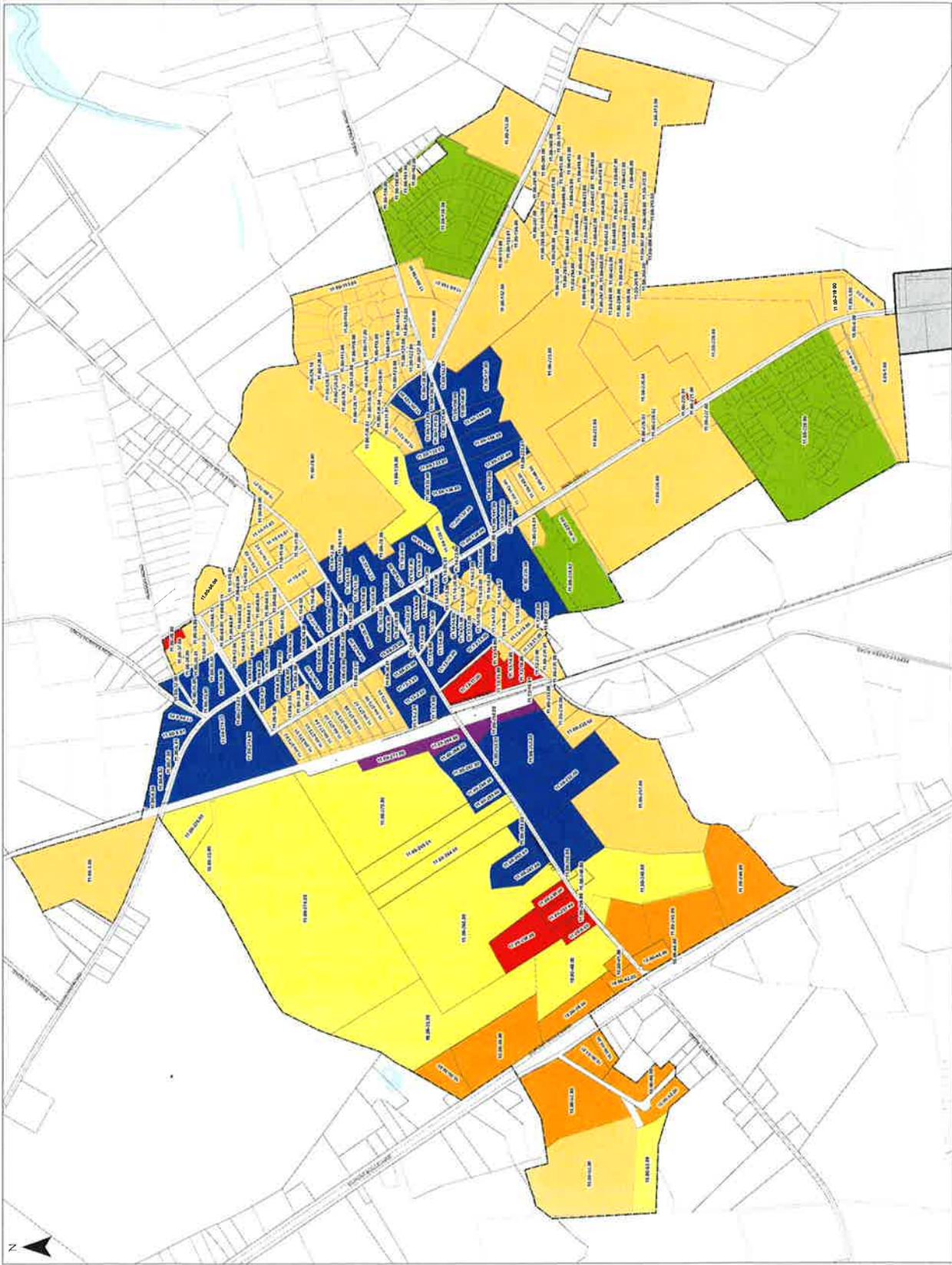
### Legend

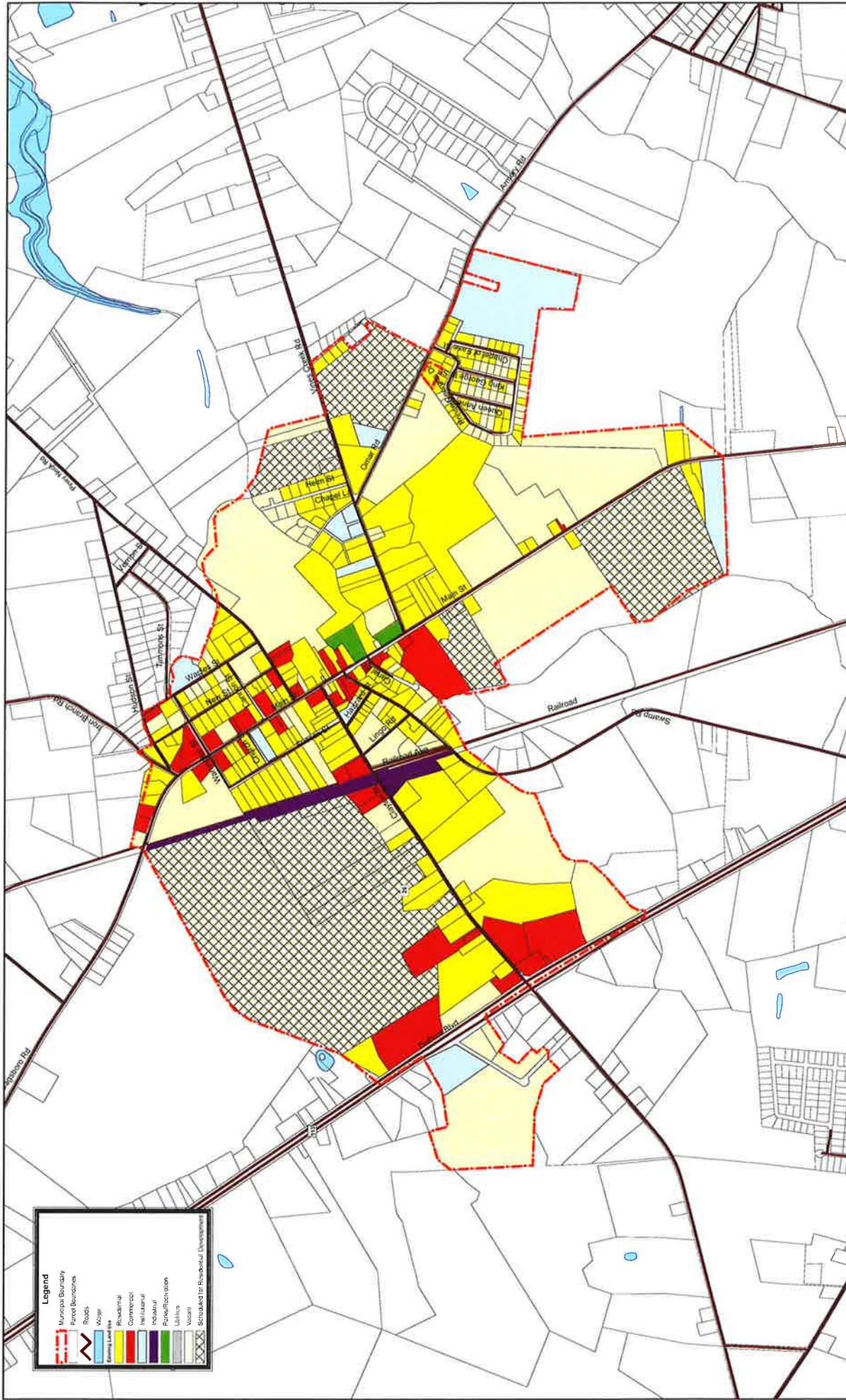
- Parcels
- Municipal Boundaries
- Zoning Districts
  - Cluster
  - Commercial
  - Medium Density Residential
  - Highway Commercial
  - Industrial
  - Residential
  - Town Center/Mixed-Use
  - Frankford Boundaries
  - Water Body
  - Stream
  - Roads
  - Railroad

DILL, SOUDELL  
 Sussex County Tax Offices - Sussex County Mapping Department, 2012  
 Municipal Boundaries - Delaware State Geological Survey  
 Railroads - United States Geological Survey  
 Municipal Boundaries - Delaware Office of State Planning Commission  
 Delaware, 2000. Updated by the Town of Dagsboro, 2008



April 2014





**Legend**

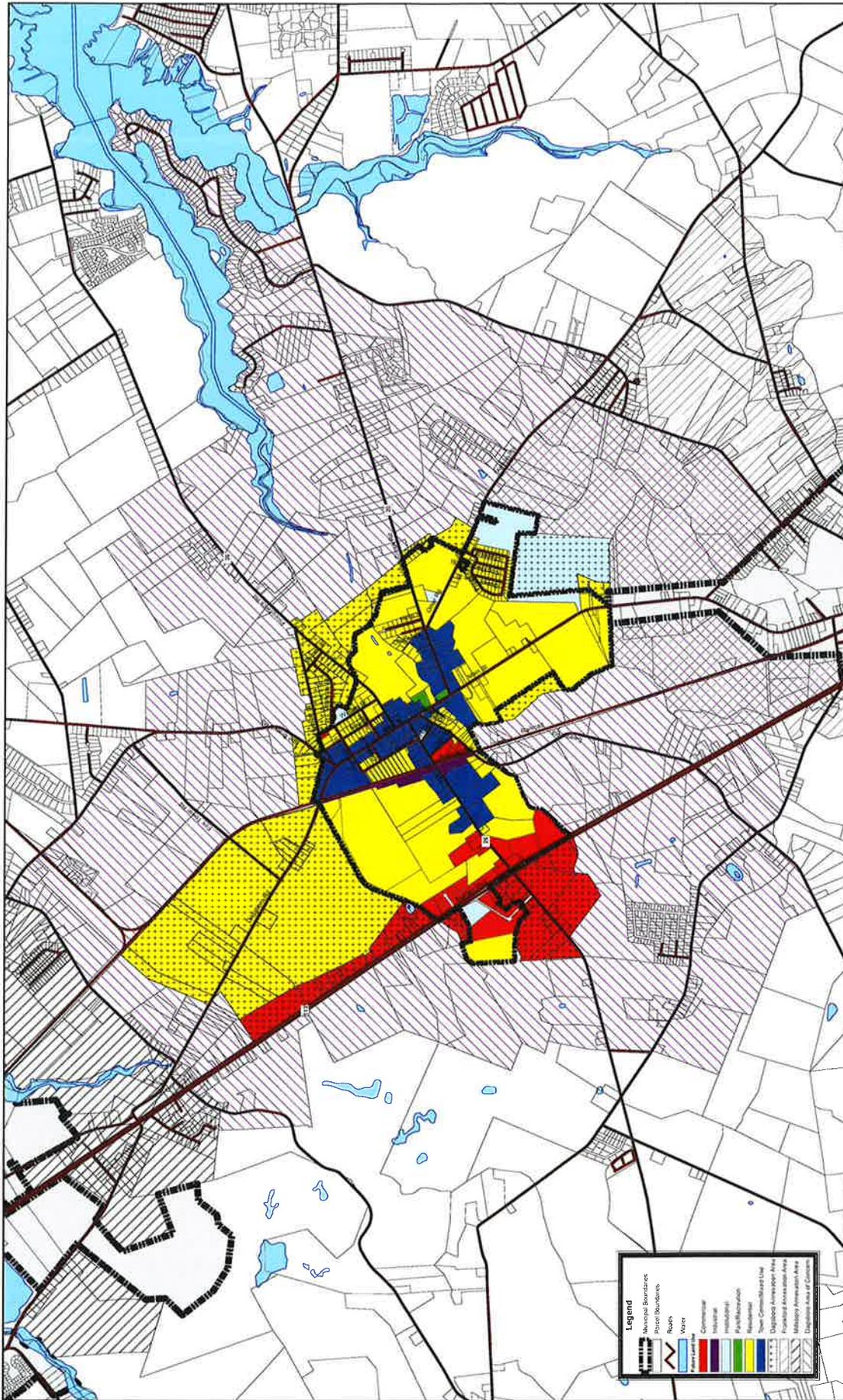
- Municipal Boundary
- Police Boundaries
- Roads
- Water
- Existing Land Use
- Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Public/Recreation
- Utilities
- Vacant
- Subsided for Residential Development



**Map 3. Existing Land Use  
Town of Dagsboro, Delaware**

APRIL 2009

**URS**  
 1000 North 17th Street  
 Suite 200  
 Wilmington, Delaware 19802  
 Phone: 302.486.1000  
 Fax: 302.486.1008



**URS**  
 1000 North Market Street  
 Suite 200  
 Wilmington, DE 19801  
 Phone: 302.441.1000  
 Fax: 302.441.1001  
 www.urscorp.com

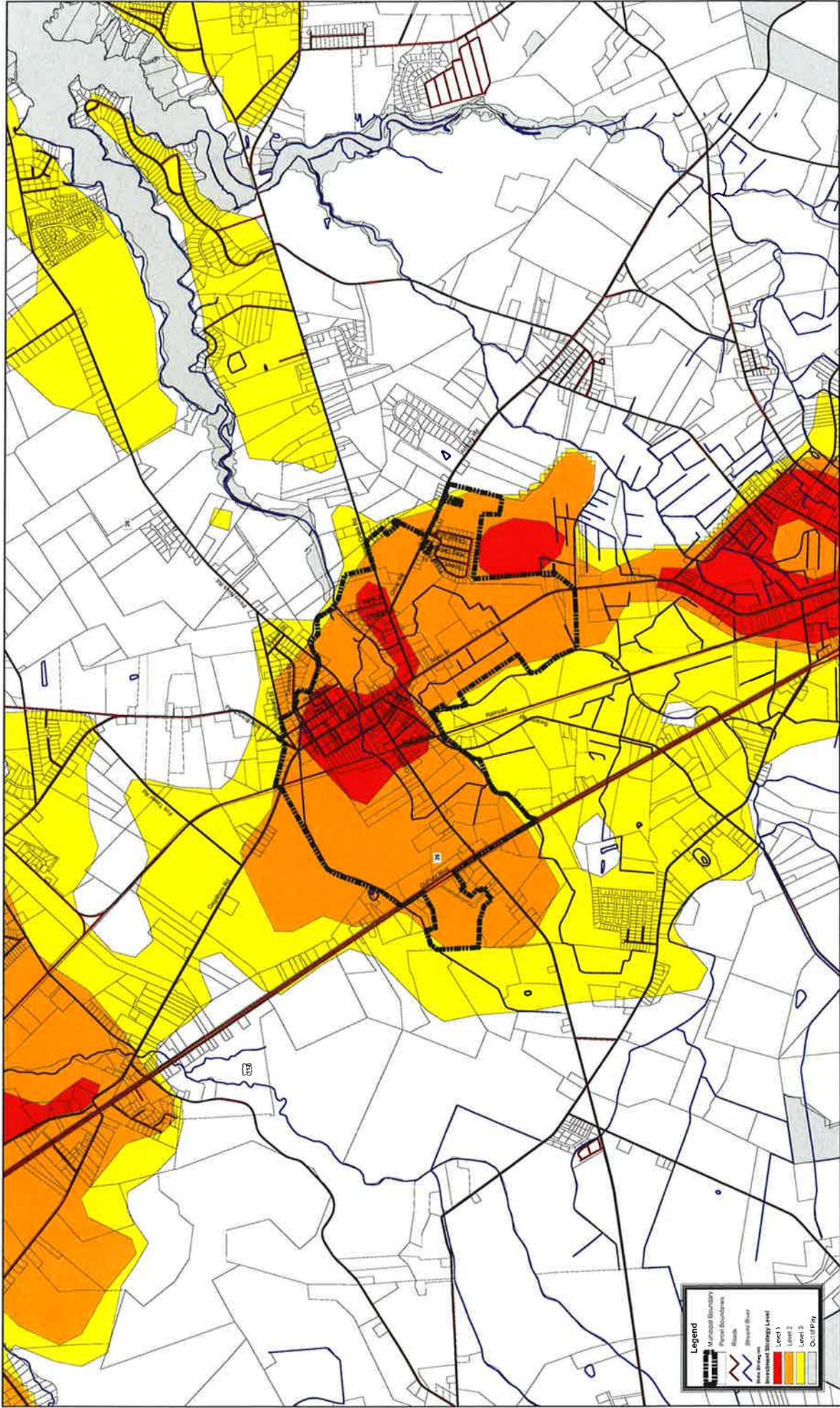
APRIL 2009

**Map 4. Future Land Use & Annexations  
 Town of Dagsboro, Delaware**

**Legend**

- Municipal Boundaries
- Parcel Boundaries
- Roads
- Water
- Future Land Use
  - Residential
  - Commercial
  - Industrial
  - Public Recreation
  - Open Space
  - Other
- Other
- Designated Environmental Area
- Designated Agricultural Area
- Designated Area of Critical Environmental Concern

Scale: 1" = 1000'  
 North Arrow

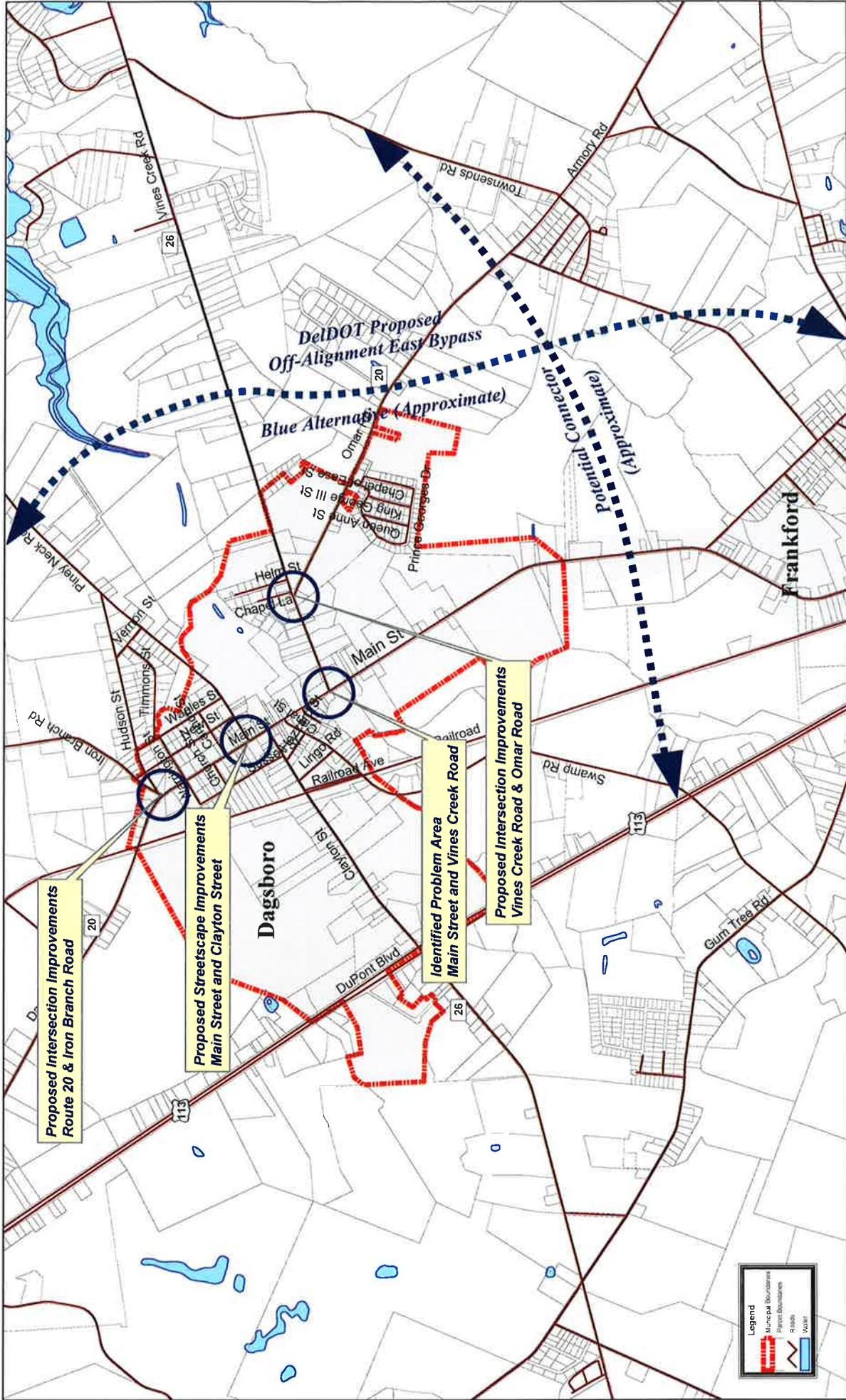


The information on this map was prepared by URS Corporation for the Town of Dagsboro, Delaware. URS Corporation is not responsible for the accuracy or completeness of the information shown on this map. URS Corporation is not responsible for any errors or omissions on this map. URS Corporation is not responsible for any damages or liabilities arising from the use of this map.

**Map 5. State Investment Strategies**  
**Town of Dagsboro, Delaware**

APRIL 2009

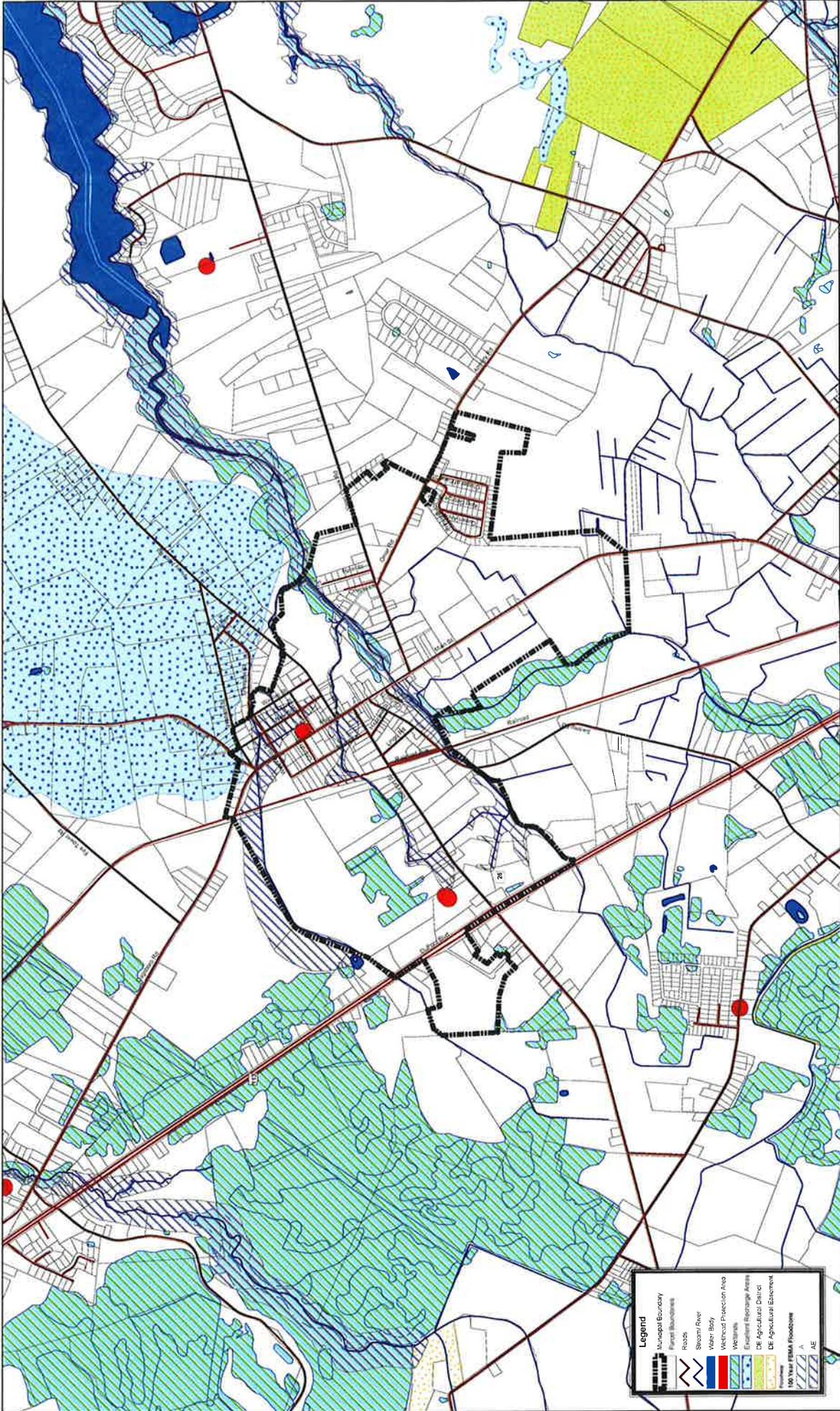
**URS**  
 URS CORPORATION  
 200 North 17th Street  
 Philadelphia, PA 19103



Map 6. Transportation  
Town of Dagsboro, Delaware

APRIL 2009

URS  
 200 North 17th Street  
 Philadelphia, PA 19103  
 Tel: 215.382.1000  
 Fax: 215.382.1001  
 www.urscorp.com



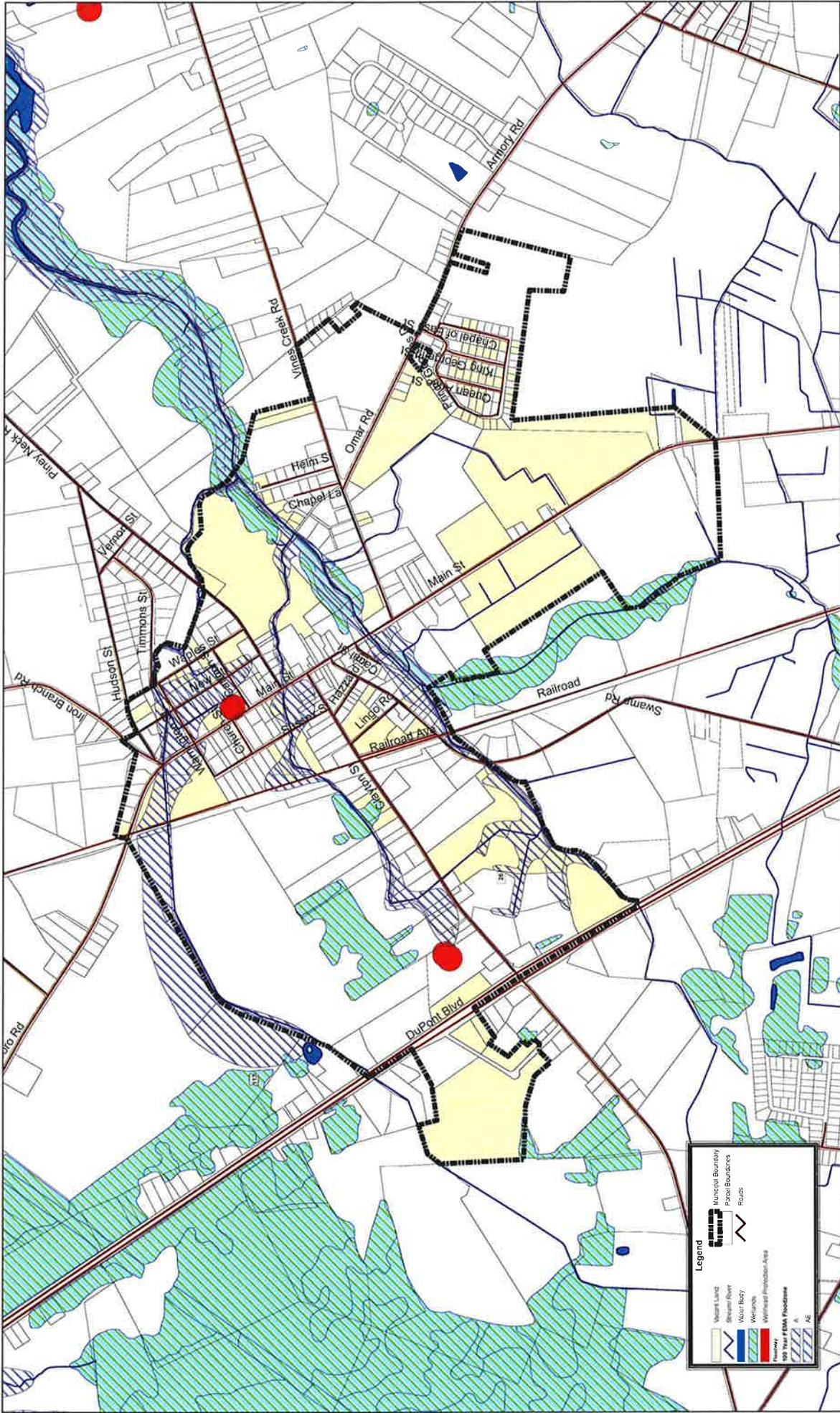
URS  
 1000 North 17th Street, Suite 200  
 Wilmington, Delaware 19802  
 Phone: 302.486.2000  
 Fax: 302.486.2001  
 www.urscorp.com

APRIL 2009

**Map 7. Environmental Features**  
**Town of Dagsboro, Delaware**

**Legend**

	Municipal Boundary
	Parcel Boundary
	Road
	Stream/Flow
	Water Body
	Wetland Protection Area
	100 Year FEMA Floodzone
	Agricultural District
	Agriculture Basecrop
	AE



**Map 8. Vacant Lands & Environmental Constraints  
Town of Dagsboro, Delaware**

APRIL 2009

URS  
 1000 Pennsylvania Avenue, Suite 1000  
 Washington, DC 20004  
 Phone: 202.224.2000  
 Fax: 202.224.2001

**Legend**

- Vacant Land
- Stream/River
- Water Body
- Wetlands
- Wetland Protection Area
- 100 Year FEMA Floodplain
- A
- AE

**Municipal Boundary**  
 Municipal Boundary  
 Parcel Boundary  
 Roads

Scale: 1" = 1000'  
 North Arrow