

## Municipal Development Strategy Checklist

Towns & Cities with a population of less than 2000 persons

Town / City:

Plan Dated:

Reviewed by:

 = State Requirement under Title 22, Section 702 Del C.

 = Strongly Suggested

★ = Encouraged but Optional

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### Public Participation

Summary: All plans should have some provision for input by the public. Public input is most useful early in the planning process, and should help form the plan's goals and recommendations. The development of a community vision for the future is a useful exercise.

**Public Participation Summary and Results.** The plan should include a section which describes the public participation process and summarizes the results. If developed, the vision statement could be contained in this section. 

### Population Data and Analysis

Summary: The following population data is important to characterize the residents of the town or city, and will inform land development plan recommendations, especially in regards to housing and social services.

**Past Population Trends.** Historic population data from past Census reports should be reported, and trends analyzed. It should be sufficient to go back 30 or 40 years (in 10 year increments), although older data may be informative in certain cases. 

**Demographics.** Demographic information about the population should be reported and analyzed. In the larger cities the Delaware Population Consortium can be a good resource. For smaller towns, the most recent Census summary files can be used. 

**Position on Population Growth.** The Municipal Development Strategy must contain *policies, statements, goals, and planning components* detailing the jurisdictions position on population growth. If possible, some type of population projection should be used. Also, it may be beneficial to complete a build-out scenario, particularly for jurisdictions with significant amounts of vacant land within the current boundaries. 

### Housing

Summary: A description of the housing styles, housing stock, and conditions should serve as a starting point for evaluating the residential uses in the town. This information, in concert with the population and employment projections, will provide the basis for land use plan recommendations. Information about low to moderate income housing needs will allow for the provision of affordable housing.

**Housing Stock Inventory.** An inventory of the housing stock in the community, including the number and type of dwelling units. An inventory of the affordable housing resources should also be included. 

**Housing Pipeline.** How many housing units are approved and pending construction. 

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**Housing Needs Analysis.** How many housing units, of which type, will be required to accommodate the existing and future population? Be sure to include affordable housing needs in the analysis. ★

**Position on Housing Growth.** The Municipal Development Strategy must contain *policies, statements, goals, and planning components* which relate the jurisdictions position on housing growth. These elements should be developed in concert with the population analysis, and if possible with any build-out scenario that is discussed. 

### Expansion of Boundaries and Development of Adjacent Areas

Summary: The section on potential expansion of the town's boundaries should discuss the desired uses for the lands immediately surrounding the town or city, and designate lands which are desirable for annexation by the town. Expansion plans should be coordinated with adequate public facilities for the new area.

**Annexation Plan.** The Annexation Plan must include *policies, statements, goals, and planning components* which serve to define the community's strategy and desires for expansion through annexation. Capacity of public facilities and services should be analyzed as a part of this plan. The plan must designate future land uses for all proposed parcels and areas that are designated for annexation by the municipality. This element is required in order to comply with the provisions of H.B. 255. 

**Development of Adjacent Areas.** The Municipal Development Strategy must consider the potential land uses, current zoning and development potential of adjacent areas within the county and / or in near-by municipalities, and how the development of these areas may impact the community in the future. While the town may not seek to annex these properties, the plan may contain some policies or guidelines for interacting and coordinating with the relevant county and / or municipal government as these lands develop. 

### Redevelopment Potential

Summary: An analysis of areas in the municipality that need revitalization and redevelopment, and a strategy to accomplish those goals.

**Identification of Redevelopment Areas and Issues.** An inventory of areas within the community in need of revitalization or redevelopment, and a discussion of the issues which have led to their decline.



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**Redevelopment Strategy.** A set of *policies, statements, goals, and planning components* to encourage and enable the redevelopment and revitalization of the areas described above. 

## Community Character

Summary: A community's character is defined by its history, urban form, natural environment, and other features that make the community unique. Plans should identify these elements, and include strategies to preserve or enhance them.

**History of the Town or City.** It is important to note when the community was established and what the historical factors in its growth and development were. Also, what features from the early period of growth are still existing and valued by the community? 

**Physical Conditions.** A description of the general layout of the town and the physical condition of major elements in the built environment. 

**Significant Natural Features.** Describe the overall topography and geology of the town. Also, note significant natural features present in the jurisdiction. Significant features refer to elements of the natural environment which provide important wildlife habitat, ecological functions, aesthetic or recreational values to the community. Examples of significant natural features include woodlands, wetlands, streams, lakes, rivers, prime agricultural soils, aquifer recharge areas, floodplains or other notable natural features. 

**Community Character.** Drawing from the above data and analysis, the Municipal Development Strategy must include relevant *policies, statements, goals, and planning components* to describe what is unique about the community and how the town proposes to preserve and enhance its character, if desired. Historic preservation, the protection of the natural environment, and the enhancement of cultural institutions are some examples of how this might be achieved. 

**Environmental Protection Plan.** The Environmental Protection Plan must include *policies, statements, goals, and planning components* which serve to define the community's strategy to preserve important natural resources, and prevent development activities which are detrimental to the natural environment. While this is not a required element, it is highly recommended for towns that are located on or near significant environmental features. 

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### Land Use Plan

Summary: The land use plan evaluates existing land use within a municipality, then recommends proposed land use categories for all parcels in the community. The land use plan should be expressed as both text and a map or map series. The Land Use Plan represents a composite of recommendations for the community, and should be derived after an analysis of all relevant data found elsewhere in the plan.

**Existing Land Use.** A survey of the existing land uses in the town or city. Land which is currently vacant and developable should be identified. This element should be expressed as a map, although some text may be included. The existing land use element should provide existing land use information for each parcel as a result of a recent windshield survey or reliable parcel based building information. 

**Land Use Plan.** The Land Use Plan must include *policies, statements, goals, planning components and a map* which serve to define the proposed land uses for all areas within the municipality's jurisdiction. Particular attention should be given to the recommended land uses for lands which are vacant and likely to be developed. The Land Use Plan must show the desired future land uses for each parcel in the municipality. This data will form the basis for the required update of the zoning ordinance within 18 months of plan adoption. 

### Critical Community Development and Infrastructure Issues

Summary: This section involves an evaluation of the community facilities and major infrastructure of a town, primarily its water and wastewater system. Transportation infrastructure should also be considered. The systems should be evaluated for their adequacy and capacity to serve current and future growth. In addition, the municipality should review items and facilities which will improve the community as a whole. These programs may include such things as housing assistance or rehabilitation, replacement of infrastructure, or economic development activities intended to provide enhanced job opportunities. Few small municipalities will be able to accomplish these activities alone, so intergovernmental coordination will be important.

**Review of Community Conditions.** The Municipal Development Strategy should identify any critical community development issues that are present in the town. 

**Inventory of Community Infrastructure.** An inventory of the community's water, wastewater, transportation, open spaces, recreational facilities, schools, public buildings and other community infrastructure. For water and sewer systems, treatment methods, capacities, and allocations should be considered. 

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**Inventory and Analysis of Community Services.** An inventory of the services offered by the municipality, including any services (such as snow removal or trash pick – up) that have land use implications. 

**Water and Wastewater Plan.** The Land Use Plan must include *policies, statements, goals, planning components and a map* which serve to define and critical infrastructure issues and describe the future enhancements and expansion of these systems to serve current and future growth areas. The ability of these systems to serve undeveloped areas in the town and any land desirable for annexation should be considered. 

**Transportation Plan.** The Transportation Plan must include *policies, statements, goals, planning components and a map* which serve to define any critical transportation issues and strategies and actions to improve the transportation system which serves the town. This plan should be written in close coordination with DelDOT, and include descriptions of applicable programs such as Corridor Preservation. 

**Community Development Plan.** The Municipal Development Strategy should include *policies, statements, goals, and planning components* detailing a strategy for addressing any critical community development concerns. Coordination with other government and non-profit agencies may be necessary to develop an effective strategy, especially in a small town with limited resources. 

### Intergovernmental Coordination

Summary: The plan should describe the municipality's relationship with other government jurisdictions and state agencies, and specify strategies for improving those relationships.

**Description of Intergovernmental Relationships.** A description of the municipality's relationships with various other levels of government, such as counties, nearby towns, and the state. Also, it will be desirable to detail the relationships with important state agencies, such as DelDOT and DNREC. 

**Intergovernmental Coordination Strategy.** A strategy for coordinating planning actions with other government jurisdictions and agencies, as defined above. 

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**Analysis and Comparison of Other Relevant Planning Documents.** The municipal development strategy must include an analysis and comparison of the proposed land use and annexation plan with other relevant planning documents. These documents may include but are not limited to the State Strategies for Policies and Spending, the most up to date County (and/or municipal) plans, State Transportation Plans, etc. The analysis must demonstrate that the proposed municipal development strategy is compatible with the other relevant plans, or provide a compelling case for the proposed deviation. 

## Implementation Strategies

Summary: Plans should be systematically implemented through a series of policies and regulations. The plan should identify how existing regulations support the plan, and suggest new policies and regulations as needed to implement the plan. In some cases, where more research or study is required, additional plans or plan elements may be recommended for completion after plan adoption.

**Evaluation of Current Codes and Ordinances.** Evaluate the municipality's current codes and ordinances to determine whether or not they support the intent and goals of the plan. A listing should be made of codes and ordinances that do not, and these should be scheduled for revisions. 

**Zoning Map Revisions.** The zoning map is a key implementation tool which should be consistent with the Land Use Plan. Zoning maps should be revised as needed concurrently or shortly after plan adoption. The zoning map must be revised to comply with the land use plan within 18 months of plan adoption. 

**Zoning and Subdivision Code Revisions.** These codes are also critical implementation tools, and should be revised as needed. In some cases, the recommendations of the Land Use Plan will require the addition of new regulations in these codes. 

**Implementation Plan.** It may be very helpful to develop an implementation work plan which lists actions and policies that the municipality can take to systematically implement the plan. 

**Coordination with Other Government Agencies.** Interactions with other government agencies, such as the county and the state, are often necessary to help municipalities achieve their goals. This section should list the types of coordination foreseen. 

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**Other State Programs, Policies, and Issues.** The Municipal Development Strategy should take address or otherwise consider relevant state programs, policies and issues that are relevant to the individual municipality based on geographic location, public service arrangements, or other factors. These items may be explored through the intergovernmental coordination process, as well as through direct interaction with the Office of State Planning Coordination and / or the individual State agencies. In some cases it will be necessary to address these items as conditions for certification. These programs, policies, and issues include but are not limited to the following:

The **Total Maximum Daily Loads** program through the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control. This program will be relevant to municipalities adjacent to significant watercourses or located in “impaired” watersheds. 

The **Corridor Capacity Preservation Program** through the Department of Transportation. This program will be relevant to municipalities near Routes 1, 13, and 113 in Kent and Sussex Counties and Route 52 in New Castle County. 

The **Agricultural Preservation** program through the Department of Agriculture. This program will be relevant to municipalities with agricultural preservation areas adjacent to their boundaries, or within their proposed annexation areas. It will also be relevant to municipalities in rural areas where farming is still an active land use near or within their jurisdiction. 

The **Wellhead Protection** program through the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control. This program is relevant to municipalities with public water systems. Although the regulations will not be enforced until 2007, it is desirable to identify appropriate land uses for wellhead areas as soon as is practical. 

**Other Comments:**

**Summary:**