

Southern New Castle County Infrastructure Master Plan

**Interim Report
October 2009**

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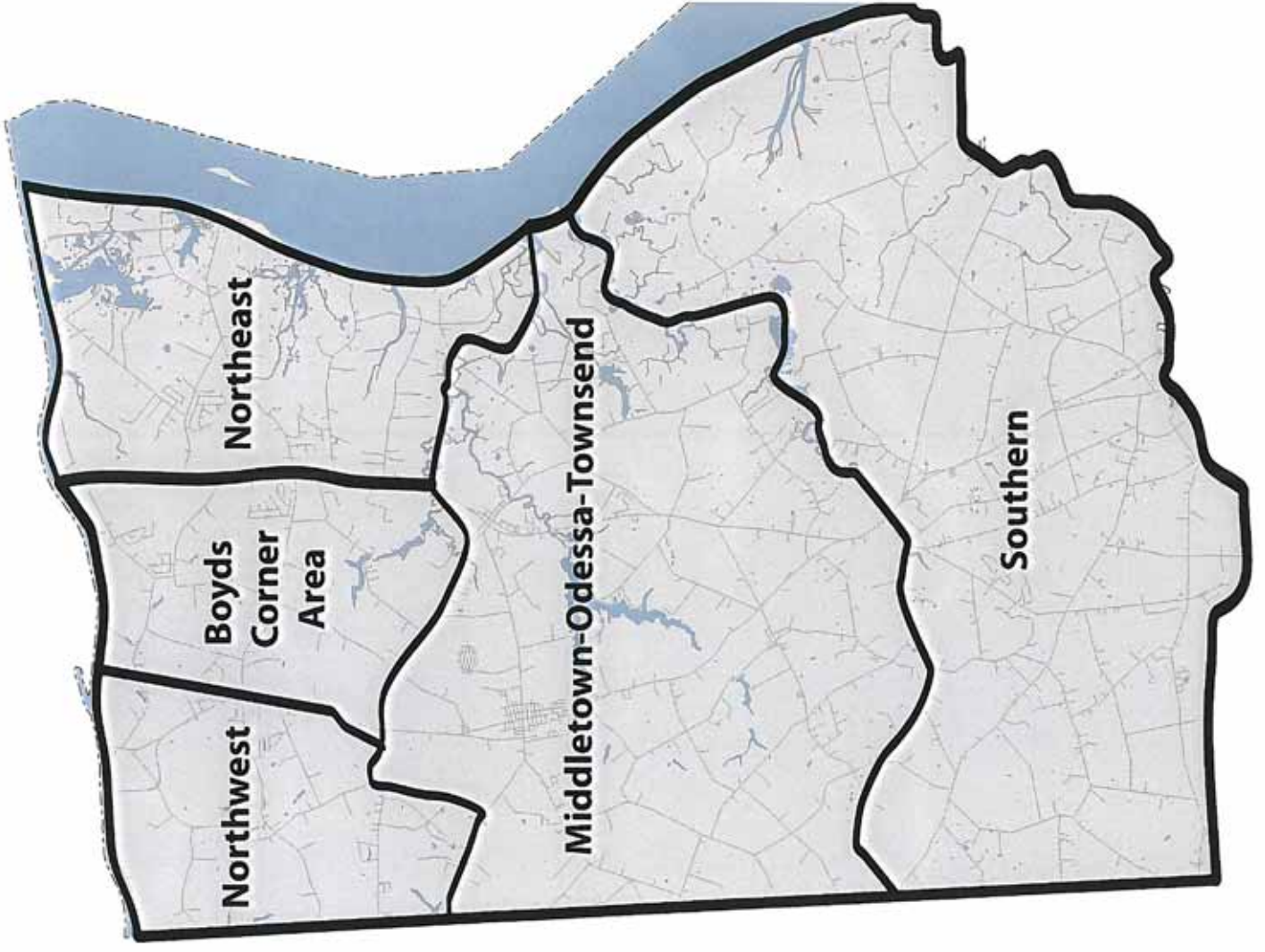


Table of Contents

1.	What We Are Undertaking and Why	3
	Infrastructure Master Plan Process	4
2.	Our Decision-making Framework	5
	Develop Base Conditions	6
	Define Needs, Goals, and Objectives	15
3.	The Five Subregional Areas	16
4.	Status of the Five Subregional Area Plans	17
5.	Next Steps	23

1. What We Are Undertaking and Why

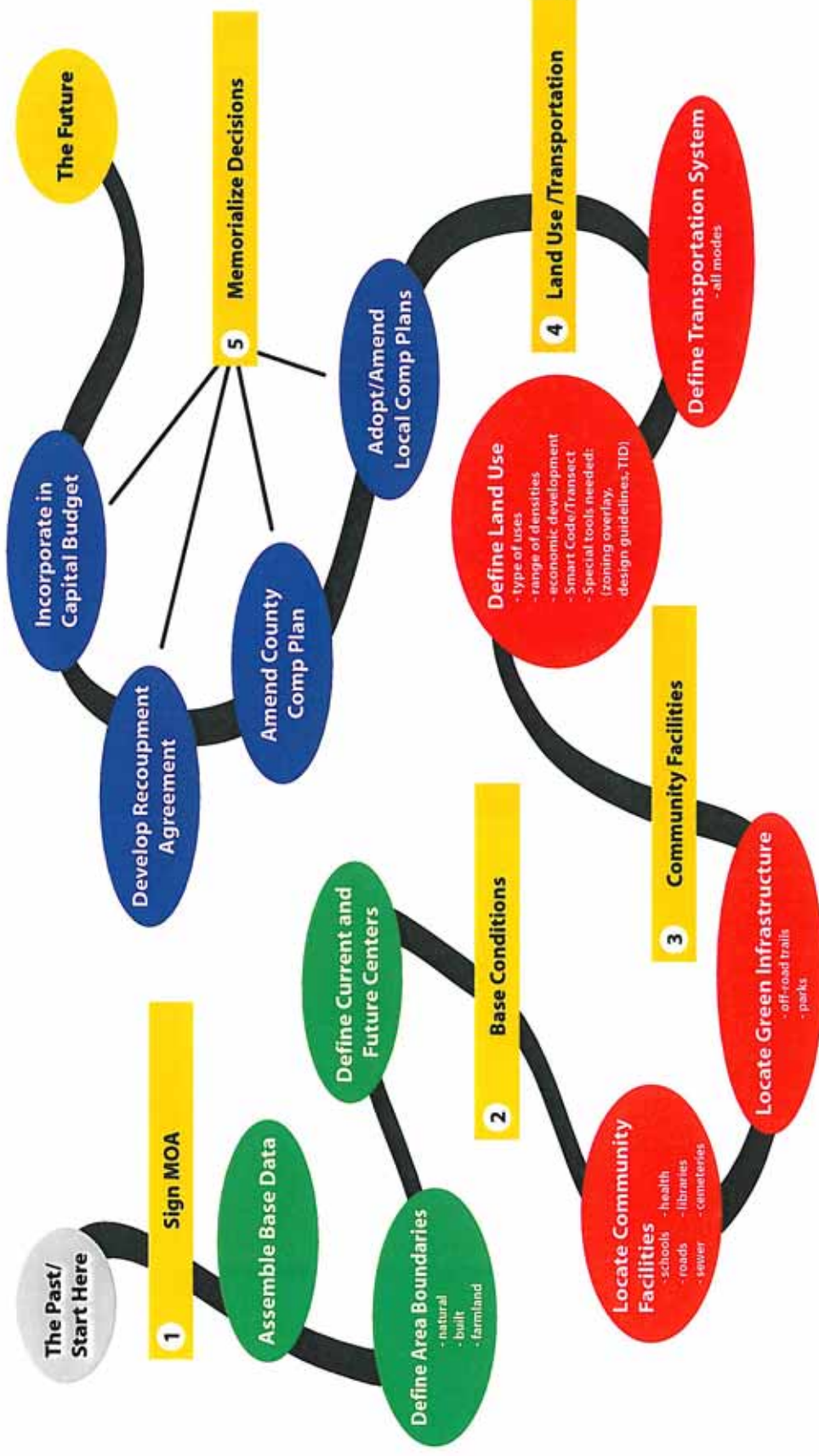
In September 2006, a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was signed to realize a more responsible use of fiscal resources, the development of more livable communities and the ability to provide more sustainable economic development. The MOA parties include the Delaware Department of Transportation, the Office of State Planning Coordination, the Delaware Department of Agriculture, New Castle County, the Appoquinimink, Colonial and Smyrna School Districts, the Towns of Middletown, Odessa and Townsend, and the Wilmington Area Planning Council.

The MOA was formed in recognition of the substantial growth that has occurred, and the additional growth that Southern New Castle County is anticipating over the next 25 years. Given the cost of providing and maintaining infrastructure, the need for a collaborative and cooperative approach by responsible units of government to effectively and efficiently plan, program, construct and coordinate this infrastructure was identified.

SO SOUTHERN NEW CASTLE COUNTY BE TWEEN THE DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, OFFICE OF STATE PLANNING COORDINATION, DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, NEW CASTLE COUNTY, THE APPOQUINIMINK, COLONIAL AND SMYRNA SCHOOL DISTRICTS, THE TOWNS OF MIDDLETOWN, THE TOWN OF ODESSA, THE TOWNS OF TOWNSEND AND THE WILMINGTON AREA PLANNING COUNCIL FOR THE COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING OF LAND DEVELOPMENT, INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES IN SOUTHERN NEW CASTLE COUNTY WHEREAS, over the next twenty five years there are an additional 12,000 people, and 15,122 households expected to locate within the two square mile area bounded by the State of Maryland, Kent County (Delaware), the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal, and the Delaware River, located in Southern New Castle County (SNCC); and WHEREAS, the growth is expected to cost at least \$75 million dollars in transportation investment and a minimum of four million dollars in sewer investment over the next twenty years; and SNCCM to support 15,500 new students in three school districts over the next ten years; and WHEREAS, the existing approved, and anticipated development in Southern New Castle County (SNCC) is not anticipated to be efficient and effective if the overall goals of responsible government plan, program, construct, and coordinate land use policies and regulations, roads, water, sewer, and other public facilities collaboratively and cooperatively in the interest of promoting optimal use of both limited land and fiscal resources, minimizing impacts to environmental and cultural resources, while ensuring that the supply of key services matches the demands; and	
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How are we doing this?

We are following a five step process to develop this plan:



Infrastructure Master Plan Process

2. Our Decision-making Framework

A Working Group consisting of the Secretary of Transportation and Chief Executive of New Castle County, who served as co-chairs; the head of the Office of State Planning; the Executive Director of WILMAPCO; the mayors of Middletown, Odessa and Townsend; and the superintendents for the Colonial and Appoquinimink School Districts formed to fulfill the obligations of the MOA. Senior staff to these entities and the University of Delaware attended the meetings.

Several projects that were important to the context of the plan were in the process of development at the time the MOA was signed. The US Route 301 project, a new, limited access toll facility, was being undertaken by the Delaware Department of Transportation. New Castle County was updating the County's Comprehensive Plan. The School Districts were completing their ten year Comprehensive Building Plans. The Towns' individual comprehensive plans were recently completed or in the process of being updated. As all of these efforts were completed or were at significant completion milestones, the Working Group began to meet.

As a first step, the Working Group undertook three tasks to provide a framework for decision-making:

- **Develop Base Conditions.** The Working Group first gathered and reviewed existing data and mapping to develop an understanding of base conditions in Southern New Castle County.
- **Define Needs.** The Base Conditions were then analyzed to generally define area boundaries.
- **Goals and Objectives.** Once the needs were defined, they were then distilled into a number of goals and objectives statements.

Develop Base Conditions

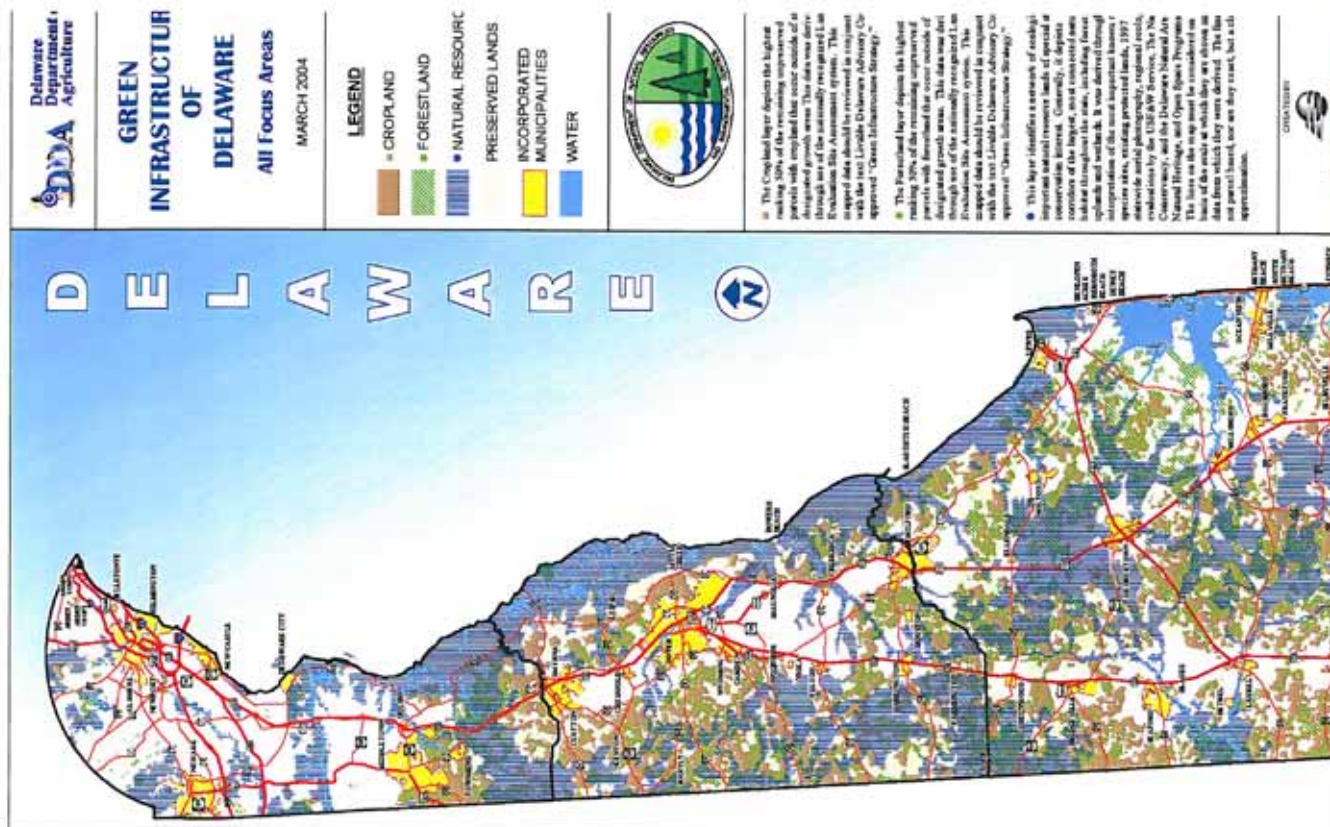
The Working Group assembled base mapping for Southern New Castle County from the Route 301 project mapping, and data from New Castle County Department of Land Use, the Office of State Planning, and WILMAPCO.

The Working Group then reviewed data from many sources to examine, discuss and understand the many types of infrastructure in Southern New Castle County:

- Environment
- Sewer Capacity
- Transportation
- Community Facilities

Environment

The Southern New Castle County Infrastructure Master Plan is guided by Executive Order 61. EO 61 was enacted to support and enhance areas with conservation value that comprise the state's Green Infrastructure.



Environment

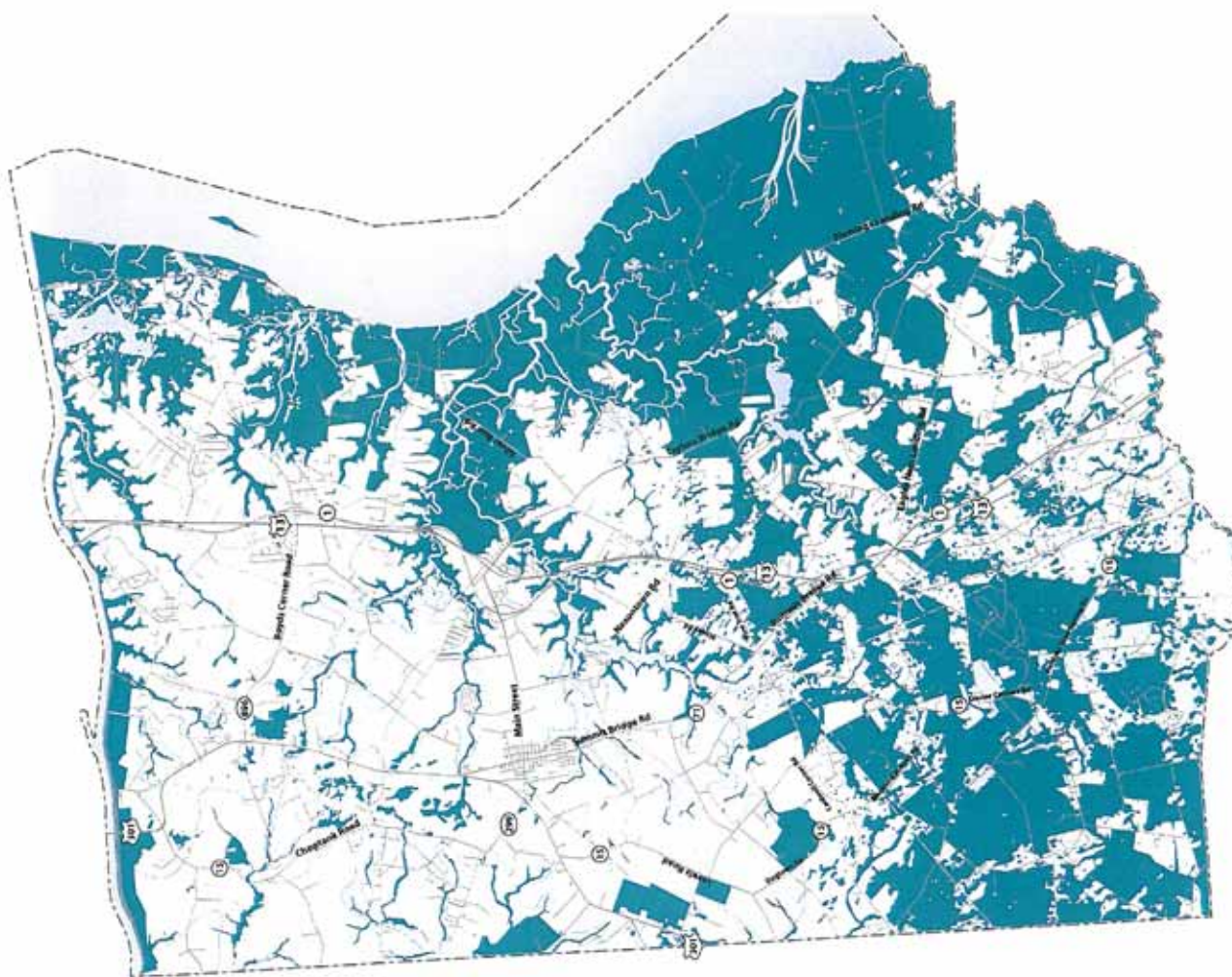
The New Castle County Comprehensive Plan provided layers of information, including environmental areas "out of play". This designation provided the Working Group with an understanding of environmental constraints to land development. "Out of Play" includes:

- State Resource Areas
- Permanently Preserved Agricultural Land
- Critical Areas and Natural Areas designated by DNREC
- Wetlands under Federal jurisdiction
- Forest/Well/Recharge areas
- Water

Environmental Out of Play

Fully Protected

Partially Protected
(Water Recharge)



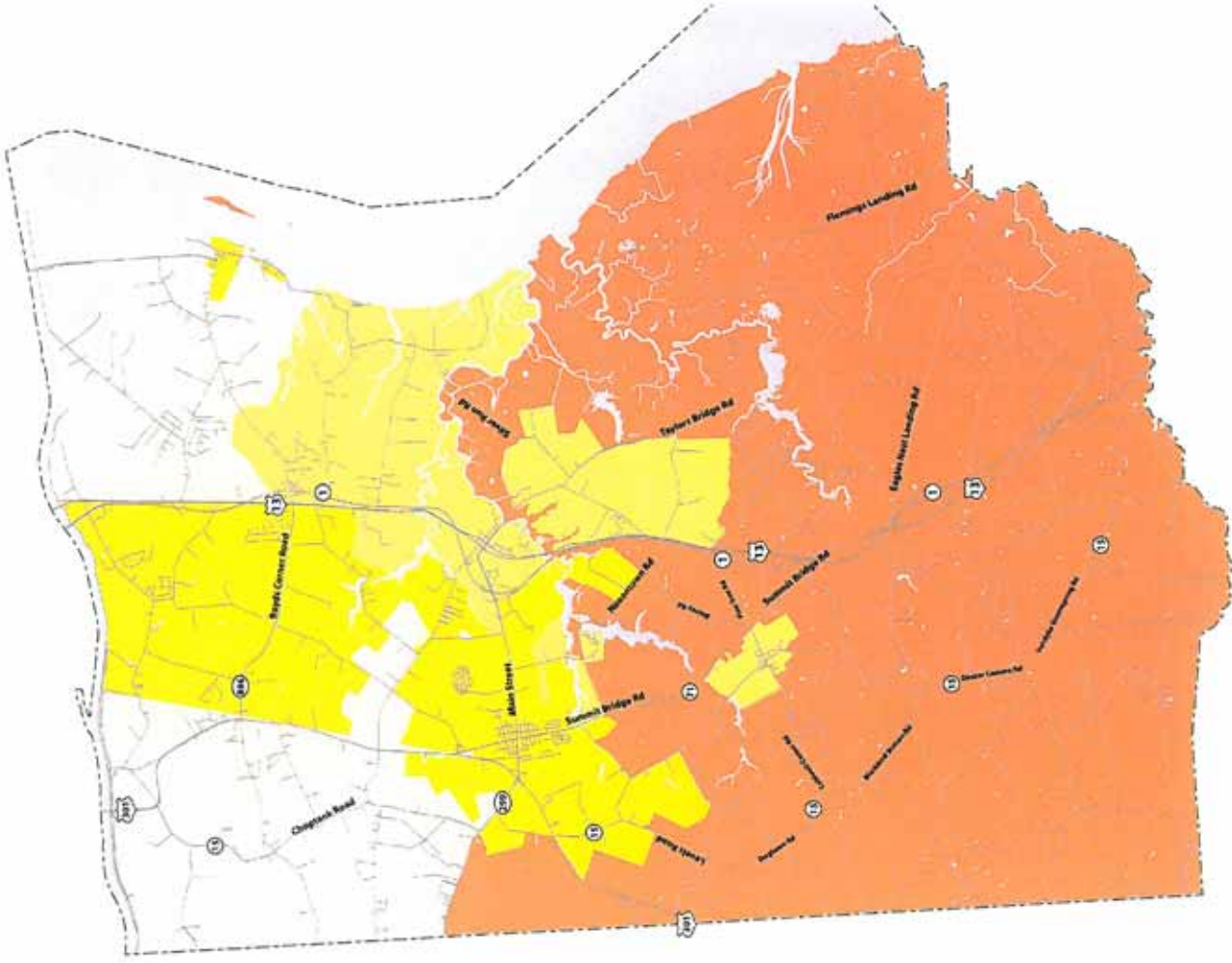
Sewer Capacity

The New Castle County Comprehensive Plan mapping also provided sewer availability:

- the Inner Core, where sewer is available
- capacity not available but improvements are funded
- capacity not available but improvements are unfunded

Sewer Service

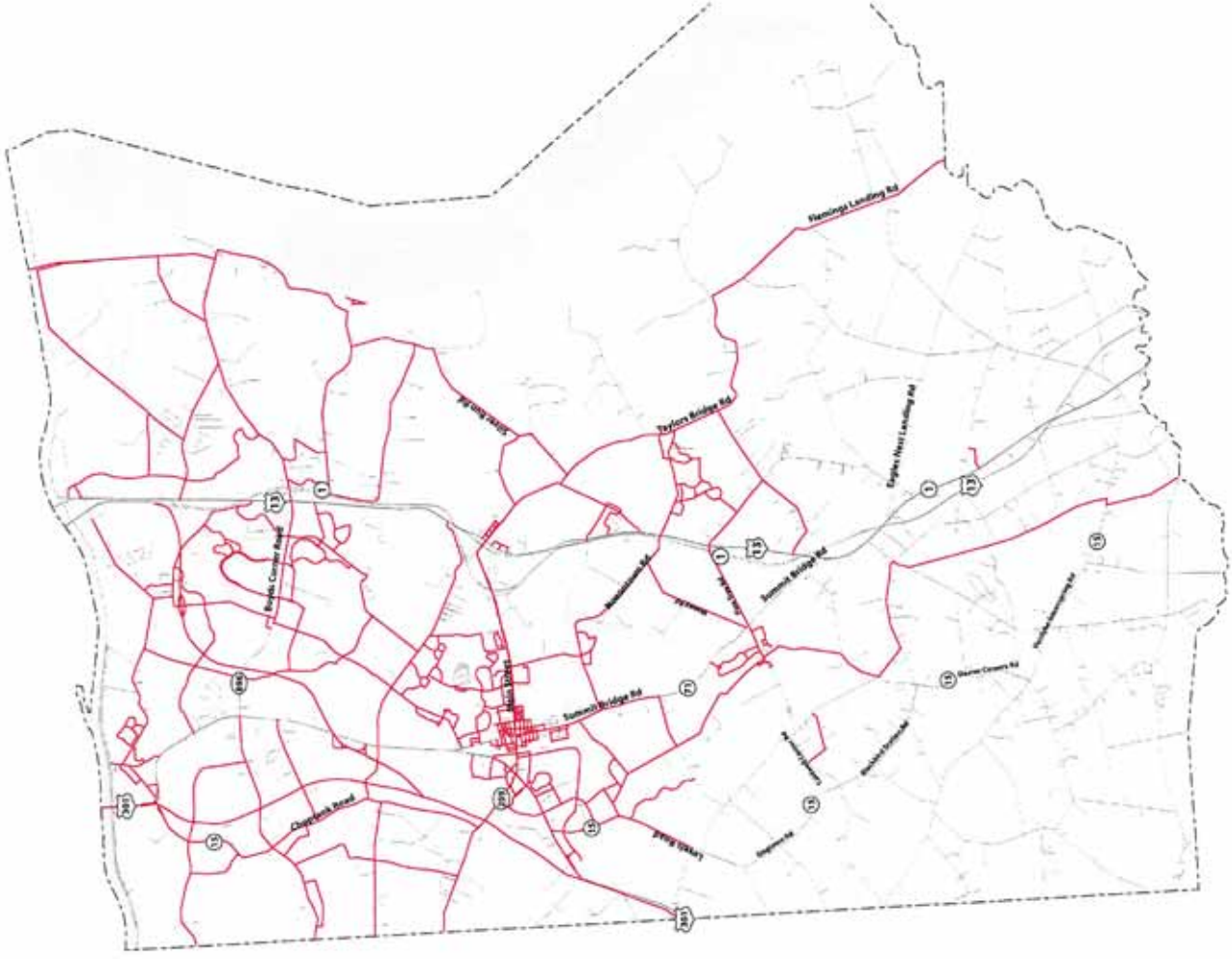
	Inner Core
	Capacity Not Available but Improvements are Funded
	Capacity Not Available and Improvements are Unfunded
	Unsewered



Transportation

Transportation information was assembled from a number of sources:

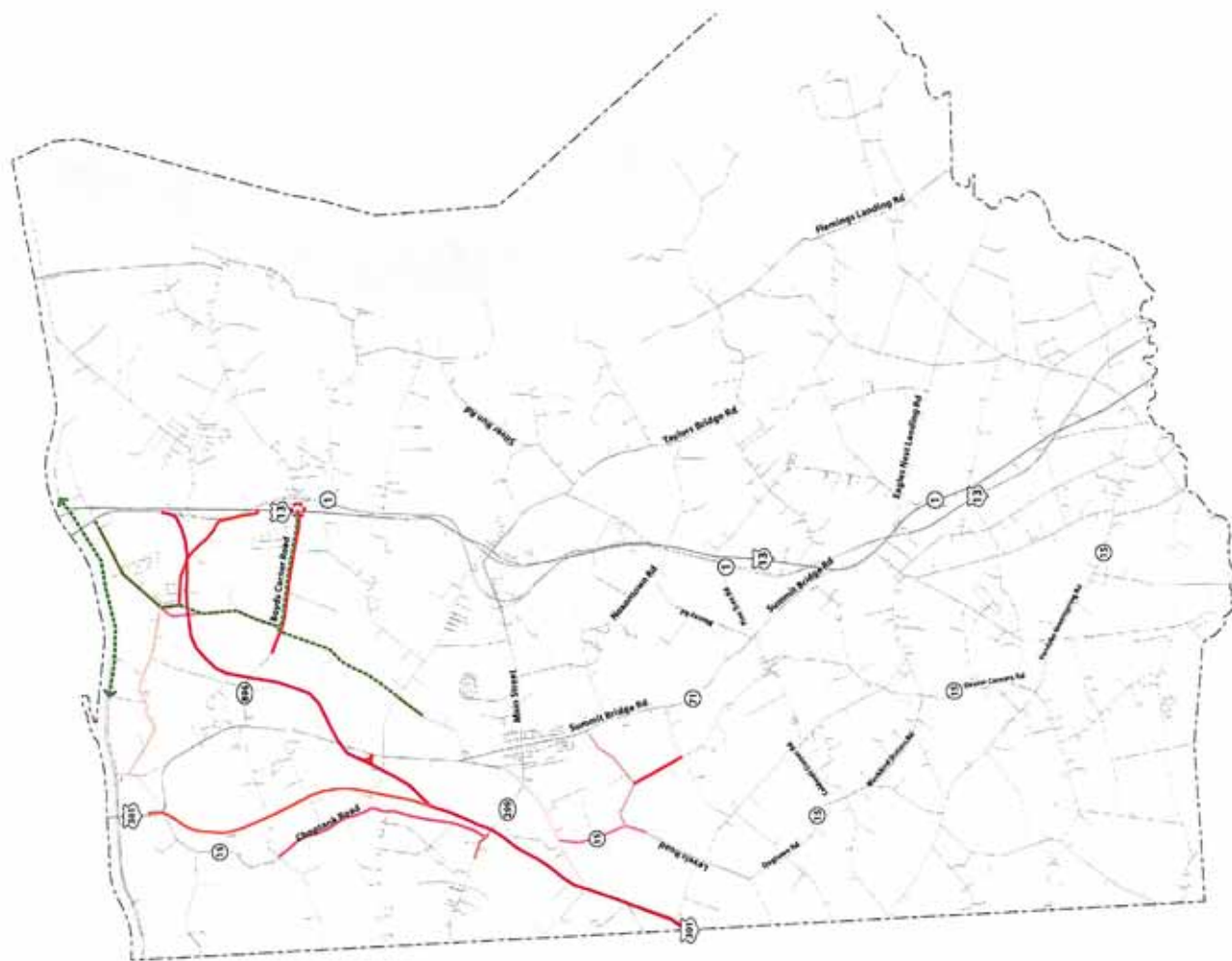
- 2008-11 Southern New Castle County TIP projects
- WILMAPCO Transportation Infrastructure Regional Transportation Plan 2030
- WILMAPCO Freight and Goods Movement Analysis
- WILMAPCO Congestion Management System
- DTC Business Plan
- US Route 301 Project/FEIS
- Southern New Castle County Local Roads Study
- Boyds Corner/Mt. Pleasant Build out Analysis "Mega TIS"
- 2006 Traffic Volumes
- WILMAPCO Greenway Plan
- Westown Transportation Improvements
- Eastown Master Transportation Plan



Transportation

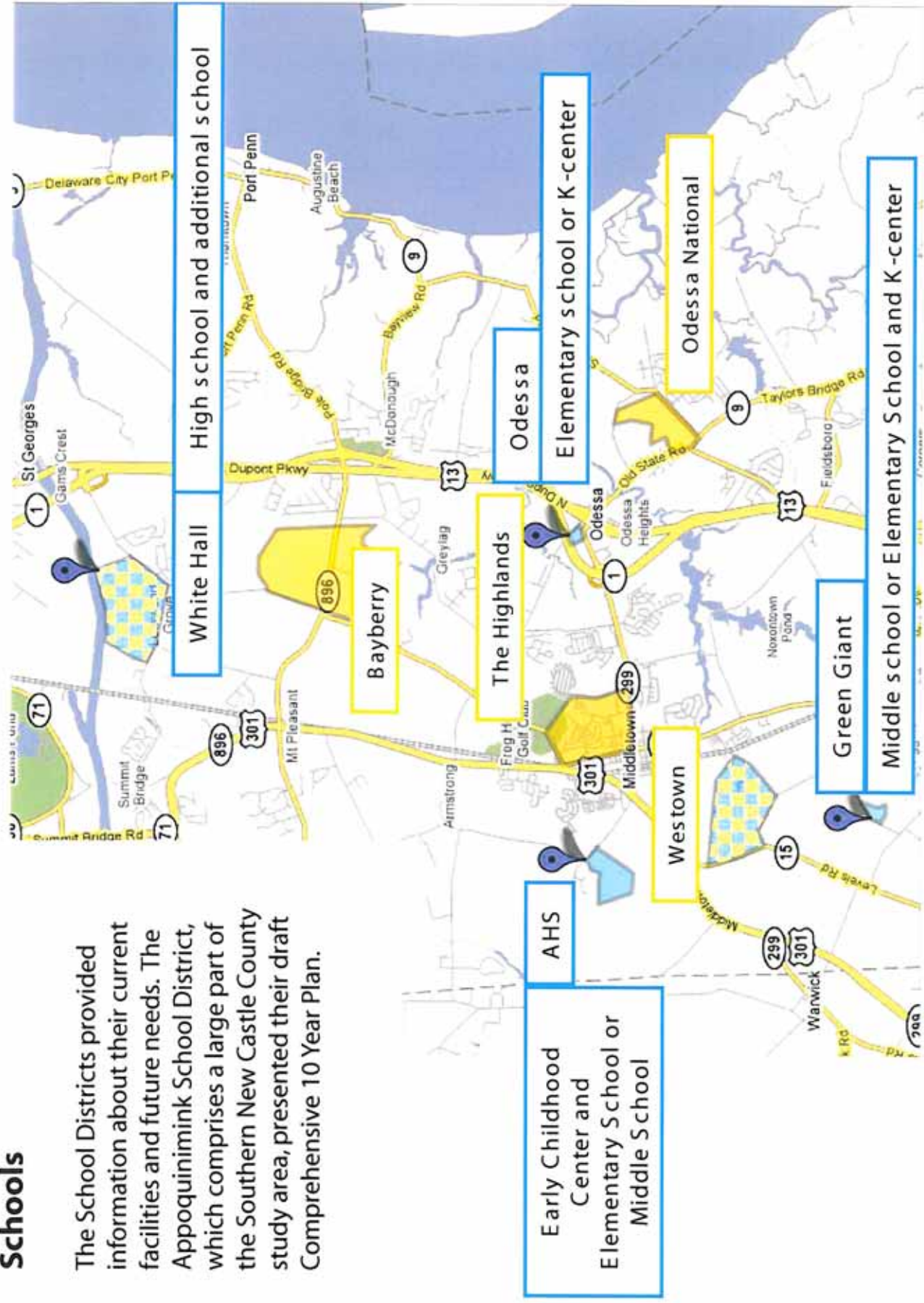
Planned projects within Southern New Castle County taken from the 2009 -2014 Capital Transportation Plan (CTP) illustrated where the state is and will be investing in road infrastructure in the near future:

1. Boyds Corner Intersection Improvements
2. Cedar Lane Road Improvements
3. Hyetts Corner Road
4. Jamison Corner Road
5. Lorewood Grove Road (Pt. 1, east and west)
6. Choptank Rd: Bunker Hill to Bethel Church
7. US 301
8. Westown: Bunker Hill Road to Bethel Church
9. Westown, US 301: Middleneck to Peterson Road
10. Westown, St. Annes Church Rd: Levels to SR 71
11. Wiggins Mill Rd Improvements
12. C & D Canal Recreation Trail



Schools

The School Districts provided information about their current facilities and future needs. The Appoquinimink School District, which comprises a large part of the Southern New Castle County study area, presented their draft Comprehensive 10 Year Plan.



Define Area Boundaries: The Three Elements

Viewing the base conditions in Southern New Castle County at a large scale, three elements were apparent:

Natural/ Green Element



1. A Natural/Green element, which provides natural areas, open space and recreational opportunities

Agricultural Element

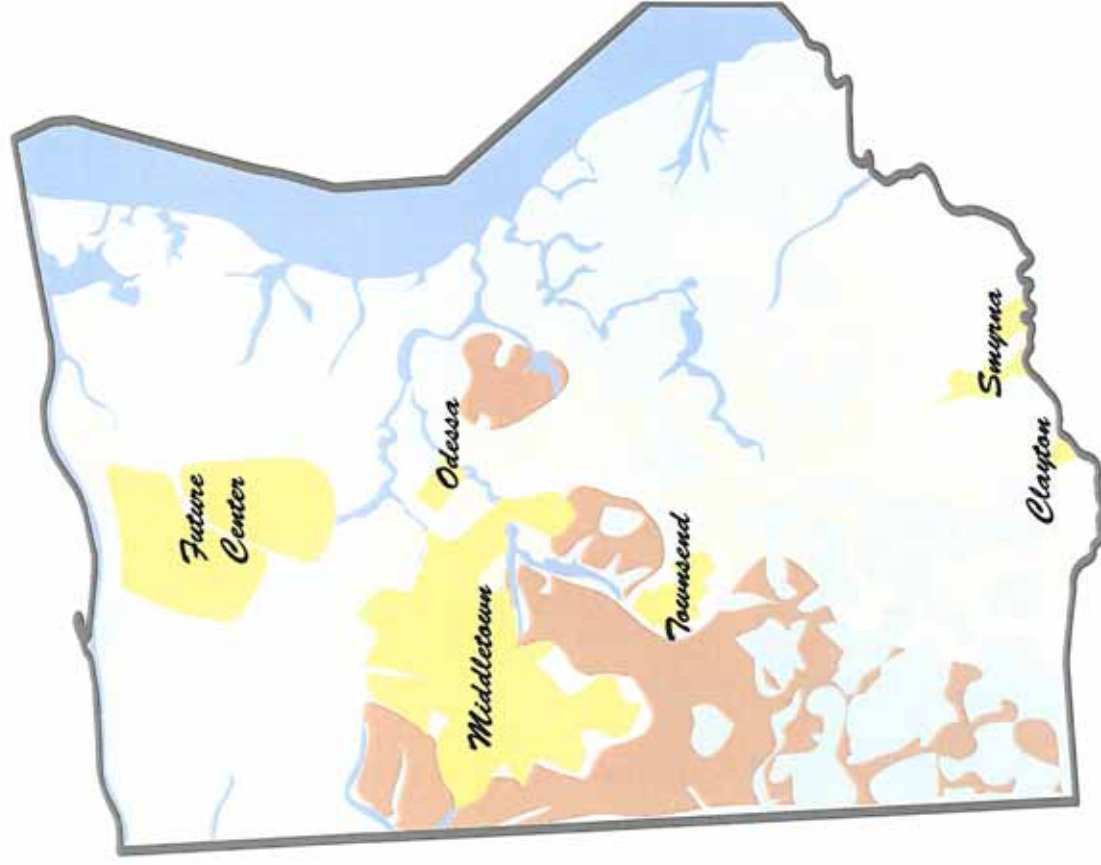


2. An Agricultural element, where preserved and/or active farming exists

Built Element



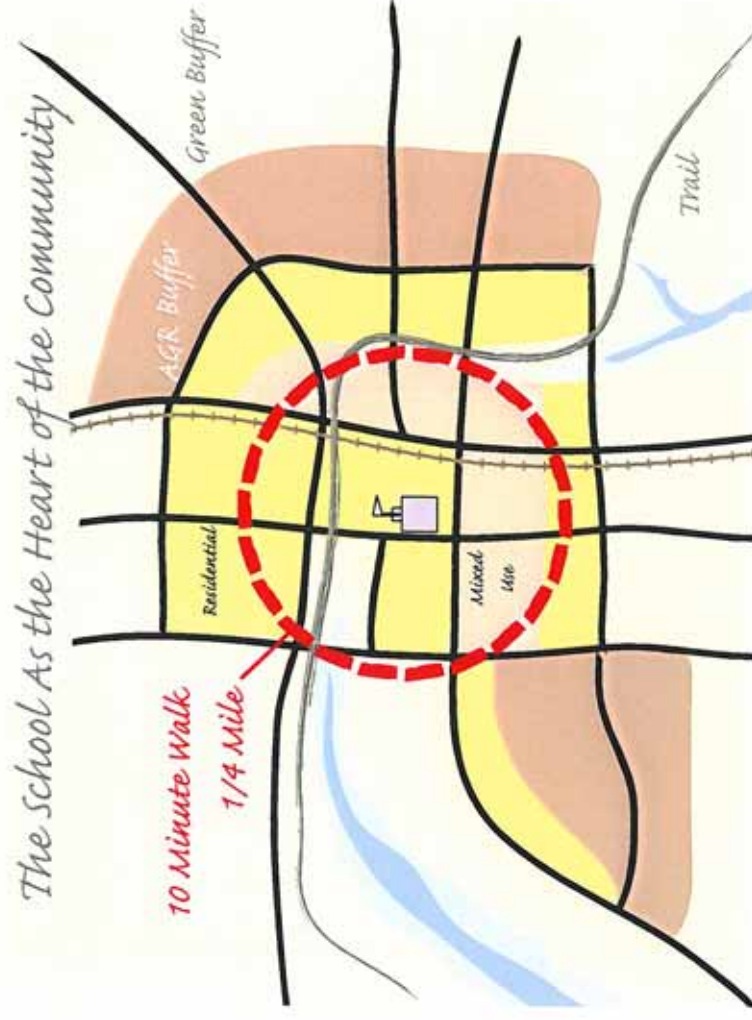
3. A Built element, where existing centers are or future centers will be



Define Needs: Livable Communities

Livable communities are places where there are opportunities to live, work and play. They offer a range of travel choices, including walking, biking and transit.

Schools can be the heart of a livable community. Locating schools in existing or future centers near residential areas minimizes distances students have to travel, and provides the opportunity for them to travel by many modes.



Define Needs, Goals, and Objectives

Once the Base Conditions were defined, a number of idealized needs were identified, which led to a set of goals and objectives to guide the plan:

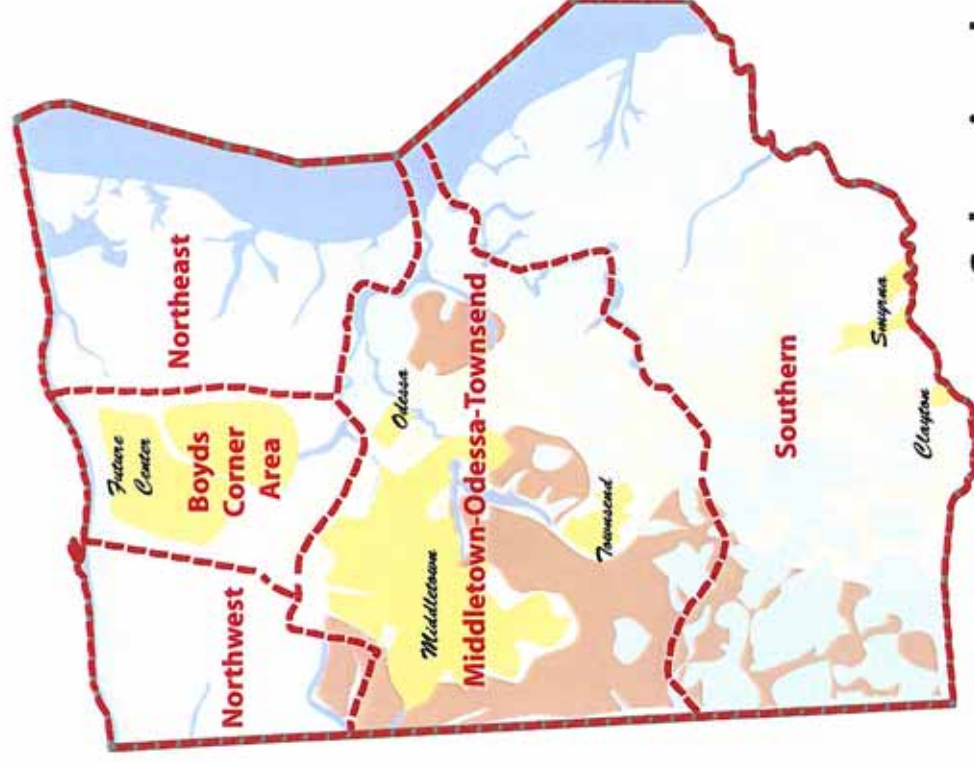
- Support existing centers – Middletown, Odessa, Townsend and Smyrna
- New communities should be livable, with places to live and work, and where travel by many modes is possible
- Consider sewer capacity
- Preserve the green element, including agriculture
- Create sustainable economic development in strategic locations, not just a few jobs here and there
- Consider future school location needs. Schools should be located where they can form the heart of the community. Site evaluation factors should include where future funded transportation improvements will occur, where growth may occur, and if they can be serviced by many modes.
- Provide for a regional library facility, and locate where it can be serviced by many modes
- Avoid creating traffic congestion
- Design and construct transportation in the context of what is needed to support community facilities, land use and economic development

3. The Five Subregional Plan Areas

After reviewing the base conditions, defining needs and developing goals and objectives, the Working Group concluded that growth discussions are local and need to be examined at a parcel level with property owners and the public. As a result, the Working Group decided to divide the study area into a subregional scale, which would allow them to focus on issues at a parcel level.

The study area was divided into 5 subregions, generally corresponding to sewer service areas:

- Northwest
- Boyds Corner area
- Northeast
- MOT
- Southern



**Subregional
Plan Areas**

4. Status of the Five Subregional Area Plans

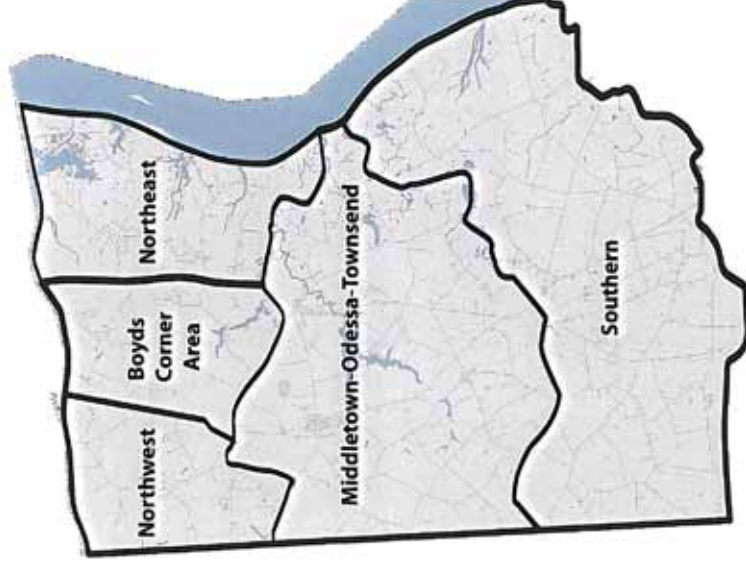
From this point forward, each area should complete the master plan process as it applies to the specifics in that subarea:

Northwest and Northeast - While largely undeveloped due to unavailable sewer capacity, several developments are proposed. The next step should be to hold discussions with property owners in the context of the master plan process steps.

Boyd's Corner Area - This area is under control of several land owners who are contemplating development under proposed zoning code revisions. Discussions should continue with these landowners and regulatory agencies in the context of the master plan process steps.

MOT - After viewing the five subregions, the towns of Middletown, Odessa and Townsend expressed a desire to work together on one plan and be the first plan to move forward. The next step would be to work with elected officials and the public on the more specific growth questions identified.

Southern - While largely unsewered and environmentally out of play, the Smyrna/Clayton area forms an edge to this subregional area. Smyrna has identified some development opportunities. The next step would be to advance these discussions and work with MOT on greenway opportunities.



The Middletown – Odessa – Townsend Subregional Plan

The Middletown – Odessa – Townsend plan is the most advanced of the subregional plans. To start the plan, the Mayor of each town presented their current planning projects and issues, and discussed what potential opportunities they saw in the context of the Needs statements identified in Step 2:

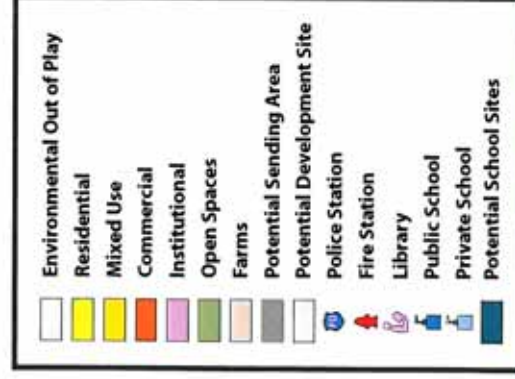
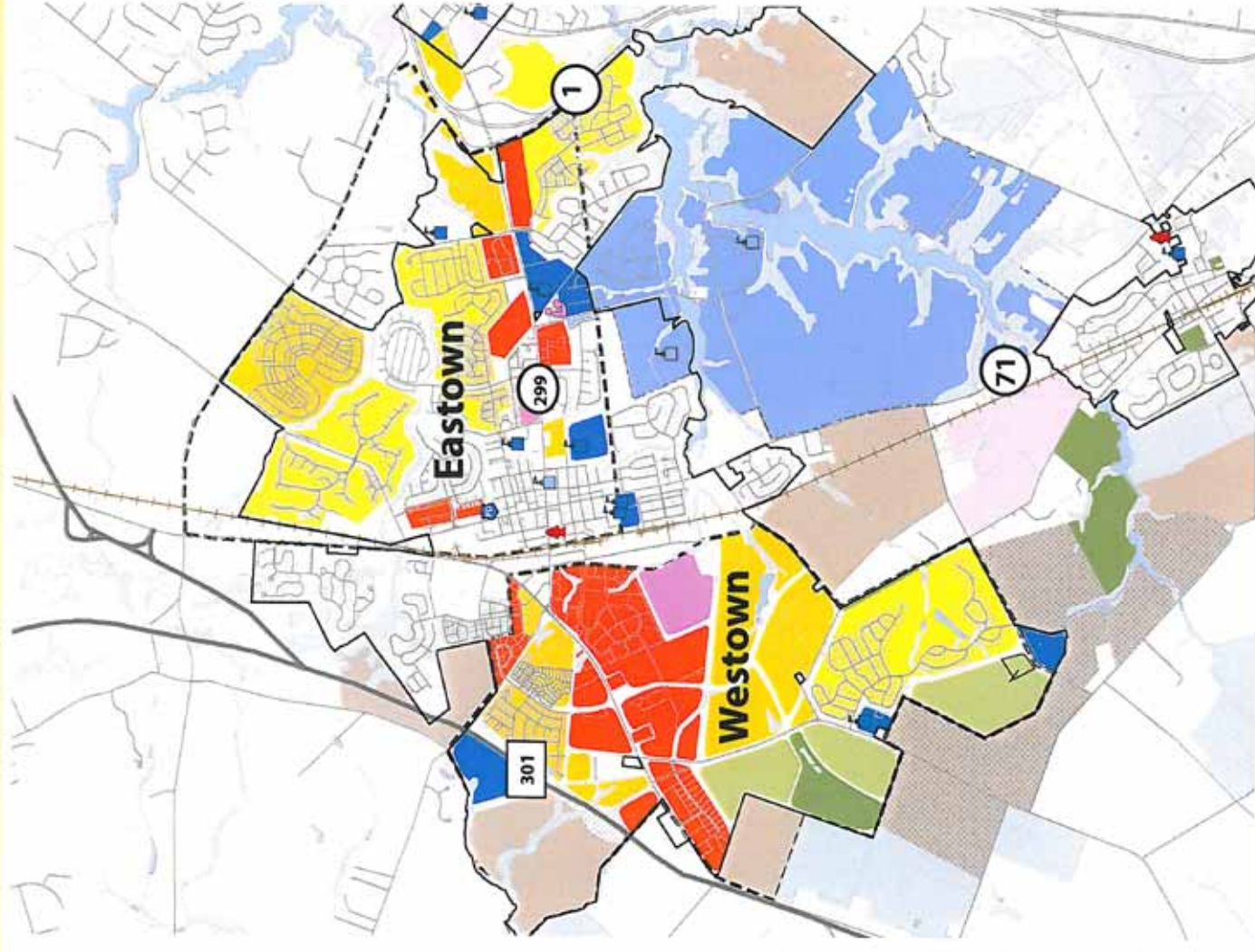
- Townsend discussed the desire to connect their town with Middletown and Odessa with off-road greenways
- Townsend discussed the potential to direct future growth between Townsend and Middletown, and the desire to consider economic development along the Route 71 corridor
- Odessa discussed the need to define the vision for future growth east and south of the town

Middletown

Middletown is working to implement the Westown and Eastown Plans.

Middletown's opportunities include:

- Coordinating with Odessa and Townsend on edge planning, including developing a greenway network
- Consider potential for transit-oriented development

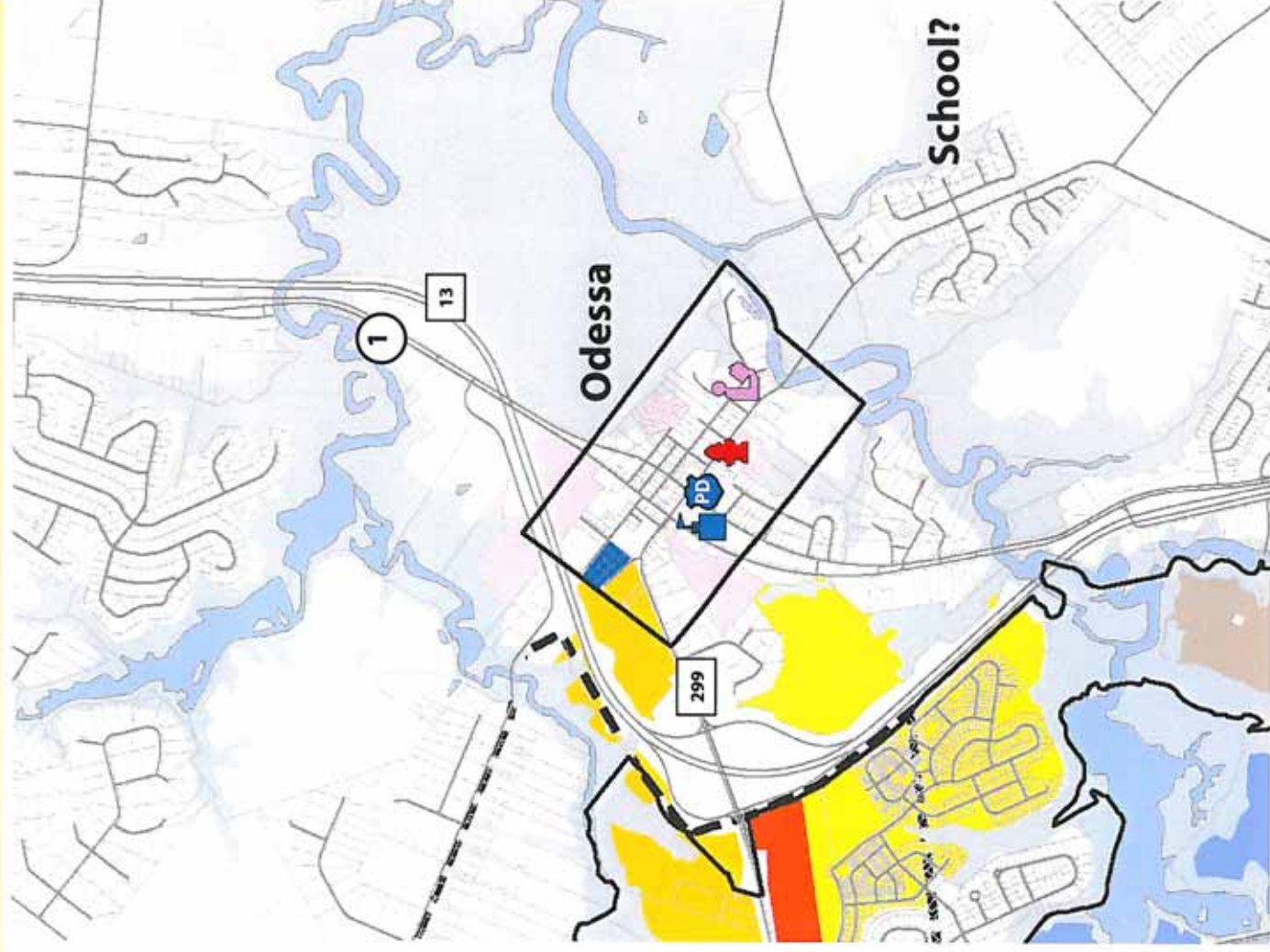
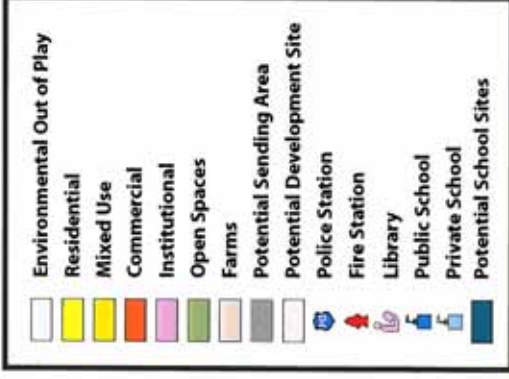


Odessa

Odessa is working to bring a mixed use development on line just west of Route 13 along Route 299. Aside from a few parcels with some development potential in the future, Odessa is essentially built out within its limits.

Odessa's opportunities include:

- coordinating with New Castle County on edge development south and east of the town's boundaries
- coordinating with the Appoquinimink School District on school needs
- developing in-fill planning and development guidelines



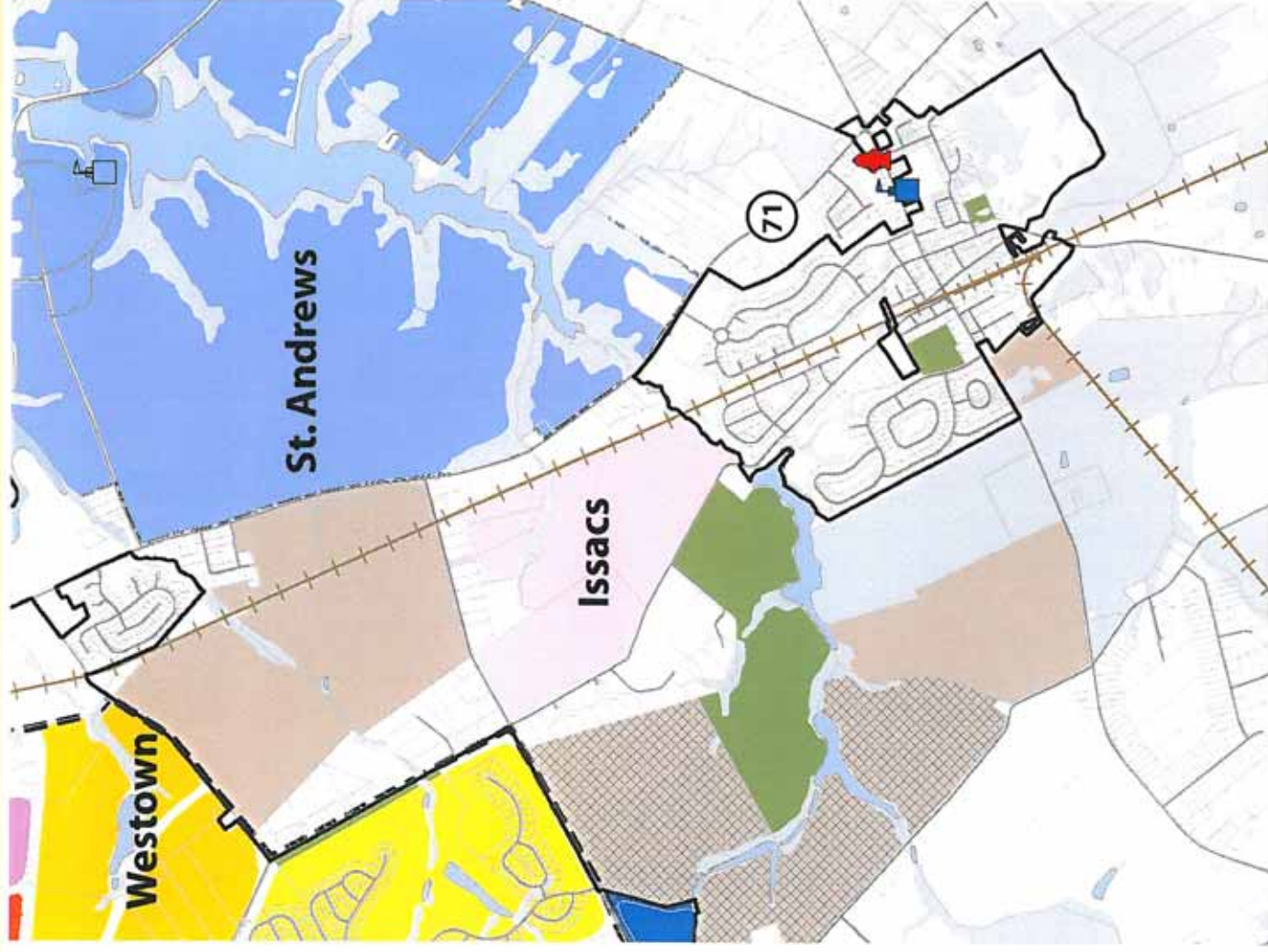
School?

Townsend

Townsend is completing an update of their Comprehensive Plan.

Townsend's opportunities include:

- defining preservation or growth options north to Middletown
- coordinating with Middletown, Odessa and Smyrna to develop a greenway network
- planning for economic development along the 72 corridor
- coordinating location for new school facility



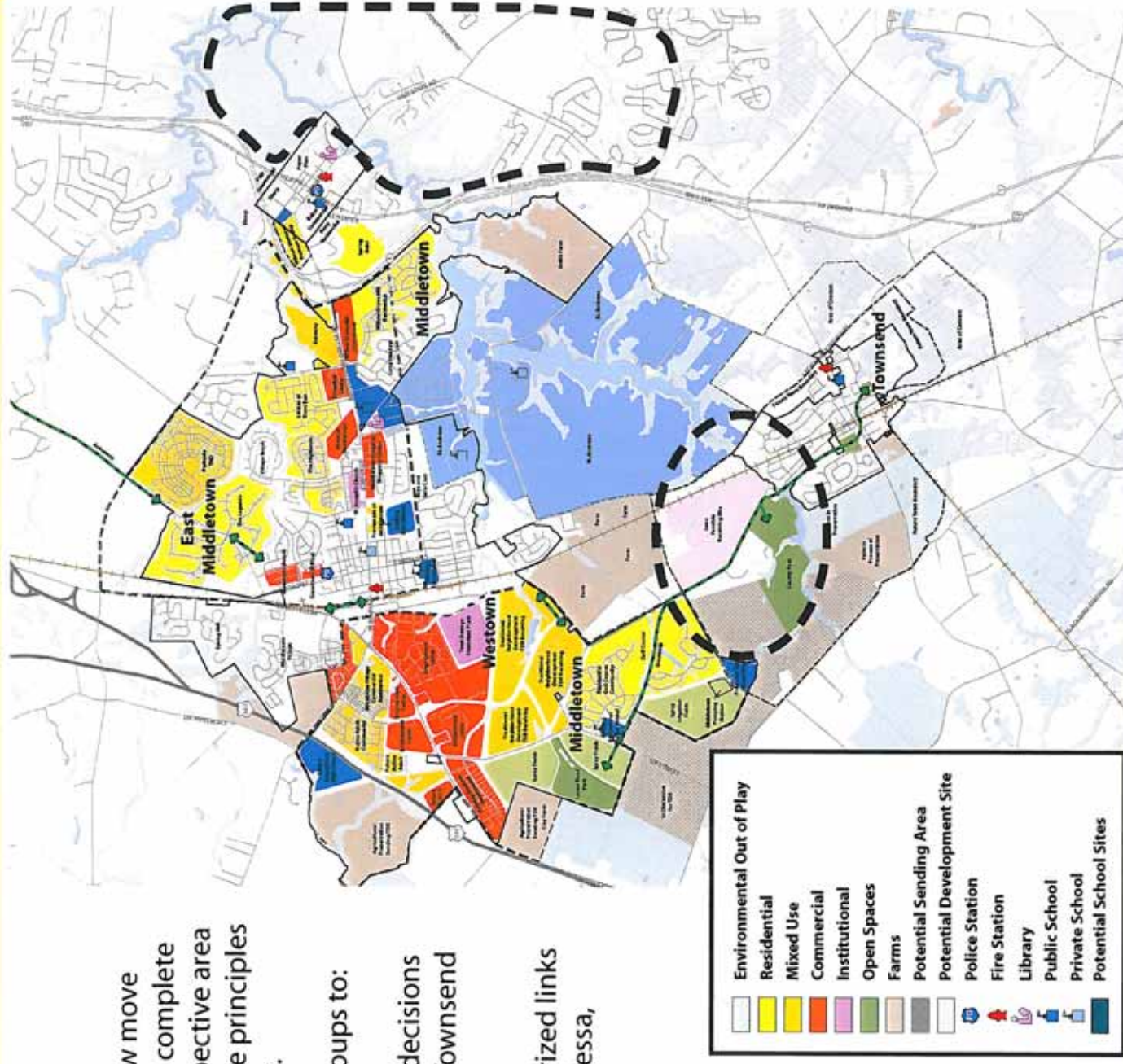
Environmental Out of Play	Police Station
Residential	Fire Station
Mixed Use	Library
Commercial	Public School
Institutional	Private School
Open Spaces	Potential School Sites
Farms	
Potential Sending Area	
Potential Development Site	

5. Next Steps

Each of the five areas will now move forward at their own pace to complete the Master Plan for their respective area building on and honoring the principles agreed to through this effort.

We will break into smaller groups to:

- Define critical issues and decisions regarding growth in the Townsend area and around Odessa
- Identify green, non-motorized links between Middletown, Odessa, Townsend and Smyrna
- Discuss these objectives with elected officials and the public, and report back to the group so that we can define the tools and mechanisms to move forward into implementation



Affirmation

We will continue to work together to:

- Preserve and protect the environmental areas identified in EO 61 Green Infrastructure
- Utilize available sewer capacity as an essential part of the decision-making framework
- Support the needs identified in the Appoquinimink School District 10 Year Plan, with the concept of the school as the heart of a livable community
- Consider a regional library site that provides multi-modal options
- Support the transportation investments identified in the 2009-20014 CTP
- Incorporate the infrastructure master plan process into the Comprehensive Plan by reference
- Continue to develop the five subregional area plans in smaller working groups, with the MOA group coming together to review progress as needed
- Develop implementation and monitoring measures as plans are completed