

# Southern New Castle County Master Plan

Public Workshop #4:  
Full Scenarios, Analysis, and  
Preliminary Recommendations  
October 7, 2019



# Agenda

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## I. Presentation

## II. Your Thoughts

- ✓ Visit stations around the room:
  - Scenarios
  - Quality of Life / Health
  - Environment
  - Community Character
  - Transportation
  - Economy/Jobs
- ✓ View information
- ✓ Ask questions
- ✓ Discuss with others
- ✓ Share your thoughts and ideas



# Plan purpose and desired outcome

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- Establish a long-term, publicly-supported vision for land use and infrastructure in southern New Castle County
- Provide recommendations to update key planning documents:
  - County Comprehensive Plan
  - WILMAPCO Regional Transportation Plan
  - DelDOT Capital Transportation Program

We Are  
Here

Spring / Summer 2019

Fall 2019 / Winter 2020

Project Kickoff  
(Oct. '18)

Vision /  
Existing  
Conditions

Preliminary  
Land Use  
Scenarios

Scenario  
Analysis

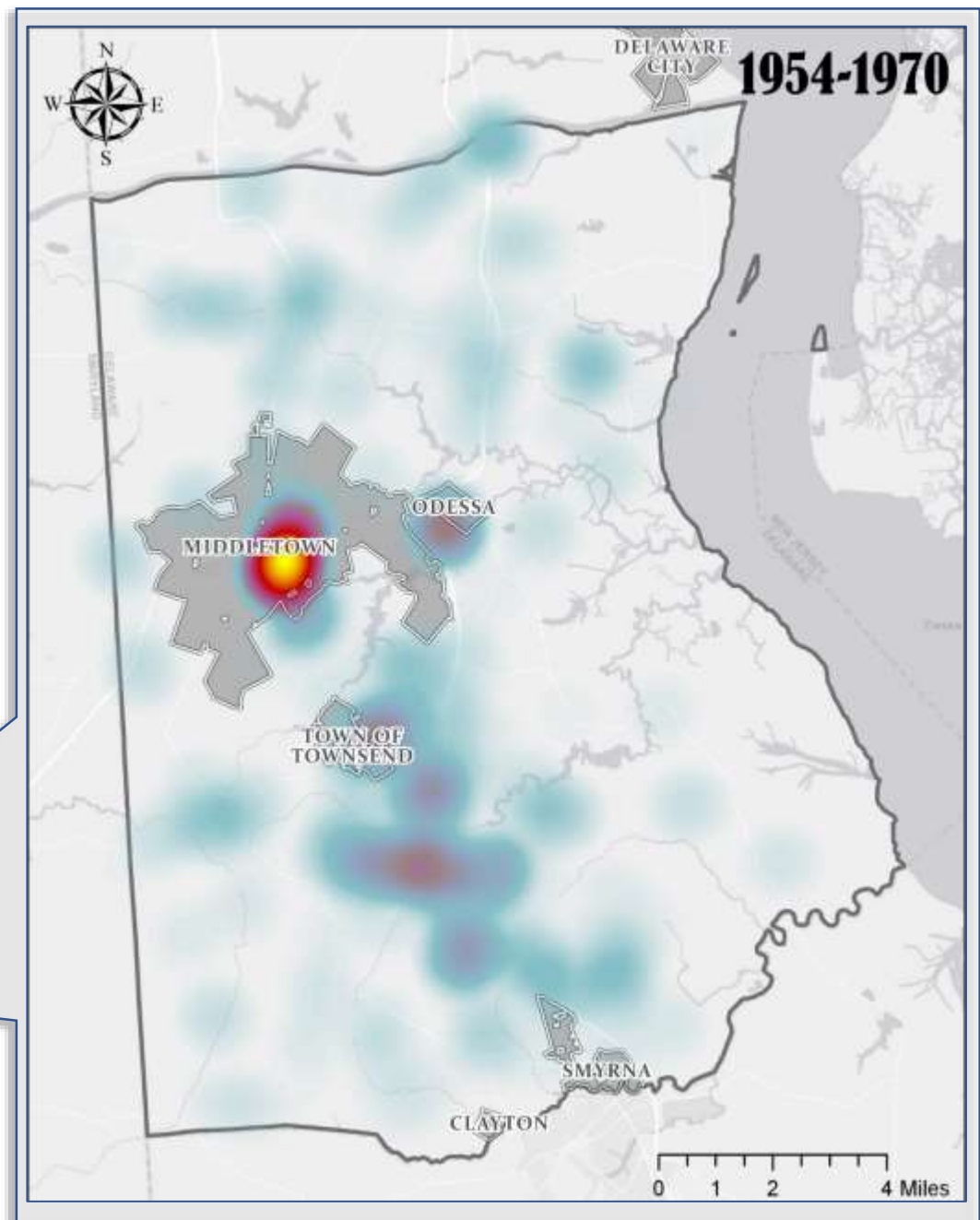
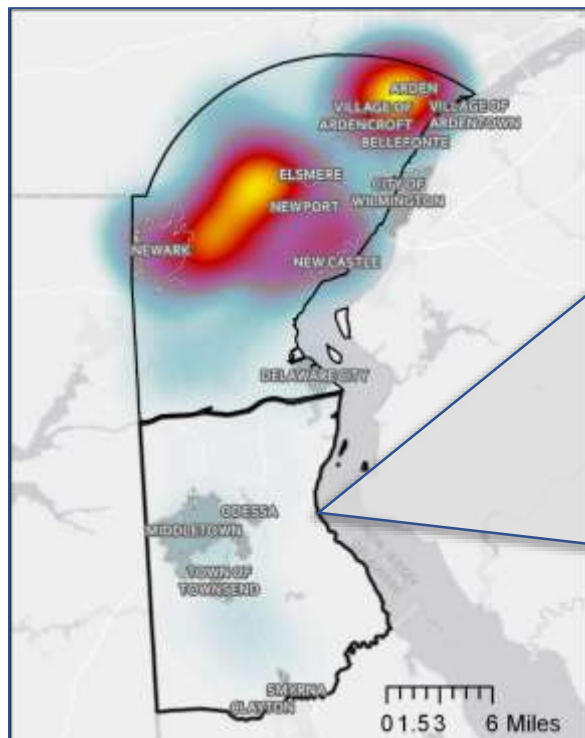
Draft  
Plan

Detailed  
Transportation  
Analysis and  
Final Plan



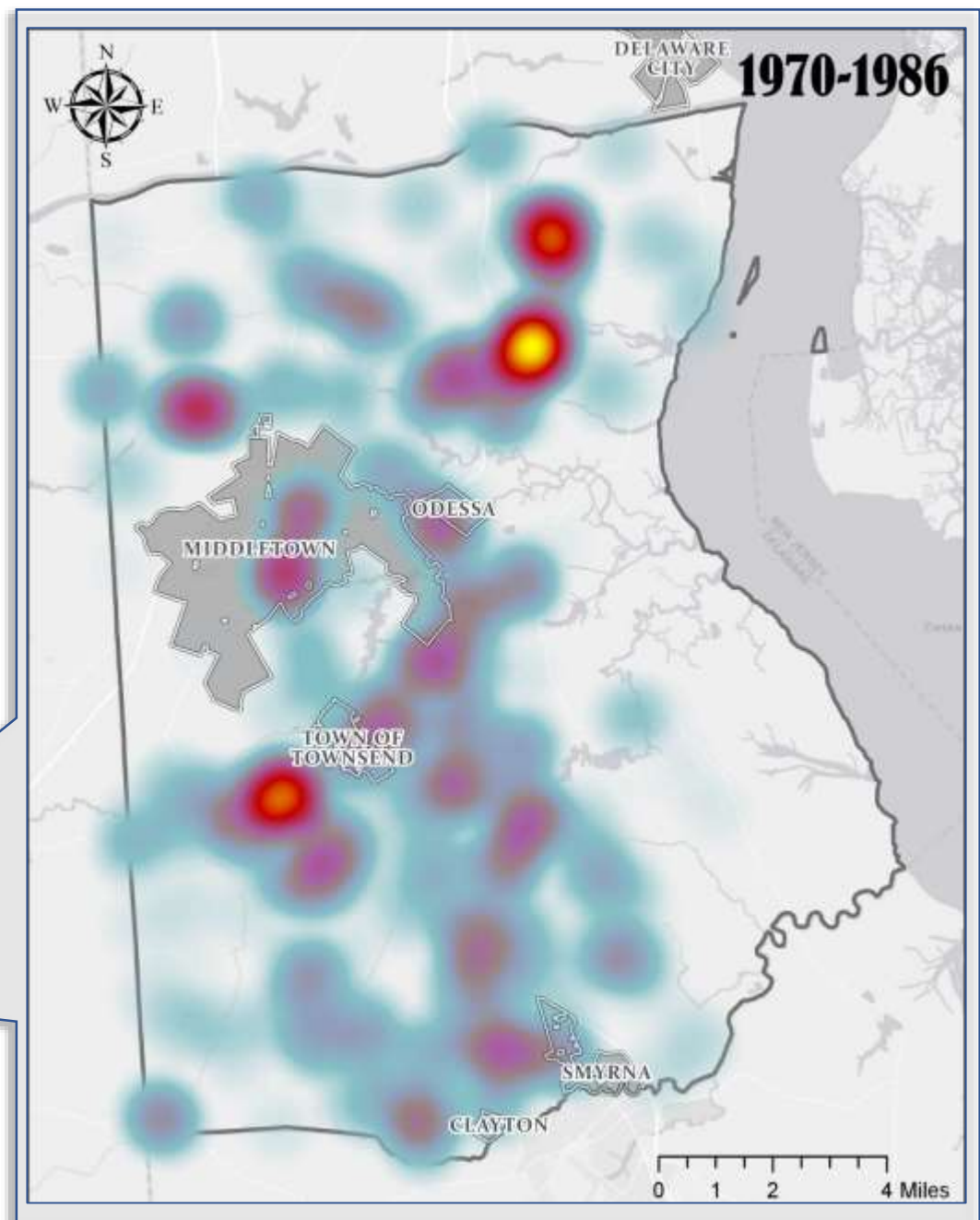
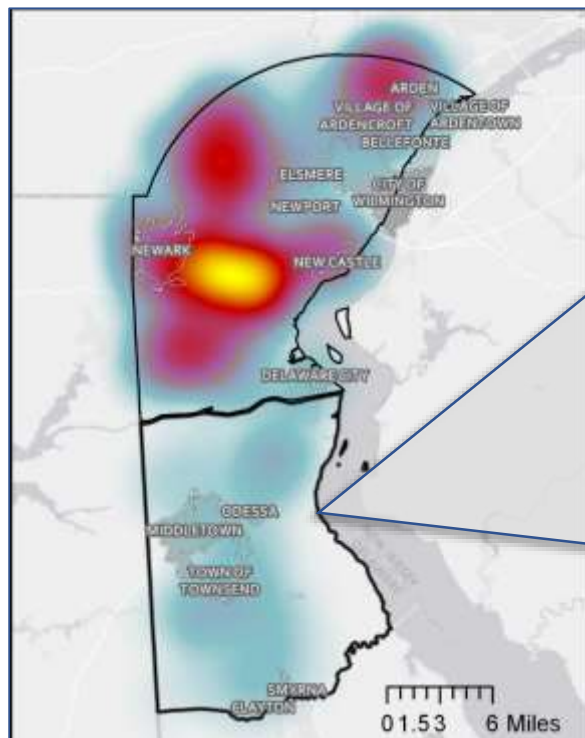
## Single Family Residential Dwellings Constructed Between 1954 &1970

652 South of the Canal  
36,622 North of the Canal



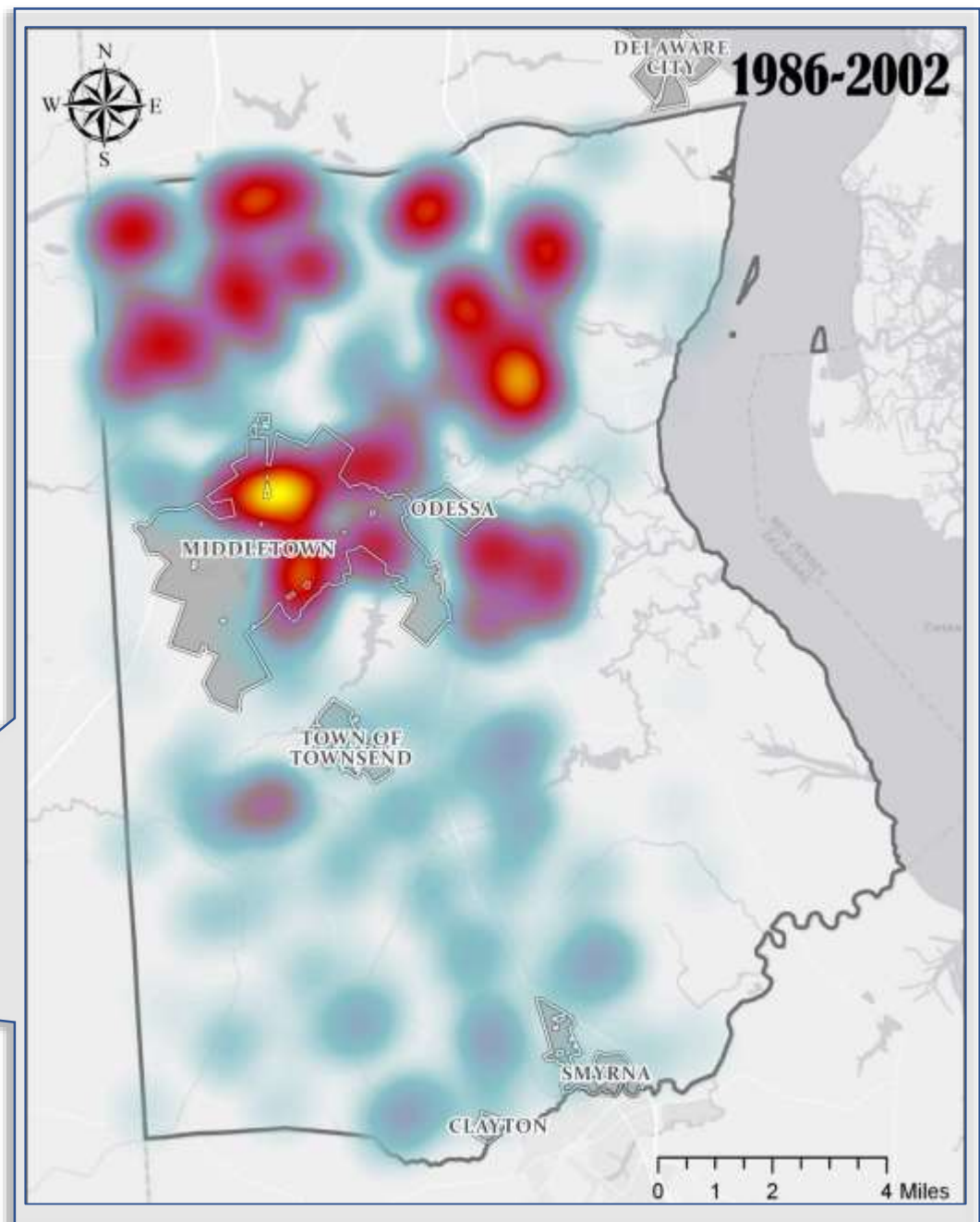
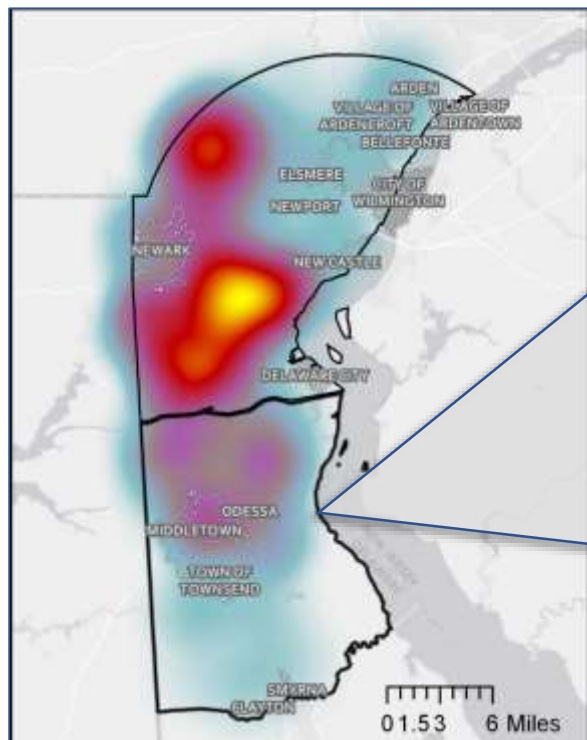
## Single Family Residential Dwellings Constructed Between 1970 & 1986

1,368 South of the Canal  
17,174 North of the Canal



## Single Family Residential Dwellings Constructed Between 1986 & 2002

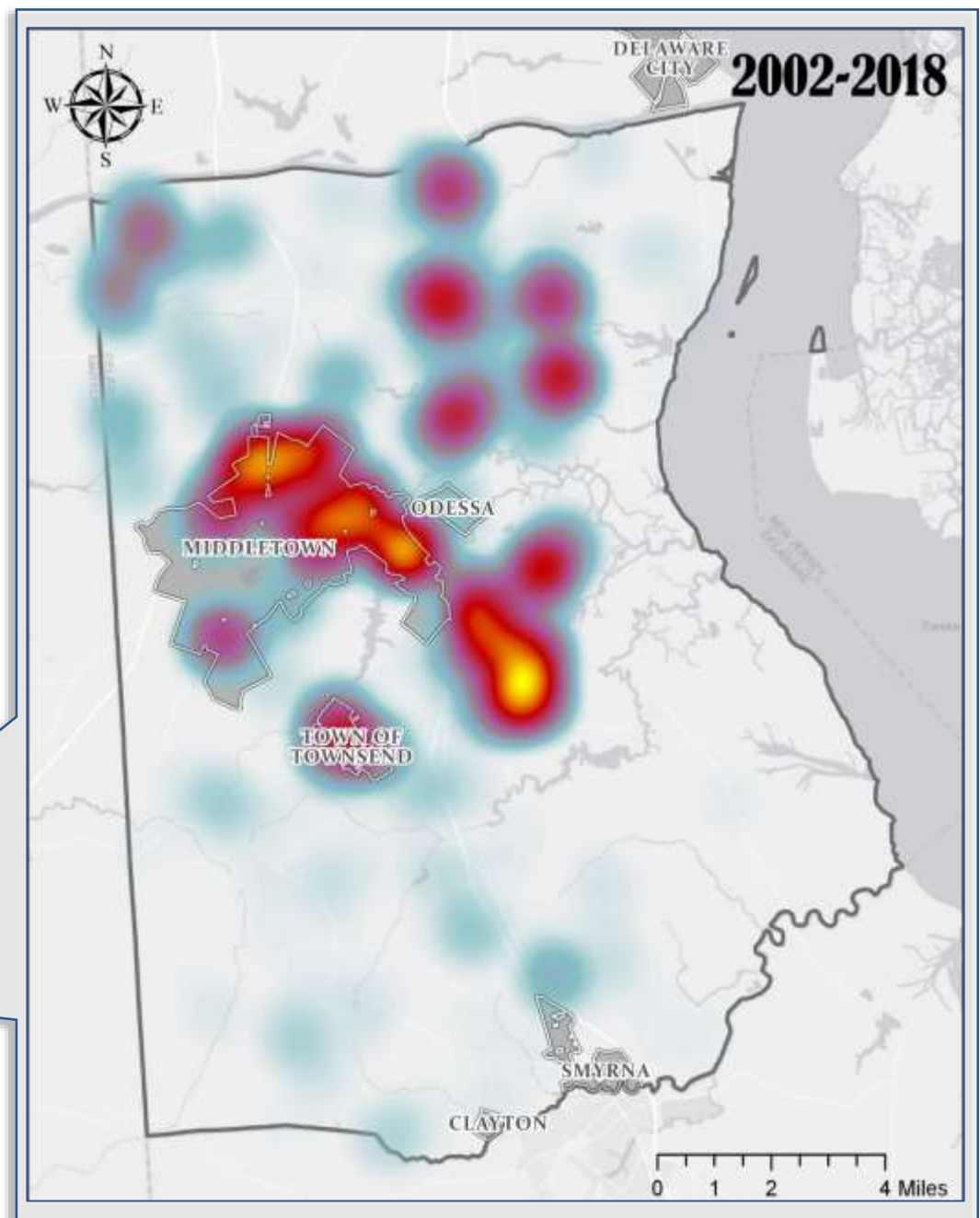
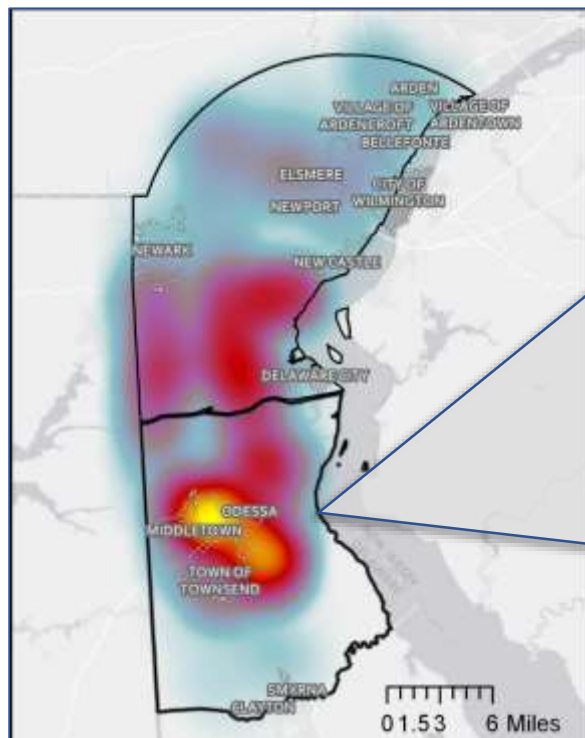
5,950 South of the Canal  
25,772 North of the Canal



## Single Family Residential Dwellings Constructed Between 2002 & 2018

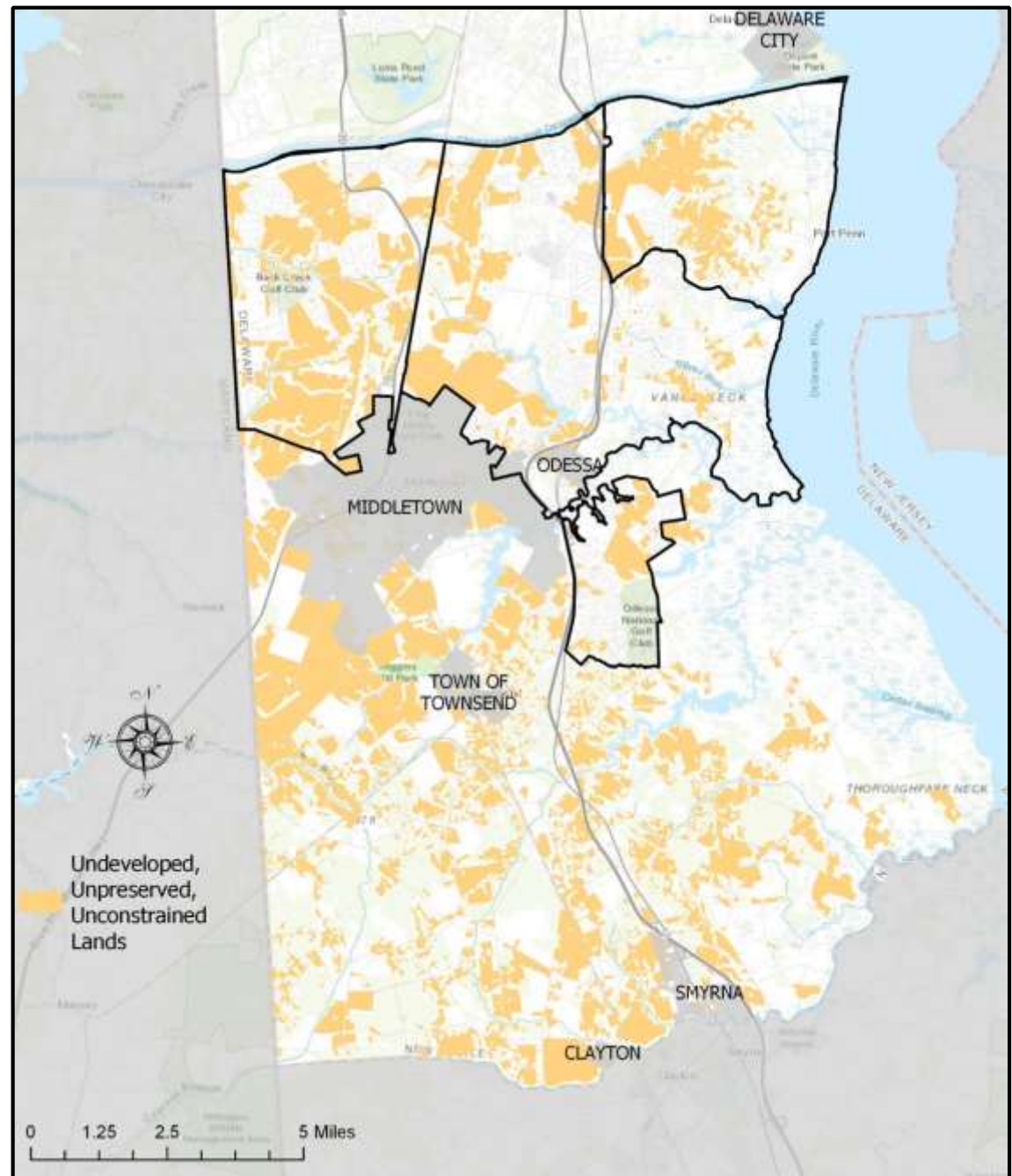
6,342 South of the Canal

7,361 North of the Canal



# What's Left:

*Develop or  
preserve?*





# Developing the Plan

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Where we are

How we get there

Where we want to be

# Where we are (existing conditions/constraints)

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- Sprawling development patterns
- Lack of clarity regarding areas for planned sewer expansion and timing, growth vs. preservation
- Lack of land preservation program
- Currently, many approved, yet unbuilt subdivisions

Without changing our approach, there will be:

- Growth not consistent with plan goals--unsustainable
- Important resources lost to development
- Continued oversupply

# Where we want to be (goals)



## Quality of Life / Health

- Residents of Southern New Castle County have **access** to the **amenities and services** that help them to maintain a **high quality of life**.



## Environment

- Environmental protection** and **farmland preservation** are considered a priority in Southern New Castle County, and residents and visitors alike have **access to trails, parks, and other natural spaces**.



## Community Character

- Development and redevelopment in Southern New Castle County are compatible with and **enhance the existing community character**, including **historic** properties and design features, the **scale** of development, and presence of **farmland and open space**.



## Transportation

- People in Southern New Castle County can use a **variety of transportation modes** (car, public transportation, walking, and bicycling) to reach their destinations in a **safe, comfortable, and convenient** manner.



## Economy / Jobs

- Southern New Castle County has a **strong and diversified economy**.

# How we get there

Overarching  
Preliminary  
Recommendations



Scenarios

1: Business as  
Usual

2: Planned  
Growth and  
Preservation

3: Town Infill  
and  
Preservation



# Options for the Future

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The full scenarios

# What we heard in June...

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- Can the towns take more growth?
- Small commercial hubs so residents don't all need to drive to Middletown.
- Job growth is desirable, but the market for commercial development has been mostly limited in recent years.
- Further explore capacity of existing infrastructure (water, sewer, roads, etc.).
- Consider a setback along Route 1 into the east wing to target for some growth.
- Examine potential for employment growth in southern portion of the study area.
- Traffic congestion and transportation are especially concerning for Scenario III.

# Refinements and Analysis

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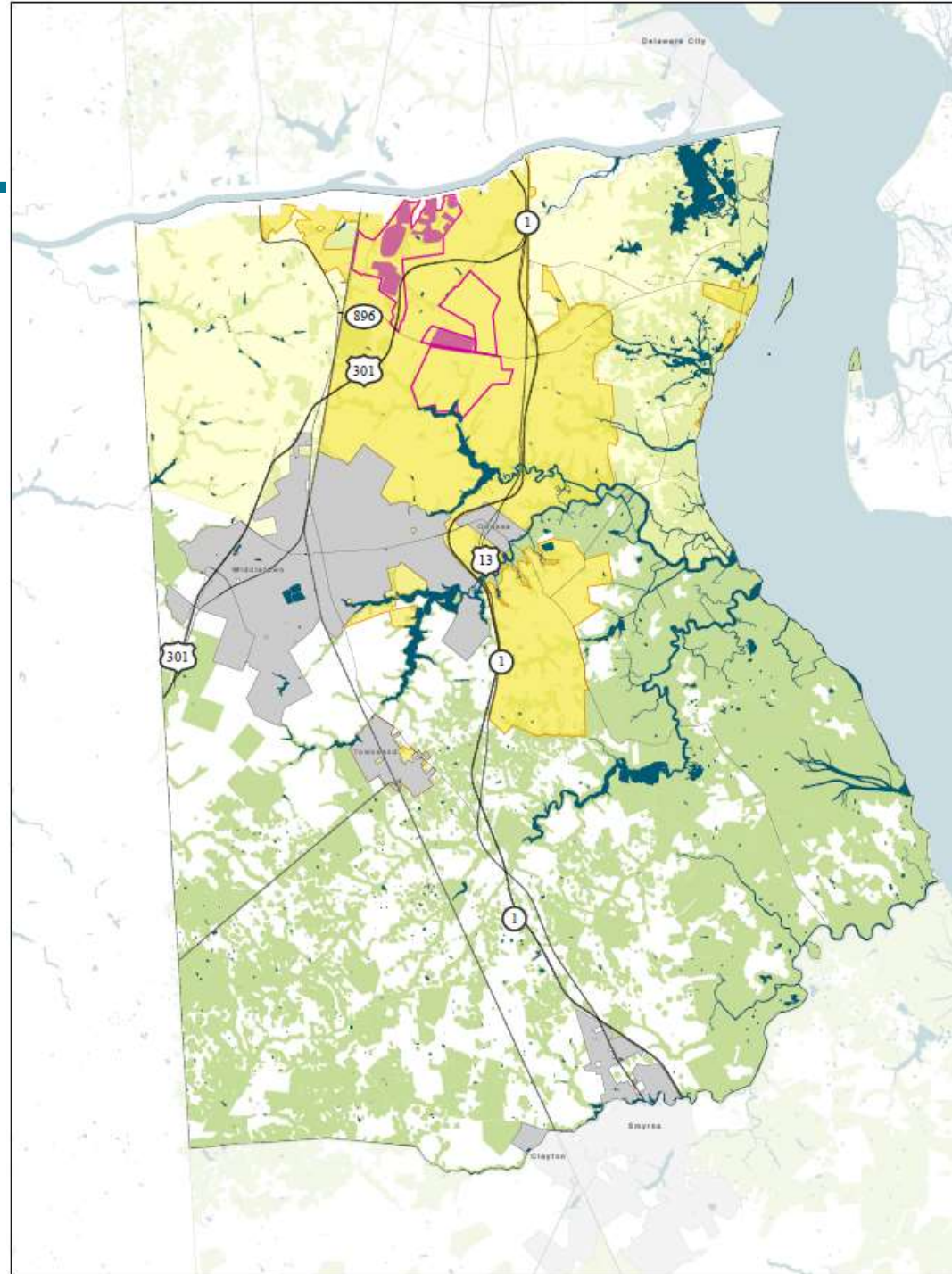
- Further refining and evaluating the land use scenarios based on feedback from the Advisory Committee and public.
  - **Business as usual**
  - **Planned Growth and Preservation**
  - **Capacity in the towns**
- Adding the rest of plan scenario elements and further evaluation:
  - **Transportation (roads, transit, non-motorized)**
  - **Parks, trails, and recreational facilities**
  - **Community spaces/facilities**
  - **Priority preservation/conservation areas**

# Scenario 1

## Business as Usual

### Map Key

-  Large Planned Developments
-  Village / Town Center Growth Area
-  Existing Sewered Area
-  Other Growth Area (Future Sewered Area)
-  Constrained Areas & Easements
-  Municipalities

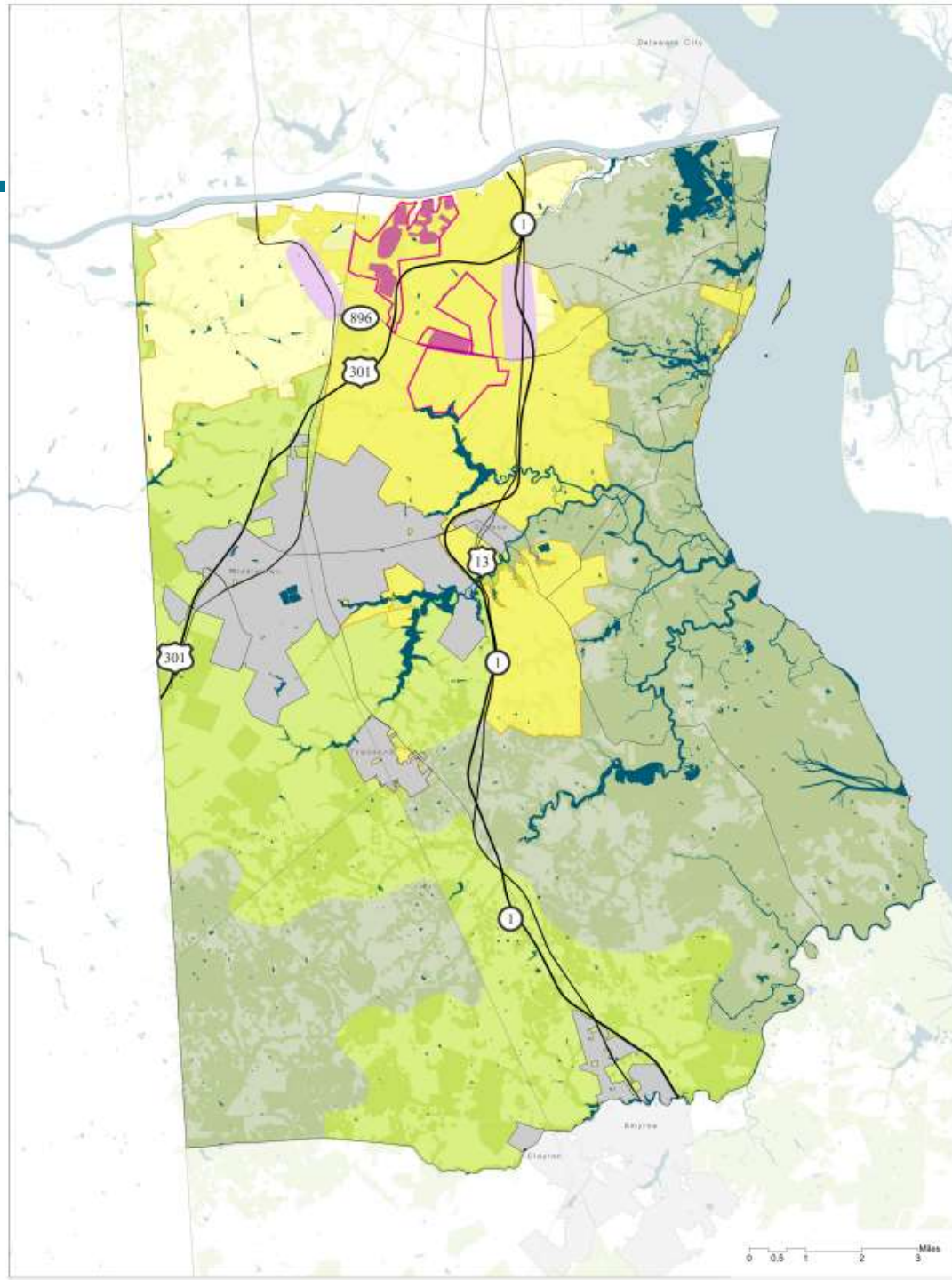


# Scenario 2

## Planned Growth and Preservation

### Map Key

- Large Planned Developments
- Village / Town Center Growth Area
- Corridor Hub Growth Area
- Existing Sewered Area
- Other Growth Area (Future Sewered Area)
- Priority Natural Resource Area
- Priority Agricultural Area
- Municipalities

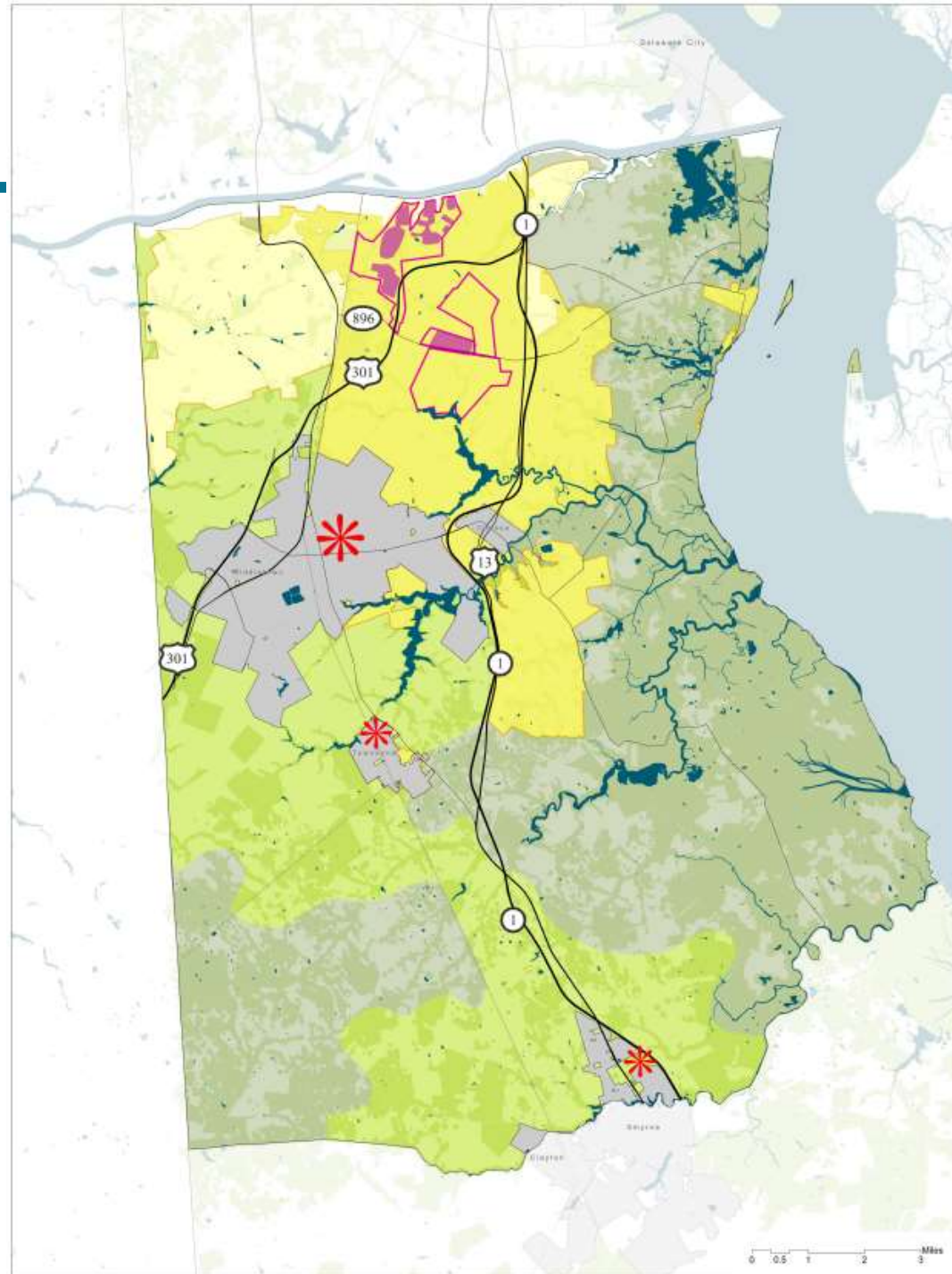


# Scenario 3

## Town Infill and Preservation

### Map Key

- Large Planned Developments
- Village / Town Center Growth Area
- Town Infill
- Existing Sewered Area
- Other Growth Area (Future Sewered Area)
- Priority Natural Resource Area
- Priority Agricultural Area
- Municipalities



# Deconstructing the Scenarios

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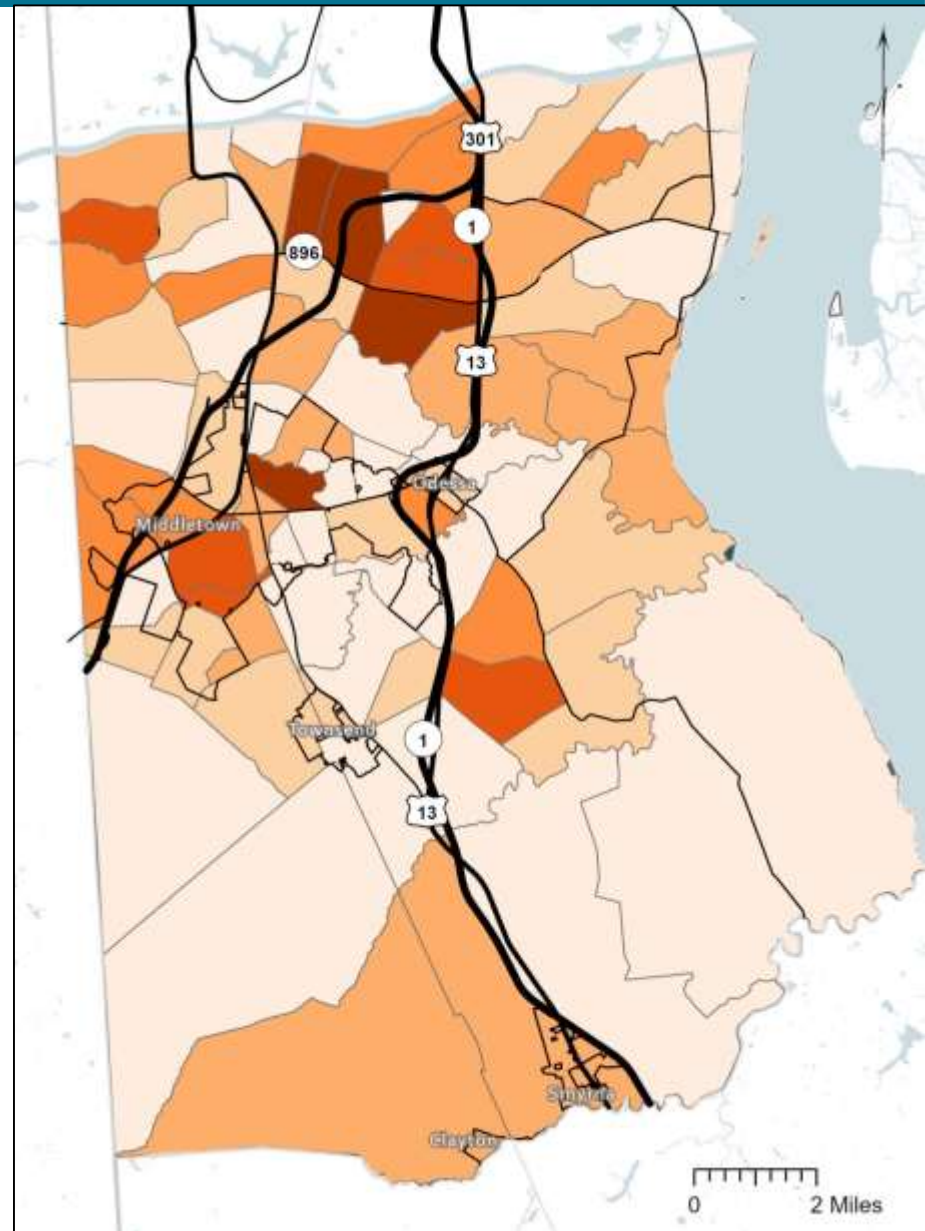
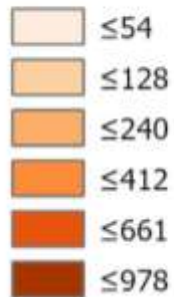
- Projections
- Assumptions
- Constraints / Conditions
- Key Indicators

# Household Growth, 2012-2050

## Scenario 1: Business as Usual

- Total of 11,100 households added over 30 years
- Delaware Population Consortium estimates

### 2015-2050 Household Change

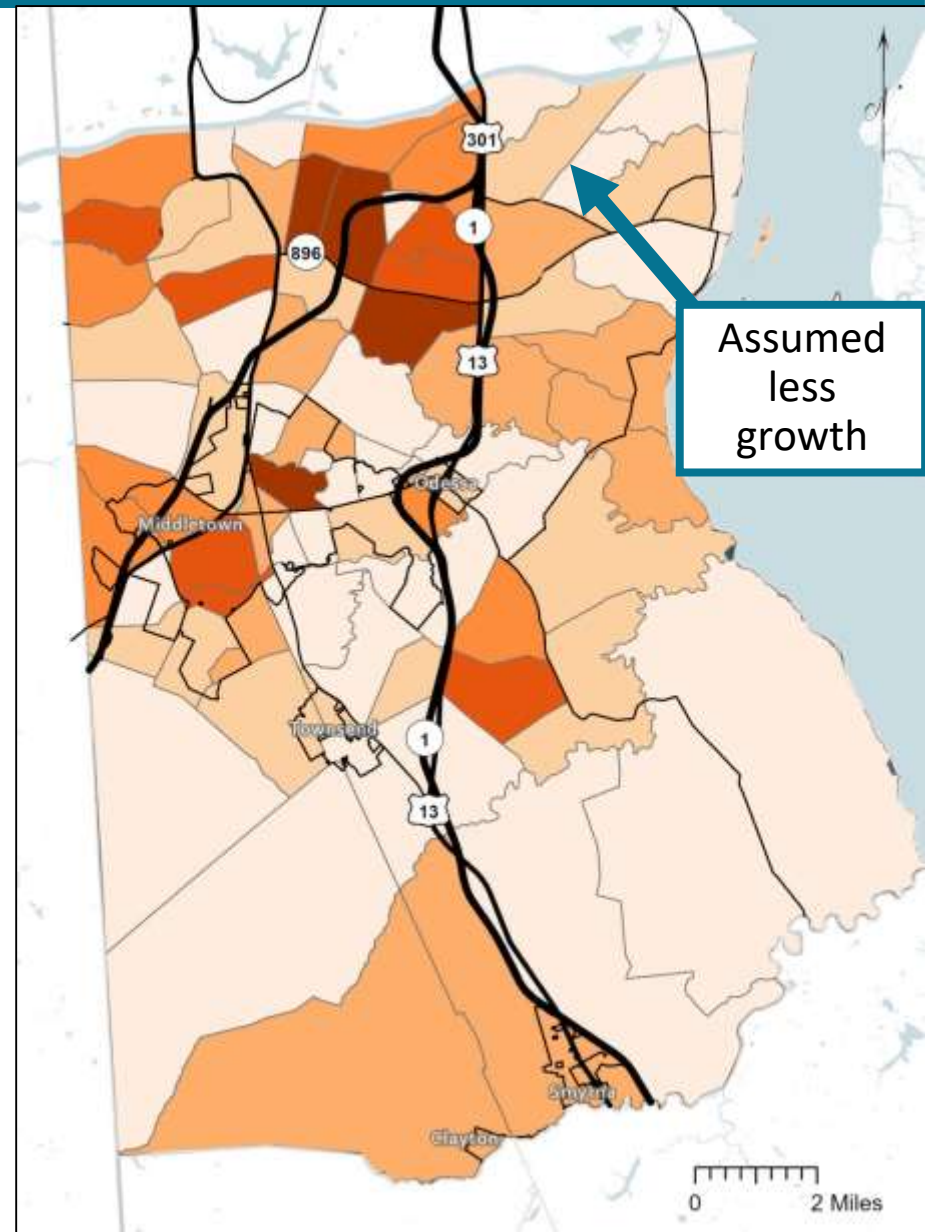
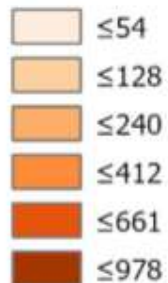


# Household Growth, 2012-2050

## Scenario 2: Planned Growth and Preservation

- Total of 11,100 households added over 30 years
- Delaware Population Consortium estimates

### 2015-2050 Household Change

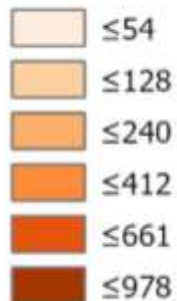


# Household Growth, 2012-2050

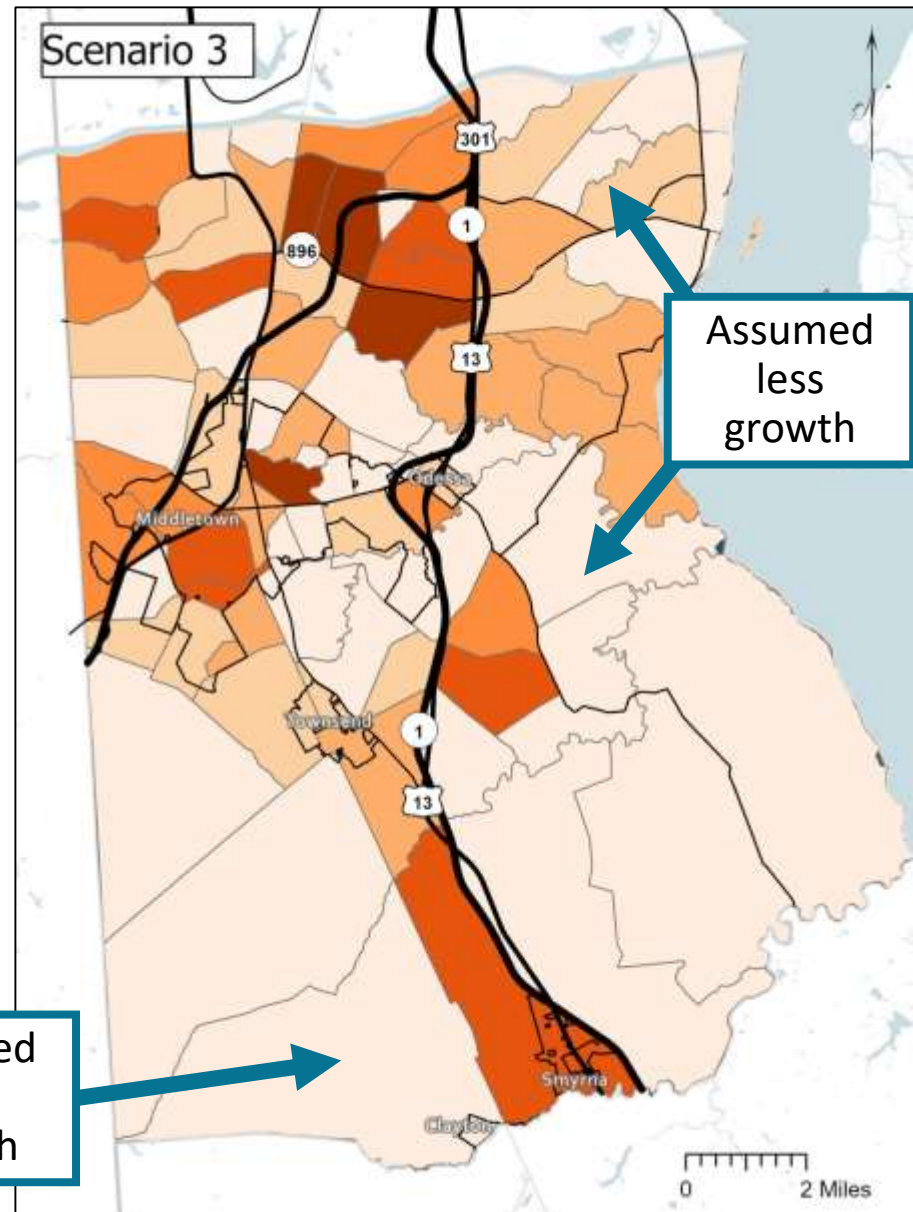
## Scenario 3: Town Infill and Preservation

- Total of 11,100 households added over 30 years
- per Delaware Population Consortium estimates

### 2015-2050 Household Change



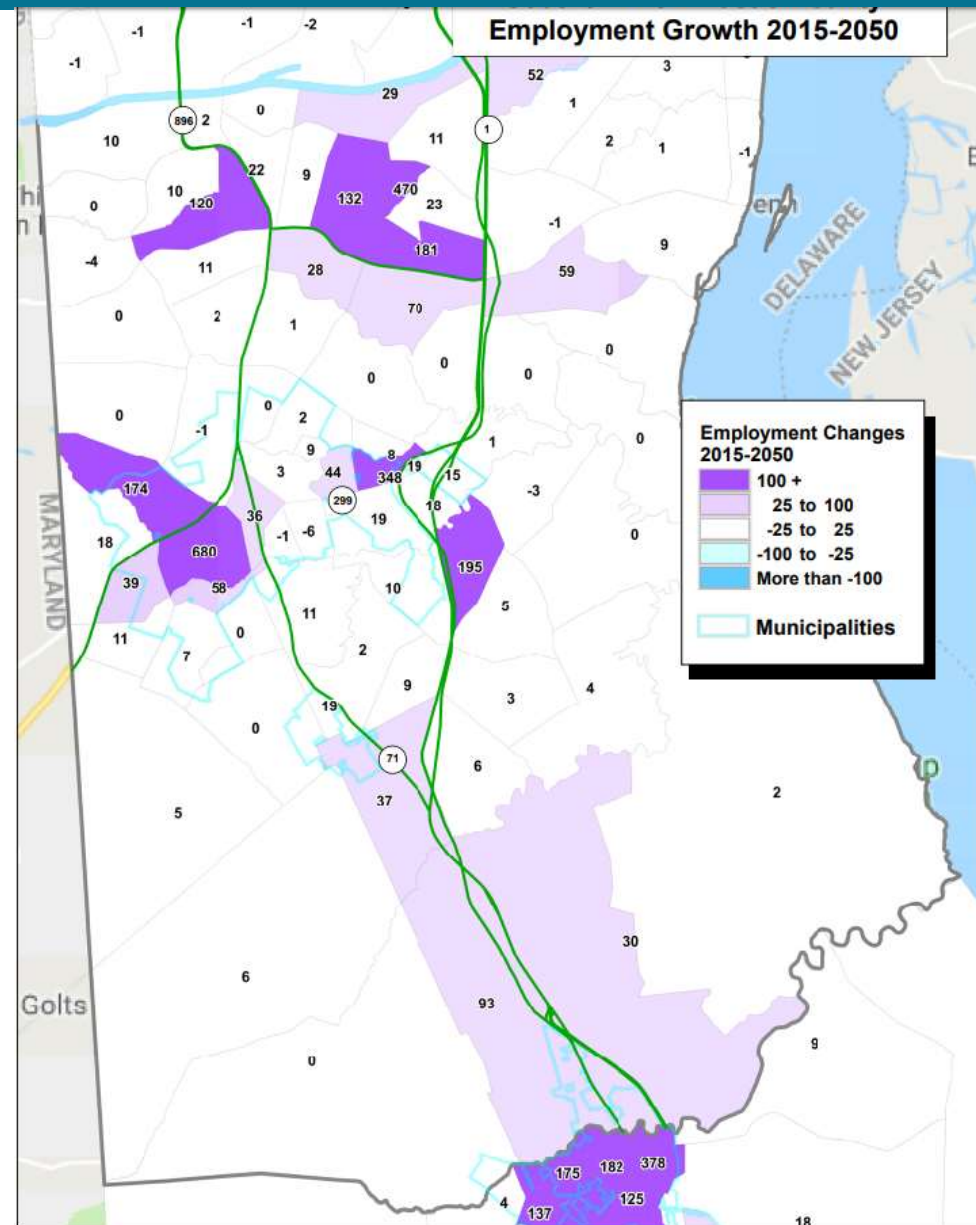
Assumed  
less  
growth



# Employment Change, 2015 -2050

Scenarios 1 and 2

**\*\*Scenario 3:** Assumes addition of roughly 2,500 jobs within Middletown's existing boundaries



# Sewer Service Area (Comprehensive Plan 2012)

Total sewer service area: 44,584 acres

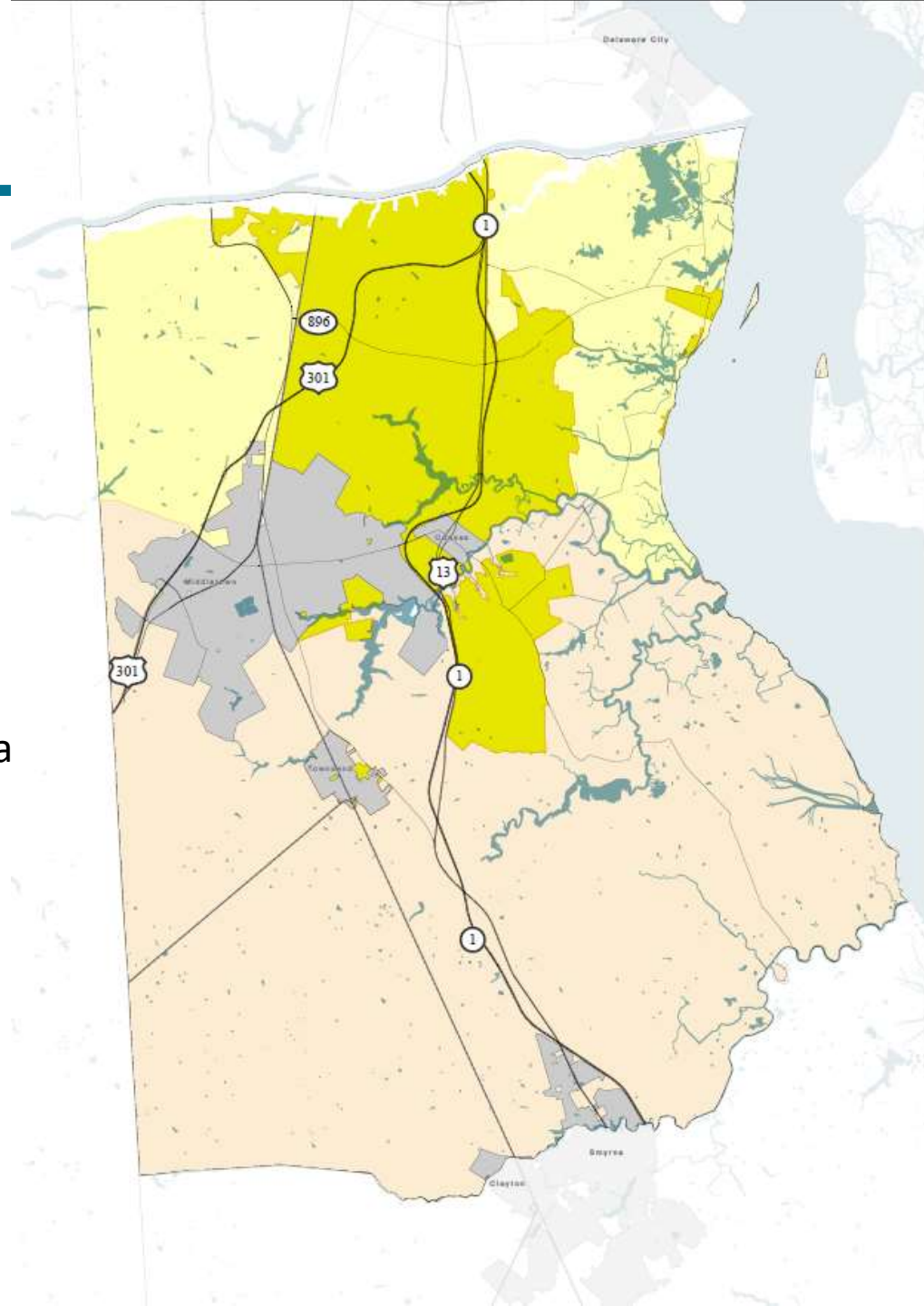
Total prime ag soils in sewer service area  
25,973 acres

## Map Key



Existing Sewered Area

2012 Comprehensive Plan  
Future Sewer Area

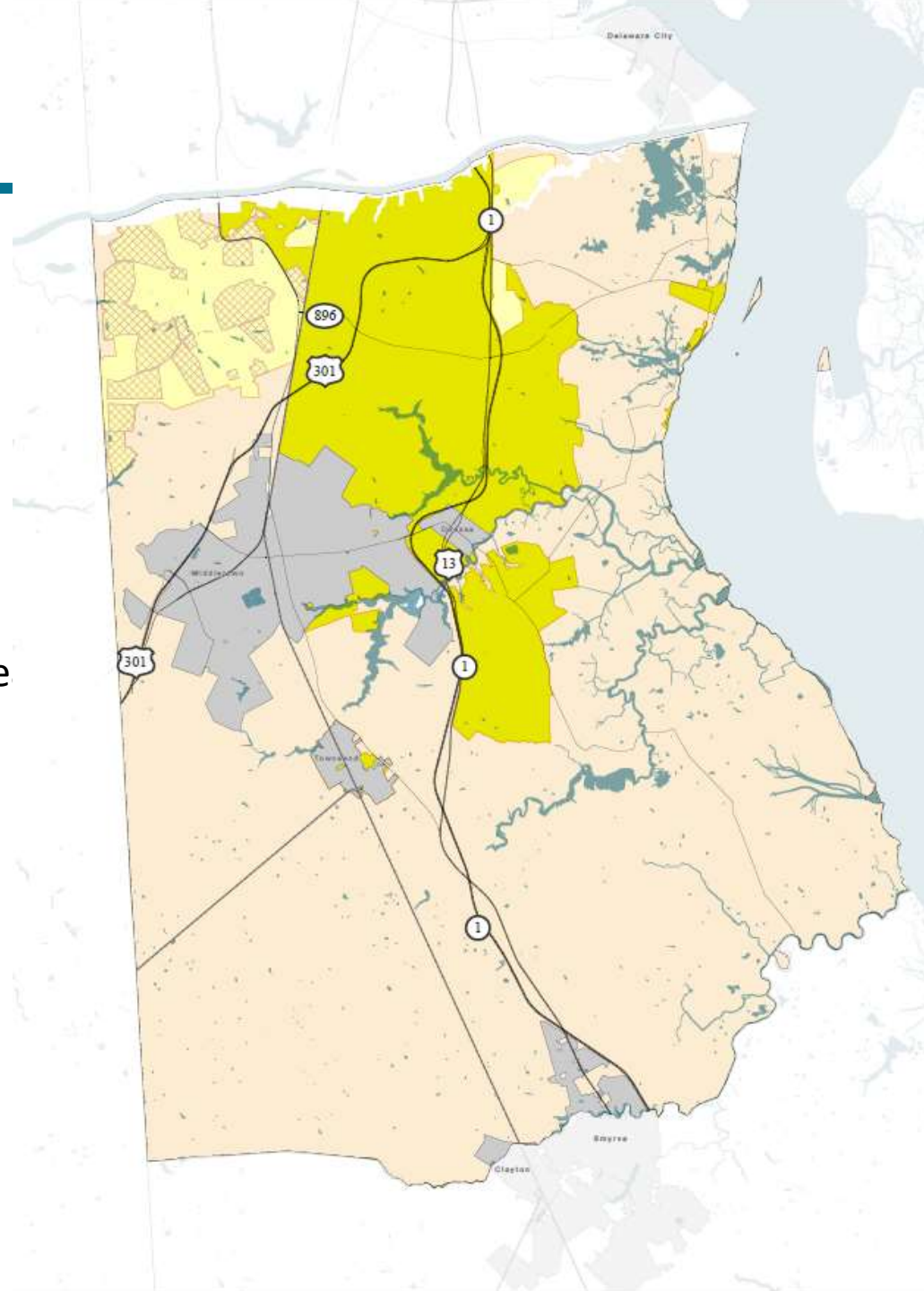


# Proposed Sewer Service Area (scenarios 2 & 3)

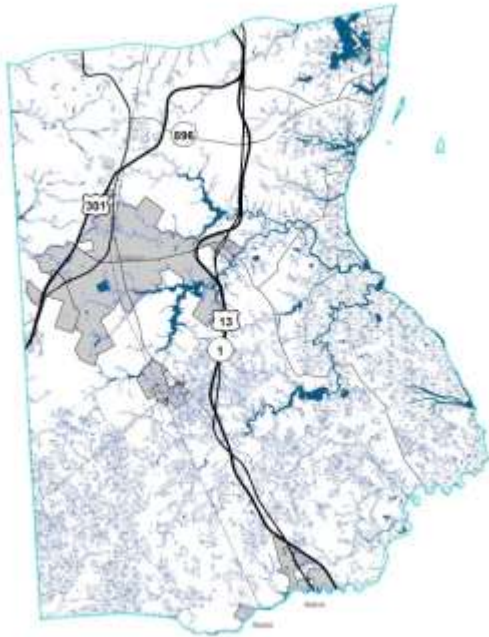
Total sewer service area: 28,408 acres

Total prime ag soils in sewer service are 18,822 acres

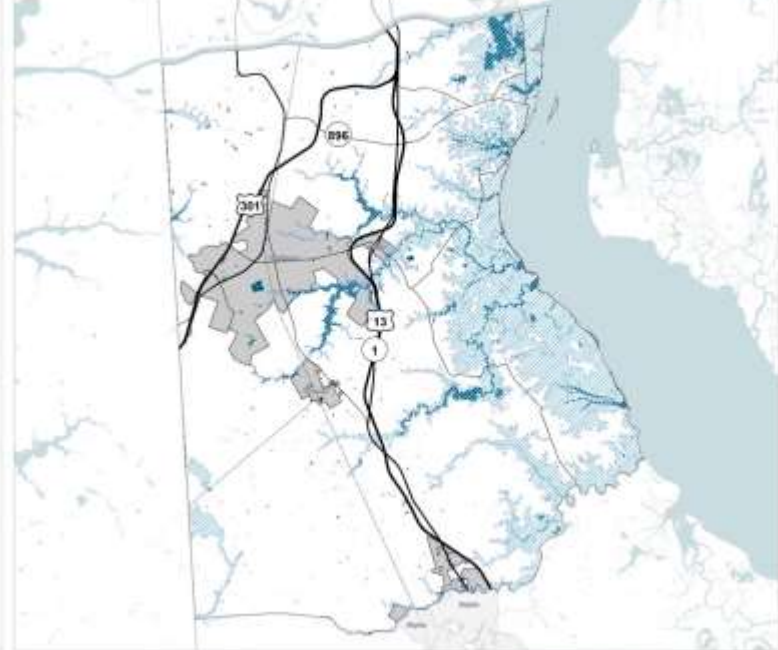
## Map Key



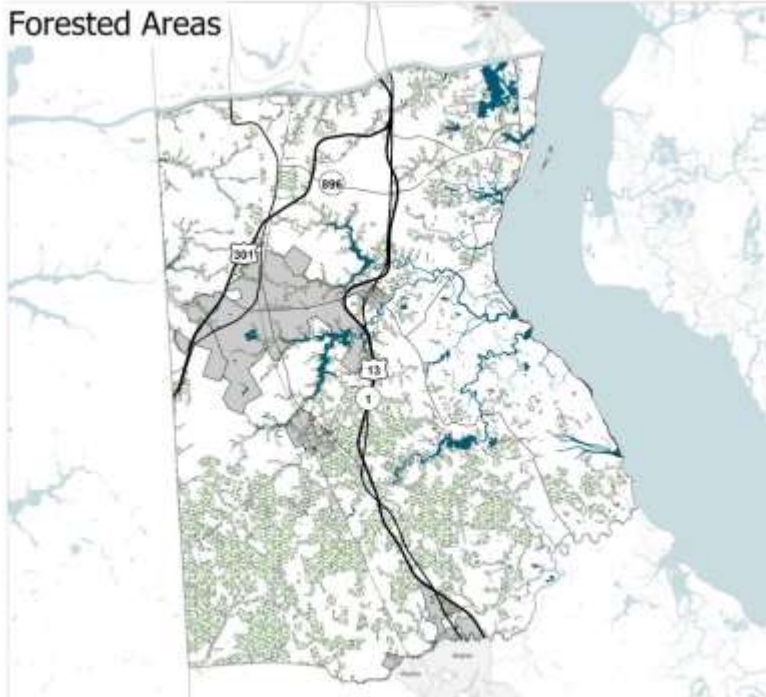
Wetlands



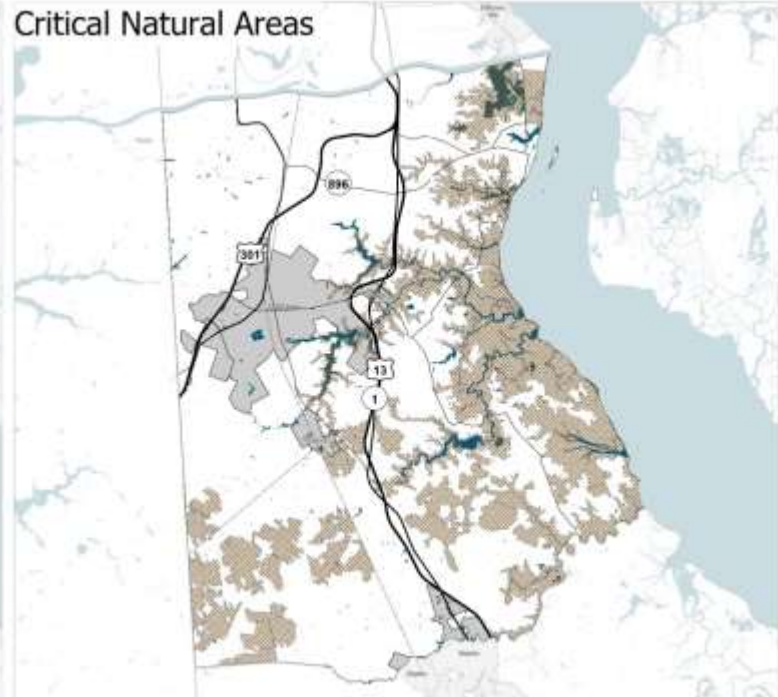
Flood Plains



Forested Areas

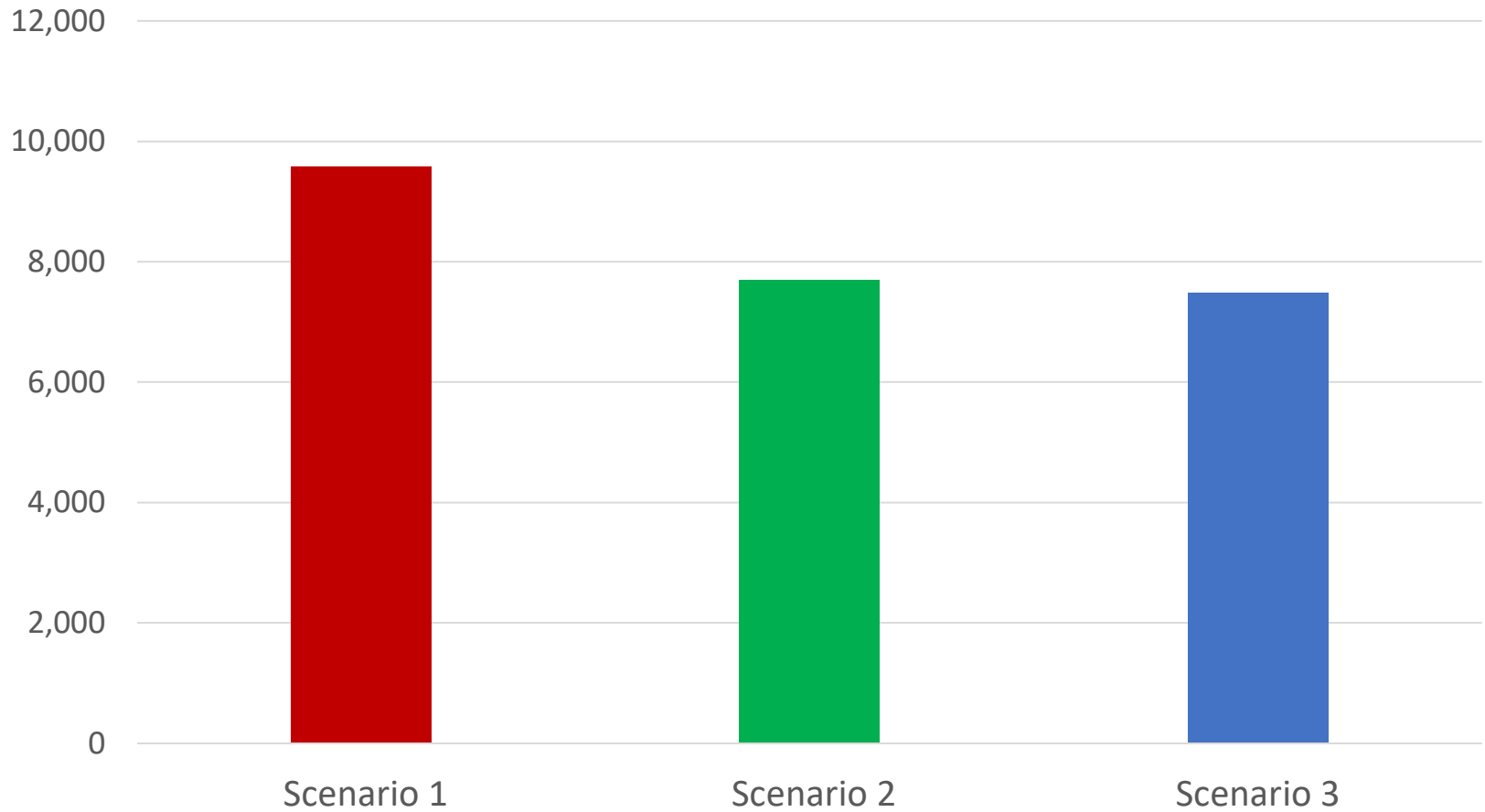


Critical Natural Areas



# Land Consumed

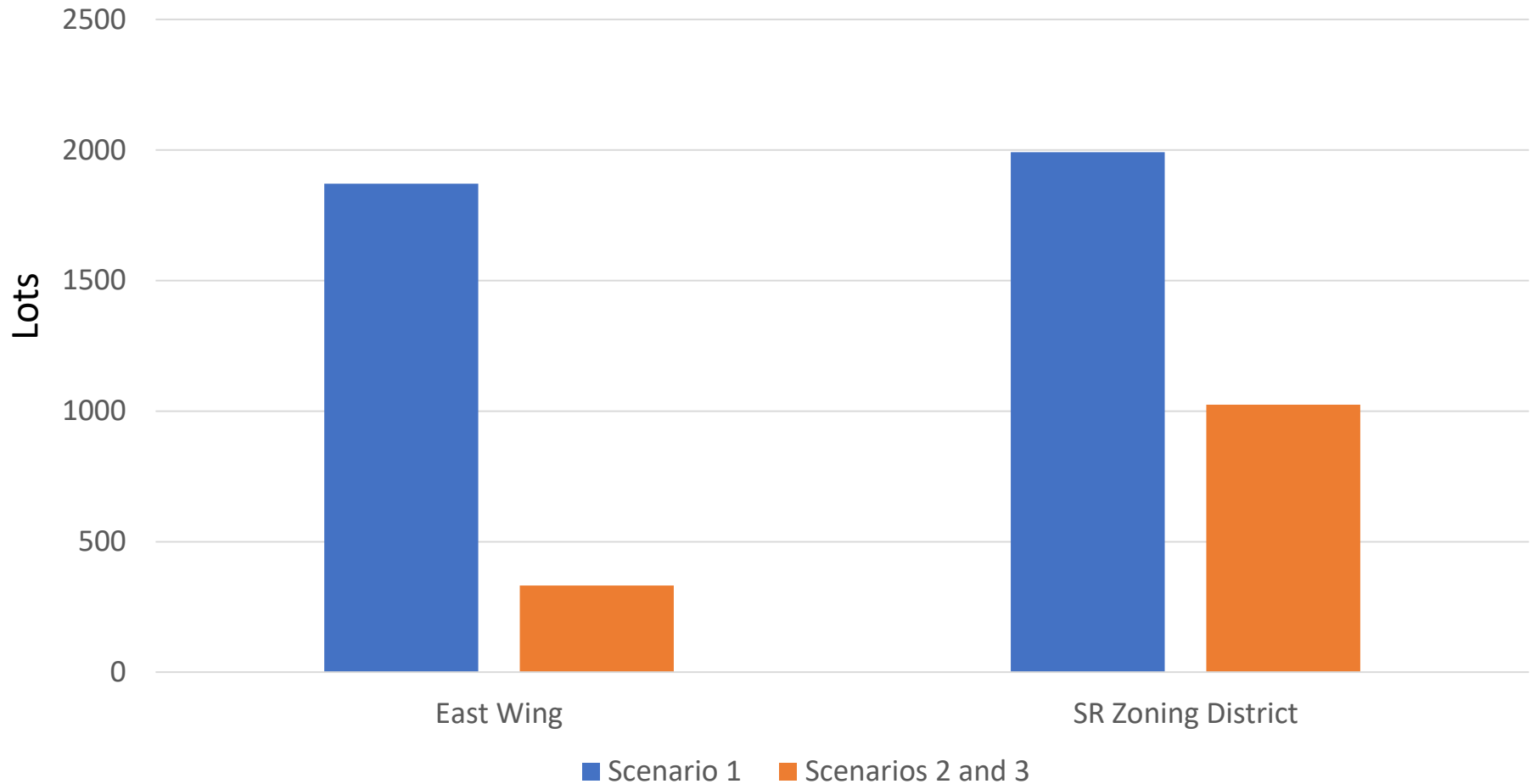
Total Acres of Land Consumed by 2050



\*\*Estimates are for unincorporated portions of the study area.

# Resource Preservation

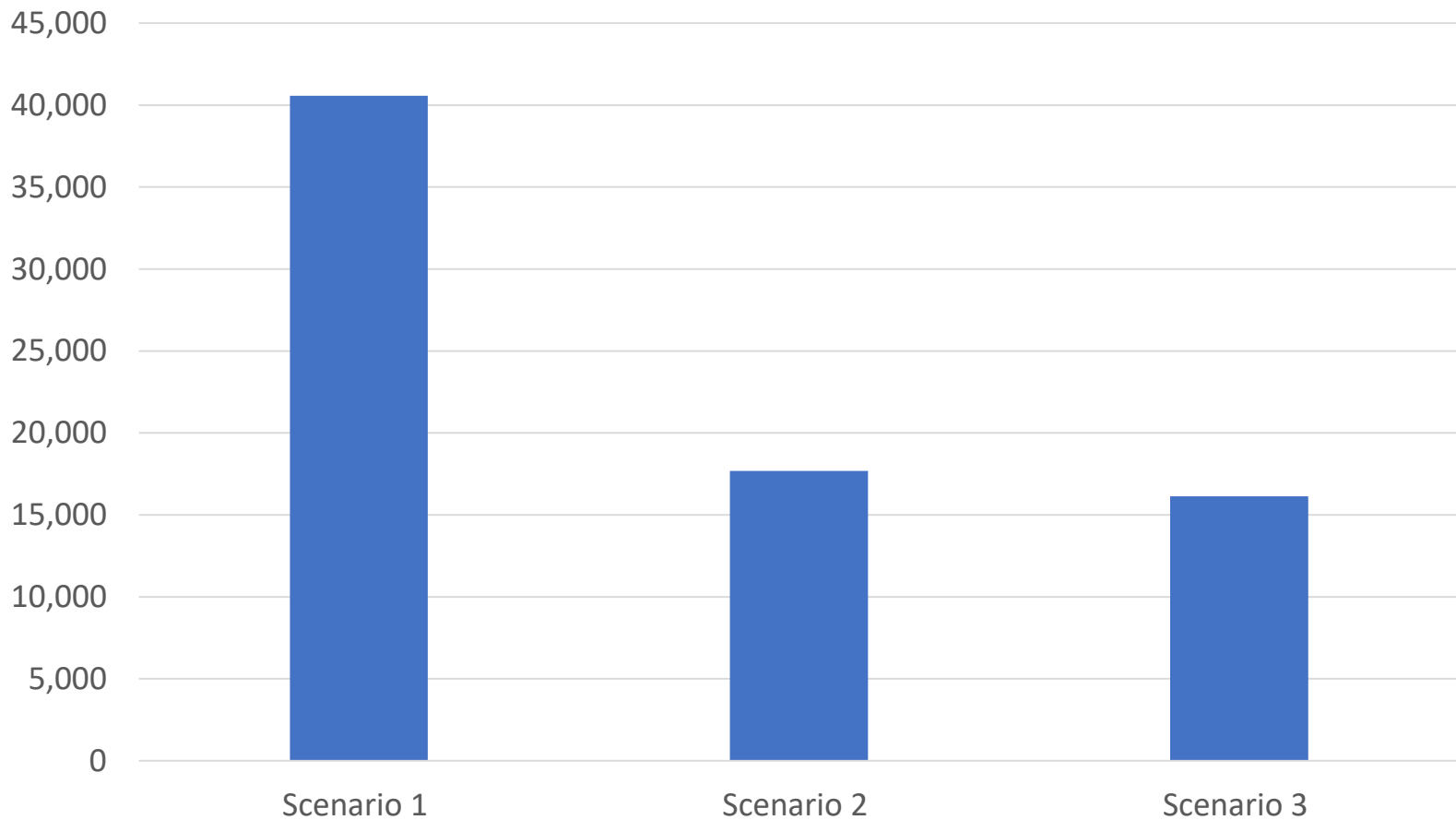
## Potential for New Residential Lots in Resource Areas



\*\*Estimates are for unincorporated portions of the study area.

# Sewer

Total Wastewater Nitrogen Loading Per Year  
(lbs of TN)

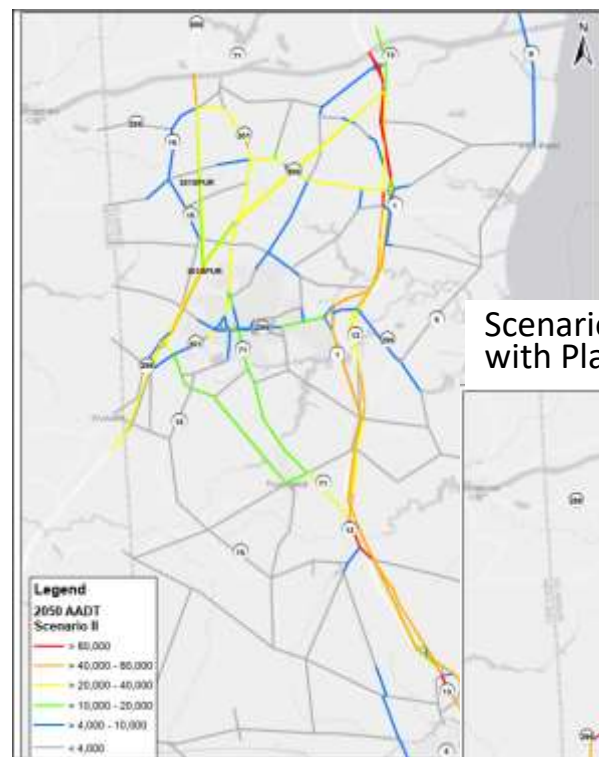


\*\*Estimates are for unincorporated portions of the study area.

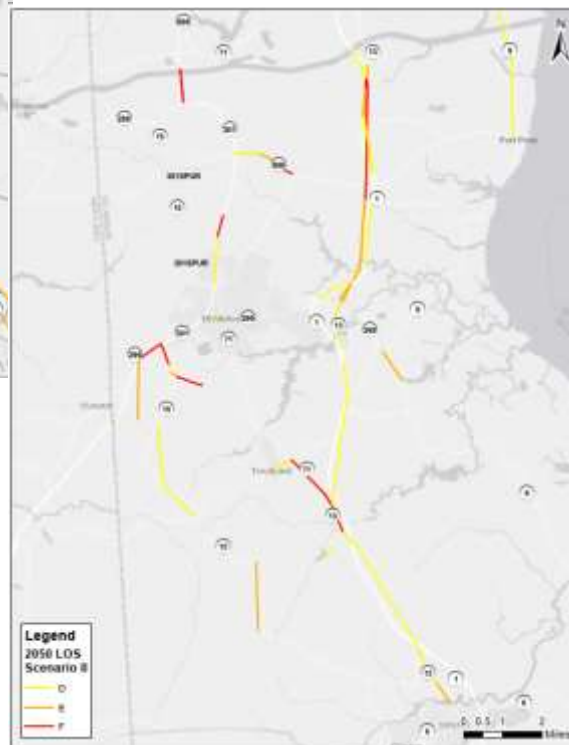


# Transportation

Scenario 2050 AADT



Scenario 2050 Levels of Service with Planned Road Improvements



- Travel demand modelling of roadways was performed for each scenario
- Results will be used to identify specific improvements that are not in current plans
- Preliminary results indicate no large difference between the scenarios in overall transportation results

# Preliminary Recommendations



# Quality of Life / Health

Where we are

How we get there



## Where we want to be:

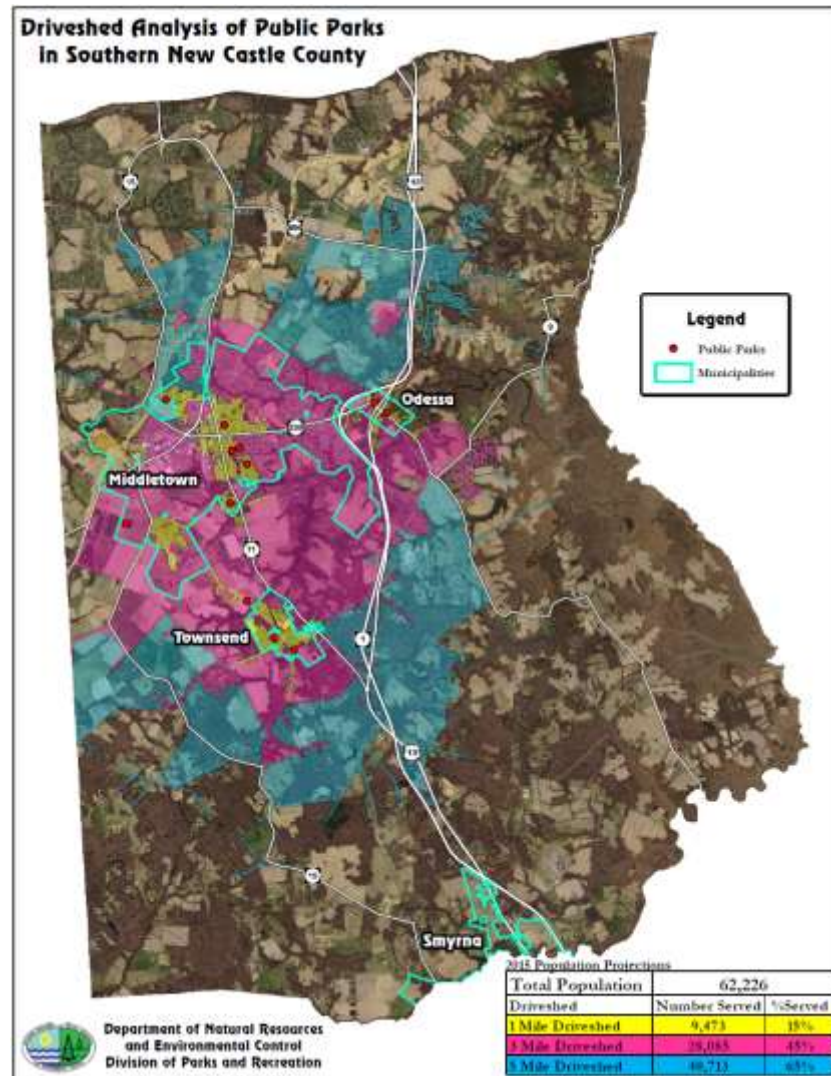
- Recreation for all ages: indoor and outdoor
- Access to quality healthcare
- Graduated care for aging population, including transportation
- Continued improvement of emergency services; types of equipment and response times
- More locally grown food



# Quality of Life / Health

## Where we are

- **Indoor and outdoor recreation for all ages**
  - Two parks within unincorporated SNCC.
  - Several parks within Middletown, Odessa, and Townsend.
  - Need for 8 more Neighborhood Parks and more than 1 additional District Park.\*
  - New 80-acre County park planned north of Middletown (near Marl Pit Rd and Shallcross Lake Rd.)
  - There are few indoor recreation facilities in SNCC.
- **Access to quality healthcare, including graduated care for an aging population**
  - Most healthcare facilities are in Middletown; households with seniors are located throughout SNCC.
- **Emergency services**
  - EMS centered mostly in towns; there are current plans for improving response times.
  - The former New Castle County Southern Patrol headquarters (Middletown) is being renovated to house County Paramedic Station #5.
- **Locally grown food**
  - One farmers' market in Middletown, but easy access to local ag areas.



\*According to New Castle County Long Range Park Acquisition and Development Plan from 2017



# Quality of Life / Health

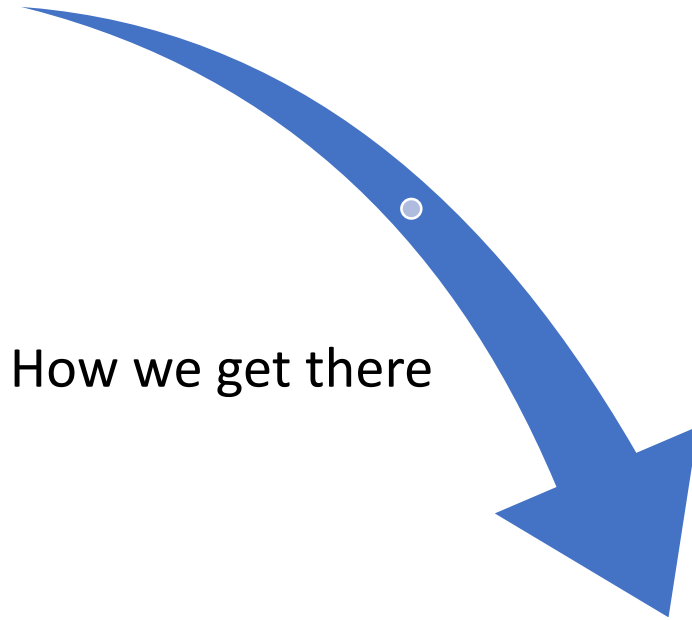
## Preliminary recommendations:

- Add new recreation facilities near new growth centers
  - Continue identifying underserved areas and seek additional parks and rec opportunities to reach desired service levels, while maintaining sustainability of existing facilities and programs
  - Work with Neighboring Residents of the County-owned Back Creek Park to Identify Potential Improvements
  - Consider Joint Location of Community Facilities for parks and recreation
  - Explore opportunities for increasing public access to hunting/fishing
- County should work with DNREC to explore possible passive recreational facilities east of Rt. 13
- Support senior center development, operations, and transportation options to senior centers
- Retain prime agricultural soils in proximity to centers of population
- Continue to preserve farmland and promote farm markets, CSA's and local food distribution



# Environment

Where we are



How we get there

## Where we want to be:

- Improve Air Quality
- Improve surface and groundwater quality
- Protect important, quality natural resources (soils, floodplains, wetlands, riparian areas, forests, and habitat) & high-quality open space
- Prepare for impacts of sea level rise
- Preserve farmland
- Enhance landscape, “greening”



# Environment

## Where we are:

### • Air and Water Quality

- NCC non-attainment for Ozone, high toxic air releases (EPA data)
- Approximately 4,600 individual residential wells; majority north of MOT
- Peak water demands can be met in existing service areas, but climate change poses unpredictability
- 40% of units are on septic, which contributes to high nitrogen loading
- Exceeding federal standards in streams and waterways

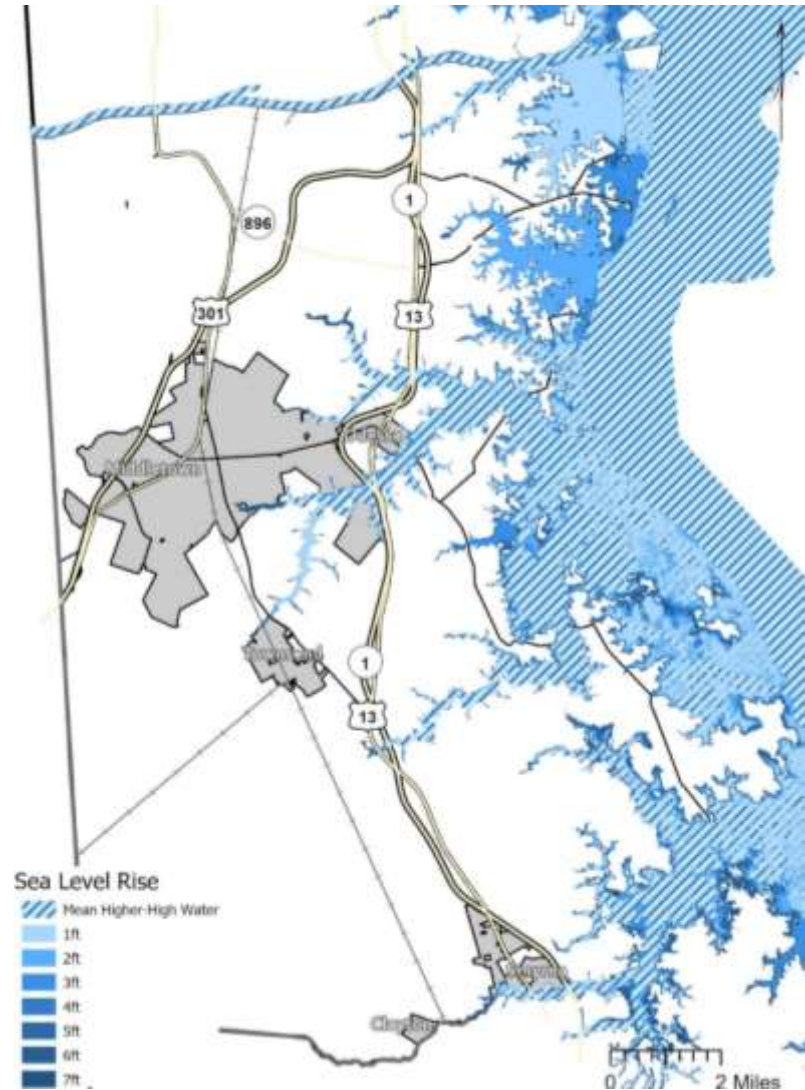
### • Sea Level Rise

### • Farmland preservation

- Total prime ag soils remaining in SNCC (i.e. not subdivided): 67,893 acres

### • Resource protection

- Approximately 6,000 acres of wetlands, 5,000 areas of natural areas, and 7,000 acres of floodplain would be impacted under current planning policies.
- Tree canopy cover ranges widely: 0% cover on farms and wetlands to > 40% in mature neighborhoods and > 70% in forests.



Source: Delaware Geologic Survey, Inundation Model (2017)  
<https://www.dgs.udel.edu/datasets/delaware-coastal-inundation-maps>



# Environment

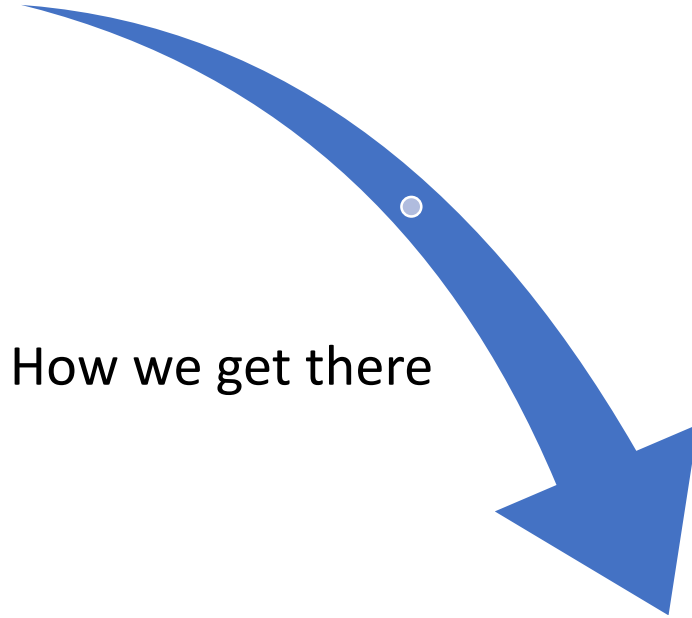
## **Preliminary recommendations:**

- Reduce percentage of new development on septic systems
- Update a natural areas inventory and develop a conservation strategy (coordinate with Land Preservation Task Force)
- Establish additional safeguards for WRPA's
- Update inventory to track natural resources and progress (e.g. tree canopy, habitat, CRA's/SRA's), including collaboration with DNREC, Delaware Forest Service and other partners
- Partner with HOAs to enhance landscapes
- Collaborate with DelDOT to review and revise design guidance and practices to achieve enhanced landscapes (e.g. stormwater infrastructure, development coordination manual, etc.)
- Encourage new development in sewer service areas and regulate septic use for low density development consistent with county septic policy
- Establish Priority protection areas strategy, including incentives, financing and regulations.
- Reduce amount of development in areas at risk for sea level rise impacts through 2100 (the year for which the DNREC model applies) through downzoning, transfer of development rights, and purchase of development rights
- Land development requirements for street trees and replacement of trees removed
- support for farmers by building on existing programs (e.g. PDR, TDR, young farmers, etc.), adding new incentives, and removing barriers to supplemental income (e.g. agritourism)



# Community Character

Where we are



How we get there

## **Where we want to be:**

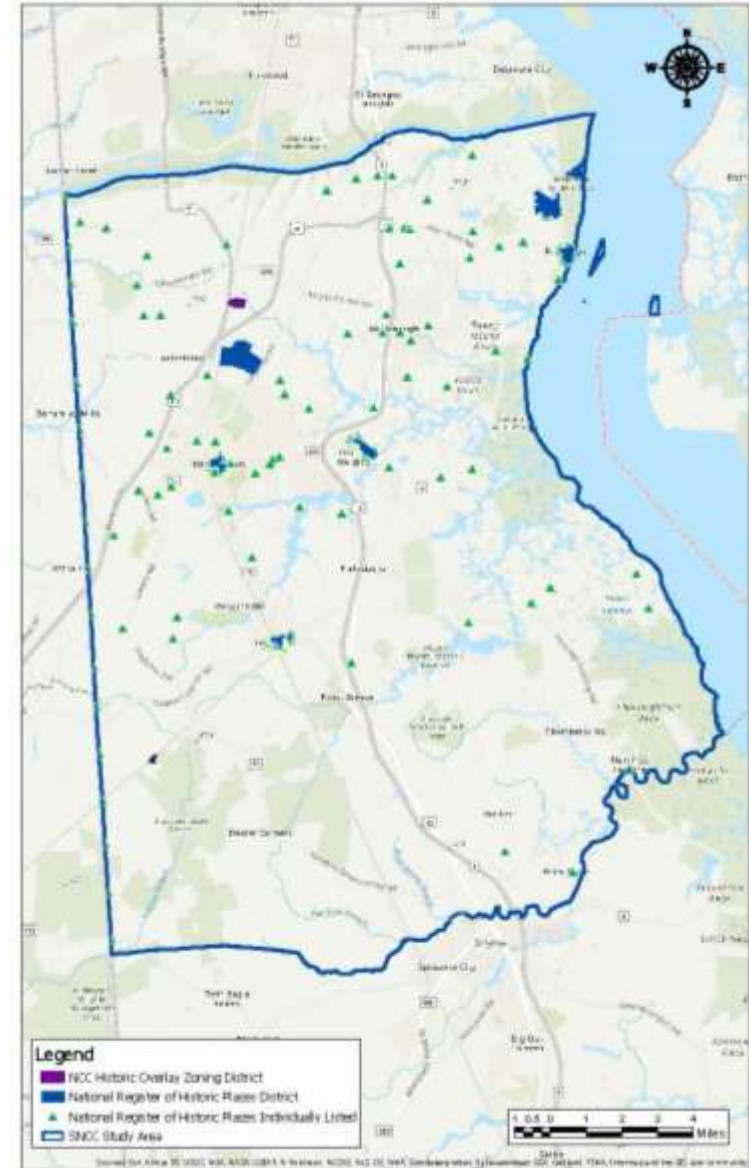
- Preservation of rural/small-town/historical character
- Denser, more walkable development with mixed use
- More opportunities for family-oriented cultural attractions, entertainment, recreation (museums, YMCA's, etc.)



# Community Character

## Where we are

- **Preservation of rural/small-town/historical character**
  - Few protected historic sites
  - Presence of scenic byways
  - Protected environmental and agricultural areas
- **Denser, more walkable development with mixed use**
  - Planned developments in Whitehall and Bayberry incorporate a mix of residential, recreational, and commercial uses, in a walkable setting, with a variety of densities.
- **More opportunities for family-oriented cultural attractions, entertainment, recreation**
  - Cultural and entertainment attractions available, but concentrated within and near Middletown.
  - A new 27,000 square foot County library and innovation center will be constructed at the intersection of Main Street and Catherine Street in Middletown.





# Community Character

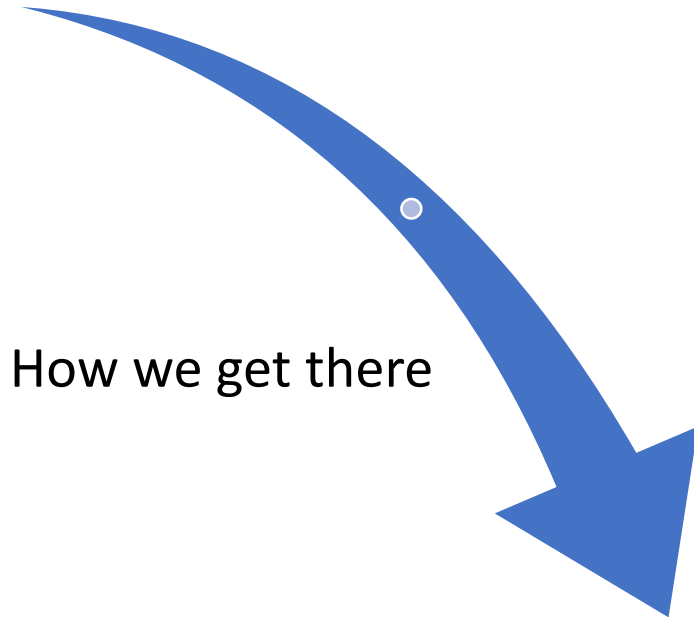
## Preliminary recommendations:

- Encourage mixed-use development through mechanisms such as zoning, property tax abatement incentives, and bond financing for infrastructure that supports mixed use
- Encourage planned growth by reducing area planned for future sewer service.
- Encourage the creation of relatively dense village centers in unincorporated areas, to allow centralized population that can support more cultural attractions, while preserving the small-town/rural/historic character of other areas.
- Build on existing assets and features including: byways, historic districts, trails and pathways, civic spaces, and non-profits



# Transportation

Where we are



How we get there

## **Where we want to be:**

- Expanded public transportation
- Congestion management in Middletown
- Better east-west connections in and around Middletown
- More/safer walking and biking paths/connections



# Transportation

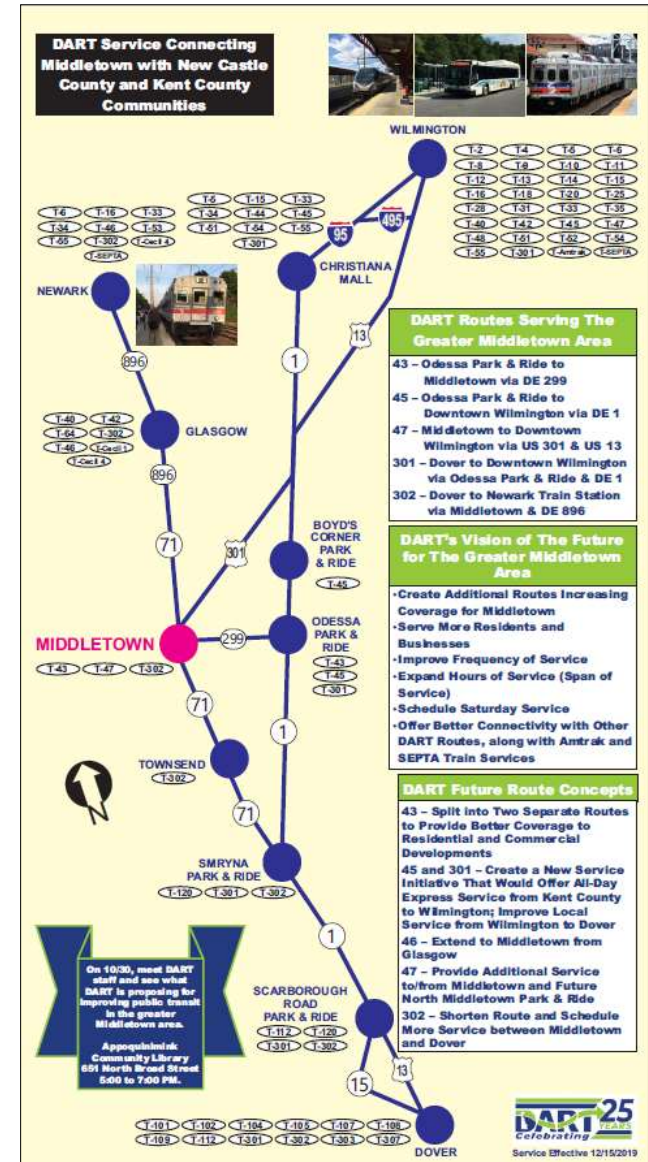
## Where we are

### • Public transportation

- Bus service on five routes is relatively infrequent and is focused toward Wilmington, Newark, and Dover
- DTC is currently planning for expanded service to Middletown and improved bus routes to better serve demand

### • Better walking and bicycling

- Pedestrian networks are disconnected and disjointed
- Limited trail segments and on-road bicycle facilities are disconnected
- A New Castle County bike plan is under development





# Transportation

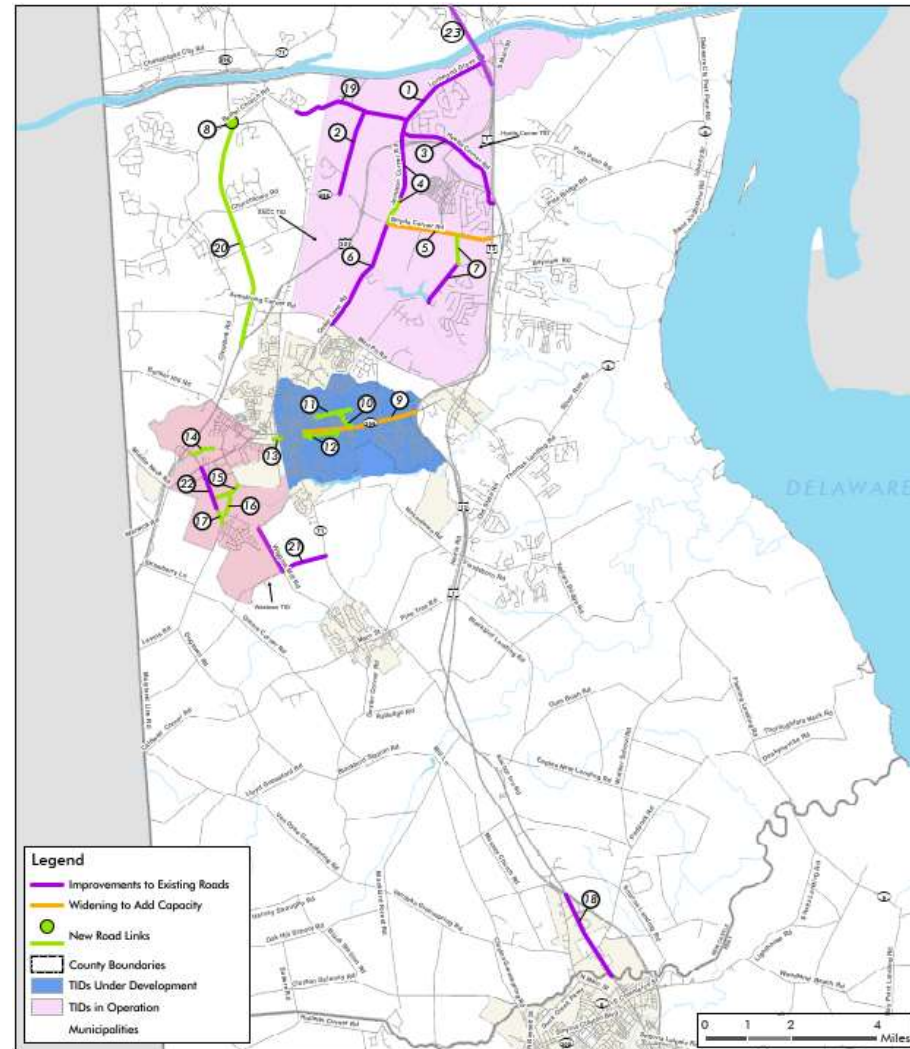
## Where we are

- **Congestion management**

- SR 299, the primary east-west route through Middletown, is congested
- Road improvements to address existing problems and handle future traffic have been planned by WILMAPCO and DeIDOT
- Developers in the Transportation Improvement Districts shown on this map will contribute toward improvements in those areas.

- **Better east-west connections**

- The road improvements mentioned above include specific east-west connections:
  - Widening of SR 299
  - Eastern extension of Lake Street
  - Eastern extension of Green Street
  - Western extension of Green Street





# Transportation

## **Preliminary recommendations:**

- Support DART proposals to expand transit service, with continued focus on new and expanded service as more development occurs.
- To the extent the market allows, expand rideshare and alternative ridesharing network.
- Optimize traffic signal timing on a regular basis.
- Proceed with design and construction of road improvements identified in DeIDOT's Capital Transportation Program, WILMAPCO's Regional Transportation Plan, and local Transportation Improvement Districts.
- Adopt New Castle County Bicycle Plan and implement proposed network.
- Increase number of miles of shared-use trails and pathways.
- Provide sidewalk connections to schools, libraries, retail establishments, and parks.
- Provide safe and comfortable bicycle routes within close proximity of those destinations.

**Additional transportation modeling will be completed this winter to identify whether additional road improvements are needed to accommodate proposed development.**



# Economy/Jobs

Where we are

How we get there



## Where we want to be:

- More local, diverse job centers, facilitating shorter commutes
- Support small local businesses
- Diversification of industries
- Higher income jobs
- Living wage/trade/union jobs with retirement benefits
- Access to more training and education opportunities

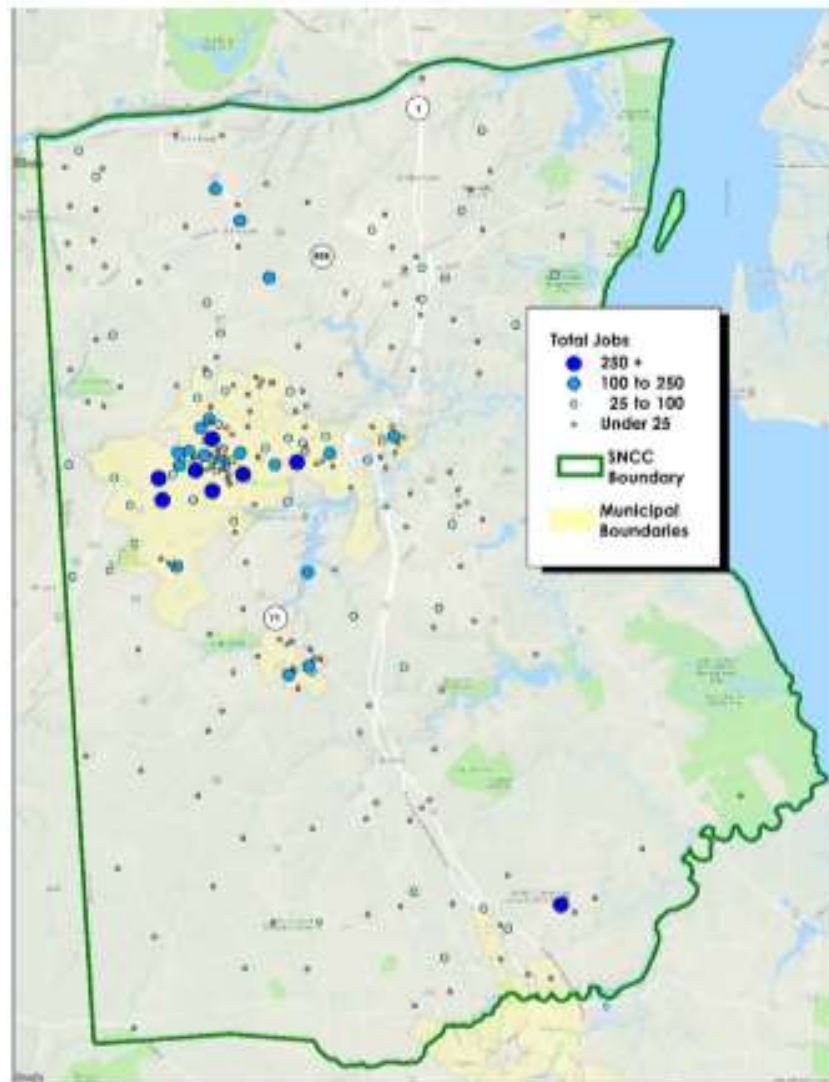


# Economy/Jobs

## Where we are:

- The Number of jobs in SNCC increased substantially between 2005 and 2015 with continued growth forecast.
- Today over half of SNCC jobs are located in Middletown.
- Approximately 85% of workers who live in SNCC drive alone out of SNCC to their jobs.
- Four industry sectors account for 55% of jobs in SNCC – Retail, Construction, Food Service and Education.
- 75% of SNCC firms have less than 10 employees.
- Earnings have improved for jobs in SNCC, yet over 25% of SNCC jobs have earning of less than \$1,250 per month.

## Southern NCC Employment Locations



(Source: LEHD OnTheMap)



# Economy/Jobs

## Preliminary recommendations:

- Adopt a Regulatory Framework that supports mixed-use centers and other place-based strategies
- Leverage NCCInnovates Program, Delaware Edge Grant, DDD program to support retention, recruitment, and expansion of businesses to SNCC Towns and Centers
- Perform Economic Analysis to Identify SNCC Industry Clusters and Opportunities
- Collaborate with towns to develop place-based approaches to economic development, building on community assets (e.g. local food, agritourism, strong schools, green economy, etc.) and infill
- Work with Small Business Administration to Target SNCC Businesses for Credit and Education Programs
- Establish a Job Training Center in Middletown

**Your ideas**

# How we get there

Overarching  
Preliminary  
Recommendations



Scenarios

1: Business as  
Usual

2: Planned  
Growth and  
Preservation

3: Town Infill  
and  
Preservation

# Ask questions→Discuss→Comment

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For consideration:

- Overarching elements for feedback
  - Transit
  - Non-motorized (trails/pathways)
  - Parks/recreation
- Scenario-based elements
  - Preservation areas
  - Environmental
  - Focused development areas (village centers and local hubs)
  - General transportation
- Broad policy recommendations
  - Economic Development
  - Housing
  - Other services (e.g. emergency, etc.)

# Upcoming

## New County facilities coming:

- **Park**
  - 1<sup>st</sup> community meeting Oct. 2019
  - Anticipated opening: 2021
- **Library**
  - 3rd community meeting Oct./Nov. 2019
  - The ~ 25,000 sq. ft. historic facility to open in 2021
- **Paramedic station**
  - Renovation of former southern patrol headquarters on Broad Street
  - Over 9,000 sq. ft.



## Delaware Transit Corp. workshop

- **October 30, 2019 @ Appoquinimink Library**

We Are  
Here

Fall 2019 / Winter 2020

Scenario Analysis

Draft Plan

Detailed Transportation  
Analysis and Final Plan

### **Next Steps:**

- Storymap / online feedback through October 18
- Advisory committee meets to review, October 23
- Rough draft plan, November 1
- Public workshop to review draft plan, early 2020
- Plan complete, spring of 2020

Storymap:

<https://arcg.is/LeSD8>



**Thank You!**