

Municipal Comprehensive Land Use Plan Annual Report

Name of Municipality: Town of Dewey Beach

Date of Plan Certification: September 14, 2018 **Date of Report:** June 25, 2021

In accordance with 22 Del. C. §702 (g) Municipalities shall provide to the Office of State Planning Coordination a report describing implementation of their comprehensive plan and identifying development issues, trends* or conditions since the plan was last adopted or amended. The report shall be due annually no later than July 1.

*Please note that the development trends data is collected each year to further supplement this requirement. Please contact the Office of State Planning Coordination with questions regarding development trends or this annual report.

1. Please review the recommendations, goals and implementation items within your comprehensive plan and Please indicate which items are complete, underway, or not yet started. Also, please include any other comments you may wish to add.

N – Not yet started

U – Underway

C – Complete

O – Ongoing effort

The Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Dewey Beach has 89 specific recommendations. A total of 46 have not yet started, and the remainder are underway, completed and/or has ongoing efforts.

Demographics and Population				
<u>Goal Statement</u>				
<i>... identify and address the needs of the residents, property owners, business owners, and visitors</i>				
N	U	C	O	<u>Plan Objectives</u>
X				<i>...equitably address the needs of residents, business and property owners, and visitors when formulating public policy and strategic planning</i> -Develop and implement a strategy for collecting and analyzing comprehensive data and information regarding total population, including year-round residents, seasonal and occasional residents, business owners, and visitors

Housing <u>Goal statement</u> <i>... encourage the development and improvement of residential land in an appropriate and responsible manner that balances the need to protect the value of residential property and preserve community resources</i>				
N	U	C	O	<u>Plan Objectives</u>
		X		<i>...establishing a zoning code that permits residential re-development and encourages rehabilitation of aging housing, including non-conforming, structures to preserve the existing housing stock while protecting and preserving the natural environment</i>
X				- Work to identify and define the character of those residential communities within each zoning district and establish zoning and other municipal code modifications that will allow architecturally interesting design options while preserving those elements of the built environment that support the existing sense of community
X				- Consider developing policies and procedures for clearly informing appraisers, real estate agents, and other stakeholders of existing conditions, constraints, and non-conformance issues regarding homes in Dewey Beach - Consider the development and implementation of a GIS-based system for tracking code violations, licenses, permits, and other housing data.
				<i>...improve housing opportunities for low- and moderate-income persons, particularly those in the Town's local workforce.</i>
X				- Collect available data to analyze the specific needs for affordable housing in the Town.
X				- Seek funding and partnerships with the State and non-profit housing agencies to improve housing conditions related to the aging housing stock of low-income persons.
X				- Consider policy initiatives to circumvent the displacement of lower income residents, particularly those in the Town's local workforce.
Land Use and Annexation <u>Goal Statement</u> <i>... pursue a strategy of urban growth and redevelopment that protects the town's resources and ensures its economic vitality while accurately defining the community</i>				
N	U	C	O	<u>Plan Objectives</u>
				<i>...ensure future buildings are properly proportioned and fit within the existing character of the Town</i>

X		X		- Review and consider revising bulk standards to preclude overbuilt buildings - Consider introducing select NR zoning requirements into the RR zoning district - Consider introducing building mass and density management across all three resort business districts - Consider revised requirements for building construction to ensure maximum protection from flooding (i.e. building elevation and construction techniques and materials)
		X		
			X	
X				<i>...ensure the impacts of future development is comprehensively evaluated and potential impacts are properly mitigated</i> - Consider reviewing and revising its Land Development Ordinance to improve the approval process to allow earlier input from outside agencies
X				<i>...analyze annexation within the context of existing land use and development policies, making necessary changes to maintain consistency with the values of the Town regarding density, scale, ambiance, and anticipated future needs</i> - Review the possibility of conducting an annexation study of all adjacent developed areas, including but not limited to Bay Vista, Seabreeze, Pine Bay, and the "Forgotten Mile.", if a funding mechanism has been determined to support the study - Consider working with the state of Delaware to reexamine and revise its municipal charter, if determined feasible, to include a suitable area of the Rehoboth Bay as part of the official municipal jurisdiction - Consider the appropriateness of and developing a multi-phased annexation approach and plan - Consider budgetary strategies that could be implemented to accommodate capital and operating costs for annexation in a fiscally responsible manner - Consider determining the appropriate re-zoning of proposed annexed areas to accommodate anticipated growth. Consider permitting mixed-use structures as is currently permitted in the Resort Business - RB Zoning District
X				
X				
X				
X				

			X	<i>...if feasible and when feasible, redevelop available, underutilized, and/or blighted parcels with a variety of uses that are compatible with surrounding uses in terms of scale, character, use, and density</i> - Identify priority parcels that are viable for redevelopment and that will support the Town's economic viability by contributing to the tax base - Consider a redevelopment policy that will assist in the accommodation of the Town's current and future affordable housing needs - Consider providing adequate design standards, with appropriate flexibility, that enhance the visual environment and emphasize a distinctive sense of place - Consider evaluating the adequacy of existing and future needs of infrastructure and open space in targeted redevelopment areas
X				
X				
X				

Transportation Goal Statement <i>... preserve the accessibility of all parts of the community by appropriate modes of transportation while enhancing the safety of residents, property owners, business owners, and visitors</i>				
N	U	C	O	<u>Plan Objectives</u>
			X	<i>...adopt policies and projects to keep Coastal Highway as a safe, enjoyable way to get around Dewey Beach</i> - Work with all entities, including DelDOT and Delmarva Power, to improve the efficiency and safety of the Route 1 transportation corridor
			X	<i>...enhance the efficiency of motor vehicle travel, particularly during the peak season</i> - Work with DelDOT to address seasonal peak-hour congestion - Work with DelDOT to re-examine and coordinate traffic signal timing along SR-1 - Work with DelDOT to improve truck traffic circulation, loading zones, and to eliminate conflict- points between pedestrian and trucks
			X	
			X	

			X	<i>...develop a coordinated pedestrian and bicycle network that is safe, accessible, convenient, and provides intermodal connections</i> - Work with DelDOT to identify funding to upgrade all pedestrian facilities to ADA-standards through major projects and regular roadway maintenance - Connect safe and adequate sidewalks with public transit facilities, as well as recreational, historic, and cultural resources in Town - Consider providing a pedestrian way-finding system, a navigational guide with maps and signs, to assist pedestrians in reaching key points throughout Dewey Beach - Consider revising its development regulations for non-residential developments to require off-street loading areas and increased setbacks to accommodate sidewalks and adequate buffering between the roadway - Consider investigating potential changes to loading and unloading regulations
X				
X				
X				
X				
			X	<i>...develop a coordinated bicycle network that is safe, accessible, convenient, and provides intermodal connections</i> - Work with DelDOT to provide safely designed, well-marked, and maintained on- and off-street bicycle routes with appropriate signage - Consider providing adequate and secure bicycle parking at key destinations (i.e. Town Hall) - Continue incorporating bicycle elements into planning activities and development (i.e. bike parking requirements for new/ re-development)
X				
X				
			X	<i>...educate Dewey Beach residents and visitors on safe walking, bicycling, and scooting techniques and motor vehicle operations</i> - Work with DelDOT to educate motorists and bicyclists regarding traffic laws related to sharing the road with appropriate signage - Continue to work with DelDOT to expand bike safety checkpoints and to provide educational messaging that emphasizes pedestrian and bicycle safety and laws
X				

				<i>...develop a comprehensive parking strategy to address parking issues, specifically in the Resort Business Districts</i> - Pursue funding for a comprehensive parking study for the Town - Consider increasing parking capacity in the form of a structured garage, more effective use of the public rights-of-way, or other means and pursue required funding as opportunities become available
X				
X				

Community Services and Facilities Goal Statement <i>... maximize the effectiveness and equitable availability of public services and facilities for residents, property owners, business owners, and visitors while maintaining the existing funding strategies</i>				
N	U	C	O	Plan Objectives
			X	<i>...enhance public safety through preventive and responsive approaches of law enforcement and emergency response units</i> - Expand and continue training, so officers are effective and proactive when interacting with a wide range of beach visitors with various backgrounds - Continuously monitor best practices in community policing to help address all forms of interaction between the police department and residents and visitors - Pursue resources for upgrading law enforcement holding facilities needed to process arrests
	X		X	
				<i>...utilize environmental design techniques as a method to enhance safety and promote activities that strengthen community cohesion</i> - Pursue funding to improve lighting in key areas to discourage illicit and unwanted activities - Pursue funding to install more surveillance cameras in key locations - Encourage neighbors to work together through a Neighborhood Watch Network
X				
X				

	X		X	<i>...maintain a safe and pleasant public realm for all residents and visitors</i> - Continue to revisit and refine local ordinances that govern disorderly and unkempt residential uses - Work with the business and residential community to reduce noise and disorderly behaviors - Continue to enforce noise code regulation to protect a peaceful and tranquil community
X			X	<i>...strengthen code enforcement to protect public well-being</i> - Continue technological solutions that would help improve code enforcement efficiency, such as an upgraded tracking system - Provide educational resources to homeowners and landlords to assist them with their property maintenance - Research programs that can be initiated by the Town that provide incentives for code compliance for rental properties, such as a "Good Landlord Program" or similar program
			X	<i>...ensure the Town's facilities, including Town Hall, effectively support operations and services recognized as efficient and effective in meeting the needs of its vibrant and evolving community</i> - Evaluate space needs of the Town to initiate plans to acquire, sell, or modify any and all facilities as required for normal and emergency operations over the coming decade, and beyond
			X	<i>...ensure the Town's emergency response services operate effectively and efficiently to meet the needs of its vibrant and evolving community</i> - Evaluate the financial feasibility to expand the Dewey Beach Police Department to ensure that its facilities are adequate to keep pace with normal and emergency operations
Natural Resources <u>Goal Statement</u> <i>... preserve, protect, and rehabilitate the identified natural resource in the region in cooperation with other local governments and the state of DE</i>				
N	U	C	O	<u>Plan Objectives</u>

				<i>...establish Dewey Beach as a world-renowned Mid-Atlantic beach destination with pristine sand, world class lifeguards and beach patrol, and exceptional water quality</i>
			X	- Maintain current open space, recreational resources, including marinas and other bayside amenities
			X	- Continue efforts to improve water quality through nutrient reduction
			X	- Ensure that any bayside redevelopment is consistent with protections for the natural environment.

Infrastructure

Goal Statement

... provide the Town an opportunity to consider creating a new funding stream that would be directed towards strengthening the aging infrastructure

N	U	C	O	<u>Plan Objectives</u>
				<i>...evaluate and provide a stormwater drainage system that reduces flood damage to properties due to excessive rainfall and maximizes the prompt removal of flood waters due to flooding, while contributing to the beauty of the Town's natural environment</i>
			X	- Consider negotiating and/or renegotiating appropriate Memoranda of Understanding with DelDOT and/or other State agencies for the routine inspection of, and repair, maintenance, and/or upgrading of the Town's stormwater drainage infrastructure
X				- Evaluate the feasibility of a stormwater fee structure that could be used to maintain, operate, and enhance the current aging and deficient stormwater collection and disposal system that is the responsibility of the Town
			X	- Continue to work with Center for the Inland Bays, DNREC, DelDOT, Army Corps of Engineers, and other State and federal agencies to ensure resources are available to develop, fund, and implement robust, aesthetically pleasing, and environmentally responsible solutions to stormwater management along the Town's Rehoboth Bay shoreline and King Charles Avenue
			X	- Pursue and implement green-stormwater infrastructure (GSI), where feasible, to reduce runoff issues created by impervious surfaces
X				- Pursue drainage easements along waterways and storm drains where needed

X				- Ensure that any stormwater system improvements will be capable of handling future anticipated sea-level rise during their design lifetime
X				- Implement a water pollution control strategy to reduce the pollution loading rate in order to meet TDML requirements
X			X	<i>...enhance the quality and convenience of community life through the regular maintenance and upgrades of community infrastructure</i> - Identify and try to secure funding to improve the streetscapes and landscapes throughout Town. - Continue to implement efficiency improvements in residential trash and recycling services.
X			X	- Establish a local funding stream to institute an Infrastructure Fund to address long-standing capital needs: drainage, electrical lines, lighting/safety, parking issues, and driveway encroachments
X			X	- Address rights-of-way and easements regarding public lands in residential areas - Work with DeIDOT to fund improvements with the goal of minimizing traffic bottlenecks that contribute to seasonal congestion in key areas
			X	<i>...enhance and protect investments in the Town's built environment</i> - Coordinate with DeIDOT and utility companies on the placement of utilities and other infrastructure for maximum efficiency and overall community aesthetics
			X	- Ensure that future public infrastructure is outside of potentially vulnerable areas or built to withstand future impacts

Cultural Resources

Goal Statement

... encourage the development of an appropriate cultural character for the town in response to the identified needs of residents, property owners, business owners, and visitors

N	U	C	O	Plan Objectives
				<i>...strengthen and refine the Dewey Beach "a way of life" through ongoing efforts to improve quality of life and a harmonious experience among residents, property owners, businesses, and visitors</i>
			X	- Continue efforts to promote a family-friendly resort by supporting respect for diversity and a vibrant summer season
			X	- Continue efforts to meet and exceed public safety and security expectations for residents and visitors
			X	- Provide special amenities to support a unique pet-friendly community
			X	- Continue increased shoulder-season activity by working with many stakeholder groups and interested parties
X				- Continue to offer high-quality parks, open space, and outdoor recreational opportunities that align with the shared goals of the State's outdoor recreational plan

Economic Development

Goal Statement

...create an environment that protects and supports the long-term sustainability of the business community which effectively meets the needs of residents and visitors.

N	U	C	O	Plan Objectives
				<i>...foster a positive climate that supports diverse businesses in summer and shoulder seasons and promote the unique assets of Dewey Beach</i>
			X	- Continue to work with existing Chamber of Commerce and Business Partnership to recruit new and retain existing businesses and create job opportunities
			X	- Support a mix of commercial development that contributes to the vitality of the Town through the creation of related local policies
X				- Forge new strategic partnerships with external organizations that help to attract new businesses that enhance the Town's image and unique assets and promotes shoulder season and year-round economic activity

			X	<i>... maintain financial stability based on stable and predictable revenue sources and reasonable and predictable expenses</i> - Undertake a comprehensive evaluation of existing financial mechanisms to increase revenues through compliance with existing fee schedules, possible indexing, and other measures - Undertake a comprehensive evaluation of infrastructure needs and establish and fund an appropriate long-term capital improvement plan.
--	--	--	---	--

Climate Change & Sea Level Rise <u>Goal Statement</u> <i>...include policy changes and practices that will ensure that Delaware makes informed policy and investment decisions to prevent damage and losses to critical infrastructure and resources in the coming decades</i>				
N	U	C	O	<u>Plan Objectives</u>
X				<i>...establish a responsible strategy for resilience to rising sea levels that will protect the Town in the face of a rise in sea level</i> - Consider determining Dewey Beach's coastal adaptation goals (protection, accommodation, retreat, or preservation), which may be different for different sections of the Town - Consider the feasibility to inventory potential vulnerabilities (by area, type of structures, etc.) to assist in future decision making - Determine if and when regulations should incorporate more restrictive requirements (i.e. new structures should be designed to be more resilient to flooding and other impacts) - Consider examining the floor area ratio (FAR) for the NR and RR Districts - Consider pursuing grant funding and technical assistance opportunities from a variety of resources, including the State, to implement sustainability strategies.
X	X			<i>...consider methods to minimize flooding of development</i> - Consider the examination of the required amount of freeboard (currently 1') and determine if additional freeboard is warranted

			X	- Consider the established mechanisms by which houses built in any flood zone prior to the implementation of Dewey Beach's first Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM), may be elevated to the effective minimum building elevation as a protective measure.
--	--	--	---	--

Preservation of Nature

Goal Statement

...create a sustainable habitat for local and migratory species including birds, pollinators, fish and marine mammals that is internationally recognized for its environmental stewardship and year-round eco-tourism destination.

N	U	C	O	Plan Objectives
X				<i>...provide a sustainable natural habitat where feasible</i> -Positively embrace its environmental stewardship and engage Coastal Delaware communities and stakeholders
X				<i>...to positively protect and improve the Town's natural environment.</i> - Consider examining the Zoning and related Municipal Code regarding open spaces, planting of native plants and trees, and reduction of untreated stormwater runoff
X				- Continue to advance existing urban forestry planning and implementation efforts
X				- Implement regulations to protect freshwater wetlands where regulatory gaps exist

2. Please highlight any significant accomplishments development issues, trends or conditions since the plan was last adopted or amended that may either have enhanced or hindered the implementation of your plan. These accomplishments may be used in the annual report to the Governor.

One of the objectives in Section 3.13.3 of the Comprehensive Plan is to evaluate and provide a stormwater drainage system that reduces flood damage to properties due to excessive rainfall and maximize the prompt removal of flood waters. Two projects noted last year- the Read Avenue Project and GIS Stormwater Infrastructure Mapping – were completed and additional projects that build on these initial projects are planned or underway.

Read Avenue Project

To protect the future of its economy and quality of life, the Town of Dewey partnered with the Center for Inland Bays to plan and implement a series of green infrastructure projects to reduce flooding and also improve water quality in Rehoboth Bay. The first of these projects, a living shoreline on the bayside end of Read Avenue, was completed in spring 2020, and the Town continues to identify opportunities for similar projects that will contribute to the goals of green infrastructure and improved stormwater management. Most recently, Town Commissioners approved matching funds for a Center for the Inland Bays proposal seeking Federal grant funding for a second project to mitigate flooding, shoreline erosion, and wetland loss along Rehoboth Bay, but the project was not selected for funding.

GIS Stormwater Infrastructure Mapping

The project to create a GIS Stormwater Infrastructure Management Mapping Database in accordance with State guidelines utilizing the latest Esri ArcGIS software applications and GIS grade GPS data collection provided recommendations for priority stormwater system rehabilitation work. The goal of this project was to verify and map all stormwater pipes and structures, including the outfalls. Based on the recommendations, the Town's Infrastructure Committee recommended, and Town Commissioners approved, \$200,000 for repair work on Read and Bayard Avenues. This work is considered as a pilot project with the hope of expanding this work in the future based on the findings of the mapping project.

Planning Commission (PC) Actions

Consistent with Section 5.1 of the Comprehensive Plan, the Planning Commission (PC) to consider the need to amend bulk zoning standards in all residential districts. The PC worked with the Town Planner to consider the need for modifications to the maximum building size and to simplify the way maximum building size is defined and regulated and unify how requirements are applied to various architectural elements. Through a series of public hearings to review proposed modifications, the PC developed a set of final recommendations to the Town Commissioners. The final recommendations were intended to ensure that zoning requirements encourage architecturally interesting design options while preserving those elements of the built environment that support the existing sense of community as called for in Section 5.2 of the Comprehensive Plan. The PC recommendations also included recommendations on minimum corner lot setbacks, basements, roof pitch, and numbers of bedrooms. The Town Commissioners held additional public hearings to consider the recommendations and based on this process made some additional changes that were reflected in a final set of zoning amendments that were formally adopted.

In response to concerns expressed about the placement of new utility poles to support telecommunication equipment for 5G wireless service, the PC considered a draft set of requirements to guide the Town's approval process for issuing permits for the poles and equipment. After a public hearing, the PC recommended to the Town Commissioners an

amendment to the zoning code that contained a set of requirements for such equipment and an associated set of design standards for this equipment. The proposed amendment and design standards were subsequently approved by the Town Commissioners.

COVID-19

The Town of Dewey Beach followed the Governor's COVID-19 Guidelines. The impact on local businesses and rentals was substantial, but recovery from these effects is progressing well. Town Hall maintained full operations throughout the worst of the pandemic period but limited public access to the building. Town finances benefited significantly from the transfer tax revenues generated by the real estate market, and with some expenditure reductions, the Town was able to avoid any serious financial problems from Covid-19. The Town Commissioners recently extended its approved for outdoor expanded dining service following the guidelines as set by the Governor.

3. Are there any planning issues that the municipality is currently facing? Do you anticipate any comprehensive plan changes for which the Office of State Planning Coordination may be able to offer technical assistance? If yes, please describe below.

Implementation of the plan, especially related to infrastructure issues and capital improvements, will face continuing fiscal challenges. Last Spring, Town Commissioners voted to consolidate certain financial reserves and devote additional funds to infrastructure needs. More recently, Commissioners have established initial funding for capital improvement projects. A new lodging tax on hotel and motels was enacted by Town Commissioners; 50% of that tax will be devoted to the capital improvement fund. The new tax is in part the result of recommendations from the Town's Budget and Finance Committee. Consistent with the economic development objectives in the comprehensive plan, this committee has a sustained focus on developing recommendations for new stable and predictable revenue streams to maintain financial stability.

There may be an anticipated zoning change to the comprehensive plan. A restaurant owner has requested rezoning of a Resort Residential (RR) property that is adjacent to the RB2 district for purposes of expanding an existing restaurant into that property. The Town Commissioners will review the request to change the RR property to RB-2 at the next scheduled Town Meeting. The purpose of the RR district is to provide for residential development of greater density than that provided for in an Neighborhood Residential District (NR), together with low-impact community and municipal functions and servicing of adjacent resort business properties owned by the same person, corporation or entity. The RB-2 district represents the middle level of commercial development intensity in a main-street-like district lining the Coastal Highway corridor (S.R. 1). The features of this zone include structures that are either entirely dedicated to commercial land use, or mixed-use structures of floor-area footage of not less than 1/3 commercial land use and not greater than 2/3 residential land use, provided that the first floor or street level is restricted to commercial land use activities.

4. Please help update our mailing list by supplying the following information:

Mayor: Dale H. Cooke e-mail address: dalehcooke@townofdeweybeach.com

City/Town Manager: William Zolper e-mail address: townmanager@townofdeweybeach.com

Planning Director: Chris Fazio e-mail address: christopher.fazio@rve.com

Town/City Clerk: Ashleigh Sander e-mail address: Ashleigh@townofdeweybeach.com

Council/Commission Members:

Dale H. Cooke, Paul Bauer, Gary Persinger, David Jasinski, William Stevens

Planning Commission Members:

Mike Harmer, Marty Seitz, Jimmy O'Connor, Mark Nordquist, Jim Bielicki, David Lyons

On behalf of the Town of Dewey Beach, I respectfully submit this comprehensive plan annual report to the Office of State Planning Coordination. The information contained in the report is correct and complete.


Signature of Mayor


Date

Dale H. Cooke

Printed Name of Mayor