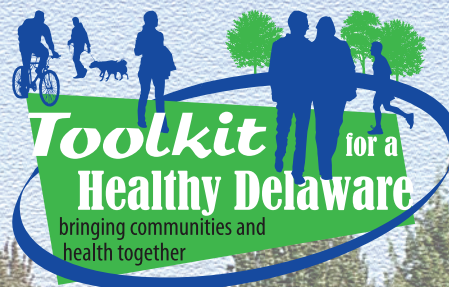


Healthy Communities: The Comprehensive Plan Assessment Tool

August 2010

*a planning resource for local governments
created as part of IPA's Healthy Communities initiative
and as an online component of the*



author
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project manager
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DELAWARE HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
Division of Public Health

in partnership with the University of Delaware
Department of Health, Nutrition & Exercise Sciences

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and funded by the
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Preface

As the Director of the Institute for Public Administration (IPA) at the University of Delaware, I am pleased to provide ***Healthy Communities: The Comprehensive Plan Assessment Tool***. Preparation of this assessment tool is part of a larger project, the University of Delaware's Healthy Communities initiative, which is an ongoing collaboration between the University's Department of Health, Nutrition & Exercise Sciences and IPA. Funding for this project was provided by the Delaware Division of Public Health. Associate Professor Eric Jacobson served as Principal Investigator for this project, Policy Specialist William DeCoursey served as project manager for production of this assessment tool, and Graduate Research Assistant Claire M. Beck authored the document. This assessment tool will also be included as a component of IPA's online **Toolkit for a Healthy Delaware**, which may be viewed at www.ipa.udel.edu/healthyDEtoolkit/.

As obesity rates across the country continue to rise, scholars and health officials alike are recognizing the importance of urban design and public policy to facilitate more active lifestyles and healthier eating habits. The development of towns and cities that promote the health of their citizens requires careful planning and a strong commitment to health-related goals. This Comprehensive Plan Assessment Tool is designed to guide municipalities in creating comprehensive plans that clearly articulate goals and strategies for providing their residents with more opportunities to live healthier lives. I hope that local government officials and others involved in the comprehensive-planning process will use this assessment tool to begin the process of building healthier, more vibrant communities.

Jerome R. Lewis, Ph.D.
Director, Institute for Public Administration

Acknowledgements

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Introduction

The ***Healthy Communities Comprehensive Plan Assessment Tool*** is a checklist-based document designed to aid Delaware municipalities in the process of writing comprehensive plans that emphasize planning for and building healthier communities. This tool is intended for use by local government officials, planning commissions, or other individuals involved in writing or updating their community's comprehensive plan. By focusing on policy initiatives and urban design guidelines that can increase physical activity and encourage healthier lifestyles, the Comprehensive Plan Assessment Tool will ultimately result in comprehensive plans that set the stage for a new era of health-focused community planning.

One goal of this Assessment Tool is to stress that planning for healthy communities is about more than just walkability. There are several elements of community planning and design that contribute to whether or not a particular community fosters healthy lifestyles. Many of these elements are included in the focal item of this document, the Comprehensive Plan Healthy-Community Checklist (found on page 14). This checklist provides a user-friendly format for guidance and review during the comprehensive-planning process. While the checklist contains 24 unique items, there are **five overarching principles of planning for a healthy community** that structure the checklist. If aspects of each of these five principles are included in a comprehensive plan, then the plan should score very highly on the checklist:

- **Bicycle and Pedestrian Accessibility**: Every effort should be made to provide facilities that allow for the safe movement of pedestrians and bicyclists throughout the town for the purposes of transportation as well as recreation. Basic facilities should be provided, including sidewalks, bike lanes, and multi-use trails.
- **Complete Streets Principles**: While bicycle and pedestrian accessibility is one of the main components of Complete Streets, truly “complete” streets are convenient and accessible for all users of the transportation system—*motorists, transit users, pedestrians, and bicyclists of all ages and abilities*. This convenience and accessibility includes accessory factors such as streetscaping improvements and human-scaled design practices. Towns should strive for all aspects of Complete Streets principles in addition to basic infrastructure.
- **Parks and Open Spaces**: Sufficient parks and open spaces should be made available to town residents for active and passive recreational opportunities. Open spaces also enhance the visual attractiveness of an area while helping to improve air quality.
- **Compact and Mixed-Use Development**: The design and benefits of compact and mixed-use development often go hand-in-hand. The town should provide areas of mixed use to its residents because of the increased opportunities to walk or bicycle to common destinations (such as grocery stores and restaurants) therein. Compact development

should also be encouraged, as low-density development results in destinations that are physically separated by long distances, requiring automobile transportation.

Municipalities can encourage more compact development by using context-sensitive designs that will result in destinations that are close enough to access by bicycling or walking.

- **Convenient Access to Healthy Food:** Every resident of the town should have convenient access to healthy-food retailers. These locations should be accessible by automobiles as well as pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users.

The majority of this document is designed to provide background information and best practices that informed the development of the Comprehensive Plan Healthy-Community Checklist. **Part One** includes general information on healthy communities concepts and state and national best practices. **Part Two** explains the process of developing the checklist. **Part Three** includes the actual Comprehensive Plan Healthy-Community Checklist, an explanation of its intended audience and use, and a list of examples illustrating each element it includes. It is recommended that users of this checklist read the entire document in order to become more familiar with the checklist and healthy-communities concepts before moving forward with assessing their own comprehensive plans. However, it is also possible to use the checklist by referencing material from Part Three only.

Part One: Healthy Communities

Healthy-Communities Concepts

Improving the Health of a Community

Improving the health of a community relies heavily on two aspects of local government planning: public policies and community design. Public policies that address zoning codes, building regulations, transportation investments, and subdivision regulations all determine the nature of the built environment of a city or town. These policies can help or hinder the development of a community that is conducive to healthy living. Ultimately, these public policies result in certain patterns of community design that shape a town's infrastructure over time. These are especially important because the design of our cities and towns determines how people use them. Some design characteristics encourage walking, bicycling, transit use and community involvement, whereas others encourage or force automobile dependency and long, solitary commutes. Public policies and community-design characteristics that foster more active forms of transportation and daily living can go a long way in combating rising obesity rates as well as problems related to pollution, environmental degradation, and energy use.

Five Principles of Planning for a Healthy Community: The Big Picture

Of the five overarching principles of planning for healthy communities, the state of Delaware is already making great progress on the principles of Complete Streets. Mandated by the Governor in 2009, the Delaware Department of Transportation has released a Complete Streets Policy that will eventually positively impact the design of communities throughout Delaware. The purpose of this legislation, as stated by the Delaware Department of Transportation, is “to ensure that the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT) system modifications are routinely planned, designed, constructed, operated and maintained in a way that enables safe and efficient access for all users. The result should be a system for all users that is comprehensive, integrated, connected, safe, and efficient allowing users to choose among different transportation modes, both motorized and non-motorized.”ⁱ The key aspect of a Complete Streets policy is that it makes streets safe and efficient for *all users*, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and those with disabilities, as well as motorists. This approach to road construction and maintenance on a statewide scale will have significant impacts on infrastructure and community designs that foster more healthy lifestyles.

DelDOT is responsible for about 90 percent of the state's transportation infrastructure.ⁱⁱ While DelDOT transportation planners and engineers strive to design streets with all users in mind, Delaware local governments have authority for local land use plans and policies, which may not

be consistent or compatible with the statewide Complete Streets policy. Local government policymakers need to develop local Complete Streets policies to strengthen all modes and foster better walking and cycling connections.

An integral part of any Complete Streets policy is the provision of adequate and integrated bicycle and pedestrian facilities. These facilities should include basic infrastructure such as sidewalks, striped bike lanes or shoulders, pedestrian crossing signals and crosswalks, bicycle parking, and adequate lighting. These facilities alone, however, will not significantly increase bicycling and walking behavior. Mixed-use and compact developments are also needed to create an environment in which desirable origins and destinations are accessible by these active transportation modes. If a grocery store is not located within a reasonable distance from a residential area, then residents will be forced to use their automobile for shopping. However, if a neighborhood grocery store is provided near residential areas, then residents will have the option to walk or bicycle for small shopping trips.

Furthermore, the provision of park facilities and open spaces is an important step in encouraging active lifestyles among residents. Local government entities are key players in maintaining open spaces that can create opportunities for healthy active and passive recreation. A final element that contributes to the viability of a healthy community is access to healthy food. The health of many Americans is adversely affected by poor diet, and thus it is very important to provide everyone with access to full-service grocery stores and farmers markets. Healthy-food outlets should be easily accessible by everyone, including car-less households, pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users.

While no one can be forced to live a healthier lifestyle, municipalities are in a position to create an environment and provide opportunities that will make it easier for residents to eat healthy and get the exercise they need. Many of our towns' residents lead hectic lifestyles that leave them little time for intentional exercise or maintaining a healthy diet. Thus, planning for a healthy community is one of the best ways to help our population build healthy activities into their everyday lives. Integrating the five principles of healthy-community planning as key elements in the future development of a municipality is an important first step in fostering healthier, happier residents.

Comprehensive Planning and Healthy Communities

Delaware State law deems that all municipalities must develop and adopt a comprehensive plan. Title 22 Chapter 7, Section 702 of the Delaware Code defines a Comprehensive Plan as “a document in text and maps, containing at a minimum, a municipal development strategy setting forth the jurisdiction's position on population and housing growth within the jurisdiction, expansion of its boundaries, development of adjacent areas, redevelopment

potential, community character, and the general uses of land within the community, and critical community development and infrastructure issues.”

Most importantly, municipal comprehensive plans have the force of law once adopted. Thus, any public policies adopted or development plans approved by a town in the future must be consistent with the maps and text contained in the comprehensive plan document. Though the comprehensive plan may not always include specific stipulations regarding building codes or subdivision regulations, the comprehensive plan itself serves as a basis for future regulatory policies and community design standards. Plans for recreational pedestrian and bicycle trails, multi-modal transportation networks, sidewalks, on-road bicycle facilities, and streetscaping improvements can all be addressed within a comprehensive plan. Pedestrian and bicycle master plans may also be included as part of a comprehensive plan, as well as subdivision regulations regarding the construction of pedestrian facilities, parks, and open spaces. In short, the comprehensive plan provides a great opportunity to make healthy community elements a part of the town’s development agenda.

Best Practices to Consider During the Comprehensive Planning Process

Many organizations around the country are focusing on how to make communities more healthy places to live. There is a wealth of information available about what elements of city planning and design can lead to more healthy, walkable, and livable communities. A few of these projects and organizations are listed below, along with examples of recommendations from each source. These recommendations should be very helpful during the comprehensive-planning process. Additionally, the organizations and projects listed below can serve as good resources for further study or reference.

It should be noted that many of the recommendations put forth by these organizations and publications address *design standards* in reference to subdivision regulations, transportation, or building codes. While these types of specific regulations are not commonly enumerated in comprehensive-planning documents, the comprehensive plan can recommend that certain types of regulations be adopted by the town council or local policymakers. For example, a comprehensive plan could recommend that subdivision regulations include a requirement for five-foot-wide sidewalks and small block sizes in order to achieve good pedestrian street connectivity. Similarly, the transportation section within a comprehensive plan could recommend that traffic-calming measures, such as narrower streets and curb extensions, be implemented downtown or in a central business district in order to facilitate a safer pedestrian environment. Moreover, a comprehensive plan can convey the need for Smart Growth or New Urbanism strategies that focus on the efficient use of land and resources while providing multi-modal transportation opportunities through compact, mixed-use development. The inclusion of such recommendations in a comprehensive plan does not ensure that the measures will be

implemented, but it does communicate a strong message about the town's values, goals, and vision for livability.

Best Practices

National Level

National Complete Streets Coalitionⁱⁱⁱ

- Complete Streets are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users. Pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders of all ages and abilities must be able to safely move along and across such a street.
- Complete Streets can be achieved through a variety of policies: ordinances and resolutions; rewrites of design manuals; *inclusion in comprehensive plans*; internal memos from directors of transportation agencies; and executive orders from elected officials, like Mayors or Governors.
- An effective Complete Streets policy must be sensitive to the community context. Being clear about this in the initial policy statement can allay fears that the policy will require inappropriately wide roads in quiet neighborhoods or miles of little-used sidewalks in rural areas.

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, *Leadership for Healthy Communities: Action Strategies Toolkit*^{iv}

- Local governments can develop or re-evaluate long-term transportation plans that explicitly set “active transportation” goals for walking or biking as modes of transportation. As part of these goals, they can implement Complete Streets in neighborhoods.
- State and local policymakers can support policies that create open spaces that can include recreational greenways.
- Local policymakers can also identify areas underserved by retail and partner with health officials to ensure that public health is part of comprehensive plans or community planning.

ADA Standards for Accessible Design (Americans with Disabilities Act)^v

- A well-designed and maintained pedestrian-circulation system can encourage people to be more active and less automobile-dependent. Facilities should be designed to be safe, usable, and accessible for all users—including children, elderly people, and persons with disabilities. The transportation section of a comprehensive plan should address the need for a connected, well-maintained, and accessible pedestrian network.
- The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 was intended to improve the mobility, safety, and comfort of persons with disabilities. Planning for the design and maintenance of all facilities, including pedestrian networks, should meet ADA accessibility requirements.
- A comprehensive plan may also address the need to amend a municipal code that is not in full compliance with ADA.

Smart Growth Network^{vi}

Encourage a Mix of Land Uses:

- Provide incentives through state funds to encourage residents to live near where they work.
- Use innovative zoning tools to encourage mixed-use communities and buildings.
- Use flex zoning to allow developers to easily supply space in response to market demands.

Create Walkable Communities:

- Require building design that makes commercial areas more walkable.
- Adopt design standards for sidewalks.

Congress for New Urbanism^{vii}

- New Urbanism is a growing movement that recognizes the need for walkable, human-scaled neighborhood design as the building blocks for sustainable communities. The Congress for New Urbanism offers resources, tools, and strategies to develop and adopt sustainable development patterns to strengthen the character, livability, and diversity of communities.

State Level

State Policies and Documents Encouraging Smart Growth and Walkability

- Delaware Complete Streets legislation^{viii}
- Delaware's Livability Principles
- "Strategies for State Policies and Spending"^{ix}
- *Statewide Pedestrian Action Plan*^x

Other Delaware Resources

- *Healthy Communities: A Resource Guide for Delaware Municipalities*^{xi}
- *Better Models for Development in Delaware*^{xii}

Six Principles for Better Development:

- Conserve Farmland, Open Space, and Scenic Resources
- Maintain a Clear Edge between Town and Countryside
- Build Livable Communities
- Preserve Historic Resources
- Respect Local Character in New Construction
- Reduce the Impact of the Car

Part Two: Development and Methodology

Development of the Comprehensive Plan Healthy-Community Checklist

The Comprehensive Plan Healthy-Community Checklist was developed based on the healthy-community elements found in existing Delaware comprehensive plans in addition to other elements gleaned from state and national best practices. Therefore, the checklist includes some elements that are not currently located in any of Delaware's comprehensive plans but should be considered for inclusion in future plans or updates based on their consistency with other recognized best practices.

Methodology

The development of the Comprehensive Plan Healthy-Community Checklist involved several steps:

1. Study and review of various best practices regarding walkability and healthy community development
2. Detailed review of comprehensive plans from Delaware municipalities (example analyses shown beginning on page 19)
3. Creation of a list of common healthy community elements found in Delaware comprehensive plans
4. Creation of a matrix comparing the healthy-community elements in each municipality's plan
5. Creation of a checklist based on healthy-community elements found in Delaware's existing comprehensive plans as well as other best practices applicable to Delaware

The Comprehensive Plan Healthy-Community Matrix

The Comprehensive Plan Healthy-Community Matrix was developed through a detailed review of a sample of Delaware's comprehensive plans. Each comprehensive plan was read completely, and any mention of pedestrian- and bicycle-friendliness, loosely defined, was recorded. The factors originally noted included things such as pedestrian or bicycle infrastructure, pedestrian safety, automobile-traffic reduction, compact/mixed-use development, and streetscaping features. After all of the various healthy community factors

and elements for each town had been gathered, the most common and important elements were identified to create an initial checklist. After this checklist had been created, five of Delaware's comprehensive plans were reviewed on the basis of this checklist, and the result is a matrix of these Delaware municipalities' healthy community features. The five municipalities whose comprehensive plans were evaluated were Bellefonte, Millville, Cheswold, Newark, and Smyrna.

The result of creating this matrix of Delaware municipalities is a comparative look at five comprehensive plans. Eventually, the matrix could include all of Delaware's municipalities, providing a statewide perspective that highlights the strengths among municipalities and other areas where comprehensive plans need to be improved. From this sample of five municipalities' plans, there appears to be much variation between municipalities in the number of healthy community elements included in the comprehensive plans. There is no clear pattern of the number of elements present based on the size of the town, location of the town, or when the plan was adopted. It is clear from the matrix, however, that almost all comprehensive plans include a recommendation for improved pedestrian or bicycle infrastructure, while a smaller number of plans call for other pedestrian-friendly design guidelines such as streetscaping, building setbacks, or compact development. There is also a dearth of comprehensive plans that call for pedestrian/bicycle studies or master plans. Overall, the Comprehensive Plan Healthy-Community Matrix suggests that areas for future improvement consist of inclusion of general pedestrian-oriented design guidelines, more emphasis on community goals related to health and walkability, and recommendations to undertake pedestrian, bicycle, trail systems, and multi-use master plan studies. An example of the type of matrix resulting from this analysis is included below (please note that due to space limitations, this is only an excerpt of the complete matrix design).

Walkability Measures in Comprehensive Plans												
	Community Goal: Pedestrian and/or Bicycle Facilities	Community Goal: Parks and Recreational Facilities	Community Goal: Reducing Automobile Traffic	Mention of Pedestrian Safety Re: Children's Access to School	Community Desire for more Shopping Facilities Located near Residences	Sidewalks Required in New Residential Developments	Future Development: Streetscaping Features	Friendly Built-Environment: Pedestrian Infrastructure	Future Development: Enhance Pedestrian Facilities in CBD	Pedestrian/Bicycle Study Recommended	Pedestrian Improvements Suggested for Short-term Implementation	Bicycle Improvements Suggested for Short-term Implementation
Town 1	++			+				++				
Town 2	++							++				
Town 3	++	++		+				++			++	
Town 4	++	++	++					++			++	
Town 5	++	++						++				
Town 6	++					++						
Town 7	+			+				++				

Part Three: The Comprehensive Plan Healthy-Community Checklist

Introduction to the Comprehensive Plan Healthy-Community Checklist

The review of Delaware's comprehensive plans revealed that, even though there is no consistent comprehensive plan format, most of the towns' plans were divided into two broad parts: community goals and future recommendations. Because the plans' content was usually divided between these two sections, and because goals and recommendations are conceptually different, the checklist itself references healthy-community elements in terms of community goals and future recommendations separately. An example of the review process used to create and use the checklist is included on page 15. This review process also revealed that Delaware's comprehensive plans often addressed transportation infrastructure (sidewalks, trails, etc.) separately from general pedestrian-oriented design (streetscaping features, building setbacks, placemaking). The checklist addresses infrastructure recommendations and design guidelines separately in order to emphasize that design guidelines are just as important as infrastructure recommendations. The checklist was applied to the same five towns that were originally reviewed to create the matrix. The results of this evaluation are included in this document, starting on page 19.

The checklist is organized based on the **five overarching principals of planning for a healthy community** enumerated in the introduction to this document. These categories can help municipalities visualize where their comprehensive plans are strongest and where the municipality needs to focus more attention.

How to Use the Checklist

This checklist is designed to be used by local officials in writing or updating their town's comprehensive plan. Since comprehensive plans do not always include specific building or development regulations, the items on this checklist are oriented toward the town's general goals and recommendations for the future. The checklist should be viewed as a guide to planning elements that encourage more walkable, bikeable, and healthy communities. The number of elements that can be included in any given comprehensive plan will vary depending on the size of the town, its existing infrastructure, and its community character. Nonetheless,

each town should strive to include goals and recommendations in its comprehensive plan that will help lead to a healthier and more vibrant community. The more features that the town can check off on this list, the more the town will be on its way to becoming a healthy community. A list of examples of each element on the checklist is included in this document, starting on page 16. Most examples come from an existing comprehensive plan of a Delaware municipality. These examples are intended to provide guidance on effective wording of checklist elements as well as a better understanding of how healthy-community elements can be seamlessly integrated into a comprehensive plan.

- **Review the town's comprehensive plan for healthy community elements:** Look through the existing comprehensive plan and check off any of the listed elements that are found in the plan. Be sure to note areas for future improvement that can be addressed in the next update of the town's comprehensive plan.
- **Update an existing or write a new comprehensive plan:** Choose elements on the checklist that can be integrated in the town's comprehensive plan, and strive to include as many elements as possible in the plan. For more information on specific features in this checklist, refer to the examples at the end of this document or the resources for best practices referenced in Part One.

The Comprehensive Plan Healthy-Community Checklist

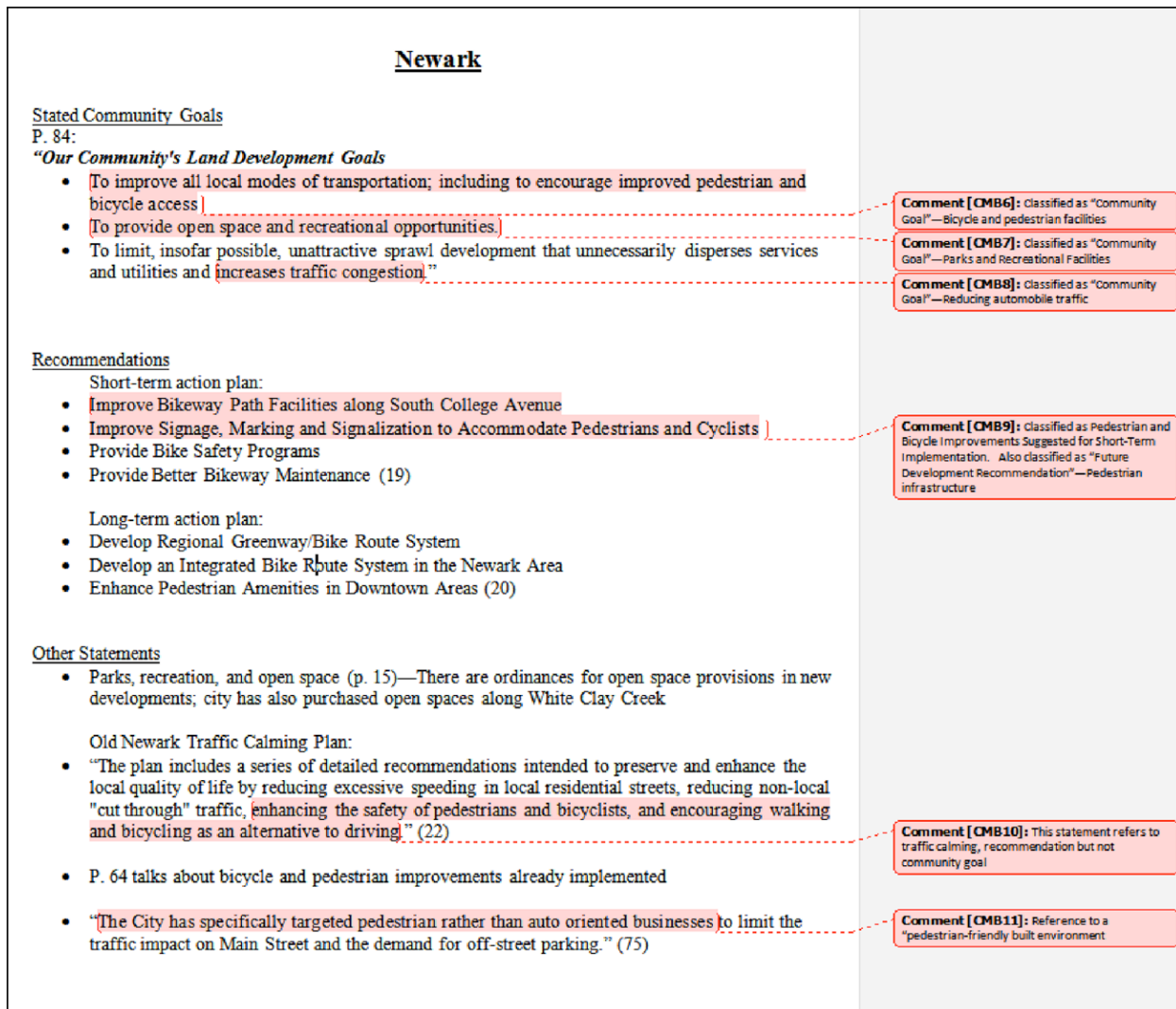
Pedestrian/Bicycle Accessibility	Check	Page #
1 Community or town goal that emphasizes pedestrian and/or bicycle facilities		
2 Community or town goal to enhance children's pedestrian and bicycle safety		
3 Encouragement to start or enhance Safe Routes to School Programs		
4 Future development recommendation for increased pedestrian infrastructure		
5 Future development recommendation for increased bicycle infrastructure		
6 Recommendation for a pedestrian and/or bicycle study		
7 Inclusion of or future recommendation for a Master Pedestrian Plan		
8 Inclusion of or future recommendation for a Master Bicycle Plan		
9 Prioritization of pedestrian improvements		
10 Prioritization of bicycle improvements		
Mixed Use/Compact Development	Check	Page #
11 Future development recommendation for additional elements of a pedestrian-friendly built environment**		
12 Recommendation for a Traditional Neighborhood Development Ordinance*		

Complete Streets Principles	Check	Page #
13 Community or town goal to reduce automobile traffic throughout the town		
14 Development regulations requiring sidewalks		
15 Future development recommendation for streetscaping features		
16 Future development recommendation emphasizing pedestrian improvements in the CBD or downtown area to increase business and create a sense of place		
17 Future development recommendation for traffic-calming measures on local streets		
18 Recommendation for multi-modal infrastructure supporting transit use		
19 Recommendation to identify service gaps and deficiencies in mobility for people of all ages and abilities		
20 Recommendation to develop a prioritization plan for addressing mobility issues for people of all ages and abilities in the transportation system		
Access to Healthy Food	Check	Page #
21 Community or town goal to locate shopping facilities near residences		
22 Community or town goal emphasizing public health, including physical activity and access to healthy food		
Open Space and Recreation	Check	Page #
23 Community or town goal that emphasizes parks and recreational facilities		
24 Recommendation for open-space policies and conservation-oriented land use plans		

*Traditional Neighborhood Developments are neighborhoods where residential, commercial, and civic buildings are within close proximity to each other. Model TND Ordinance found at: <http://urpl.wisc.edu/people/ohm/tndord.pdf>

**Additional elements of a pedestrian-friendly built environment = mix of uses; compact development; building setbacks; parking location; pedestrian-scaled design (buildings, signs, roads); street connectivity

Example of the Review Process



This graphic shows the process used to analyze comprehensive plans in order to develop the checklist items. First, elements related to healthy-community concepts were extracted from comprehensive-plan documents as direct quotes or notes (left). Then these elements were classified by checklist category and documented on the Comprehensive Plan Healthy-Community Checklist (right).

Examples of Checklist Elements

1. “Develop and maintain an efficient, balanced, and safe street-and-highway system with adequate facilities for pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists.” (Bethany Beach Comprehensive Plan, 2005 Update, p. 8)
2. “The safety of these modes of transportation, especially children walking in the street to school, is a major concern of the citizens and the Town and Planning Commissions.” (Bellefonte 2007 Comprehensive Plan, p. 58)
3. “State and local leaders in communities and schools can support Walk to School and Safe Routes to School programs.” (*Leadership for Healthy Communities: Action Strategies Toolkit*, p. 16)
4. “Develop a plan for a network of bicycle and pedestrian paths traversing the Town, using existing streets, other rights-of-way, and systems provided in conjunction with new development.” (Smyrna 2006 Comprehensive Plan, p. 79)
5. “It is recommended that the town develop a plan for the installation of additional bike paths throughout the town. This plan should identify specific areas of need and detail the year-to-year improvement schedule or identified projects.” (Bethany Beach Comprehensive Plan, 2005 Update, p. 42)
6. “The Town may also wish to partner with DelDOT or some other outside agency to conduct a mobility-friendly assessment of the town’s transportation infrastructure. Such a project could likely pinpoint where and why most automotive/pedestrian conflicts arise and suggest mitigating measures. The Town may also wish to develop an inventory of the bicycle and pedestrian networks within its boundaries in an effort to identify specific areas of need.” (Dewey Beach 2007 Comprehensive Plan, p. 25)
7. “Although a number of bicycle and pedestrian facilities have been added in recent years and others will be developed as various projects are completed, there is no overall bicycle and pedestrian plan for the community. With assistance from DelDOT this planning effort needs to be addressed in the near future.” (Smyrna 2006 Comprehensive Plan, p. 84)
8. Same as above
9. “For Immediate Implementation-- Prioritize planning and actions that create a pedestrian and bicycle friendly environment throughout town.” (Fenwick Island 2007 Comprehensive Plan, p. 3-24)
10. “Short-Term Action Plan: Improve Bikeway Path Facilities along South College Avenue.” (Newark 2008 Comprehensive Plan, p. 19)
11. “Make investments in construction of bicycle and pedestrian pathways...Require more attractive, pedestrian-friendly placement of commercial and institutional buildings.” (Middletown 2005 Comprehensive Plan, p. 11)

12. "Adopt a zoning district that is consistent with Livable Delaware initiatives and neotraditional design principles. A Traditional Neighborhood Design (TND) ordinance that would allow for a greater mix of housing types, as well as provided a prescribed mix of residential, commercial, office and institutional uses. A TND would promote a sense of community and provide for more compact development patterns that produce less traffic than conventional traffic development styles. Neighborhood commercial retail should be permitted and encouraged that offers daily necessities intended to limit daily trips per day and mitigate some of the demands on the local road network." (Millsboro Comprehensive Plan 2009 Update, p. 63-64)
13. "To limit, insofar possible, unattractive sprawl development that unnecessarily disperses services and utilities and increases traffic congestion." (Newark 2008 Comprehensive Plan, p. 85)
14. "Sidewalks, bikeways, and walking trails should be required components of every new area and development within the city limits." (Lewes 2005 Comprehensive Plan, p. 2)
15. "Frankford should work with state officials to develop a comprehensive plan for streetscape improvements to improve the appearance of Frankford's Main Street and increase parking." Frankford 2008 Comprehensive Plan, p. 32)
16. "Sidewalks and other pedestrian connections should be provided along Market Street and to other uses in the area that will attract pedestrians. It is important to create an environment in which people will feel comfortable walking and shopping. This is critical if the area is to be friendly to visiting boaters." (Blades Comprehensive Plan, 2008 Update, p. 30)
17. "Planned improvements could include, but are not limited to, the construction of sidewalks in identified key-risk areas, traffic-calming devices, and improved lighting." (Bethany Beach Comprehensive Plan, 2005 Update, p. 42)
18. "To provide infrastructure that is both pedestrian- and transit-supportive and allows fast transitions between modes." (*Healthy Communities: A Resource Guide for Delaware Municipalities*, p. 35)
19. "In 2008, the City began preparation of an ADA Transition Plan that will establish the need for ADA compliance, evaluate sidewalk ramps for compliance, rate and prioritize needed improvements, propose a phased capital improvements budget, and define a schedule to remedy as funding allows." (Rehoboth Beach 2010 Comprehensive Development Plan, p. 71)
20. Same as above
21. "When considering what features were desirable in new neighborhoods, the respondents found the following features desirable: parks and open spaces; an interconnected street network; neighborhood shopping nearby; streets that allow quick access to major roads ..." (Bridgeville Comprehensive Plan, 2006 Update, p. 38)

22. “The Town encourages farmers’ markets and community gardens, and should work with local farmers towards this purpose.” (Millsboro 2009 Comprehensive Plan Update, p. 36)
23. “Respondents overwhelmingly favor the establishment of parks or open space for both passive- and active-recreational activities...” (Cheswold Comprehensive Plan, 2006 Update, p. 10)
24. “The Town has adopted standards for open space that require that new residential developments set aside land for open space and recreation uses in developments.” (Millsboro Comprehensive Plan 2009 Update, p. 33)

Examples of Use of the Checklist in Five Delaware Municipalities

Bellefonte 2007 Comprehensive Plan

- *Date of Review:* May 2010
- *Comprehensive Plan Document:*
stateplanning.delaware.gov/comp_plans/bellefonte_plan_master_certified.pdf
- *Bellefonte Town Website:* www.townofbellefonte.com

Bellefonte, located just a few miles northeast of Wilmington, is a small town with a continuous history as a suburb of the city. The residents of Bellefonte highly value its small-town character and are concerned with maintaining the small-community feel of the town. The town of Bellefonte consists of relatively small lots built into a grid-like street pattern, and the town is almost completely built-out, with very little open parcels or room to grow. Some issues of primary concern to the town are managing traffic and parking on narrow streets, increasing pedestrian safety that is jeopardized by these narrow streets without sidewalks, supporting the town's local businesses located in the Central Business District (CBD), and providing residents with the activities and services they desire. Though improving the health of the community is not explicitly stated in Bellefonte's comprehensive plan, there are a number of goals and recommendations included in the plan that will contribute to a healthier community, including:

- A strong community desire for safer pedestrian facilities and traffic-calming measures
- A community desire for a greater variety of shopping facilities located near their homes
- A community and town goal of continually improving the CBD through building and streetscape design standards
- A plan to revitalize the town's one park and provide more recreational opportunities
- A town goal to create aspects of the CBD and recreational areas that encourage social interaction

Though most of Bellefonte's residents work outside of the town itself, the small size of the town makes within-town shopping and socializing trips feasible by walking or bicycling. It appears that the main obstacles to pedestrian and bicycle circulation are inadequate infrastructure and traffic speed. Bellefonte is already undertaking some measures to create more pleasant destinations for residents through streetscape improvements along Brandywine Boulevard in the CBD, but proper infrastructure and safety measures will need to be implemented in order to encourage more active transportation activities within the town.

The Comprehensive Plan Healthy-Community Checklist: Bellefonte

Pedestrian/Bicycle Accessibility	Check	Page #
1 Community or town goal that emphasizes pedestrian and/or bicycle facilities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	42
2 Community or town goal to enhance children's pedestrian and bicycle safety	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	58
3 Encouragement to start or enhance Safe Routes to School Programs		
4 Future development recommendation for increased pedestrian infrastructure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	58
5 Future development recommendation for increased bicycle infrastructure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	58
6 Recommendation for a pedestrian and/or bicycle study		
7 Inclusion of or future recommendation for a Master Pedestrian Plan		
8 Inclusion of or future recommendation for a Master Bicycle Plan		
9 Prioritization of pedestrian improvements		
10 Prioritization of bicycle improvements		
Mixed Use/Compact Development	Check	Page #
11 Future development recommendation for additional elements of a pedestrian-friendly built environment**		
12 Recommendation for a Traditional Neighborhood Development Ordinance*		

Complete Streets Principles	Check	Page #
13 Community or town goal to reduce automobile traffic throughout the town	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	42
14 Development regulations requiring sidewalks		
15 Future development recommendation for streetscaping features	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	61
16 Future development recommendation emphasizing pedestrian improvements in the CBD or downtown area to increase business and create a sense of place	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	71
17 Future development recommendation for traffic-calming measures on local streets	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	47
18 Recommendation for multi-modal infrastructure supporting transit use		
19 Recommendation to identify service gaps and deficiencies in mobility for people of all ages and abilities		
20 Recommendation to develop a prioritization plan for addressing mobility issues for people of all ages and abilities in the transportation system		
Access to Healthy Food	Check	Page #
21 Community or town goal to locate shopping facilities near residences	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	42
22 Community or town goal emphasizing public health, including physical activity and access to healthy food		
Open Space and Recreation	Check	Page #
23 Community or town goal that emphasizes parks and recreational facilities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	42
24 Recommendation for open-space policies and conservation-oriented land use plans	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	62, 65

Millville 2008 Comprehensive Plan Update

- *Date of Review:* May 2010
- *Comprehensive Plan Document:* https://imageserv2.teamlogic.com/mediaLibrary/170/MillvilleCompPlanAdopted_FinalCopy_2.pdf
- *Millville Town Website:* www.millvillede.us

Millville is a small coastal town in Sussex County that strongly desires to retain its small town character while accommodating new growth in a well-planned manner. The residents of Millville envision the town's future as a more connected, pedestrian-friendly community with a vibrant center of commercial and social activities along Atlantic Avenue, the town's main thoroughfare. In order to achieve these goals of retaining small-town character, creating a pedestrian-friendly community, and accommodating new growth, Millville's comprehensive plan lays out several general goals and specific recommendations. Many of these goals and recommendations are related to urban design elements that encourage more healthy lifestyles and more opportunities for physical activity and recreation. Some of these elements that should encourage a more healthy community include the following:

- Town residents strongly support policies protecting open space and desire the establishment of a public park.
- Town residents very highly rank the importance of pedestrian and bicycle facilities connecting the town.
- One of the highest priorities of town residents and business owners is to improve the appearance and structure of Atlantic Avenue in order to create a strong sense of place, setting Millville apart from its neighboring towns.
- The town has created a special commercial zoning district intended for mixed-use development (C1-Route 26 Corridor/Town Center Commercial District), which could encourage more pedestrian activity.
- Recommended transportation improvements include expansion of bicycle and pedestrian facilities, streetscaping features, traffic-calming measures, and ensuring that new developments connect to the existing network.

One of the most striking aspects of Millville's community development plan is its emphasis on creating a strong sense of place. Indeed, the feeling of living in a unique place is what gives small towns their charm, and urban design and development policies play a huge role in creating that sense of place. In addition to providing pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure and connectivity, place-making is what ultimately gives town residents a destination to go to and a reason to go there. This combination of pleasant destinations and adequate active

transportation facilities will provide Millville's residents with more opportunities to engage in healthy lifestyles. If Millville follows through on its community's goals and recommendations, the town's vision may become a reality:

"Atlantic Avenue in the Town of Millville, a street lined with crowded sidewalks, people running errands, stopping to talk with friends or just enjoying a leisurely walk. Flowers and trees border the street creating a colorful and lively atmosphere encouraging people to be outside walking or riding bikes. Children are looking at the recently constructed mill replica while the parents gather nearby sitting on street benches to talk. This is the future of Millville, a more connected, pedestrian community."

The Comprehensive Plan Healthy-Community Checklist: Millville

Pedestrian/Bicycle Accessibility	Check	Page #
1 Community or town goal that emphasizes pedestrian and/or bicycle facilities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	12
2 Community or town goal to enhance children's pedestrian and bicycle safety		
3 Encouragement to start or enhance Safe Routes to School Programs		
4 Future development recommendation for increased pedestrian infrastructure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	39-40
5 Future development recommendation for increased bicycle infrastructure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	39-40
6 Recommendation for a pedestrian and/or bicycle study	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	40
7 Inclusion of or future recommendation for a Master Pedestrian Plan		
8 Inclusion of or future recommendation for a Master Bicycle Plan		
9 Prioritization of pedestrian improvements	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	45-46
10 Prioritization of bicycle improvements	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	45-46
Mixed Use/Compact Development	Check	Page #
11 Future development recommendation for additional elements of a pedestrian-friendly built environment**	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	28
12 Recommendation for a Traditional Neighborhood Development Ordinance*		

Complete Streets Principles	Check	Page #
13 Community or town goal to reduce automobile traffic throughout the town	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	17
14 Development regulations requiring sidewalks	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	40, recommended
15 Future development recommendation for streetscaping features	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	28
16 Future development recommendation emphasizing pedestrian improvements in the CBD or downtown area to increase business and create a sense of place	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	16, 29, 40
17 Future development recommendation for traffic-calming measures on local streets	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	39
18 Recommendation for multi-modal infrastructure supporting transit use	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	41
19 Recommendation to identify service gaps and deficiencies in mobility for people of all ages and abilities		
20 Recommendation to develop a prioritization plan for addressing mobility issues for people of all ages and abilities in the transportation system		
Access to Healthy Food	Check	Page #
21 Community or town goal to locate shopping facilities near residences		
22 Community or town goal emphasizing public health, including physical activity and access to healthy food		
Open Space and Recreation	Check	Page #
23 Community or town goal that emphasizes parks and recreational facilities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	12
24 Recommendation for open-space policies and conservation-oriented land use plans	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	44

Cheswold 2006 Comprehensive Plan Update

- *Date of Review:* May 2010
- *Comprehensive Plan Document:*
stateplanning.delaware.gov/comp_plans/2006_update_cheswold_comp_plan.pdf
- *Cheswold Town Website:* www.cheswoldde.com

Cheswold is a small, historic town located just outside of Dover. While the town has remained very small throughout its existence, it is now under intense development pressure and expects its population to increase dramatically over the next 10 to 20 years. The focus of Cheswold's comprehensive plan is on managing and directing future growth in a way that will encourage economic development while still maintaining the small-town character that current residents value. The comprehensive plan mentions that Cheswold has historically had a very liberal zoning code, which has resulted in several industrial uses in the town. This zoning code is also, however, attractive to residential developers because of its liberality and because of Cheswold's location on the Route 1 Corridor. Thus, Cheswold's town officials intend to strengthen the town's zoning codes and ordinances so as to have more control over future development. The comprehensive plan does not contain many explicit references to elements of a healthy community, but it is clear that the town's residents desire adequate pedestrian and bicycle facilities as well as more open space and recreational opportunities. The provision of alternative transportation options and good connectivity will be essential to ensuring that Cheswold can maintain its small-town character rather than becoming a fragmented, sprawling suburb.

The Comprehensive Plan Healthy-Community Checklist: Cheswold

Pedestrian/Bicycle Accessibility	Check	Page #
1 Community or town goal that emphasizes pedestrian and/or bicycle facilities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	10, 11
2 Community or town goal to enhance children's pedestrian and bicycle safety	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	23, 33
3 Encouragement to start or enhance Safe Routes to School Programs		
4 Future development recommendation for increased pedestrian infrastructure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	33, 34
5 Future development recommendation for increased bicycle infrastructure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	33, 34
6 Recommendation for a pedestrian and/or bicycle study		
7 Inclusion of or future recommendation for a Master Pedestrian Plan		
8 Inclusion of or future recommendation for a Master Bicycle Plan		
9 Prioritization of pedestrian improvements		
10 Prioritization of bicycle improvements		
Mixed Use/Compact Development	Check	Page #
11 Future development recommendation for additional elements of a pedestrian-friendly built environment**		
12 Recommendation for a Traditional Neighborhood Development Ordinance*		

Complete Streets Principles	Check	Page #
13 Community or town goal to reduce automobile traffic throughout the town	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	11, 32
14 Development regulations requiring sidewalks		
15 Future development recommendation for streetscaping features	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	32
16 Future development recommendation emphasizing pedestrian improvements in the CBD or downtown area to increase business and create a sense of place		
17 Future development recommendation for traffic-calming measures on local streets		
18 Recommendation for multi-modal infrastructure supporting transit use		
19 Recommendation to identify service gaps and deficiencies in mobility for people of all ages and abilities		
20 Recommendation to develop a prioritization plan for addressing mobility issues for people of all ages and abilities in the transportation system		
Access to Healthy Food	Check	Page #
21 Community or town goal to locate shopping facilities near residences	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	32
22 Community or town goal emphasizing public health, including physical activity and access to healthy food		
Open Space and Recreation	Check	Page #
23 Community or town goal that emphasizes parks and recreational facilities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	10, 11
24 Recommendation for open-space policies and conservation-oriented land use plans	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	30, 35

Newark 2008 Comprehensive Development Plan

- *Date of Review:* May 2010
- *Comprehensive Plan Document:*
http://cityofnewarkde.us/DocumentView.aspx?DID=770&bcsi_scan_466F0C48B84B72D2=6qbS5O+TdPnxOQ+gAedG5RQAAAAwVmgrp&bcsi_scan_filename=DocumentView.asp
- *Newark City Website:* cityofnewarkde.us

Newark is one of the three main population centers in Delaware, and its economy is anchored mainly by the University of Delaware, light industrial establishments, and commercial activity. Newark has a strong history of comprehensive planning, which dates back to 1969 with the city's first Comprehensive Development Plan. Since that time, Newark has completed three additional incarnations of its comprehensive plan as well as several other area-specific plans, such as the Historic Preservation Plan and Design Guidelines for Main Street. With a majority of Newark's population comprising University students, faculty, and staff, non-motorized transportation options and mitigation of automobile traffic within the city has been an area of focus for quite some time. The city also highly values open space and opportunities for active and passive recreation. Newark's location along the White Clay Creek makes it a prime candidate for recreational trails and parks, and the city is still pursuing additional parklands along this natural feature. Some of the standout elements from Newark's Comprehensive Plan include:

- Specific recommendations for bicycle and pedestrian improvements in key areas
- An emphasis on traffic calming on local streets and encouragement of alternative-transportation options
- An area-specific plan to create a strong sense of place on Main Street through streetscaping, historic preservation, and building-design regulations
- A goal to improve intermodal connections within the city, including improved facilities at the Newark Rail Station and bike racks on buses
- A community goal to avoid unattractive sprawl development

The City of Newark has already implemented many strategies that have improved the availability of active lifestyle options for its residents. However, the city also realizes that there is still room for improvement in terms of providing adequate facilities throughout the entire city, not just along Main Street. By virtue of having a captive audience in the University population, Newark should be able to mitigate much of its traffic problems while providing a more healthy place for its residents to live through providing better opportunities for transit and non-motorized transportation as well as active recreation.

The Comprehensive Plan Healthy-Community Checklist: Newark

Pedestrian/Bicycle Accessibility	Check	Page #
1 Community or town goal that emphasizes pedestrian and/or bicycle facilities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	84
2 Community or town goal to enhance children's pedestrian and bicycle safety		
3 Encouragement to start or enhance Safe Routes to School Programs		
4 Future development recommendation for increased pedestrian infrastructure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	19, 20
5 Future development recommendation for increased bicycle infrastructure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	19, 20
6 Recommendation for a pedestrian and/or bicycle study		
7 Inclusion of or future recommendation for a Master Pedestrian Plan		
8 Inclusion of or future recommendation for a Master Bicycle Plan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	22
9 Prioritization of pedestrian improvements	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	19
10 Prioritization of bicycle improvements	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	19
Mixed Use/Compact Development	Check	Page #
11 Future development recommendation for additional elements of a pedestrian-friendly built environment**	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	31, 75
12 Recommendation for a Traditional Neighborhood Development Ordinance*		

Complete Streets Principles	Check	Page #
13 Community or town goal to reduce automobile traffic throughout the town	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	84
14 Development regulations requiring sidewalks		
15 Future development recommendation for streetscaping features	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	31, 20
16 Future development recommendation emphasizing pedestrian improvements in the CBD or downtown area to increase business and create a sense of place	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	31, 65
17 Future development recommendation for traffic-calming measures on local streets	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	22
18 Recommendation for multi-modal infrastructure supporting transit use	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	21
19 Recommendation to identify service gaps and deficiencies in mobility for people of all ages and abilities		
20 Recommendation to develop a prioritization plan for addressing mobility issues for people of all ages and abilities in the transportation system		
Access to Healthy Food	Check	Page #
21 Community or town goal to locate shopping facilities near residences		
22 Community or town goal emphasizing public health, including physical activity and access to healthy food		
Open Space and Recreation	Check	Page #
23 Community or town goal that emphasizes parks and recreational facilities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	84
24 Recommendation for open-space policies and conservation-oriented land use plans	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	15

Smyrna 2005 Comprehensive Plan Update

- *Date of Review:* May 2010
- *Comprehensive Plan Document:*
stateplanning.delaware.gov/comp_plans/smyrna_comp_plan_certified_2006.pdf
- *Smyrna Town Website:* www.smyrna.delaware.gov

Smyrna, located just 12 miles from Dover, is a mid-sized town poised for increased growth. The town's location along the Route 1 Corridor makes it an attractive residence for employees in Dover, Wilmington, and Newark. Smyrna also already houses three major employers and wishes to expand its growth for light industrial and commercial uses. The town has recently experienced a large amount of sprawl development, fragmenting its community and putting stress on utility services; thus, Smyrna's development plan is concentrated on controlling new growth by encouraging infill development, revitalization of the downtown area, and placement of new developments adjacent to existing ones. Smyrna desires to influence community-design standards in order to improve the image of the town and create more of a sense of place. The town is actively developing and implementing such community-design standards to encourage more compact, walkable, and resource-efficient development. Some examples of Smyrna's actions towards a healthier community include:

- A revitalization plan for the downtown historic district that includes pedestrian and streetscape improvements
- A goal to provide a multimodal circulation system
- A recommendation to encourage provision of community open spaces in new developments
- A move towards more compactly-designed residential developments
- A recommendation to undertake pedestrian and bicycle studies

While Smyrna's comprehensive plan document does not contain many explicit references to overall community or town goals, it is clear that the town is undertaking measures to create a more healthy and livable community. The leaders of Smyrna realize that future growth and development will need to be closely monitored in order to avoid a sprawling, car-dependent bedroom community with no sense of place.

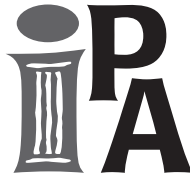
The Comprehensive Plan Healthy-Community Checklist: Smyrna

Pedestrian/Bicycle Accessibility	Check	Page #
1 Community or town goal that emphasizes pedestrian and/or bicycle facilities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	79
2 Community or town goal to enhance children's pedestrian and bicycle safety		
3 Encouragement to start or enhance Safe Routes to School Programs		
4 Future development recommendation for increased pedestrian infrastructure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	79
5 Future development recommendation for increased bicycle infrastructure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	79
6 Recommendation for a pedestrian and/or bicycle study	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	84
7 Inclusion of or future recommendation for a Master Pedestrian Plan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	79, 84
8 Inclusion of or future recommendation for a Master Bicycle Plan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	79, 84
9 Prioritization of pedestrian improvements		
10 Prioritization of bicycle improvements		
Mixed Use/Compact Development	Check	Page #
11 Future development recommendation for additional elements of a pedestrian-friendly built environment**	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	48, 70, 82
12 Recommendation for a Traditional Neighborhood Development Ordinance*		

Complete Streets Principles	Check	Page #
13 Community or town goal to reduce automobile traffic throughout the town		
14 Development regulations requiring sidewalks	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	79
15 Future development recommendation for streetscaping features	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	48, 70, 82
16 Future development recommendation emphasizing pedestrian improvements in the CBD or downtown area to increase business and create a sense of place	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	48, 82
17 Future development recommendation for traffic-calming measures on local streets		
18 Recommendation for multi-modal infrastructure supporting transit use		
19 Recommendation to identify service gaps and deficiencies in mobility for people of all ages and abilities		
20 Recommendation to develop a prioritization plan for addressing mobility issues for people of all ages and abilities in the transportation system		
Access to Healthy Food	Check	Page #
21 Community or town goal to locate shopping facilities near residences		
22 Community or town goal emphasizing public health, including physical activity and access to healthy food		
Open Space and Recreation	Check	Page #
23 Community or town goal that emphasizes parks and recreational facilities		
24 Recommendation for open-space policies and conservation-oriented land use plans	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	107, 108

References

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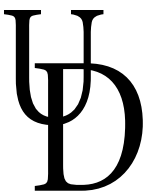


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