



## PLANNING COMMISSION / STAFF REPORT

CASE NUMBERS: 2021-0812 & 0814

REQUEST: Multiple Requests

PROJECT: Delaware Together Comprehensive Plan  
& 2020-2040 Thoroughfare Plan

MEETING DATE: April 7, 2021

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### APPLICANT/OWNER

City of Delaware

### REQUEST

2021-0812: A request by the City of Delaware for adoption of the Delaware Together Comprehensive Plan and Amendments to Chapter 1101 of the Planning & Zoning Code of the City of Delaware.

2021-0814: A request by the City of Delaware for adoption of the 2020-2040 Thoroughfare Plan and Amendments to Chapter 1103 of the Planning & Zoning Code of the City of Delaware.

### BACKGROUND/PROPOSAL

The City has been working on a new Comprehensive Plan and Thoroughfare Plan for the community for some time. The Comprehensive Plan, known as Delaware Together, has been a citizen driven effort with a formal Steering Committee appointed by City Council in June 2018. After a competitive application and selection process, a 31-person citizen Steering Committee was appointed to reflect diverse backgrounds, interests, and areas of the City. The Steering Committee worked closely with the national consultant team, Staff, and the community to guide the planning process. The work of Plan development included multiple opportunities for public engagement generating over 2,500 comments. Building upon the City of Delaware's well-managed growth strategies and strong planning tradition, Delaware Together has woven together technical analysis, citizen engagement, Steering Committee input, and best practices to reflect ideas and insights for the future in the broadest public policy document a community can create. It expresses the values and aspirations of who and what we want to become as a community over the next 10-15 years.

The Thoroughfare Plan has been created with input from City staff, regional partners, and citizens through the Access Delaware process. It reflects completed improvements over the last planning period as well as future improvements needed for major roadways and intersections. Over 60 projects have been completed during the last planning period. This plan reflects over 100 future improvements to the transportation system in the community.

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### STAFF ANALYSIS

- The Delaware Together planning process was designed to create a new city-wide plan that reflects community ideas and insights for the future. The resulting Comprehensive Plan puts forth a vision for the community for both the near and long term. A comprehensive plan is a long-term guide that expresses the values and aspirations of a community. It is the broadest public policy document a community can create for its future. It considers the input of residents, workers, and other stakeholders. The Plan helps the City respond to change and acts as a guidebook for decision-makers. It can also serve as a marketing tool to clearly convey the community's values and priorities.

The Plan is composed of 8 chapters that resulted in 6 Goals, almost 60 Objectives, and over 230 individual actions that will be pursued, monitored, and adjusted as needed over time. The Plan was driven by the public through the Steering Committee as well as engagement processes that resulted in over 2,500 separate comments, thoughts, and input items.

It is meant to be a living document that will be revisited through the years and can be modified as needed while its core vision and goals continue to guide decision-making. Outcomes of the Plan can be measured individually, but the Plan also acknowledges and seeks to leverage the potential synergies between individual recommendations.

The Steering Committee unanimously recommended adoption of the Delaware Together Plan at its meeting of March 23, 2021.

Chapter 1101 - Master Plan of the Delaware City Planning and Zoning Code adopts the Comprehensive Plan and provides for several elements of its implementation. The proposed Chapter is attached for consideration.

As there were several necessary changes and to ensure clarity, the entire current Chapter is recommended to be repealed and replaced in total with the recommended Sections.

- The 2020-2040 Thoroughfare Plan has been developed using the Access Delaware process and led by the Public Works Department and City Engineer. It is critical that this plan is updated concurrently with the Delaware Together Plan as several sections of the City code as well as the Charter of the City of Delaware closely link and/or require these plans to be in place. The Plan documents over 60 completed projects over the last planning period as well as recommends over 100 street stub extensions, roadways, and intersection improvements in the future. This plan serves as a guide to require major transportation improvements and is intended to be used during project planning development, capital improvement planning, and other initiatives. It is anticipated that the Plan and its elements may be amended through the planning period as new studies, technologies, growth and development parameters, or other elements change and evolve. The Delaware Together Plan reflects the inputs and improvements noted within this Thoroughfare Plan and thus the Thoroughfare Plan is also recommended for formal adoption concurrent with the Comprehensive Plan.

Chapter 1103 Thoroughfare Plan of the Delaware City Planning and Zoning Code adopts the Thoroughfare Plan and provides for several elements of its implementation. The proposed Chapter is attached for consideration. As there were several necessary changes and to ensure clarity, the entire current Chapter is recommended to be repealed and replaced in total with the recommended Sections.

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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION (2021-0812 – ADOPTION OF THE DELAWARE TOGETHER COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND AMENDMENTS TO CHAPTER 1101 OF THE PLANNING & ZONING CODE OF THE CITY OF DELAWARE)**

Staff recommends approval of a request by the City of Delaware for adoption of the Delaware Together Comprehensive Plan and Amendments to Chapter 1101 of the Planning & Zoning Code of the City of Delaware.

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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION (2021-0814 – ADOPTION OF THE 2020-2040 THOROUGHFARE PLAN AND AMENDMENTS TO CHAPTER 1103 OF THE PLANNING & ZONING CODE OF THE CITY OF DELAWARE)**

Staff recommends approval of a request by the City of Delaware for adoption of the 2020-2040 Thoroughfare Plan and Amendments to Chapter 1103 of the Planning & Zoning Code of the City of Delaware.

**COMMISSION NOTES:**

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*MOTION:*     \_\_\_\_\_ *1<sup>st</sup>*     \_\_\_\_\_ *2<sup>nd</sup>*     *approved*     *denied*     *tabled* \_\_\_\_\_

*CONDITIONS/MISCELLANEOUS:*

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**FILE:**  
**ORIGINAL:**     4/1/21



# Delaware **Together**

Building on Tradition, Planning for Tomorrow

## **Executive Summary**

City of Delaware  
Comprehensive Plan

**March 2021**



# PLANNING PROCESS

The Delaware Together Comprehensive Plan was developed through a process that integrated input from community members and key stakeholders with technical analysis. Participants offered thousands of ideas and suggestions that helped to shape the plan's recommended actions. This process began in early 2018 and culminated in Winter 2021.

## STEERING COMMITTEE

A 31 member citizen Steering Committee helped guide the public process and creation of the plan's recommendations. Members were selected to reflect the City's diverse backgrounds and interests through an open application process.

## ONLINE AND SUPPLEMENTAL ENGAGEMENT

Additional opportunities were created to collect input outside of the formal workshop settings. This included both online engagement and face-to-face meetings with key stakeholders.

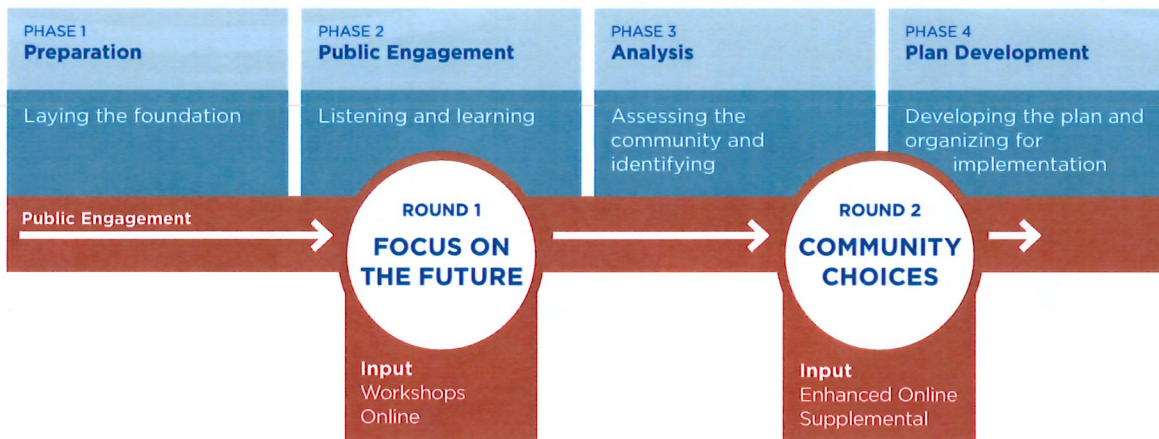
## FOCUS ON THE FUTURE

The first round of public workshops were conducted early on in the Delaware Together planning process and were used to gather input from the community through both individual work and small group brainstorming.

## COMMUNITY CHOICES

The public was invited to view the draft plan and to provide any comments, with a focus on the Actions in Chapter 7. Based upon input collected the planning team revised recommendations and other plan content to reflect additional ideas and key priorities.

## PROCESS DIAGRAM



# VISION AND GOALS

The plan is guided by the vision statement below and includes six goals that reflect themes from the community input. Each goal is supported by several objectives that organize the over 230 actions.

## VISION

*The City of Delaware strives to promote a high quality of life for all community members, protecting its unique character while embracing positive change.*

## GOALS

Building off the vision, the six goals below articulate the highest level of desired outcomes for the plan.

### A. MANAGE GROWTH AND CHANGE

- Direct, design and encourage new development to promote compatible land uses, create strong quality of place including a mix of uses where appropriate, support fiscal health and promote sustainability.

### B. ADVANCE ECONOMIC PROSPERITY

- Provide economic opportunity for all residents and support diverse, successful and resilient business and industry.

### C. BUILD SOCIAL COHESION AND EQUITY

- Foster Delaware's sense of community across geographies, income categories and demographic groups and provide stable foundations for a high quality of life.

### D. PROMOTE HOUSING QUALITY AND VARIETY

- Ensure a broad spectrum of housing options to meet the current and future needs of the population.

### E. LEVERAGE RESOURCES, INFRASTRUCTURE AND AMENITIES

- Preserve and enhance key historic buildings and neighborhoods, natural areas and open spaces, transportation and mobility options, and quality facilities and services.

### F. ENSURE FISCAL SUSTAINABILITY

- Promote development, land use, infrastructure and other policies that will support a healthy fiscal position.

## KEY CONDITIONS AND TRENDS

Over the past several decades, the City of Delaware has experienced significant changes with respect to people (population), place (physical environment), and prosperity (economics). Existing conditions and trends in the City and the region were analyzed and have informed the plan's goals, objectives and actions.

### PEOPLE

- City and region growing
- All age demographics attracted to the community
- Diversifying population (age, race and ethnicity, household type, etc.)

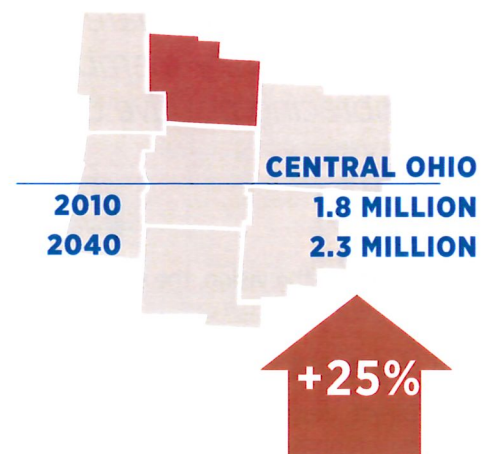
### PLACE

- Significant residential development
- Thriving National Award-Winning Downtown
- Critical new roadways constructed and needed
- Demand for housing options growing
- Pockets on disinvestment

### PROSPERITY

- Diverse economic base
- Mismatch between where people live and work
- Strong but changing industrial and business market
- Investment in infrastructure
- Emphasis on fiscal sustainability
- High quality of life and affordable housing stock

### REGIONAL GROWTH PROJECTIONS



Source: insight2050, U.S. Census, American Community Survey 2012

### EMPLOYMENT INFLOW-OUTFLOW



Source: US Census, 2015



# THEMES

Key themes that emerged under each Goal for the Plan are summarized below and supported by specific actions.

## A. MANAGE GROWTH AND CHANGE

- Encourage infill and redevelopment
- Target Focus Areas for new development / selected intensification
- Coordinate with infrastructure investments
- Promote housing options (affordable/ attainable)
- Leverage incentive-based tools (TIF, CIC, property tax-related etc.)
- Coordinate regionally
- Promote connectivity
- Update zoning for implementation

## B. ADVANCE ECONOMIC PROSPERITY

- Focus on marketing / economic development brand
- Support small business / entrepreneurs
- Encourage mix of uses, flexible spaces and quality of places in Southwest
- Strengthen workforce development and align with residents
- Utilize tools / incentives
- Update zoning for implementation



### **C. BUILD SOCIAL COHESION AND EQUITY**

- Make new residents feel welcome
- Make public spaces and events attractive and inviting for all
- Recognize our diversity
- Support age-friendly and accessibility initiatives and physical improvements
- Foster sense of Citywide togetherness and pride
- Address public health concerns (food access, public health-related, etc.)

### **E. LEVERAGE RESOURCES INFRASTRUCTURE AND AMENITIES**

- Continue Historic Preservation and leverage Downtown even more
- Enhance riverfront access
- Encourage greenways and open space access along with new development
- Focus on the Arts
- Encourage energy efficiency / sustainability
- Coordinate with Thoroughfare Plan

### **D. PROMOTE HOUSING QUALITY AND VARIETY**

- Encourage variety of housing types, including “starter”, “empty nester”, attainable, and affordable
- Support housing inside long standing utility boundary
- Encourage connections between new housing developments
- Encourage mix of housing types and mixed use in identified areas

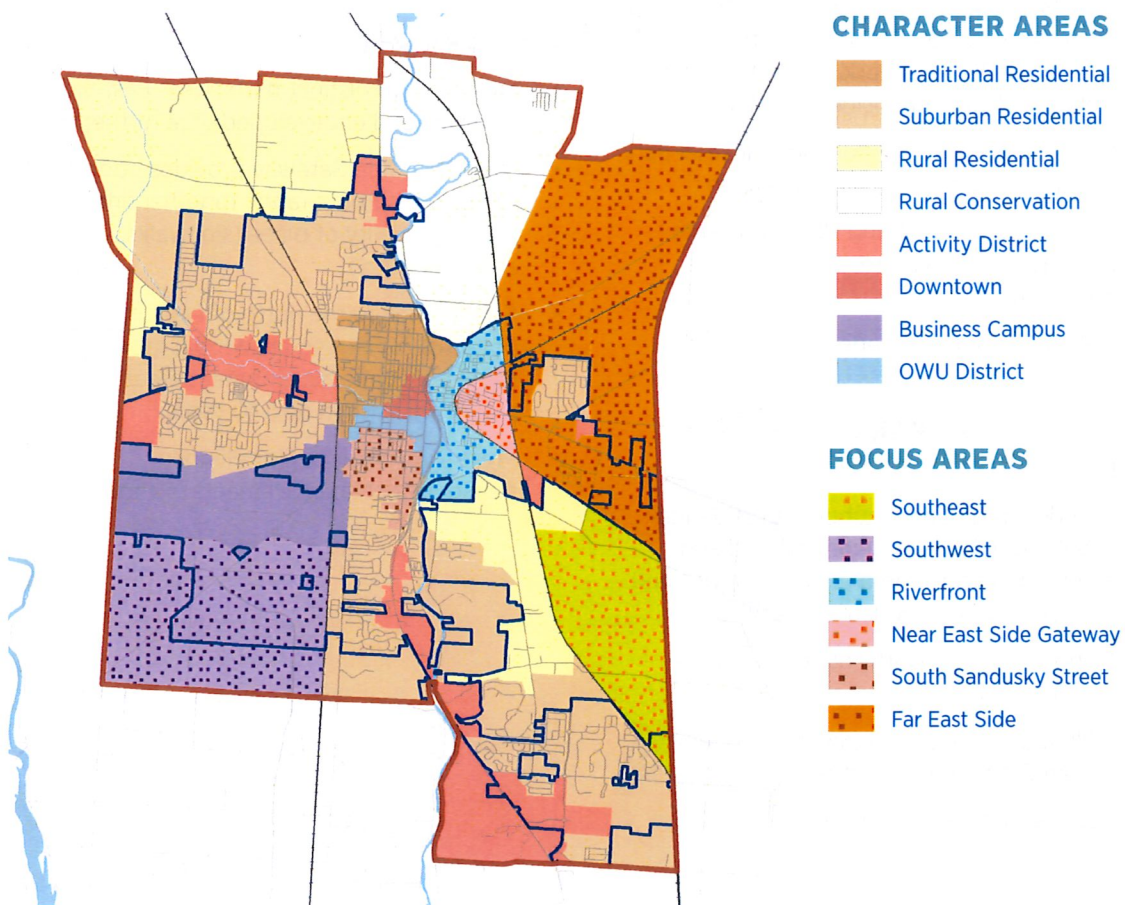
### **F. ENSURE FISCAL SUSTAINABILITY**

- Maintain current high standard for fiscal management
- Develop strategy / study of fiscal implications of land uses
- Improve data collection / management
- Develop long-term funding sources for roadway infrastructure



# CHARACTER AND LAND USE

The plan includes a character and land use map that includes Character Areas (expected to see development in the next ten years that will generally align with existing character) and Focus Areas (expected to see significant new development in the next ten years, that includes different and/or a greater mix of uses). Specific recommendations for each of the Focus Areas are included. For the Southeast and Southwest Focus Areas, creating Area Plans is also recommended.



## **SOUTHEAST**

- Large (approximately 1,500 acres) area that is largely undeveloped and ideal for new development
- Envisioned as a mixed-use area, including a variety of housing types
- Planned infrastructure improvements (e.g. Glenn Parkway Extension) and adjacency to amenities
- Detailed area plan needed

## **SOUTHWEST**

- Large (approximately 2,000 acres) area
- Has three areas that are loosely categorized or marketed as the “business parks” (Delaware Business Park, Innovation Park, Delaware Crossing Business Center)
- Some areas have pre-existing industrial park character expected to largely remain
- South of the airport and US 42 presents opportunity for a more mixed-use environment
- Detailed area plan needed

## **RIVERFRONT / NEAR EAST SIDE GATEWAY**

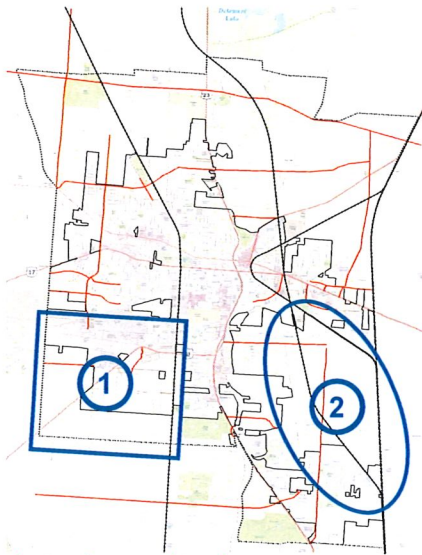
- Includes traditional / suburban residential development, major neighborhood and community scale commercial corridors, and railroad-oriented industrial / service
- Opportunity for riverfront access and development
- Infill housing potential (including attainable housing) and intensification of uses possible
- Detailed area plan needed

## **SOUTH SANDUSKY STREET**

- Includes a traditional neighborhood and one of the City's earliest automotive corridors
- Capitalize on civic anchors (Woodward Elementary, cemetery, Second Ward Community Center, Delaware General Health District)
- Address obsolete commercial development by encouraging incremental redevelopment of commercial properties – encourage neighborhood grocery/food options
- Develop stronger gateways, promote pedestrian-oriented design and support housing

## **FAR EAST SIDE**

- Includes two distinct parts: Near East Side Gateway and undeveloped area further north
- Near East Side Gateway provides opportunity to better knit built fabric together and improve quality of place (sidewalks, amenities, etc.)
- Farther area to the north offers long-term potential for limited residential growth and some economic development areas (not anticipated within next 10 years)
- Preserving corridors for planned transportation improvements is important



*The Southwest and Southeast Focus Areas are recommended for more detailed Area Plans.*

## MANAGED GROWTH AND AREA PLANNING

### ① SOUTHWEST

The Southwest Focus Area is dominated by industrial and business uses, which fan along US Route 42 West and nearby streets. Older industrial areas within the “Central Industrial” triangle formed by London Road, Liberty Road, and U.S. Route 42 accommodate a handful of heavy industrial facilities alongside residential neighborhoods and under-utilized buildings and land. Newer areas south of the airport have attracted several light industrial, high-tech and business uses and plans for land along Sawmill Parkway have envisioned more industrial and business development further south. There are transitions and land uses to consider which differ between the west and east sides of US 42, south of the airport. Activity nodes and residential uses should be considered appropriate in this area.

### ② SOUTHEAST

The Southeast Focus Area is almost entirely agricultural with larger lots and some single family residential uses, mostly along Curve, Braumiller, and Berlin Station Roads. More intense development should be located around major transportation corridors such as the future Glenn Parkway with mixed-use nodes that transition to less intense uses.

## IMPLEMENTATION AND NEXT STEPS

The plan includes an implementation matrix, which assigns responsibilities and timeframes for all Actions.

### TIMEFRAMES

Of the Actions 65 are considered short-term (0-3 years), 71 are considered medium term (3-6 years), 19 are considered long term (6+ years) and 79 are considered ongoing. The Comprehensive Plan should be reviewed on an annual basis to assess progress on Actions and identify any adjustments that are needed.

### RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibility for implementing the actions will fall on multiple agencies, organizations and others, including but not limited to City Departments. Nearly half of all Actions will require leadership by more than one entity. The implementation process will require collaboration and commitment for many years to come, and may involve the establishment of working groups or task forces to focus on key topical areas.

