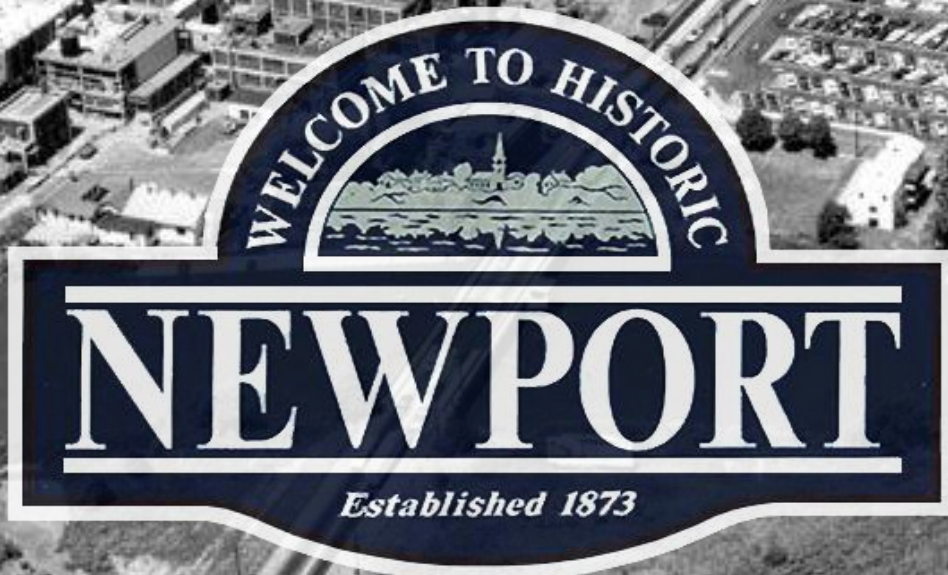
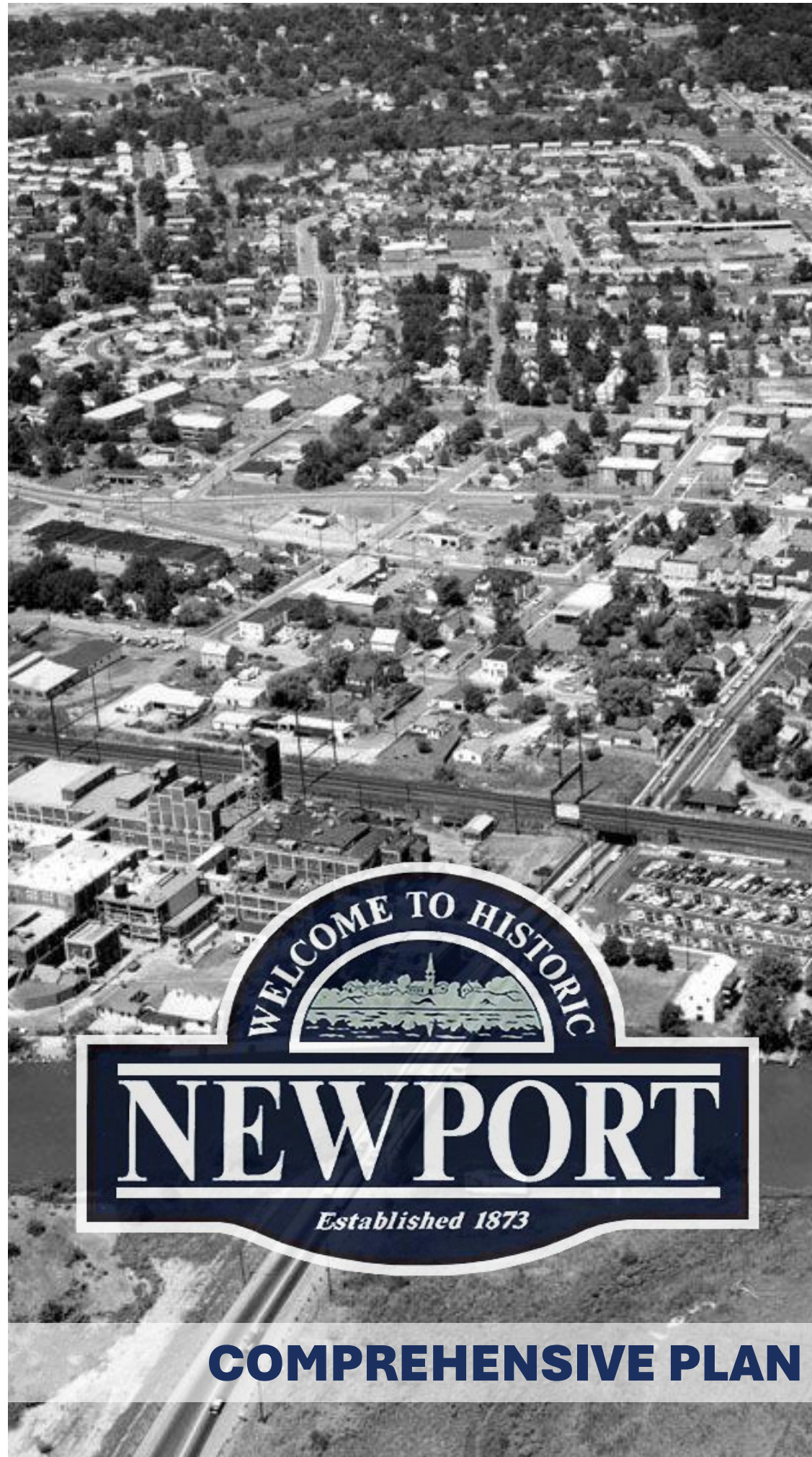




COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

**UPDATE
2024**

Prepared for:



Town of Newport
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Newport, DE 19804

Prepared by:



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The original version of this document has been signed pursuant to law.



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Tim Chatburn, Vice Mayor
Michael J. Capriglione, Commissioner
Michele MacDonald, Commissioner
Lisa Spencer, Commissioner
Wendy King, Town Manager

NEW CASTLE COUNTY COUNCIL

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David M. Culver, Land Use General Manager

GOVERNOR

Matt Meyer

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 House Bill 396

In June of 1998, the Delaware General Assembly adopted House Bill 396 (“HB 396”), which provided for each municipality in the State to undertake a community-based planning process to develop a Comprehensive Plan regulating growth in the community. The Assembly’s goal in adopting HB 396 was:

to encourage the most appropriate uses of the physical and fiscal resources of the municipality and the coordination of municipal growth, development, and infrastructure investment actions with those of other municipalities, counties and the State through a process of municipal comprehensive planning.¹

HB 396 (b) 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."

Once completed and adopted, a municipality’s Comprehensive Plan will be used as the basis for zoning decisions, infrastructure spending, annexation decisions and redevelopment and general growth policies.

HB 396 also requires that each municipality in Delaware review its Comprehensive Plan at least every five (5) years to determine its relevance given changing conditions in a community. The Plan must be fully revised and formally readopted at least every ten (10) years.

The Town of Newport first adopted a Comprehensive Plan in May 2003. The Town was granted a waiver from the 5-year review by the Office of State Planning in 2008. Upon acceptance by the Town Commission and State, this document will constitute the mandatory 10-year Comprehensive Plan revision and readoption.

1.2 Managing Growth in 21st Century Delaware

In December of 1999, the Governor’s Cabinet Committee on State Planning Issues published a report focusing on how Delaware and its 57 individual municipalities can manage the explosion of growth occurring in the state. Policies related to sprawl management (“Smart Growth”), environmental issues and business concerns and their

¹ HB 396 (a)

collective impact on public sector spending were addressed. The result was a series of initiatives designed to shape Delaware's future. At its heart, these growth management initiatives are grounded in sound planning principles.

1.3 House Bill 255

In July of 2001, House Bill 255 was signed into law. Said Bill amended various land use laws in the State of Delaware and, most notably, strengthened the role that Comprehensive Plans play in a county and a municipality. Such a document is required to, in general, review the existing conditions in a particular county and municipality, outline community goals and objectives and state policies regarding how the community plans to achieve said goals and objectives.



Old Town Hall

Source: <https://newport.delaware.gov/photo-gallery/>

2.0 NEW CASTLE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

2.1 Background

The current *New Castle County Comprehensive Development Plan* was first adopted in 1988 (“1988 Plan”) and updated in 1997 (“1997 Plan Update”), 2002 (“2002 Plan Update”), 2007 (“007 Plan Update”), 2012 (“2012 Plan Update”), and 2022 (“Comprehensive Plan 2050”). The 1988 Plan superseded the County’s previous plan, which had been in place since 1967.

The 1988 Plan established long-term development goals for New Castle County based on growth management principles. The 1997, 2002, 2007, 2012, and 2022 Plan Updates refined these goals in accordance with sound land use principles, demographic trends and land use patterns occurring during these planning periods. The 1988 Plan and the subsequent Plan Updates established objectives and implementation strategies to guide policy decisions for the County.

The State’s 1988 Quality of Life Act requires a Comprehensive Development Plan Update to include the following elements:

- Economic Development
- Conservation (including Agriculture)
- Recreation and Open Space
- Intergovernmental Coordination
- Water and Sewer
- Future Land Use
- Stormwater Management (optional)
- Housing
- Historic Preservation
- Accomplishments
- Mobility
- Community Facilities
- Community Design (optional)

Goals as stated in the New Castle County Comprehensive Plan 2050:

- Planned Growth
- Environmental Justice
- Land Preservation
- Sustainability & Climate Change
- Economic Justice
- Implementation
- Targeted Strategies
- Diversity

2.2 Relationship of County Plan to Newport Comprehensive Plan

The concepts underlying Newport's *2024 Comprehensive Plan Update* are designed to work in concert with and advance the goals and objectives of the New Castle County Comprehensive Plan 2050. In which, this *Comprehensive Plan Update* coordinates concepts referenced in the County's *2050 Plan* and aligns with the framework provided.

As the Town of Newport shifts its focus from outward expansion to internal development, one aspect is to prioritize the refinement of zoning and land use within its existing municipal boundaries. A key component of Newport's *2024 Comprehensive Plan Update* will involve aligning internal land uses with those of surrounding areas, particularly along the town's perimeter.

3.0 2024 NEWPORT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

3.1 Statutory Requirements

22 Delaware Code §702 requires Delaware municipal governments to develop and regularly update land use plans. Smaller Cities and towns (those with a population under 2,000) are required to develop a municipal development strategy that includes the jurisdiction's position on:

- Population Growth
- Housing Growth
- Expansion of Boundaries
- Development of Adjacent Areas
- Redevelopment Potential
- Community Character
- The General Use of Land
- Critical Community Development Issues
- Key Infrastructure Issues
- Their Coordination with State, County and other Municipalities

3.2 This Document

This document, entitled *2024 Comprehensive Plan Update, Town of Newport, New Castle County, Delaware* (hereinafter referred to as the “*2024 Comprehensive Plan Update*” or “*2024 Plan Update*”), supersedes the Town's 2014 Comprehensive Plan (hereinafter referred to as the “*2014 Comprehensive Plan*” or “*2014 Plan*”), and provides a discussion of the issues currently faced by the resident and businesses in Newport and outlines strategies and recommendations to address those issues. The recommendations contained herein, along with the maps developed for this Plan, are designed to assist Newport's leaders in their efforts to maintain and enhance the quality of life in the town.

2024 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

To ensure transparency during the planning process of a town's Comprehensive Plan the 2024 Town of Newport Comprehensive Plan Update has been reviewed through the Town's public meeting process, which process commenced with a working group meeting in 2023. An ordinance to adopt the 2024 comprehensive plan was introduced in February 2024 and passed in March 2024. There was a public hearing at the second reading of the ordinance. In February, 2025 the comprehensive plan was submitted to PLUS. The draft comprehensive plan update was updated again in response to public agency comments received and a new draft ordinance was introduced by the Town on December 18, 2025. The new ordinance is currently scheduled and expected to pass on January 15, 2026.

3.3 Other Planning Efforts

In addition to this Comprehensive Plan, the Town of Newport has engaged in several other plans and planning efforts including:

- The Newport to Newark Trail feasibility study & information
- The Newport Train Station Feasibility Study (2013)
- The Newport Train Station Ridership Forecasting (2018)
- The Newport Transportation Plan (2021)
- The current Newport Train Station Study (ongoing, projected completion in 2026)

4.0 COMMUNITY PROFILE: TOWN OF NEWPORT

The Community Profile for the Town of Newport is provided as a description of the character of the Town (and the area surrounding Newport, as appropriate) based on the information available from the U.S. Census Bureau, the Delaware Population Consortium, various internet sources and input by and direction from Town officials.

4.1 Physical Profile

The Town of Newport is located in the north central portion of the State of Delaware in New Castle County (39.71° north, 75.6° west). Newport is located 97 miles north of Washington D.C. and 38 miles from Dover, the State capital. ²

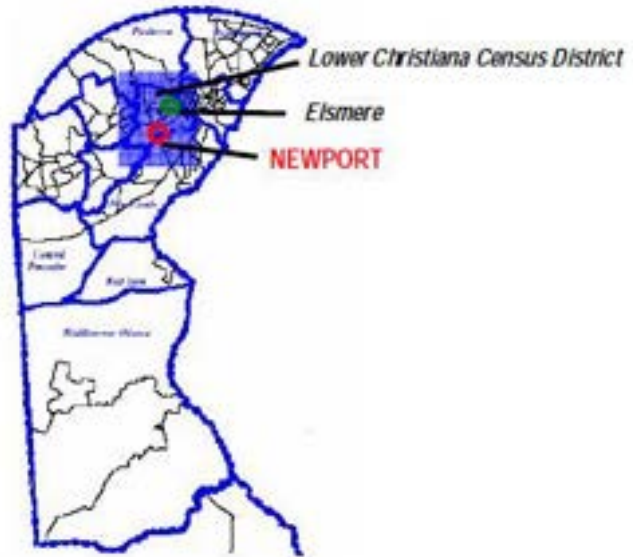
The incorporated land area of Newport is 0.46 square miles, including .01 square miles of surface water areas.

² See *Regional Context Map, Aerial Photograph, and Newport Parcel Map* in Exhibit section.

4.2 Location

The Town of Newport is located above the Chesapeake and Delaware (“C&D”) Canal in the northern portion of New Castle County in what has traditionally been called the “Lower Christiana Census District.”

The major defining characteristic of the Town’s geography is the Christina River, which forms Newport’s southern boundary line.



4.3 Town History

Newport is among the oldest communities in Delaware, tracing its roots to the early colonial days of the Country. Since its inception, Newport has been a crossroad of commerce for the State. The “Old Kings Road,” which traveled from Philadelphia to Baltimore, ran through the lands where Newport now stands.

In 1735, John Justis (Justis Street) purchased 100 acres of land from a Maryland Landholder in order to build a town for business purposes. Justis saw the potential for trade in this area, which bordered on the Christina Creek and thus was already in use for shipping grains and other materials.

In 1735, Samuel Marshall purchased 18 acres from Justis and laid out lots for sale. This first “town plan” marks the founding what was to become Newport. Many of the street names created during the early development are still in use today, including Ayre Street, Augustine Street, John Street and James Street.

By the late 1700s, Newport had developed into a bustling port town, with warehouses and wharves built along the shores of Christina Creek. The primary trade commodities were grain, flour and crops grown on farms in Delaware and Pennsylvania.

Newport’s location as a stagecoach (relay) stop along Kings Highway made the Town an important commercial hub for the young nation. Under the newly created United States Postal Service, Town resident Wm. Robeson was commissioned Newport Postmaster in 1792 and oversaw the creation of one of the first Post Offices in the United States in March 1793. The location of this structure is generally believed to be the corner of James and Market Streets in downtown Newport.³

³ Original Post Office decommissioned in June 30, 1945, with services relocated to the present Post Office operation. Information regarding the Newport Post Office was provided by Town Officials.

2024 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

Newport continued to thrive as a commercial center into the early 1800s. In 1818, the Newport-Gap Pike (toll road) was constructed, which attracted significant commercial development to the area.

Newport's seaborne growth continued until the mid-1800s, when the Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore Railroad Company extended its tracks through the Town. As rail service surpassed shipping for the transport of freight, Newport began to see a decline in its (port-oriented) industry.

In order to maintain a thriving economy, Newport was forced to change its commercial focus. By the latter part of the 1800s, the Town's industry had shifted to tanning and fertilizer production, thus keeping pace with the changing mode of cargo transportation.

This period saw the establishment of a significant mercantile sector in Newport, with the addition of the Newport National Bank, five (5) general stores, six (6) taverns and other commercial operations.

Newport was incorporated as a Town on April 17, 1873. The Town was formed as a Commission form of government, with five (5) Commissioners elected at large. This form of government remains in place today.

By the 1900s, northern Delaware had joined the Industrial Revolution, led by the Du Pont Company. Newport participated in the State's burgeoning chemical industry when, in 1908, Henrik J. Krebs built a chemical and pigment plant along Christina Creek.⁴

With the advent of mass automobile ownership and the interstate highway system of the post-war era,⁵ the Newport area became and remains today a desirable place to live. Residential development in and around Newport ⁶ took advantage of the Town's proximity to employment centers such as Wilmington and Philadelphia to provide suburban living to City employees.

Throughout this period, the Town government provided essential services, including trash collection and police. The Town maintained a landfill near the Christina River at what is now the Newport Industrial Park.

In the early 1960s, construction of Interstate 95 (I-95) took place just south of the Newport town limits. Additionally, residential development to the north and west of Newport created the need for a major north/south thoroughway linking Kirkwood Highway to I-95. In the 1970s the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT) planned and constructed State Route 141 through the middle of Newport. The construction of this highway, although

⁴ *Much of that plant remains today under the ownership of BASF.*

⁵ *WWII*

⁶ *Stonehurst, Newport Heights, Lyndalia, Silview, Gordy Estates, Westview and Forest Brook Glen*

providing a great service to the motoring public, had a negative impact on the appearance and character of the Town.

The 1980s heralded more changes for Newport. In 1984, faced with the increasing complexity of managing a municipality, the Commissioners proposed and received approval for a Charter change to allow for the hiring of a Town Manager. Also in 1984, Newport privatized its municipal water system, transferring this antiquated system to the Wilmington Suburban Water Company.

The 1980s also saw the development of the Newport Industrial Park at the site of the (former) municipal landfill. Developers ⁷ recognized the potential of Newport as a location for commercial real estate and constructed numerous warehouse-type buildings that have contributed greatly to the town's tax base. Additional development was enabled by the annexation of a tract of land in 1991, which led to the construction of over 10,000 square feet of premium office/warehouse space.

In 2007, BASF petitioned the Town government to annex several acres of land into Newport. After annexation, the company embarked on a \$130 million project to create one of the most advanced pigment manufacturing operations in the world. The investment by BASF, along with similar initiatives at Air Liquide's manufacturing facility on Water Street, significantly reduced the environmental impacts of their operations to the benefit of the citizens of Newport.

4.4 Municipal Government

Newport has a non-partisan Commission/Town Manager form of government. The Town Commission consists of five (5) Commissioners, all of whom serve at-large for two (2) year terms. One Commissioner is selected by the body to serve as Mayor, and one is selected to serve as Vice Mayor. The Mayor presides over all Commission meetings.

Day-to-day operations for Newport are the responsibility of a full-time, professional Town Manager. This individual, appointed by the Town Commission, oversees the Town's finances and personnel matters, manages capital projects and solicits for and administers grant funds, supplies and equipment. The Town Manager directly supervises all municipal employees.

A Board of Adjustment, consisting of the Mayor, Town Solicitor and a resident appointed by the Commissioners, hears appeals for variance relief from the Town's Zoning and subdivision ordinance. Such relief is required when a desired use or any physical aspect of a proposed development does not conform with the requirements of the said ordinances.

⁷ The Harvey family (Harvey & Harvey, Inc. and HDC, Inc.), the Schmuessers (Active Crane Rentals).

4.5 Population⁸

With a 2020 population of 910 and approximately 349 households, Newport is a small town with a suburban character.

Census data collected by the US Census Bureau over the decades reveals that Newport's population first topped 1,000 people during the 1940s. Since then, population has fluctuated from a high of 1,366 (1970) to the current low of 910. It appears the population is on a continuous decline and reflects an ongoing trend that could be driven by multiple factors including lack of amenities and an aging population.

Table 1 depicts the population of Newport and the percentage of population changes from decade to decade between 1940 and 2020.⁹ It is our hope that after years of population decline, the population can be stabilized. Due to the declines of the past, the current housing stock is more than adequate to handle any modest increase in population.

Table 1: Population Trend Comparison (Newport & New Castle County)¹⁰

Year	Newport	% Change	New Castle County	% Change
1940	987	-	179,562	-
1950	1,171	18.6%	218,879	22.0%
1960	1,239	5.8%	307,466	40.5%
1970	1,366	10.3%	346,674	13.7%
1980	1,167	-14.6%	367,562	4.5%
1990	1,245	6.7%	441,946	20.2%
2000	1,122	-9.9%	500,265	13.2%
2010	1,055	-5.9%	538,479	7.6%
2020	910	-13.7%	570,719	5.9%

Table 2 provides population projections for New Castle County from 2015 to 2050. These projections show an approximately 9.8±% increase in the County's population during this time period.

⁸ US Census: DP-1: Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics: 2020 Demographic Profile Data

⁹ The population growth for New Castle County is attributed to an explosion of residential construction in the southern section of the county, specifically the Middletown-Odesa Census County Division. Included for comparative purposes is the population of New Castle County as a whole.

¹⁰ US Census: DP-1: Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics: 2020 Demographic Profile Data

Table 2: Population Projections (New Castle County)¹¹

Year	Population
2015	554,867
2020	570,719
2025	582,747
2030	593,944
2035	600,019
2040	600,240
2045	595,945
2050	589,023

Table 2A: Population Projections (Town of Newport)¹²

Year	Population
2015	1,066
2020	901
2025	969
2030	873
2040	877
2050	868

Table 3 and Table 4 present Census Bureau summaries of age, gender and race of the residents of Newport.¹³

Table 3: Newport Population Demographics for Census Year 2020 (Age & Gender)

Age	Male	Female	Total	Age	Male	Female	Total
Under 5	21	30	51	45 to 49	18	18	36
5 to 9 years	25	39	64	50 to 54	23	27	50
10 to 14	30	23	53	55 to 59	26	32	58
15 to 19	41	26	67	60 to 64	37	36	73
20 to 24	21	29	50	65 to 69	26	16	42
25 to 29	42	38	80	70 to 74	18	16	34
30 to 34	36	51	87	75 to 79	5	12	17

¹¹ Annual Projections from the Delaware Population Consortium, 10/14/2024

¹² Annual Projections from the Delaware Population Consortium, 10/14/2024

¹³ US Census: DP-1: Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics: 2020 Demographic Profile Data

Age	Male	Female	Total	Age	Male	Female	Total
35 to 39	43	28	71	80 to 84	2	0	2
40 to 44	31	27	58	85 years +	8	9	17

Table 4: Newport Population Demographics for Census Year 2020 (Race)

Race ¹⁴	Number	Percentage
One Race	752	82.6%
White	472	51.9%
Black or African American	138	15.2%
American Indian & Alaska Native	4	0.4%
Asian	13	1.4%
Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander	3	0.3%
Some Other Race	122	13.4%
Two or More Races	158	17.4%
Total Races alone or in combination with one or more other races: ¹⁵		
White	617	67.8%
Black or African American	167	18.4%
American Indian & Alaska Native	19	2.1%
Asian	24	2.6%
Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Islander	3	0.3%
Some Other Race	244	26.8%
Hispanic or Latino		
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	280	30.8%
Not Hispanic or Latino	630	69.2%
Hispanic or Latino by Race		
Hispanic or Latino	280	30.8%
White alone	32	3.5%
Black or African American alone	5	0.5%

¹⁴ Response of Zero for Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese, Asian Indian, Chinese, Filipino, Guamanian or Chamorro, Samoan and Other Pacific Islander deleted for brevity.

¹⁵ U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 Census Demographic Profile. The alone or in combination categories are tallies of responses rather than respondents. That is, the alone or in combination categories are not mutually exclusive. Individuals who reported two races were counted in two separate and distinct alone or in combination race categories, while those who reported three races were counted in three categories, and so on. For example, a respondent who indicated "White and Black or African American" was counted in the White alone or in combination category as well as in the Black or African American alone or in combination category. Consequently, the sum of all alone or in combination categories equals the number of races reported (i.e., responses), which exceeds the total population.

Race ¹⁴	Number	Percentage
American Indian & Alaska Native alone	3	0.3%
Asian alone	3	0.3%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	0	0.0%
Some Other Race alone	119	13.1%
Two or More Races	118	13.0%
Not Hispanic or Latino	630	69.2%
White alone	440	48.4%
Black or African American alone	133	14.6%
American Indian & Alaska Native alone	1	0.1%
Asian alone	10	1.1%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	3	0.3%
Some Other Race alone	3	0.3%
Two or More Races	40	4.4%

4.6 Housing

While the 2020 census indicates that there were 378¹⁶ housing units in Newport, this continues a downward trend in the total number of units (465¹⁷ units in 2010, and the 487¹⁸ units reported in 2000), representing a 22.4% decrease over the 2000-2020 time period.

Housing in Newport is dated. Table 5 reveals that 69.1% of the housing stock in Newport was constructed prior to 1970. With more than half of the housing stock being built before the 1970s and none being built within the last 5 years, the housing stock may lack the capacity to handle demands for modern living. The older housing may not be as effective in supporting the growth of a sustainable town.

¹⁶ US Census: H1 2020: DEC Demographic and Housing Characteristics

¹⁷ US Census: H1 2010: DEC Restricting Data (PL 94-171)

¹⁸ US Census: H001 2000: DEC Summary File 3

Table 5: Newport Housing Stock ¹⁹

Year Built	Estimate	% Total Estimate
2010 to 2019	5	1.3%
2000 to 2009	3	0.8%
1990 to 1999	8	2.0%
1980 to 1989	40	10.2%
1970 to 1979	65	16.6%
1960 to 1969	53	13.6%
1950 to 1959	93	23.8%
1940 to 1949	58	14.8%
1939 or earlier	66	16.9%

Despite this decrease in total housing units, Newport's Commissioners and residents remain concerned with the relative decrease in homeownership. The 2014 Comprehensive Plan reported that Newport was experiencing a shift in its ratio of owner occupied vs. rental occupied unit mix, with the 2000 Census reporting 271 units, equating to 54.7% of the Town's total housing stock, being rental.²⁰ The 2020 Census reported 294 rental units, 77.8% of the Town's reported 378 total housing units.²¹

Newport's policymakers continue to believe that further decrease in home ownership will affect the Town's character and sense of community, and fear that an abundance of rental properties will lead to code and property maintenance issues. Similarly, the Newport governing body believes that an over-abundance of rental properties may weaken property values. Town policy ~ articulated in the 2014 Comprehensive Plan and restated here ~ is to retain strong property values as vital to the future of Newport.

4.7 Community Services

4.7.1 Town Government

The Town of Newport is an incorporated municipality with powers granted by the State of Delaware to govern themselves through their elected officials and authorized appointees. The powers of the Town are established in its Town Charter, which was amended in 2012.

Municipal offices include the Town Commission, Mayor and Vice Mayor (elected from among the Commissioners), Town Manager and Board of Adjustment.

¹⁹ US Census: DP-04 2022: ACS 5 Year Estimates Data Profiles Selected Housing Characteristics

²⁰ Conventional Planning doctrine places a 'healthy' housing rental: ownership ratio at 30:70.

²¹ US Census: DP1: Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics 2020.

Notable Town Ordinances adopted to regulate land use, development, construction and property maintenance and public health and safety are:

- Zoning Ordinance: Regulates uses of property (land use) throughout Newport as well as the size and location of buildings and signage.
- Subdivision and Land Development Ordinances: Establishes procedures for the review and approval of proposed subdivisions and development.
- Business License Ordinance: Requires registration of all businesses in Newport.
- Building, Plumbing and Mechanical Codes and Existing Structures Code: Set standards for new construction, major repairs and building system replacement. Permits are required for all but minor repair work.
- Noise Disturbance Ordinance: Protects Town citizens from excessive noise generated by equipment, vehicles, voices and animals.
- Dog Ordinance: Prohibits dogs from running loose and requiring proper disposal of animal waste.
- Graffiti Ordinance: Defines graffiti as a public nuisance which is destructive to property rights and property values as well as the general quality of life in the community and establishes anti-graffiti enforcement tools to protect public and private property from graffiti vandalism.²²

4.7.2 Public Safety & Emergency Services

Police

The Town of Newport provides its residents, property owners and businesses with police protection 24 hours per day, 365 days per year. The Police Department is dispatched by the State Police (RECOM) via a countywide Emergency Communications System (Dial 911).

The Police Department is located in the Town Administration building at 226 N. James Street.

Fire

The Minquas (Volunteer) Fire Company provides fire, rescue and ambulance service to a seven (7) square mile service area which includes the Town of Newport.

The Minquas Fire Company's original firehouse was constructed in-or-about 1907 by the firefighters themselves. Located at 21 North James Street, the facility was remodeled and expanded in 1950.

²² Ordinance No. 2011-001 (adopted September 15, 2011)

The fire company moved into a new, state-of-the-art, Fire Station / Public Safety Building in 2005. This facility, located at the corner of James Street and Justis Street, includes an office for each officer, a large kitchen / banquet facility, a television room and modern fitness room.

Medical Services

While there is no hospital in Newport, the Town is well served by several first-class centers nearby, the closest being Christiana Hospital in Newark, Delaware.

4.7.3 Public Works

The Town of Newport has maintenance staff that maintains the Town's street and roadway network ²³ as well as Newport's parks and public buildings. Services include, but are not limited to, street sweeping, leaf and litter collection and snow removal.

Municipal garbage collection is provided once weekly, while recycling is provided via Waste Management every other week. Two bulk pickups occur in April and October. The town will provide, for the cost of tipping, special pickups.

4.7.4 Education and Library Facilities

The Town of Newport is part of the Red Clay Consolidated School District. Children in Newport attend the Donald J. Richey Elementary School, Richardson Park School and Henry C. Conrad Middle School of Science (a math-science magnet school serving both middle school (grades 6-8) and High School (grades 9-12) students.

For High School, children in Newport go through Delaware's School Choice Program, whereby children are afforded the chance to enroll in a public school in any school district. Despite this option, teenagers in Newport usually opt to attend John Dickinson High School on Milltown Road, Alexis I Du Pont High School in Greenville or Thomas McKean High School on McKennan's Church Road. Buses transport children residing in Newport to all schools attended.

While there is no public library within Newport, the closest libraries are located in the Red Clay Consolidated School District schools and the New Castle County Library System. ²⁴

²³ Not including roadways owned and maintained by the State of Delaware or New Castle County.

²⁴ Including the Wilmington Public Library, Elsmere Library and the New Castle County/Kirkwood Highway Library.

4.7.5 Recreation

The Town of Newport offers the following parks and recreation areas as amenities. These facilities are not only designed for use by local residents, but as attractors for eco-tourists, students and residents of surrounding communities:²⁵

- An approximately 26,000-square foot park located at W. Christian Street along the Town's westerly border.
- A 9,300-square foot park is located along the Christina River south of Water Street.
- *Newport Boat Ramp*: An approximately two (2) acre State constructed, Town operated boat ramp and nature preserve along the Christina River at Thom's Drive in the Town's Industrial Park.²⁶ Amenities include a 47' x 105' boat ramp with two (2) parallel floating boarding docks and 26 parking spaces (13 of which are sized for vehicles with trailers). The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the State Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC): Division of Fish and Wildlife funded this amenity.
- The Richey School Playground / Park consisting of one (1) outdoor basketball court, fixed playground equipment and two (2) baseball fields; all maintained by the Red Clay Consolidated School District and community patrons.
- *Newport Rowing Club*: Formed as a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation to promote education, training and participation in amateur rowing, the Club seeks to help its student athletes develop healthy minds, bodies and character through training and competition. Sportsmanship, teamwork and the highest principles of amateur sports competition are emphasized in regattas held on the historic Christiana River in Newport as well as regional and national rowing venues. Since its inception, NCR athletes have been recruited by top universities and rowing programs nationwide.
- *Ella Johnson Memorial Park*: a 2.4-acre public park made possible by the donation of the W. Ayre Street land by the DuPont Company in 2003. Named for Miss Ella Johnson ~ a pioneer among Newport women ~ who served as the Newport Postmaster and founded the Women's Club of Newport (WCON)²⁷, this handicapped-accessible Park includes amenities such as a walking trail; playground and exercise equipment; benches and a gazebo; picnic tables; a community stage; and significant landscaping. The park was formally annexed into Newport and dedicated in 2010.

²⁵ See Parks, Recreation and Conservations Areas in the Exhibit section. The former park located along S. Augustine Street adjacent to the Old Town Hall and St. James Cemetery has been eliminated.

²⁶ Access to this area is made through Harvey Drive.

²⁷ Initially organized to wrap bandages for the Red Cross during World War I, the WCON had a broad array of civic and social interests, including fine arts, libraries, public health and welfare, citizenship, education, and social events. In addition to her many civic duties, 'Miss Ella' (and her sisters Mary and Alice) touched the lives of children throughout Newport, Documents reveal that each year the sisters had a gift for every child in Newport under their Christmas Tree.

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- The Ella Johnson Memorial Park received funding through the Delaware Land and Water Conservation Fund program and shall remain an open space for conservation and recreation purposes in perpetuity. This commitment not only aligns with the envisioned mixed-use redevelopment (see Section 6.2.4) in the nearby GB Overlay District, it also has come to the Town's attention that DELDOT, WILMAPCO, and Bike Delaware, among other interested stakeholders, envision that a future pedestrian trail from Newport to Newark may traverse through the Ella Johnson Memorial Park. The Town anticipates learning of more specificity on these plans in 2026-2027.
- *Newport River Trail*: a proposed 2-mile paved trail that will serve as a key connection between the Town of Newport and the Jack A. Markell Trail. This trail will provide a low-stress route for bicyclists and pedestrians traveling to and from Newport and Wilmington and offer important safety, health, and economic benefits to County residents. New Castle County secured a \$23,000,000 Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity Grant (RAISE) in 2023. Further environmental assessments and regulatory permitting are underway. The Town hopes to learn of significant progress in 2026 on this important initiative.

In addition to these traditional recreation areas, Newport is home to the privately run Newport Stake Park, a skateboard and rollerblading park located in the heart of the Town's downtown area. While this facility is Christian-oriented, it is open to all people, regardless of religion. The Skate Park boasts very low entrance fees and stages popular local and regional events and skating tournaments, providing youth activities in a fun, safe atmosphere.

4.7.6 Senior Services

Approximately 26.7% of Newport's population is age 55 or older. The town has no senior center and does not offer senior services. The nearest senior center is the Absalom-Jones center in Belvedere.

Resident homeowners who are 65 years of age or older, or who are under 65 but who are 50% or more disabled, are eligible for a property tax exemption equal to \$32,000 of assessed value of their residential property. Single individuals are eligible to receive this exemption if their taxable income does not exceed \$15,000 annually. Married couples are eligible for the exemption if their combined annual income does not exceed \$19,000. Applications for this exemption must be filed with the County by June 1st of each year.

4.7.7 Other Services

Several local places of worship have collectively opened a soup kitchen for those in need. This facility, hosted by the Peniel United Methodist Church (115 East Market Street), offers services on Fridays on an ongoing basis.

Newport is served by a U.S. Postal Service Office located on Stanton ~ Newport Pike. Mail is delivered to Newport residents and businesses daily.

4.8 Infrastructure

While Newport does not provide municipal utility services to property owners, the Town is serviced by private electric and gas from Delmarva Power, by public sanitary sewer (and wastewater treatment) from the New Castle County sanitary sewer system²⁸ and by private water from the Veolia (primary service) and the Artesian Water Company (secondary service).

Communication services are available from a variety of companies.

4.9 Environmental Quality and Natural Resources

4.9.1 Source Water Protection Areas²⁹

The Town of Newport recognizes the importance of environmental stewardship and the protection of local drinking water resources. As part of the Comprehensive Plan update, the Town evaluated available data to identify Water Resource Protection Areas (WRPAs), including Wellhead, Surface Water, and Recharge WRPAs. No Wellhead or Surface Water WRPAs are located within the Town's municipal limits; however, a Recharge WRPA has been identified at the northern end of Newport. This area is illustrated on the Parks, Recreation, and Conservation Areas Exhibit. *To support long-term water resource protection, the Town will assess optimum strategies to consider for the future protection of recharge zones.*

4.9.2 Surface Water Quality

The Town of Newport lies within the Christina River Watershed. A DNREC pollution control strategy is in place to improve water quality throughout this watershed. Improvements in water quality at various monitoring stations throughout the watershed have been realized over the past decade.

The Town's contribution to improving surface water quality will parallel the envisioned mixed-use redevelopment in the GB Overlay District. The mixed-use ordinance (2016-002) enacted by the Town encourages redevelopment to utilize best management practices (BMPs) attendant to environmental sustainability. These BMPs include, but are not limited to, expanded green space; preservation and addition of new trees; shared parking incentives; Smart Growth principles, traffic calming, and planted islands for corridor redevelopment; green roofs and other technologies to reduce surface water runoff; and net reduction of impervious surfaces. The Town's adoption of the Sediment & Stormwater Ordinance (2017-

²⁸ See *Sewer Infrastructure Map* in Exhibit section.

²⁹ See *Parks, Recreation and Conservations Areas Map* in Exhibit Section

001) further embraces BMPs for stormwater management; protects the municipal stormwater system from illicit discharges; and requires a stormwater review for future redevelopment permit applications.

4.9.3 Marsh Nesting Birds in the Delaware Ecological Network

The Town of Newport includes land within the Delaware Ecological Network, along the Christina River and co-located with wetlands. The Delaware Ecological Network is a statewide network of interconnected lands having significant ecological value. Aerial imagery and wetland habitat maps indicate that low and high marsh habitat is present within the Town. Several state-rare species of conservation concern frequently nest in low marsh habitat, including the saltmarsh sparrow (*Ammospiza caudacutus*), Coastal Plain swamp sparrow (*Melospiza georgiana nigrescens*), willet (*Tringa semipalmata*), state-listed endangered American oystercatcher (*Haematopus palliatus*), federally listed threatened black rail (*Laterallus jamaicensis*), seaside sparrow (*Ammospiza maritimus*), and clapper rail (*Rallus longirostris*).

4.9.4 Migratory Fish Species in the Christina River

The Christina River, particularly in the stretch near Newport, serves as an important resource for several migratory fish species including American shad, blueback herring, alewife, striped bass, and American eel. As a tidal tributary of the Delaware River, the Christina provides a critical link between the freshwater spawning grounds upstream and the estuarine and marine habitats of the Delaware Bay and Atlantic Ocean. Its mix of tidal and non-tidal sections, combined with relatively gentle gradients and diverse aquatic habitats, creates the right conditions for these species to complete their life cycles.

For anadromous species like American shad, blueback herring, and alewife, the Christina River's accessible freshwater reaches are essential for spawning. These species migrate from the ocean each spring to deposit their eggs in freshwater, where the young then grow before moving downstream to mature in marine waters. Improvements in water quality over recent decades, along with targeted habitat restoration and upstream tributary dam removal projects, have helped reopen upstream sections of the river basin, enhancing spawning and nursery habitat for these important forage fish.

Catadromous species like the American eel use the Christina River in the opposite direction, migrating from their spawning grounds in the Sargasso Sea to live much of their lives in the river's freshwater and brackish environments. The river's complex network of channels, marshes, and tributaries provides ideal feeding and growth habitat for juvenile eels before they return to the ocean as adults to spawn. Striped bass, a highly mobile species, also rely on the Christina and other Delaware River tributaries as nursery and feeding grounds during their early life stages.

Overall, the Christina River plays a vital ecological role as part of the broader Delaware River estuary system. Its location, habitat diversity, and improving environmental conditions make it a key resource supporting the migration, reproduction, and survival of several fish species of ecological, recreational, and cultural significance to the region.

4.9.5 Flood Zones

The Town of Newport shall conform and comply with all federal and State standards attendant to flood zone regulations.

4.9.6 Stormwater Management

The Town of Newport adopted a sediment and stormwater ordinance in 2017, Ordinance No. 2017-001, An Ordinance to Regulate the Sediment and Stormwater Management Systems of the Town of Newport. This ordinance adopts the Delaware Sediment and Stormwater Regulations, which became effective January 1, 2014. The revised regulations have a goal of reducing stormwater runoff for the rainfall events up to the equivalent one-year storm, 2.7 inches of rainfall in 24 hours. Implementation strategies encourage infiltration back into the soil, remove pollutants, and protect waterways. This ordinance also allows the use of Best Management Practices (BMPs), protects the municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4) from illicit discharges, and requires a stormwater review as part of the Town's requirements for new development requests.

4.9.7 Brownfields

The Delaware Brownfields Development Program, established in 2004, was designed to facilitate the cleanup, remediation, and redevelopment of vacant, abandoned, or underutilized properties that may be affected by environmental contamination. By reducing environmental uncertainties and providing financial and technical incentives, the program has become one of the state's most effective tools for promoting economic revitalization and community reinvestment.

Within the Town of Newport, multiple Brownfields projects have been successfully completed, contributing to job creation, improved environmental quality, and the productive reuse of long-neglected sites. As Newport continues to pursue redevelopment opportunities and strengthen its economic base, active engagement with the Brownfields Program will remain a priority. The program will continue to serve as a key resource for developers, business owners, and non-profit organizations seeking to invest in the community while supporting responsible and sustainable land use.

4.9.8 Vegetated Buffers

The Town of Newport recognizes the importance of vegetated buffers and their ecological contribution, specifically towards stormwater runoff. The Town of

Newport shall consider, where appropriate, the preservation of vegetated buffers along the Christina River.

5.0 GENERAL LAND USES

The following land uses are relevant to Newport.

5.1 Residential

The overwhelmingly predominant land use in Newport is Single-Family Residential. These uses are augmented by duplex and multi-family residential uses. Additionally, there are several residential dwellings located above commercial and office uses along Market Street and in the eastern section of Town.

5.2 Commercial

For the purposes of this Comprehensive Plan Update, the Commercial land use classification refers to those properties which are used for conducting business involving retail sales and other 'walk-up' services, including professional office and similar uses. Most of Newport's commercial activity is located in the General Business (GB) and Residential-Business (RB) Districts.

Due to the location and influence of SR 141/41, there is currently a limited amount of retail commercial or office activity in the center of Town (and accordingly, no critical mass of such businesses to act as a commercial anchor or retail attractor). At this time, much of the commercially zoned land in Newport is used for light industrial purposes. Additionally, it is noted that Newport's commercial area contains some older, obsolete structures and vacant lots, all of which are envisioned for future mixed use redevelopment in the GB and GB overlay districts.

5.3 Mixed-Uses

Many older central cities or smaller downtown commercial areas have retained their traditional residential units above ground-floor retail or office space. Such configurations traditionally housed local shopkeepers above their stores or professionals above their offices.

Newport has a limited inventory of such mixed-uses. However, it is doubtful that many of the dwellings house traditional owner-occupants. Rather, these units are more likely rental remnants of the Town's commercial past.

As identified by the Wilmington Area Planning Council's (WILMAPCO) (July 2013) *Newport Train Station Feasibility Study*, "mixed-use" residential and commercial construction as envisioned is consistent with the principles of Smart Growth and walkable communities

and will help sustain a new regional commuter rail station in Newport. In 2016, the Town enacted Ordinance 2016-002 to promote the development of mixed use structures in the GB and GB overlay districts.

5.4 Industrial

While not large in number, Newport's Industrial and Light Industrial land uses ~ including class A Commercial Warehouses constructed between the 1990s and the present time ~ occupy a considerable amount of the Town's land mass, mostly on lands adjacent to the Christina River. The presence and location of these uses is significant for Newport as employment centers and tax ratables.

As a community whose history includes a working-waterfront with freight rail service, it is not surprising to find residential uses in close proximity to Newport's industrial core. Such development patterns are typical in older communities where workers lived within walking distance to their places of employment.

Over the years, several former industrial properties have been converted into light industrial uses, especially along the interior edge of the industrial district. The result is that industrial activities are located in close proximity to residential, office and retail establishments. Residents and shoppers must contend with noise, odors and visual elements generated by these uses, whose influences are often felt far beyond their property lines. (It is noted that residential uses are not permitted in the Industrial Zone.)

While not generally undesirable, the existence of a significant number of residential dwellings in very close proximity to the Town's active industrial properties - *without appropriate buffering* - could represent a detriment to the safety and welfare of the community. This situation is expressly evident in and around Ayre Street, where automotive, processing and other land uses are exerting negative pressures on adjacent land uses.

5.5 Open Space / Recreation

As detailed in section 4.7.5 Recreation, Newport has a series of parks and recreation areas located throughout the Town. In addition, the Newport views the natural areas in and around the Christiana River as an open space and recreational resource.

6.0 CRITICAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

6.1 Goals & Objectives

As a basis for this Comprehensive Plan, in late 2001 Newport Policymakers conducted a public opinion survey of its residents to determine their opinions regarding issues ranging from municipal spending and municipal services to traffic and congestion. After analysis

of the responses, and after several public meetings to confirm and identify additional issues, the following municipal goals and objectives for the Town of Newport were developed. These goals and objectives, updated under this 2024 Comprehensive Planning process, are designed to serve as general guidelines for the development of specific Town policies and programs.

1. Provide a healthy and safe town with neighborhoods consisting of attractive homes and commercial buildings consistent with the principles of Smart Growth and New Urbanism.³⁴
2. Continue to provide necessary municipal services and facilities.
3. Provide for the safe, efficient and convenient movement of people and goods within the Town by integrating land uses, circulation routes and transportation facilities.
4. Provide for recreational and cultural activities for all age groups and interests.
5. Encourage development of land consistent with the interests of the Town.
6. Encourage the development/redevelopment of “downtown” Newport utilizing, to the extent practical, generally accepted Smart Growth principals.
7. Strengthen the Town’s commercial areas through proper planning and regulation.
8. Update Land Use Regulations to meet the Town’s needs.
9. Provide traffic calming and landscape techniques to mask the noise and traffic generated by State Route 141/41 and State Route 4.
10. Research funding options available through the State and County.

The Town of Newport affirms its commitment to these purposes and adopts the same general guidelines for this Comprehensive Plan Update, the Newport Zoning Ordinance, and for the policies and practices for all appropriate municipal agencies in the administration of their duties and responsibilities.

6.2 Issues & Recommendations

The following issues (areas of concern) and recommendations to address these issues were developed as part of this 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update (it is recognized that many of these recommendations may overlap):

6.2.1 Traffic & Transportation

The residents and Policymakers of Newport expressed concern regarding the effects of vehicular traffic on the Town. Not only is Newport impacted (directly and indirectly) by the State Route 141/41 overpass, which carries large numbers of cars and trucks through (albeit above) Newport, but also by the surface traffic carried by SR 4/Market Street. Residents have voiced concern about the speed that vehicles

travel on SR 4 and the impact this traffic has on pedestrian activity and business in the commercial section of Town.³⁰

Transportation matters in Delaware are managed by the Delaware Department of Transportation ("DelDOT") and the Wilmington Area Planning Council ("WILMAPCO"). DelDOT's principal responsibility is to construct and maintain roads, but it also focuses resources on providing options to address transit, bicycle, pedestrian and freight needs. WILMAPCO is the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization ("MPO") for the regional area that includes New Castle County, Delaware, and Cecil County, Maryland, and is responsible for coordinating transportation plans of State and local governments within this region.

A Land Use and Transportation Master Plan named "Newport Transportation Plan" was conducted in January of 2021, and was jointly created by the Town of Newport, New Castle County Department of Land Use, Wilmington Area Planning Council (WILMAPCO), Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT), and the Delaware Transit Corporation (DTC). This study assessed the transportation network in Newport and surrounding areas. The developed plan focuses on the improvement of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, along with other improvements as the town focuses towards being multi-modal, transit-oriented community.

In 2018, WILMAPCO commissioned a "Newport Train Station Ridership Forecasting" document that provided 2040 ridership forecasting for a proposed Newport Train Station added along the SEPTA Wilmington line between the current Wilmington and Churchmans Crossing stations.

In 2025, WILMAPCO, in conjunction with the Delaware Transit Corporation (DTC) and DelDOT, initiated a new 'Newport Train Station Study' commission, to determine the ridership potential that could be realized from a new passenger rail station in Newport. Additional components of the study are as follows:

- To develop preliminary planning and infrastructure that would be required to reintroduce passenger rail service to Newport, including a new station, track and power upgrades, coordination of passenger and freight operations.
- Identify multimodal connection enhancements for residents and commuters to access station.
- Ensure compliance with federal standards.

Recommendations:³¹

³⁰ The Speed Limit on the Market Street section of SR 4 is 30 mph. The roadway has minimal traffic signals and crosswalks, which create a dangerous environment for pedestrians. Moreover, the lack of commercial activity and pedestrian traffic along Market Street provides no reason for regional traffic to decelerate while driving through Newport.

³¹ It is recognized that implementation of many of these recommendations will require cooperation with DelDOT, WILMAPCO and other appropriate State agencies.

Develop measures to manage traffic from the regional vehicular roadway network. Issues include limiting speed, buffering noise, reducing air pollution and addressing growing threats to pedestrians.

Evaluate options for appropriate traffic-calming ³² techniques to improve both traffic and pedestrian safety, especially for the downtown commercial section of the Town.

Explore funding mechanisms in order to ensure necessary roadway maintenance.

Explore opportunities to incorporate traffic-calming with appropriate development design standards in order to help to ensure safety and mobility for pedestrian and non-motorized modes of transport. Design standards may include, but need not be limited to, shorter and narrower blocks, on-street parking, through streets and walkways and other elements designed to keep regional traffic dispersed and at low speeds.

Evaluate options for improving aesthetics and providing pedestrian accessibility and amenities along State Route 4 through Newport, including the design and installation of signalized pedestrian crossings throughout the Market Street section of State Route 4.

Explore opportunities for developing pedestrian and bicycle pathways to link residential and commercial sections of Town as well as to link the boat ramp and nature center to the Town's residential and commercial areas. Develop and encourage the use of other alternative transportation systems, including transit rail service envisioned under section 6.2.2 herein.

Consider extending the above-recommended pedestrian/bike path along the Christiana River. The Boat ramp has potential to attract large numbers of people to Newport. A well-established pedestrian/bike path may entice tourists to walk/ride and shop or eat in local establishments.

Develop a plan for the regular monitoring of vehicular traffic (including the vehicle mix of cars vs. trucks) and associated impacts over the next decade. The plan should include regular (annual) reporting from the appropriate agency to Newport Town Commission.

Establish a seasonal air quality monitoring program in the vicinity of State Route 141/41 and State Route 4 to track changes over time.

Develop a system of pathfinder signage throughout Newport to guide visitors to various locations, including parking lots. Such a system will reduce traffic congestion and thus noise and air pollution.

³² *Traffic Calming is the practice of using roadway geometry to improve safety. Speed bumps, rumble strips, hammerheads, flare-outs, doglegs and other combinations of geometry and streetscaping (landscaping and street furniture) can be effective in lowering drivers' speed on streets.*

Capitalize on Newport's accessibility to Interstate-95, Interstate-295, Interstate-495, State Route 141/41 and State Route 4 while concurrently implement measures to manage regional traffic.

As appropriate, coordinate all Transportation improvement efforts with implementation of recommendations outlined in this section and in section 6.2.2 Parking.

6.2.2 Parking & Downtown Circulation

Residents and Policymakers of Newport expressed concern regarding the limited parking situation in the downtown area. Currently, parking space to service the Town's commercial areas is quite limited. Such a shortage not only impacts existing businesses but deters new businesses from the area.

The way parking is managed has a significant impact on the type of development that takes place and the resultant look and feel of the community. Older downtowns typically do not have sufficient off-street parking due to the development patterns established prior to the advent of mass automobile usage. Business-owners attempt to address this issue by either demolishing buildings for parking lots or by converting green space or other (otherwise) unproductive areas to parking. The result is *often* a haphazard use of land and an increase in congestion. The result is *always* a reduction in the quantity and quality of the commercial downtown.

Newport has attempted to address this issue by requiring specified numbers of parking spaces for all new commercial development. This has had the effect of reducing prospects for downtown development and increasing requests to the Board of Adjustment for variance relief. Parking and traffic circulation considerations are integral to the envisioned multi-modal transit experience envisioned for downtown Newport. To this end, the Town enacted modifications to its parking rationale suitable for mixed use redevelopment per Ordinance 2016-002.

Recommendations:

- While the Town has no specific current data, there is a need for more off-street parking in Newport. Although no specific study has been contracted as yet by the Town or private developer, a mixed use master planning study is currently underway by one potential redevelopment firm in Newport. This study encompasses streetscapes, parking supply and demand, greenspace, landscaping, and other amenities critical to future mixed-use redevelopment. The results of this study are anticipated in late 2026.
- Explore amending Newport's development code to allow development applicants the opportunity to propose reduced parking requirements for a site by submitting an applicant-supplied and Town-approved Parking Needs and Demand Assessment, as currently allowed in unincorporated New Castle County.

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- Explore creation of one or more centrally located surface public parking lots or parking structures to serve surrounding land uses.³³ While Policymakers do not favor metered public parking, a mechanism to limit parking times for premium spaces is supportable.
- Work with select business owners with parking to institute shared parking arrangements as appropriate. Commercial tenants whose primary office hours are during the day can share parking facilities with establishments whose patronage is primarily at night. Newport can facilitate “Parking Agreements” between the parties in order to define the terms of such shared parking arrangement.
- Consider locating parking lots behind buildings or street walls. Successful urban design for commercial downtowns places retail and office buildings close to the sidewalk with no set back. Rear parking becomes a logical extension of such a design.
- Upon completion of the DelDOT State Route 141 construction project currently underway, create a safe, well-lit pedestrian connector under the State Route 141 viaduct ~ formerly the site of the public recycling station ~ by removing the deteriorated fence and installing landscaping / streetscaping this area. Adjust traffic light signal timing as necessary to facility pedestrian (and bicycle) circulation.
- Enter into discussions with DelDOT and other State agencies regarding the creation of a Park & Ride facility under the State Route 141 viaduct.
- Request that DelDOT pave a lot at or near South James Street (parallel to State Route 141) for public parking.
- Explore public/private partnerships and other creative mechanisms with the downtown business and general development communities in order to effectuate the above-recommended and other municipal parking / circulation improvements. Such mechanisms shall include, but not be necessarily limited to, increasing permitted building height in the GB Zone to accommodate parking below or within a structure, enhance quality of life, and expand economic development opportunities.
- In consultation with the Planning and Redevelopment Steering Team , explore creation of a new (or revisions to the existing) definition of Parking Garage to ensure that the prohibition against locating such structures within 50 feet of a residential district applies to stand alone facilities and not to parking accessory to a permitted use.

³³ It is recognized that implementation of many of these recommendations will require cooperation with DelDOT, WILMAPCO and other appropriate State agencies.

- In consultation with the Planning and Redevelopment Steering Team, explore an increase in building height in the General Business Zone to accommodate structured parking.

6.2.3 Recreation

Senior and Youth Services

Primarily attributed to a lack of funding, Newport does not offer activities or services for its senior citizens or children. Senior-based programming for the housebound elderly (or those with limited mobility or opportunities) provides activity which has been demonstrated to enhance the quality of life for such individuals. Additionally, programs can be created whereby seniors can volunteer to assist and support local schools, the proposed library or other desired public or non-profit organizations.

Youth-oriented programs for children of different age groups reinforces lessons learned in school and provides an outlet for idle hands.

Ideally, programs for seniors can be combined with programs for young people such that the children learn from the experience of mentoring adults.

- Encourage local non-profit organizations, social clubs and places of worship to provide senior and youth activities and related services.
- Provide transportation and/or financial assistance to facilitate Newport's seniors' and youth participation in programs in neighboring communities.

Recommendations:

- Coordinate with appropriate State agencies to ensure proper operation of the boat ramp and nature preserve.

6.2.4 Land Use & Development

The primary Land Use and Development issues for Newport are Zoning and Redevelopment of Existing Areas. Rather than addressing these issues as distinct topics, they are discussed herein within the context of the significant land use categories existing in Newport at the time of this Comprehensive Plan.³⁴

Recommendations:

- Create a Planning and Redevelopment Steering Team ("PRST") comprised of Town (government) representatives, local business owners and residents to assist in developing specific strategies and procedures for implementing the zoning and redevelopment recommendations contained in this Comprehensive Plan.

³⁴ See General Land Use Map in Exhibit section.

Housing

In general, Newport’s housing stock, while older, is in good to excellent condition and its residential neighborhoods are stable, both in terms of housing ‘turnover’ and the character and integrity of the areas.

With the exception of the residential neighborhoods bordering commercial zones, it appears that the Town’s existing Zoning controls for residential districts, with minor modifications, will continue to maintain the character of these districts into the future.

Recommendations:

- Develop strategies to promote future mixed-use redevelopment which, while emphasizing homeownership, includes an appropriate rental mix.

*Commercial*³⁵

Newport’s policymakers and residents are strongly concerned with the Town’s declining economic (commercial) base. While there is no desire to significantly increase the population of Newport, there is a recognition of the need to expand its commercial center.

The Town maintains a pro-business attitude Newport’s strategy is to remake its “downtown” into a commercial destination by utilizing Smart Growth and New Urbanism design principles and redevelopment initiatives. The goal is to recreate a “sense-of-place” in this area by incorporating dining, shopping, work and entertainment uses under the theory that a vibrant commercial center requires all such uses in a mutually reinforcing arrangement (no one activity can flourish in the absence of any other).

In developing recommendations to pursue this strategy, Newport proposes to employ a combination of (traffic calming, streetscape improvements and land use controls, working in conjunction with available (pro- business) State programs, to attract and retain appropriate investment. Other Redevelopment programs, including façade and other improvements to existing operations, replanning land uses to produce a more efficient and effective configuration, and the relocation of incompatible land uses may be used to provide a physical setting which will attract appropriate investment.

Recommendations:

- Develop a Strategic Plan for increasing and improving the use of the commercial properties in Newport. Explore marketing the Town’s

³⁵ Includes Newport’s Residential Business (RB), General Business (GB) and General Industry (GI) Zoning Districts.

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accessibility via State Route 141/41, State Route 4, Interstate-95 and Interstate-295, increased cooperative ventures with the State, redevelopment of certain parcels and the rezoning of selected sections of the Town. Said Strategic Plan may include, but need not be limited to, efforts to:

- As a cornerstone of any redevelopment program, enter into negotiations with each owner and/or operator of each parcel and/or facility in the Redevelopment Overlay Zone. The goal of these negotiations is to enter into a public/private partnership between the Town and each of the individual operators in the Overlay Zone to assist in the general redevelopment of this area. Such negotiations should include, but need not be limited to, voluntary actions (on the part of the owner/operator) to address adverse impacts (to the extent any such impacts exist) resulting from said operations as well as the visual improvement to the physical structure.
- In consultation with the Planning and Redevelopment Steering Team, establish front yard setback requirements that are appropriate to the uses and architecture anticipated.
- Revise the current parking regulations as outlined in Section 6.2.2 herein to assist in attracting and retaining desired commercial uses.
- Reinforce Newport's downtown the sense-of-place by supporting a cultural facility as an anchor for the area.
- Explore improvements to Newport's business licensing process in order to accurately identify and confirm conformance with zoning, parking and other regulations.

Mixed-Use

The above-cited Smart Growth design principles reinforce mixed-use development to provide a live-work-play lifestyle. Above-ground-floor apartments provide customers for shops, activity for the street and nighttime surveillance for the area. While such principles and the following recommendations are appropriate for the General Business (GB) District, they are also key components for redevelopment within the Redevelopment Overlay Zone.

Recommendations:

- Allow mixed-use redevelopment in the GB (General Business) and GB Overlay zoning districts consistent with the provisions of Ordinance 2016-002.
- Define Mixed-Use Structures as: *a building or structure containing a mix of residential and commercial uses ~ typically retail and office uses on the lower floors with residential above ~ that affirm Smart Growth Principles,*

including, but not limited to, stronger neighborhood character; integration of housing, workplace, retail, institutional, service and other destinations and uses; and pedestrian-friendly / bicycle-friendly environments in order to create what Planners term a "Walkable Community".³⁶

- Address parking issues pursuant to the discussion under section 6.2.2 herein. Additional parking considerations will arise with mixed-use development. Address residential parking either by dedicated parking areas or by shared parking arrangements.
- The Town desires that "downtown" be designated a Downtown Development District (DDD). Being selected into the program would provide access to incentives and grants that would spur private capital investment, stimulate job growth, build a stable community, and assist in strengthening neighborhoods. The Town has drafted a program application which will be submitted once the application period is open for new submissions.

Architectural Design Standards

Communities which include well-designed buildings, attractive signage, well-maintained facades and a positive orientation of buildings to the street are often the most distinctive. As Newport establishes its own definition of a desirable look, the opportunity exists to create a unique, memorable streetscape to attract future development.

Section 6.2.2 herein discusses site design standards in order to facilitate parking in downtown Newport. Architectural design standards regulating building setbacks, street and sidewalk design, architectural styles, signage and building materials can enhance both existing buildings and new development as the community addresses its sense-of-place.³⁷ Such guidelines may be prescriptive and specific (addressing the level of detail to the size and color of signs), or they may set broad parameters for design to allow for maximum diversity among users. In either case, when applied in a clear and consistent fashion, such standards provide guidance for developers and create higher quality projects by being attentive to design from the early stages.

While such standards are appropriate for the General Business (GB) District, they should also be key components within the Redevelopment Overlay Zone.³⁸

Recommendations:

³⁶ See *Smart Growth & New Urbanism* in Exhibit section.

³⁷ Architectural design standards often go hand-in-hand with Zoning and Land Use regulations. For example, mixed-uses often require multi-story buildings, whose height, in turn, contributes to defining a street as a "place."

³⁸ It should be noted that while design standards may nominally increase the cost of a project (generally estimated at 5% of total project cost), they often 'pay for themselves' in the form of lease value and enhanced customer base.

2024 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

- Develop clear site and architectural design guidelines so that streets, buildings and public spaces work together to create a Sense-of-Place for Newport’s “downtown”.
- Enact appropriate lot, bulk, parking and related regulations for various uses based on Smart Growth / New Urbanism ³⁹ planning principles to create live-work-play neighborhoods and transit-friendly, walkable communities. Concepts include, but need not be limited to:
 - Neighborhoods have a discernable center of mixed or multi-use buildings.
 - Most dwellings are within a 5-minute (2,000 feet) walk of the center.
 - A variety of dwelling types are available.
 - Small Accessory buildings are permitted in backyards for home occupations.
 - Shops and offices can be found at the edge of neighborhoods. Commercial offerings are sufficiently varied in order to meet the weekly needs of households.
 - An elementary school is close enough for most children to walk to school.
 - Small playgrounds are convenient to residential uses.
 - Streets form a connected network and are relatively narrow to promote traffic calming.
 - Buildings are situated close to the street.
 - Parking lots and garages rarely front the street.
 - Certain prominent streets at the termination of street vistas or in the neighborhood center are reserved for civic buildings.

Open Space

Recommendations:

- Recognize the unique nature of Newport’s green spaces and conservation areas by creating a new Conservation (CON) Zoning category. Permit only open space and recreation uses in these areas.
- Regardless of the yet-to-be-established Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) requirement for Newport, the Town should implement such Best Management Practices (BMPs) such as may be appropriate to reduce both

³⁹ "Smart Growth" and 'New Urbanism' are Planning terms referring to the return to the principals that made neighborhoods successful as communities. Elements harken back to the days when neighbors knew each other and the street corner and front porch were venues for friendly interaction. While all of these elements may not be appropriate for every application, they should be viewed as guides for good urban design. See Exhibit section for a more expansive discussion of these concepts.

‘point’ and ‘non-point’ emissions entering the Christina River watershed. Newport will conform with State Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC) regulations once promulgated.

Industrial Park

Recommendations:

- Expand permitted uses in the Industrial Park to include Train Station, Accessory Parking and Institutional Uses (including, but not limited to, Places of Worship and non-profit organizations, conditioned upon the provision of sufficient parking [including "shared parking"]). Insure that the schedule of permitted uses is expansive and flexible while continuing to prohibit residential uses.

Public Works

Recommendations:

- The Town's current public works facility, located at 425 Washington St., is on land leased from state. While the Town's lease is through 2035 with the option of a 5-year extension, it has been indicated that further extensions will not be provided. The Town will need to find an appropriate future location and start seeking funding sources. While the Town owned waterfront parcel is a possibility, additional due diligence will be required.

6.2.5 Annexation & Plan of Service

Between 2003 and 2014, Newport annexed the following parcels into the Town:

400 W. Newport Pike	414 Washington Avenue
301 W. Ayre Street	100 Larch Avenue
1518 E Ayre Street	1515 E. Ayre Street
118 Larch Avenue	250 S. James Street

While Newport's 2014 Comprehensive Plan included the concept of growth through selective annexation, such approach is no longer a direction that Town Policymakers wish to explore. Instead, Policymakers will dedicate their efforts and resources toward ensuring the best possible service to Newport's residents and businesses.

6.3 State and County Comments

Through the PLUS process the Town has received written comments from the State and New Castle County. The Town has chosen to address required comments and those suggested comments that were pertinent to achieve goals and objectives.



Bicentennial Memorial Park
Source: Google Street View

7.0 EXHIBITS

Regional Context Map

Aerial Photograph: Newport & Environs

Newport Parcel Map

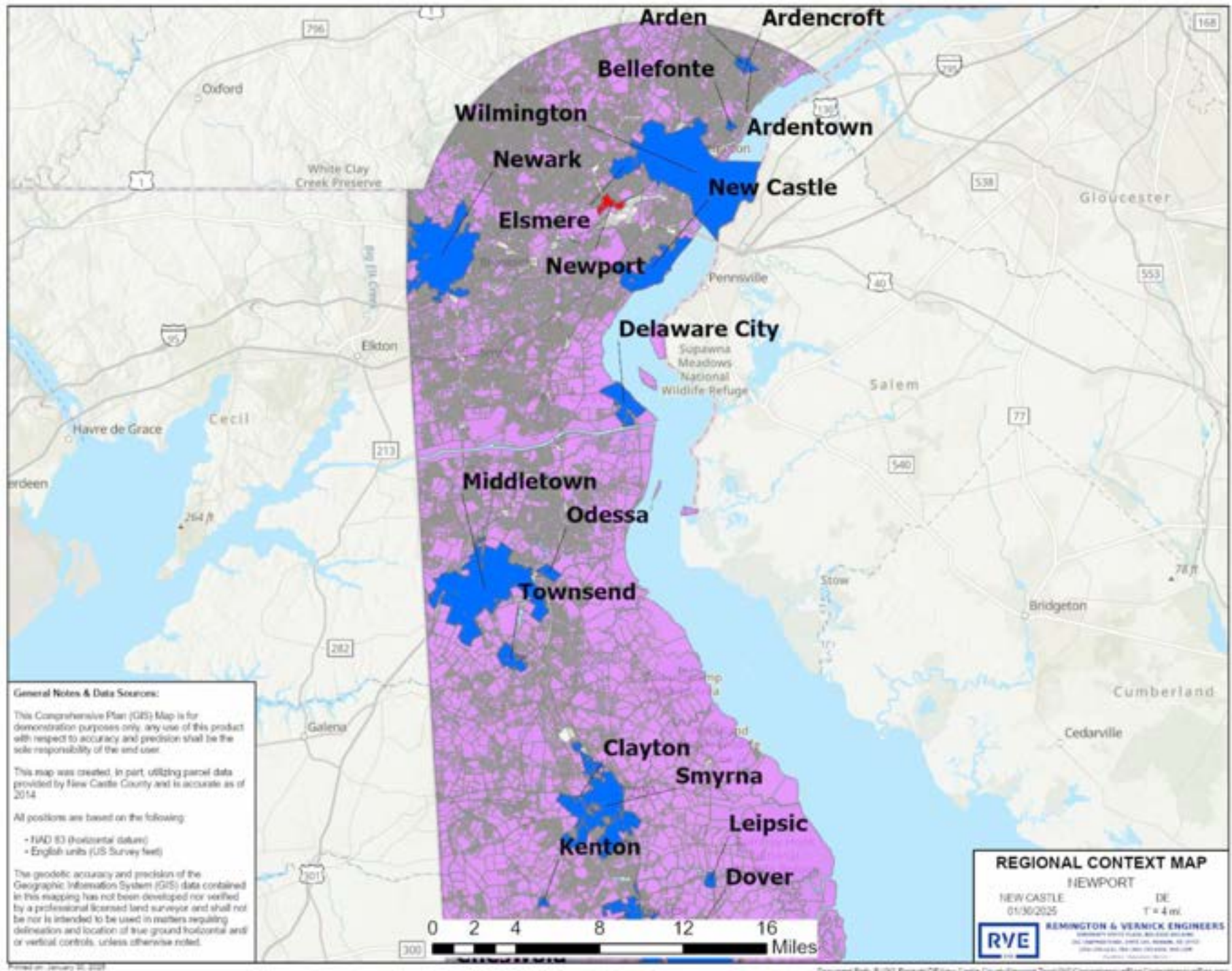
Parks, Recreation and Conservations Areas

Significant Transportation Routes

Existing Zoning

Future Land Use

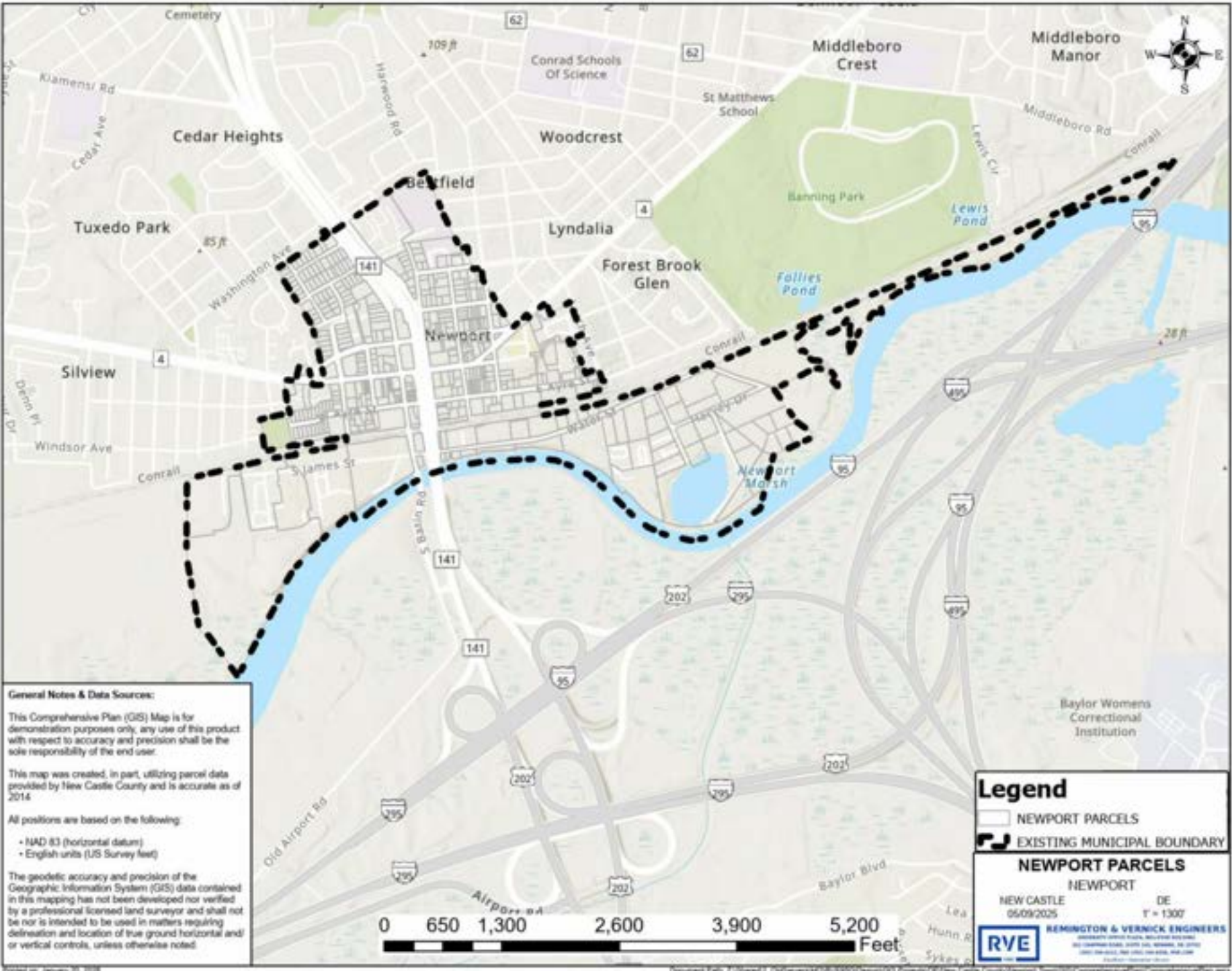
Regional Context Map



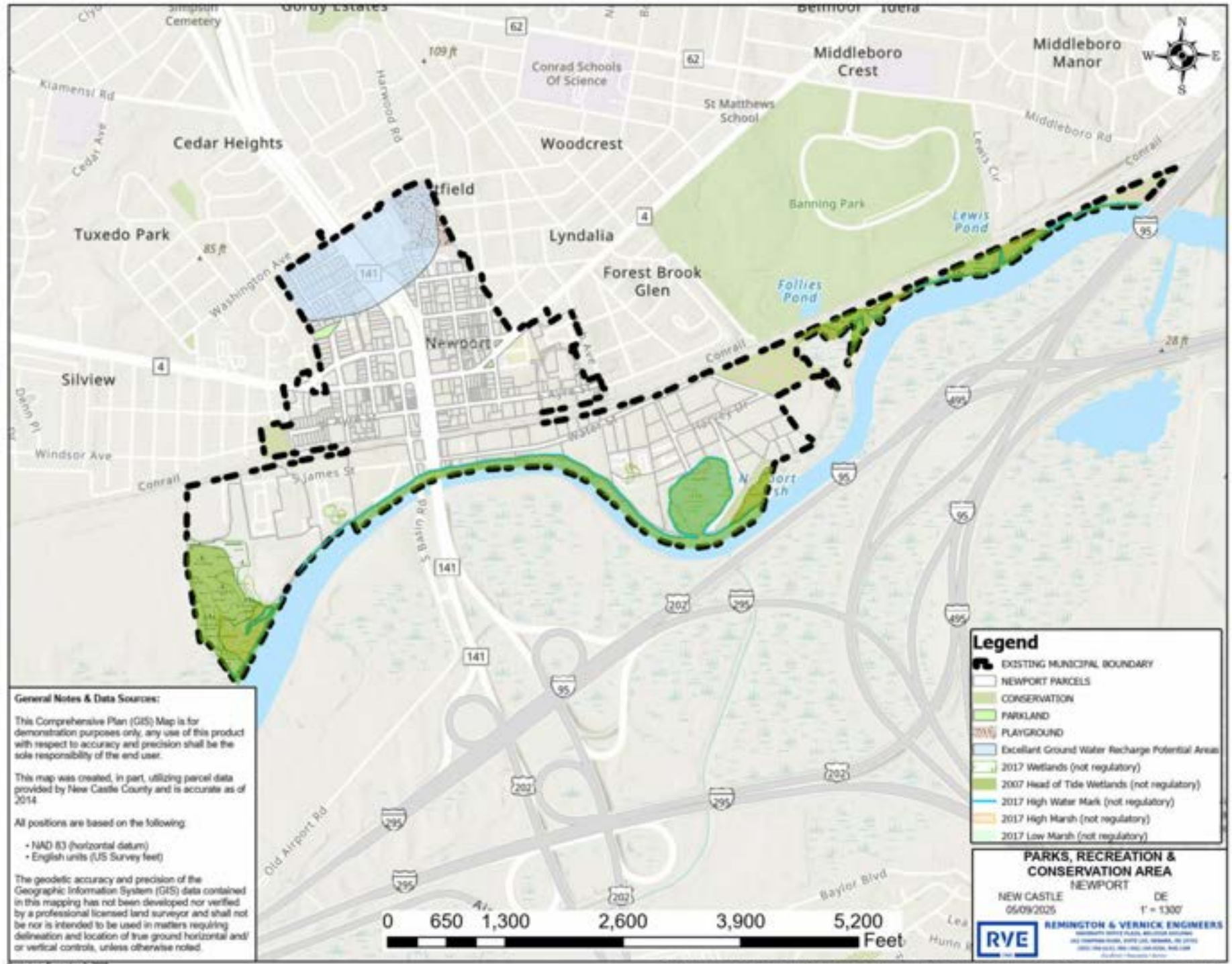
Aerial Photograph: Newport & Environs



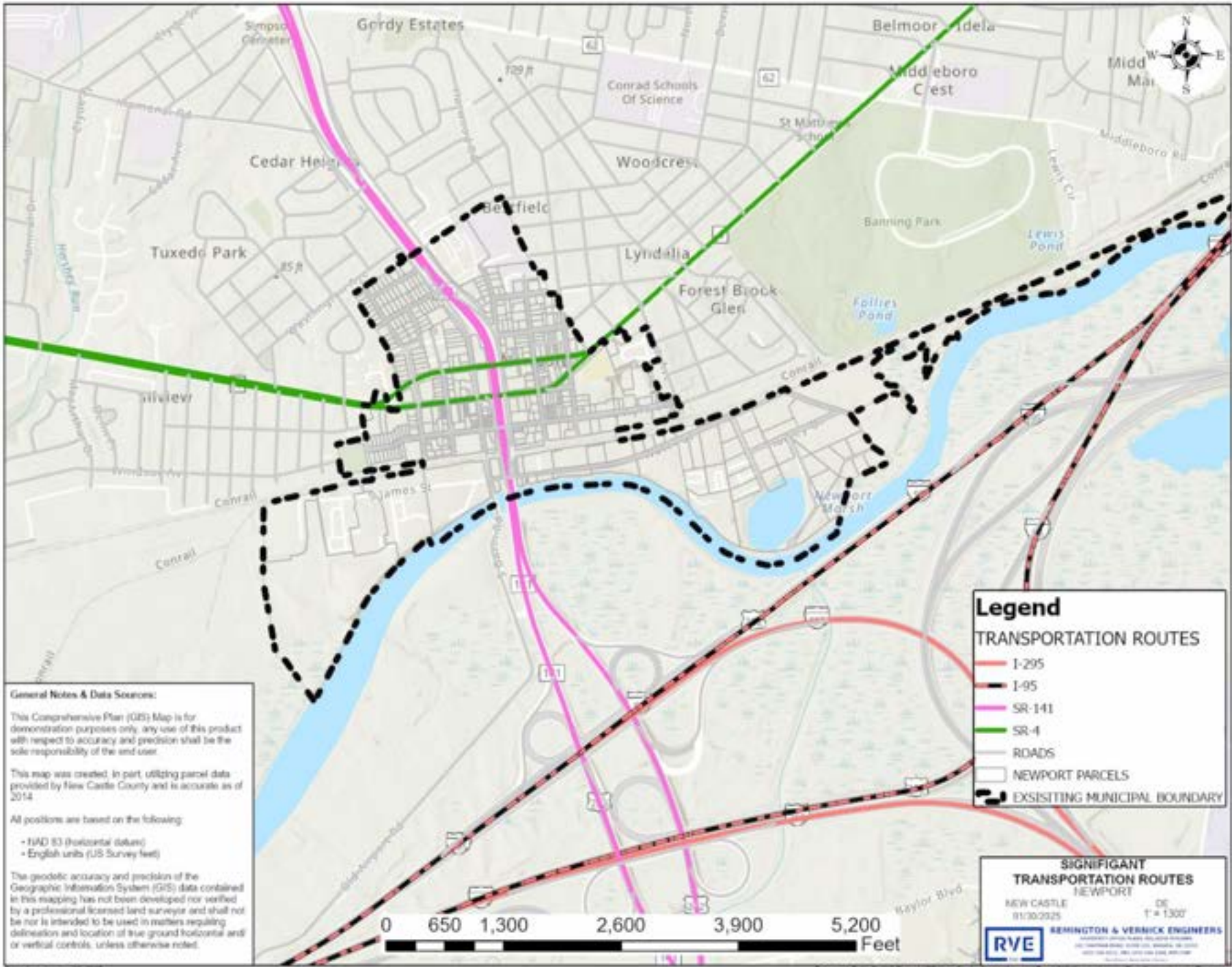
Newport Parcel Map



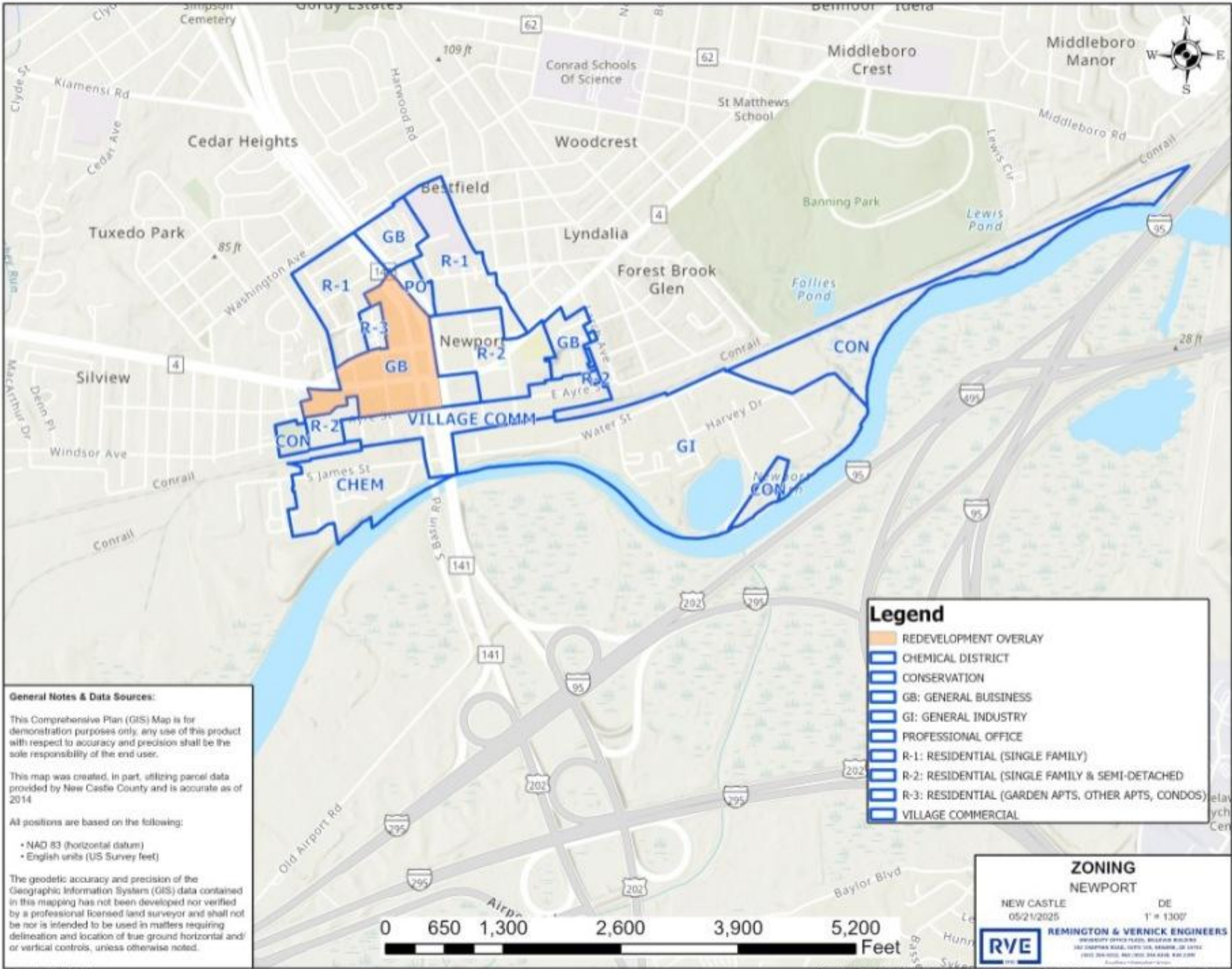
Parks, Recreation and Conservations Areas



Significant Transportation Routes



Existing Zoning



Future Land Use

