



Draft Goals and Objectives Framework

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When we set out to create NCC@2050, the next New Castle County Comprehensive Plan, our goal was to bring forth big issues, get the community engaged in discussing the challenges we face, the opportunities we have, and the collaborative approach needed to make NCC a thriving place today and many decades from now.

The draft goals and objectives, presented on page 2 and on, reflect a truly comprehensive vision and plan for that future. This expansive frame of our future is a critical part of enabling our community to see out in front of us and work together addressing things like COVID-19 recovery, learning from mistakes of the past that have hurt and impeded some of us or our neighbors, safely leveraging new technology, or reducing the threat of climate change.

Through this process, we also need to work to understand tradeoffs, identify priorities, and coordinate to implement the plan. It is important to realize that the comprehensive planning process is an important opportunity to discuss a full range of topics related to our communities with the broadest range of voices as possible. It's also important to recognize that resources are limited. Of everything that was discussed and put in the plan, there will be parts that don't receive as much focus. Implementation of the plan will involve prioritization.

For context, we have provided the vision for the county's comprehensive plan, NCC@2050, along with key themes that elaborate on the vision (shared in January 2021). This is followed by the draft goals and objectives that build on the community vision and themes, forming a framework for the plan. All of this was developed from stakeholder input to date, which includes surveys, four workshops in the fall, the December 2021 public forum, five Deep Dive workshops, the Stakeholder Challenge, website page views, the Stake Holder Advisory Committee, and Youth Planning Board, and amounts to over 100,000 interactions.

I. **Community Vision: (published January 2021)**

In 2050, New Castle County is a thriving healthy community that has a clean environment and has a strong economy. New Castle County champions and leads preservation of clean water and the natural environment, and adaptation to climate change while fostering a prosperous and strong agricultural industry largely in the areas south of the Chesapeake & Delaware Canal. Residents have equitable access to parks and recreation, a multimodal transportation network, and a robust economy with living wage jobs. The housing stock is diverse in both form and price. Important historic and cultural resources are respected and preserved. It is a model for social justice and climate resiliency.



II. Themes: (published January 2021)

Livable Built Environment for All



All elements of the built environment (e.g. land use, transportation, housing, energy, and infrastructure) work together providing a high quality of life for all our residents.

Conservation and Preservation



Our environment (air, water, land, natural resources, and climate), essential to the well-being of our community, is protected as part of our thriving county.

Robust Economy



The economy is diverse, strong, and resilient; it adapts to change with innovation and collaboration, while ensuring access to local, living-wage jobs.

Sustainable Growth



We guide and coordinate sustainable investment to support a thriving, healthy county; this includes balancing our capacity and needs for built space, infrastructure, and services, in line with growth/decline demands.

Thriving Places and Community Character



The places in which we live, work and play are alive with activity, attractive, and safe; our communities are places we are proud of.

Diverse Engagement



Our communities are central to our future and the county's diverse residents are represented in civic life, engagement, and leadership in our community.



New content
(May 2021)

III. DRAFT Goals and Objectives, and Preliminary Strategies:

The following draft goals and objectives are organized by key issue areas.

- **Goals** are positive statements about what NCC will be like in the future; in other words, they describe the desired result
 - **Objectives** are specific, actionable steps to achieve the goal. Where possible they are quantified, or are at least directional (e.g., “increase” or “decrease”)
 - **Strategies** are steps to be taken to achieve the goals and objectives (generally phrased to start with a verb).

Notes: The topic of environmental and social justice is not identified in a separate category, but is treated as an overarching principal that relates to each of the other topics/elements. As such, it has been integrated throughout the goals and objectives. Measuring and tracking representative metrics is important for promoting equity as a product of this plan.

A version of this Goals and Objectives Framework that also contains the preliminary strategies can be viewed [here](#), for those who would like the additional detail.

Recreation and Open Space

1. **Goal:** New Castle County has a connected, well-maintained and well-loved network of open space (natural lands and recreational resources) that benefits all residents.
 - 1.1. **Objective:** Preserve 30% of land for open space in the county in 30 years
 - 1.2. **Objective:** Increase the percentage of residents that have safe, comfortable access (within 1 mile using a low-stress route) to a variety of recreational opportunities and natural spaces without the requirement of a personal automobile.

Conservation

2. **Goal:** The natural environment of the county continues to be a distinguishing characteristic of our community, and the quality of our natural resources—air, water, land, ecosystems (plants and animals)—are continually improving and meeting the needs of present and future generations. Development/redevelopment patterns that consume less unbuilt “greenfields” and resource lands support conservation of our important natural resources.
 - 2.1. **Objective:** Comply with state and local air quality standards, addressing micro- (e.g. local air quality) and macro-climate conditions (e.g. greenhouse gases).

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- 2.2. **Objective:** Improve surface water quality and reduce stormwater runoff from developed lands, with recognition that community revitalization and stream/ecosystem restoration are linked.
- 2.3. **Objective:** Improve ecosystem health by reducing sprawl and fragmentation, reconnecting open space, enhancing ecosystems, and applying green stormwater infrastructure strategies (while our economy and population continues to grow).
- 2.4. **Objective:** Increase tree-canopy to 40%, prioritizing areas with the lowest canopy cover and greatest potential benefits (e.g. urban heat island, flooding, etc.)

Sewer & Water

- 3. **Goal:** Clean water is available to all residents now and in the future.
 - 3.1. **Objective:** Continue to ensure water services and potable water supply is sufficient to meet demand.
 - 3.2. **Objective:** Continue to maintain efficient and effective sanitary sewer service in existing areas served by sewer and extend service to new areas to meet growth demands in a sustainable manner.
- 4. **Goal:** Healthy, safe housing options throughout the County are diverse, meeting needs of people of all incomes, ages, abilities, and races, while maintaining built form that integrates with existing communities.
 - 4.1. **Objective:** Increase variety and range of price-points of safe, quality housing options, in a diversity of locations.
 - 4.2. **Objective:** Increase proximity of quality housing to other daily needs, especially jobs, to support overall cost of living affordability. Better balance of jobs and housing can support residents and their access to both quality/affordable living and living-wage jobs as well as employers and their workforce.
 - 4.3. **Objective:** Expand access to homeownership, especially among low-income residents and people of color
 - 4.4. **Objective:** Upgrade the condition of substandard housing stock—including integration of green energy—throughout the County, without causing displacement.

Economic & Community Development

- 5. **Goal:** New Castle County is a strong, resilient hub of the regional economy that provides a range of jobs and services to County residents.
 - 5.1. **Objective:** Promote business clusters by focusing resources and policies toward retaining and growing businesses in discrete sectors that advance the County’s economic strengths.
 - 5.2. **Objective:** Achieve a diverse and supportive business ecosystem.





5.3. **Objective:** Increase the percentage of jobs located in Delaware Level 1 State Strategies Investment Areas, ensuring job centers are located near transit and existing infrastructure/services.

6. **Goal:** All residents have the ability to participate in the economy and have access to living-wage jobs. Delaware’s workforce is strong and positioned for emerging industry and jobs as well as applying innovation and adaptation in traditional industries.

6.1. **Objective:** Increase equitable access to educational and economic opportunities (see also Housing and Environmental/Social Justice elements).

6.2. **Objective:** As economic growth occurs, increase distribution of benefits across the community.

7. **Goal:** Farming continues to be as a viable way of life and contributes to economic resiliency and healthy communities (for its provision of food access and security, its preservation of farmland, and contribution toward community character).

7.1. **Objective:** Increase the amount of preserved farmland.

Mobility and Transportation

8. **Goal:** All New Castle County residents will have safe, efficient access to employment, retail services, parks, and other daily needs including by walking, bicycling, public transit, and emerging modes. The transportation and land use systems are integrated and support each other to create livable places and a vibrant county.

8.1. **Objective:** Establish a Vision Zero plan in coordination with DelDOT and WILMAPCO, reaching zero traffic fatalities by 2050.

8.2. **Objective:** Enhance and increase accessibility by all modes to/between local and regional destinations, including diverse housing, jobs, and goods/services.

9. **Goal:** Transportation of people and goods is efficient and fair. The transportation system and land use/development are coordinated; development occurs in areas with ample existing or planned transportation infrastructure (and other infrastructure) and decisions are fiscally sound and fair for present and future generations.

9.1. **Objective:** Preserve existing roads and transportation infrastructure, using them to their greatest capacity, while limiting widening and creation of new multi-lane roadways.

9.2. **Objective:** Plan for emerging transportation modes and technologies (e.g. renewable energy-based, autonomous, e-bikes/scooters, etc.) to leverage benefits and minimize potential negative externalities; embrace technology designed to address existing infrastructure issues, benefit the environment, and improve how people experience travel.

9.3. **Objective:** “Right-size” traffic/congestion and reduce its associated pollution burdens (both local and macroclimate).



Community Design

10. **Goal:** Land uses, transportation, and other infrastructure complement each other, and neighborhoods and areas across the county are distinctive, attractive, functional, comfortable, and human scale. The physical environment is high quality, retains value, and is fiscally sustainable.
- 10.1. **Objective:** Redevelop and infill key areas of the county (identified in Community Area Master Plans and other studies/analyses) and struggling industrial land, strip malls, office parks, and other “greyfields” to achieve connected places, continuity of design, and sense of place.
- 10.2. **Objective:** Increase compact development in places where it is appropriate and will support the range of community goals (like transit, affordable housing/lifestyles, non-motorized accessibility, enhancement of place, etc.).
11. **Goal:** The built environment and streetscapes promote physical activity and healthy lifestyles including options for walking and biking. All residents have safe access to physically active and healthy lifestyles (see also Transportation).
- 11.1. **Objective:** Increase the percentage of people who walk, bike, and take transit to work (from 6% in 2018).
- 11.2. **Objective:** Increase access to healthy food retailers, medical care, and other daily needs.

Historic (Cultural) Preservation

12. **Goal:** The value and significance of the historic, prehistoric, and cultural resources in the county are known and promoted; significant resources are preserved for the benefit of residents and visitors.
- 12.1. **Objective:** Increase awareness of the county’s historic/prehistoric/cultural resources.
- 12.2. **Objective:** Increase preservation and adaptive reuse of the county’s historic/prehistoric/cultural resources.

Climate Change/Sea-Level Rise (SLR)

13. **Goal:** Environmental protection, climate change mitigation, and adaptation are important considerations in all county policies. Our community’s collective built environment—infrastructure, transportation, nature, and development patterns—are designed in a way that limits greenhouse gas emissions and protects our people and critical infrastructure from impacts of climate change.
- 13.1. **Objective:** Reduce Greenhouse Gas emissions.
- 13.2. **Objective:** Strengthen/improve resiliency in the face of climate change threats through changes to the built environment (infrastructure, transportation, etc.) so to minimize risk and impacts to all people and communities.



14. **Goal:** Pursue a net zero built environment by following emerging technologies, and alternative regional and individual energy sources.
- 14.1. **Objective:** Increase the proportion of energy efficient building stock and conservation infrastructure in the building stock.
- 14.2. **Objective:** Reduce pollution from Transportation sources.

Emergency Preparedness/Hazard Mitigation/Resiliency

15. **Goal:** New Castle County's infrastructure and economic and social systems are strong and our communities are prepared for future climate-related and man-made/natural events; all residents will live in neighborhoods that are protected from negative impacts of incompatible non-residential land uses/activity and other hazards such as flooding (discrete and cumulative); and economic growth, prosperity and change in New Castle County is equitable and accessible by all.
- 15.1. **Objective:** Reduce infrastructure that is at risk due to sea level rise and flooding.
- 15.2. **Objective:** Reduce risk/disparate impact on sub-populations.

Intra and Inter governmental coordination, diverse engagement in shaping our future

16. **Goal:** Participation in planning and development represents the full diversity of the county.
- 16.1. **Objective:** Increase diversity of engagement in community planning activities (e.g. age, race, native language, persons with disabilities, etc.).
- 16.2. **Objective:** Increase diversity of local professionals involved in planning, land use, infrastructure, and development.
17. **Goal:** Development, infrastructure, and change is well-planned and coordinated, achieving sustainable and effective public investment in our communities.
- 17.1. **Objective:** Planning/investment decisions integrate across governments and jurisdictions.
- 17.2. **Objective:** Increase collaboration associated with data/analysis and public engagement.