

Once an isolated crossroads in 1856, Townsend was bisected by the railroad which created a more active shipping and commercial center by 1880. Tremendous growth in population and housing stock occurred at the turn of the twentieth century until about 1910. In 2010, the population and housing inventory surged to four times its previous size. (See Table 1)

1-3. Public Participation Process

The deliberations resulting in Townsend's Comprehensive Plan Update were conducted in open, public meetings that began and were publicized according to the Freedom of Information Act guidelines (FOIA, 5 U.S.C 553). Public participation in the planning process was explicitly sought through a public survey published in 2018. The survey was revised in 2019 and published again at that time. In addition, members of the Planning Commission participated in the Townsend Fair on September 23, 2017, and a Town Hall meeting on October 4, 2017 with an informational board about the Commission, as well as a paper copy of a survey.

The COVID-19 pandemic impacted the final plan completion by moving all meetings to virtual platform. Planning Commission members continued to discuss and move forward on the plan and provided a meeting link for the public to participate in the final discussion. Meetings were advertised on the Town website, but public participation did not happen during COVID.

New Castle County held public workshops on the New Castle County Master plan on October 7, 2019 and June 24, 2019. The New Castle County Planning Advisory Group held a meeting on June 16, 2019, and a PLUS pre-review on May 22, 2019. On January 24, 2020, a meeting was held in Townsend with New Castle County (various departments), Town of Townsend Council and members of Townsend Planning Commission to discuss concerns, clarification and considerations of municipal coordination recommendations.

It is important to note that the completion of the Townsend Comprehensive Plan Update was prolonged in order to fully integrate and coordinate it with the Southern New Castle County (SNCC) Regional Master Plan. This coordinated effort with SNCC that was initiated in September of 2006 and driven by a formal Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) obtained in January of 2020. State agencies, school districts, New Castle County, Middletown, Odessa, Smyrna, and Townsend are all now coordinating the development of SNCC. The SNCC Master Plan study area was divided into five sub-areas, with Townsend being in the first sub-area to be studied. For additional details concerning the master-planning effort, see Chapter 3, Coordination and Implementation.

1-4. Town Goals

The following goals were developed in 2003 to provide general guidance for Townsend's planning activities and were developed by referencing the Town's previous plans and through discussions with Town officials and residents. In 2020, the Planning Commission revisited these

goals and determined that all goals remain relevant. The goals provided below are what Townsend officials and citizens seek to accomplish through the implementation of this plan.

- Retain and reinforce the identity of the town and its setting within its immediate regional area.
- Preserve and enhance the town's social, cultural, aesthetic, and environmental amenities.
- Manage future land uses and transportation systems to adequately address patterns in town for the convenience and well-being of our residents, workers, and visitors.
- Coordinate the development of the town with that of the surrounding areas and with the plans of New Castle County and the state of Delaware.
- Provide adequate and efficient public facilities, utilities, and services to meet the needs of present and future residents.
- Coordinate, manage, and create future land uses in the commercial and/or industrial sectors to attract businesses and create new jobs.

These overall town goals are discussed in further detail in this document. More specific goals are also presented and discussed in the text where appropriate.