



# Town of Odessa Comprehensive Plan 2001

Institute for Public Administration ❖ College of Human Services, Education, & Public Policy ❖ University of Delaware



# Town of Odessa Comprehensive Plan 2001

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# Town, County, and State Officials

## Town of Odessa

### **Mayor and Council**

James Grant, Mayor  
William Allen, Council Member  
Rebecca Tulloch, Council Member  
Jerome Unruh, Council Member  
Cindy Williams, Council Member  
A.I. Guessford, Treasurer

### **Planning Commission**

William Allen, Commission Member  
Janet Butler, Commission Member  
Mark Johnston, Commission Member  
L.D. Shank, Commission Member  
John Tulloch, Commission Member

## New Castle County

### **County Council**

Christopher Coons, President  
Robert Weiner, Council Member  
J. Robert Woods, Council Member  
Richard Abbott, Council Member  
Penrose Hollins, Council Member  
Karen Venezky, Council Member  
J. Christopher Roberts, Council Member

### **County Executive**

Thomas Gordon

### **Department of Land Use**

Charles Baker, Acting General Manager

## State of Delaware

### **Senate District #14**

James Vaughn

### **House of Representatives District #9**

Richard Cathcart

### **Cabinet Committee on State Planning Issues**

Lee Ann Walling, Chair  
James Ford, Secretary, Department of Public Safety  
Nathan Hayward III, Secretary, Department of Transportation  
David Singleton, Secretary, Department of Finance  
Nicholas DiPasquale, Secretary, Dept. of Natural Resources & Environmental Control  
Saundra Johnson, Director, Delaware State Housing Authority  
John Wik, Director, Delaware Economic Development Office  
Peter Ross, Director, Office of the Budget  
Vincent Meconi, Secretary, Department of Health & Social Services  
John Tarburton, Secretary, Department of Agriculture  
Valerie Woodruff, Secretary, Department of Education

### **Office of State Planning Coordination**

David Hugg III, AICP, State Planning Coordinator

# **Institute for Public Administration, College of Human Services, Education, and Public Policy**

The Odessa Comprehensive Plan 2001 was prepared by the Institute for Public Administration (IPA) of the College of Human Services, Education, and Public Policy at the University of Delaware. The Institute links the research and resources of the University of Delaware with the management and information needs of local, state, and regional governments in the Delaware Valley. The Institute provides assistance to agencies and local governments through direct staff assistance and research projects as well as training programs and policy forums.

Jerome Lewis is the Director of the Institute. Martin Wollaston served as the Project Coordinator and liaison with Odessa's town officials. IPA staff members David Edgell, Alex Settles, and Edward O'Donnell assisted with the development of the Plan. Geographic Information System staff from the IPA's Water Resources Agency, Vern Svatos and Nicole Minni, provided technical advice and developed the maps in the Plan and were assisted by Alison Rogozenski and Lori Schnick, GIS Interns with IPA/WRA. Graduate Research Assistants Bettina Burger and Janice Garda also worked on the Plan, conducting fieldwork and assisting with the development of the GIS maps. Lisa Moreland edited the final draft for punctuation and grammar, and the design and production of the Plan were accomplished by Nicole Minni.

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# Executive Summary

Since the early 1700s, Odessa has been a small residential town surrounded by farm fields and the Appoquinimink River. Many people knew only that Odessa was the location of a traffic light on U.S. Route 13 and State Route 299 as they traveled north and south through the state. But today many Delawareans know Odessa as a small town located in one of the fastest growing areas in Delaware. Many of the farms outside of the town are being replaced by housing developments and many of these new residents commute by car to jobs to the north or south utilizing the new limited-access highway State Route 1 (SR1). With one of the few access ramps to SR1 located close to Odessa's western boundary, this area is being forced to address issues that are influencing its residents' quality of life.

The **Town of Odessa Comprehensive Plan 2001** provides a discussion of the issues residents of Odessa now face and provides strategies to help address those issues. The Plan was developed with the guidance of Odessa's Planning Commission, which held several public meetings to receive comments on the issues of most concern to residents of the town. The recommendations in the Plan along with the series of maps developed for the Plan should aid the leaders of Odessa in their efforts to maintain the quality of life in their historic town.

During the last 30 years, the population and number of housing units in Odessa have decreased while the surrounding area has grown. While forecasts indicate this area of New Castle County will continue to grow, Odessa is comfortable with its current size and prefers only limited growth. While many towns use annexation by town council vote as the prime tool for growth, Odessa has decided to keep annexation as an issue to be decided by town referendum. And while some towns seek to attract new commercial activity by rezoning and relaxing subdivision standards, Odessa looks to strengthen its codes to preserve the historic character of the town for future generations. The adoption of historic design guidelines and zoning ordinance amendments to sunset development plans and protect environmentally sensitive areas will be considered. And the revised Land Use Plan map provides an updated guide for town officials to use when considering future development.

The residents of Odessa are very concerned about the effects of vehicular traffic on the town. Main Street (Route 299) traffic continues to increase as developments being built to the east use Main Street to access SR1. Large numbers of cars and trucks are also still using the toll-free U.S. Route 13 to travel north and south. Odessa plans to work with the State and WILMAPCO to develop solutions to reduce traffic and the associated noise, air pollution, and growing threats to pedestrians from vehicular traffic.

Finally, it is very important that Odessa work with the state, county, and municipal governments on issues that could affect the town. Odessa will need to initiate and participate in discussions with these other governments regarding planning issues and land development activities near its boundaries to try to decrease the impacts of economic growth on the residents of the town. Odessa should also begin to discuss the budgeting of funds in its annual budget for compensating someone on a part-time basis to represent the Town's interests on the range of issues discussed in this Plan.

# Chapter 1: Introduction



## Preface

In 1968, the Town of Odessa Planning Commission contracted with the Delaware State Planning Office to prepare a Comprehensive Development Plan for the town. The preparation of that Plan was financed in part through a federal grant established through provisions of Section 701 of the Housing Act of 1954. This Plan, known as a 701 Plan, was adopted by the Town Council in 1969 and has served as the guidance document for the Odessa Town Council, and Planning Commission for making land use decisions for the past 30 years.

In the fall of 1999, the Town Council and Planning Commission for Odessa contracted with the Institute for Public Administration (IPA) at the University of Delaware to prepare an update of Odessa's 1969 Comprehensive Plan. A team was assembled consisting of professional staff and graduate research assistants. The planning team met several times with the Mayor, Planning Commissioners, and members of Town Council to discuss the preparation of this revised plan.

The planning team also assisted the Town in preparing an application to the State Cabinet Committee on State Planning Issues for a grant of \$5000 from the "Infrastructure Planning Grant" fund. These grants are available to municipalities to develop or update Comprehensive Plans. The Odessa grant request was approved at the October 20, 1999 meeting of the Cabinet Committee.

## Purpose for Updating the Comprehensive Plan

There are two principle purposes for updating the Town of Odessa Comprehensive Plan. First, it provides the Town's elected leaders with an updated document on issues and land use within the Town, thereby assisting them in making decisions that will shape the future of the municipality. Second, to satisfy the requirements of House Bill 396 recently passed by the Delaware General Assembly that establishes minimum standards for the contents of municipal comprehensive plans and standards for periodic review of these plans. The following excerpt is from H.B. 396:

"Comprehensive plan means 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 the 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." "... the comprehensive plan shall have the force of law and no development shall be permitted except as consistent with the plan."

H.B. 396 also requires that each municipality in Delaware review its Comprehensive Plan at least every five years to determine its relevance given changing conditions and the Plan must be revised and formally re-adopted at least every ten years. This bill established for the first time in Delaware a requirement to ensure that local government plans are coordinated with State planning efforts and remain up-to-date.

The 2001 Odessa Comprehensive Plan provides a guide to issues the Town will have to address in the near future. The area surrounding Odessa is developing rapidly. Lands that for decades were family owned and passed from “parents to children” for use in agricultural operations are now being sold to investors and developed for residential and commercial uses. As this conversion occurs, greater stress is placed on our natural resources and public facilities including roads, schools, water supply systems, and wastewater systems. Public officials are continually forced to face difficult and costly decisions concerning expansion of these public facilities, which in turn provides more justification for higher density development in what has until recently been a mostly low density, rural area.

Odessa will not have to face too many issues of new development on vacant lands within the town since there is a limited amount of vacant land within its boundaries. Most of the vacant land is either deed restricted or consists of relatively small lots. The Town has an extensive Zoning Ordinance with a Historic District zone which limits the range of development activities. However, there is vacant land surrounding the Town immediately adjacent to its boundaries. Development of these lands will have a range of impacts on the Town. The New Castle County Unified Development Code controls the use of these lands. One of the primary issues facing Odessa will be whether to consider annexation of some of these lands if requested by the landowners.

Odessa will need to address the redevelopment of lands within town, particularly the use of vacant commercial land. These properties are important for supporting the town budget and offer the only opportunities for the establishment of businesses that could support the daily activities of the residents of the town.

### **Synopsis of the Planning Process & Community Involvement**

In August 1999, the Odessa Planning Commission held a meeting with staff from the Institute for Public Administration at the University of Delaware to discuss the proposal developed by the IPA at the request of the Planning Commission for updating the Town’s Comprehensive Plan. After reviewing the proposal, the meeting focused on a discussion of the Goals and Objectives for the revised Plan starting with a review of those goals listed in the previous Town Plan written 30 years ago.

In December 1999, the Planning Commission held a public meeting to discuss progress on the Plan. Included in the invitations to the meeting were the Office of State Planning Coordination and the Land Use Department of New Castle County. The meeting was sparsely attended, but it

included a lively discussion of the residents' view for the future of Odessa and their opinions concerning future land use and potential annexations. It was recognized by all attending that the new limited access State Route 1 (SR1) with an interchange on the western edge of Odessa on State Route 299 would have both positive and negative impacts on their Town.

In May 2000, the Draft Comprehensive Plan 2001 for Odessa was delivered to the Town's Council and Planning Commission and made available to the public. The Planning Commission held a meeting on August 30, 2000 to discuss this first draft and receive public comment. The IPA summarized the comments received both at the meeting and through correspondence and delivered this summary to the Planning Commission and Town Council for review and directions for the revisions necessitated by these comments. The Planning Commission held a public meeting on October 16, 2000 and developed its reply to the proposed revisions in a letter to the IPA dated October 19, 2000. A revised Draft Plan dated January 2001 was sent to the State Planning Coordination Office and the New Castle County Department of Land Use for review and comment. After the 20-day review period, comments received from the State and New Castle County were reviewed with the Town Planning Commission. The Planning Commission held a public meeting on the Final Draft Plan on March 22, 2001 to receive final comments from the public.

The Final Comprehensive Plan 2001 for Odessa was formally submitted by the Planning Commission to the Town Council for adoption on March 22, 2001. The Final Plan was adopted by the Odessa Town Council on April 2, 2001.

### **Comprehensive Plan Goals**

Comprehensive plans usually start with the Town's goals that serve as a general guide to the development of policies and programs. The following goals were developed referencing the previous Plan and comments from Town officials and residents.

To conserve, encourage, and promote the Town's unique place in Delaware history, including its richness in historical buildings and museums.

To provide a healthy and safe town with neighborhoods consisting of attractive homes and commercial buildings.

Continue to provide necessary municipal services and facilities, including access to sanitary sewers, stormwater management, street lighting and refuse disposal.

To provide for the safe, efficient, and convenient movement of people and goods within the town by integrating the pattern of land uses with circulation routes within town and transportation facilities.

To provide sufficient park and recreational facilities for residents of the Town.



To provide recreational and cultural activities for all age groups and interests.

To coordinate with all local jurisdictions and the State on issues impacting Odessa from the development of areas in close proximity to the Town.

To encourage the development of land consistent with the interest of the Town.

To encourage the growth and/or redevelopment of Odessa's commercial zone located along the Route 13 south corridor.

### **Location**

The Town of Odessa is located in the portion of New Castle County situated south of the Chesapeake and Delaware (C&D) Canal. Both the northbound and southbound dual lanes of U.S. Route 13 cross through the town, intersecting with State Route 299. The newly constructed SR1 bypasses the town to the west and a SR 299 exit was built for easier access to Odessa and Middletown.

SR1 is a wide four-lane toll highway that now forms a sizable boundary just outside the western edge of Odessa. The Appoquinimink Creek forms a natural boundary to the east of town. To the north there is another natural boundary consisting of a ravine area of woods and wetlands. And to the south there is a combination of wetlands, wooded areas, and residential housing.

Map 1:  
Odessa Location in New Castle County



## History of Odessa

Little can be found concerning the early history of the Odessa area except that the Dutch settled Appoquinimink in the 1660s and adopted the name “Apequinemy.” They were attracted to the area by its location along the river and had hopes of establishing a trading route with colonies to the west. Alexander DeHinijossa, upon his retirement as Vice-Director at New Castle, built a plantation on a tract of land given to him at Appoquinimink and intended to reside there and engage in trading.

During those years, the English began to colonize this new land and peacefully took over the Apequinemy area in 1664. A few months later, the estate of Mr. DeHinijossa was confiscated by the British and granted to Captain Edmund Cantwell—first sheriff of New Castle County under the government of William Penn. A roadway, called “Old Hermann’s Cartroad,” was established during these years connecting Bohemia Manor, Maryland with the village.

In 1731, permission was granted to Edmund Cantwell’s son, Richard, to erect a toll bridge over the Appoquinimink Creek at Appoquinimink Landing. It was called Cantwell’s Bridge and the Town gradually took the same name. In 1767, William Corbit opened the first industry in the town, a tannery, and it continued in operation until the 1850s. In 1817, a blacksmith shop was opened and in 1855, the New Castle County Bank was incorporated. Throughout the 1800s industries opened for the manufacture of fertilizers, the evaporation of fruits, and the canning of fruits and vegetables.

The first schoolhouse was erected at an early date by a Quaker group called “A Society of Friends,” but in 1817 it was closed. In 1855, the railroad was built with the route going through nearby Middletown. Town officials were worried about the effect the rail could have on the shipping business of the town and decided to again change its name from Cantwell’s Bridge to “Odessa” after the Ukrainian grain port Odessa located on the Black Sea. Shortly afterwards, the nationwide railroad network opened causing Odessa’s grain boats to become obsolete. In 1873, Odessa was incorporated as a town and endowed with corporate privileges.

From 1870 to 1917 a steamboat operated hauling mainly agricultural and industrial products. A newspaper, “The Odessa Herald” also operated in town around 1890, but in 1892 it relocated to the Town of New Castle as the “County Herald.” A second paper materialized in 1890 but that also soon failed. From 1903 to 1907, a trolley operated from Middletown to Odessa as an attempt to tie the railway with the riverfront. Up until the end of World War I, Odessa’s Main Street also served as a state highway. In 1923, the DuPont Highway was built thus allowing Main Street to go back to its single status as a main street and not a main highway.



In 1926, the Odessa Fire Company was established and the first vehicle purchased was a 1926 Hale Pumper. The Pumper was temporarily housed in the Red Man Lodge located on Main Street across the street from where

the current firehouse stands. Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, carnivals, bingo's, etc., were held to earn money to build a firehouse. The building was finally realized in 1936 through the carnival revenues, donations from town residents, land donated by Mr. Corbit, and a cash amount equal to Mr. Corbit's land, given by Mr. Moxom.

In 1927, Odessa was provided with electricity for the first time. Street lighting was expanded using mercury-vapor lights in 1958.

### **Historic Structures**

The historic atmosphere of Odessa is the Town's most prominent characteristic. Even though the population is small, the Town has the following pre-1855 buildings which have historical or architectural interest.



*The Collins-Sharp House (1700) is the oldest structure in Odessa.*

The Collins-Sharp House is the oldest historic home in Odessa. This structure was built around 1700 as two frame houses which were joined together by a connecting hallway about 1730. Known in later years as the Collins-Johnson House, it was located at Delaware Bay near Taylor's Bridge. In 1962, H. Rodney Sharp purchased the house and had it moved to Odessa. Today it is called the Collins-Sharp House and is a part of the Historic Houses of Odessa owned and operated by Winterthur Museum.

The next two oldest houses date back to 1740; these are the Thomas House and the Frame & Log House. The Thomas House was built with hand-hewn log, and hand-split shingles and laths. In later years, a white-frame addition was added. The Frame & Log House was built with white oak logs. The woodwork, floors and beaded beams in the kitchen are quite exceptional. In 1942, the house was restored by H. Rodney Sharp.

The next oldest house is the Wilson-Warner House. This structure was built by David Wilson in 1769 and is of brick construction. The house remained in the Wilson family until 1829 when David Wilson, Jr., sold it to William Polk as a result of business reversals. In 1901, the house was sold to Mary Corbit Warner, a granddaughter of David Wilson, Jr. Mrs. Warner died in 1923 and, under a provision of her will, the house became a museum under David Wilson Mansion, Inc. It is now a part of Historic Houses of Odessa, owned and operated by Winterthur Museum.

The Corbit-Kabis House was built by John Corbit in the mid-1700s. The construction date of the later front section is c.1820s. In the second half of the nineteenth century (c.1870s), the house was remodeled for John Corbit. The last member of the Corbit family, Daniel Corbit, died in 1941.

A section of the Maily House was built about 1770, according to estimates, although the exact date is not known because the records were burned in a fire at the New Castle Court House. This section, now known as the rear

wing, is built of frame. The middle stucco-brick section was added in the nineteenth century followed by the front red brick section in 1940.

The January House seems to have been built in several stages. The name is derived from the earliest known owners, Peter and Janet January who conveyed it to David Wilson on May 29, 1773. The house was later completely restored by H. Rodney Sharp.

One of the main attractions in Odessa is the Corbit-Sharp House. This house is one of the finest Georgian homes on the eastern seaboard. Located near the banks of the Appoquinimink River, it is a two-story, twenty-two room brick structure built between the years 1772 and 1774. It was built by William Corbit, a Quaker who operated a tannery, which was the first industry in Odessa. The last male Corbit to occupy this house died in 1922. In 1938, the property was purchased by H. Rodney Sharp who restored the house to its original state. In 1958, he endowed and presented the house to Winterthur Museum and it is now part of Winterthur's Historic Homes of Odessa.

The John Janvier House was built in 1775 and is of brick construction. In the nineteenth century a front porch was added but was later removed. Since c. 1963, the house has served as a parsonage for St. Paul's Methodist Church. The paneled chimney section in the parlor has been restored and the front bedroom on the second floor retains its original paneled fireplace wall. The old stable, which dates from 1791, was moved to the Brick Hotel lot. The present St. Paul's Church stands on the ground where John Janvier had his cabinet making shop.

The Judge Lore House was built in 1775 with logs and has a winding stairway that climbs four floors. The cellar, which was used as a kitchen, is paved with brick and has a large fireplace at one end. The name of the house comes from its once famous owner, Chief Justice Charles B. Lore.



*The Corbit-Sharp House (1772-74) is a main attraction for visitors.*

The Pump House was the middle section of a three-part row house built in 1780 and in its earlier days was used as a store. In 1948, H. Rodney Sharp renovated the deteriorating building and today, although it is a private residence, it is part of the Historic Houses of Odessa. Adjoining it is another row house that Mr. Sharp converted to a garage. Mr. Sharp demolished the third row house that was located to the left of the Pump House because of its bad condition.

The Friends Meeting House, which was built in 1785, is a small brick building about twenty feet square. It was built by David Wilson and deeded to four trustees for "A Society of Friends" (called Quakers) in Appoquinimink. The "Society" waned for a

while but has presently been reactivated and has weekly meetings of about fifteen people. It is now under the jurisdiction of the Wilmington “Friends Society.”

The Davis Store was built from brick in 1821. It was remodeled in 1870 but no further renovation is known. In 1830, the Davis Residence was attached to the store.



*The Brick Hotel (1822) is a familiar site on Main Street.*

The Brick Hotel was built for William Polk in 1822 and operated as a hotel for nearly one hundred years. In 1956, H. Rodney Sharp bought and restored the building. Today it is the Brick Hotel Gallery, part of the Historic Homes of Odessa and serves as a visitor reception area and exhibit space.

In 1846, William Polk built the Cyrus Polk House for his son Cyrus. This house is made of brick in the “Italian Villa” style. It is furnished with Chinese antiques dating from the Han Dynasty (200 A.D.) to the present.

The Old Academy Building was erected in 1844 and is the oldest surviving public school building in town. In 1846, a library was donated by William B. Corbit and housed here making it the earliest free library in Delaware. Later, the Corbit Library was moved to the Wilson-Warner House and then to its present location on High Street as the Corbit-Calloway Memorial Library. H. Rodney Sharp, who had once taught at the Academy, restored the building in 1938 and gave it to the Odessa Community Center Association which later gave it to the Town for public use.



*The Old Academy Building (1847) now serves as Town Hall for Odessa.*

The Miller-Polk House is a white, late Federal frame house built in 1850 by William Polk for his son Cyrus T. Polk. The house boasts an outstanding curly maple stairway.

Old St. Paul’s Church and Graveyard was built in 1851 and served as a Methodist Church for decades. When a new Methodist church was built, St. Paul’s was abandoned for years until the Women’s Club of Odessa eventually acquired it. The Club has been working for many years to restore it to its original condition and uses it for Club functions.

The Crouch House was built from brick in 1854 in the “Italian Villa” style. No renovations have been recorded since its construction.

The last of these historic buildings is the Bank of Delaware Building, built in 1855. This structure, which is also in the “Italian Villa” style, was originally chartered as the New Castle County National Bank of Odessa.

Table 1:  
Major Historical Buildings  
in Odessa

Historic Structure	Original Construction Date	Present Usage/Address
Collins-Sharp House	ca. 1730	Museum – 110 Second St.
Thomas House	1740	Residence – 628 Main St.
Frame & Log House	1740	Residence – 114 Main St.
John Corbit House	mid-1700s – 1870	Residence – 206 Main St.
Wilson/Warner House	1769	Museum – 202 Main St.
Mailyly House	1770	Residence – 300 Main St.
January House	1772	Residence – 2 Main St.
Corbit-Sharp House	1774	Museum – 118 Main St.
John Janvier House	1775	Residence – 400 Main St.
Judge Lore House	1775	Residence – 310 Main St.
Pump House	1780	Residence – 116 Main St.
Friends Meeting House	1785	Meeting House – 624 Main St.
Davis Store/Residence	1821	Residence – 205 Main St.
Brick Hotel	1822	Museum – 109 Main St.
Cyrus Polk House	1846	Residence – 301 High St.
Old Academy Building	1847	Town Hall – 315 Main St.
Miller-Polk House	1850	Residence – 303 High St.
Old St. Paul's Church	1851	Odessa Women's Club – 506 High St.
Crouch House	1854	Residence – 203 Main St.
Bank of Delaware	1855	Vacant – 201 Main St.

*Source: Comprehensive Development Plan for Odessa, Delaware, June 1969 which references the New Castle County Regional Planning Commission, Historical Development, 1966 and interview with Mr. Horace L. Hotchkiss, November 15, 1968. Additional updates provided by Mayor James Grant, November 1999 and Mr. Steve Pulinka, Winterthur Museum, February 2000.*



# Chapter 2: Community Profile

The community profile for the Town of Odessa is provided as both a description of the residential character of the Town based on the limited information available from the U.S. Bureau of the Census and the Delaware Population Consortium and a characterization of the area surrounding Odessa.

## Population

According to historic data provided in the 1969 Odessa Comprehensive Plan, the Town experienced its largest population around the beginning of the 1900s. In 1900, the population was reported to be 575 residents, which grew to 585 in 1910, establishing what was the highest population for the Town in its U.S. Census documented history. During the next 20 years, the population decreased by 200 people with the 1930 Census recording 385 people. The next four decades showed steady growth up to 1970 when the population again peaked at 547. Since the 1969 Comprehensive Plan was written, the number of residents in Odessa has steadily declined.

Table 2 shows the population of Odessa and the percentage change from decade to decade for about the last 100 years. Also provided for comparison is the population of nearby Middletown as well as the entire New Castle County area.

Table 2:  
Population Change in Odessa /  
Middletown / New Castle County

YEAR	ODESSA		MIDDLETOWN		NEW CASTLE	
1900	575		No Data		109,697	
1910	585	+1.7 %	No Data		123,188	+12.3 %
1920	435	-25.6 %	No Data		148,239	+20.3 %
1930	385	-12 %	No Data		161,032	+8.6 %
1940	391	+1.6 %	No Data		179,562	+11.5 %
1950	467	+19.4 %	1,755		218,879	+22 %
1960	526	+12.6 %	2,191	+25 %	307,446	+40.5 %
1970	547	+3.9 %	2,644	+21 %	349,674	+13.7 %
1980	384	-29.7 %	2,946	+11 %	367,562	+4.5 %
1990	311	-19 %	3,834	+30 %	441,946	+20.2 %
1998*	280	-8 %	4,434	+16 %	482,562	+9 %

\* Population estimates from U.S. Census Bureau, June 1999.

The data indicates that in recent times the population of Odessa peaked in 1970 and since then has been declining while the populations of Middletown and New Castle County have been increasing. Table 3 provides population and housing projections for the Middletown-Odessa Census County Subdivision from 1990 to 2020.

Table 3:  
 Middletown -Odessa Census County Division  
Population and Household Projections

Year	Population	Households
1990	18,578	5,881
2000	28,379	9,564
2005	33,382	11,540
2010	37,481	13,310
2015	40,653	14,809
2020	43,123	16,067

Source: Delaware Population Consortium, July 1, 1999

The projections indicate that a significant amount of growth in population and housing is expected in the Middletown-Odessa Census County Subdivision area. This is basically the area of New Castle County south of the C & D Canal. During the next 10 years, a 32% growth in population and 39% growth in housing are expected in the area. Odessa will be affected by this growth and could experience some of it within its boundaries, particularly if the Town develops policies to attract residential growth.

The 1990 U.S. Census is the most current Census data available to describe the population characteristics of the residents of Odessa. Table 4 and Table 5 present summaries of race, age, and gender of the residents of Odessa.

Table 4:  
Odessa Racial Composition (1990)

Race	Number	Percentage
White	256	82 %
Black	38	12 %
Other	17	6 %

Source: U.S. Census, 1990.

In summary, in 1990 the Town was predominantly made up of residents that were white (82% of the population) and over 40 years of age (56%). Also, according to the 1990 Census, the 1989 median household income in Odessa was \$28,462 – placing it near the Middletown median income level of \$30,044, but below the New Castle County median income level of about \$38,600.

Table 5:  
Odessa Age/Gender Composition (1990)

Age	Male	Female	Total
0-6	12	15	27
7-18	16	17	33
19-24	7	5	12
25-39	26	39	65
40-59	21	23	44
60+	39	91	130
<b>Totals</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>311</b>

Source: U.S. Census, 1990.



## Housing

A decreasing pattern is also occurring with the number of housing units in Odessa. The 1969 Odessa Comprehensive Plan reported that according to the 1960 U.S. Census there were 170 housing units in Odessa. The 1990

U.S. Census reported that there were 146 housing units in Odessa, a decrease of 14% in forty years. The decrease could be due to a variety of factors, including the consolidation of dwelling units on a single lot, the conversion of residential property to commercial or institutional (historic) use, demolition, or abandonment.

Table 6 was developed using data from the 1990 U.S. Census. As expected in a small historic town, the majority of the housing stock in Odessa is over 60 years old. However, it is significant to note that only six units were built during the 1980s. Fortunately, much of the housing stock is in good condition due to Town codes, the Town's code inspection program, the historic zoning district regulations, and the character of the residents of the Odessa who take pride in the history and heritage of their town.

Table 6:  
Age of Odessa Housing Stock (1990)

<b>Year Built</b>	<b>Total Units</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
1980-1989	6	4 %
1970-1979	12	8 %
1960-1969	9	6 %
1950-1959	9	6 %
1940-1949	19	13 %
1939 or earlier	91	63 %
<b>Totals</b>	<b>146</b>	

*Source: U.S. Census, 1990.*

During discussions with Town Council and the Planning Commission, the consensus appeared to be that the decrease in population and housing units was not a concern. Odessa is a small town with a limited amount of developable residential land and most of that land is associated with a nearby home (yard, garden, garage, etc.). Several residents reported that the overall condition of the housing has improved since the 1969 Plan was developed. Some of the decrease in population may be from children moving out of their parents' homes resulting in smaller household sizes, which is currently the trend found throughout the State.

There are two vacant properties that have been formally subdivided and approved for residential development but are vacant at this time. One is located off of Mechanic Street, the other off of Osbourne Street. These two developments combined, as recorded, could add 25 new dwelling units, which would be a significant increase in the housing stock. These subdivisions were approved prior to the adoption of the October 1997 Odessa Zoning Ordinance, but any new residential development would be governed under that ordinance. For new residential development, the Zoning Ordinance only permits the development of single-family detached dwellings and these detached dwellings can only be built on lots measuring a minimum of 0.5 acre with a 125 feet minimum width. This ordinance minimizes the opportunities for new development on the limited vacant land available within the town.

## ***RECOMMENDATIONS***

1. Although population and dwelling units in Odessa have declined during the last 30 years, the condition of the housing has improved since the 1969 Comprehensive Plan. The Plan recommends continuing to encourage the rehabilitation of homes to maintain or increase the number of dwelling units in Odessa.
2. The Plan recommends the development of Town strategies that would help attract new residents.



# Chapter 3: Government Services

## Town Government

The Town of Odessa is an incorporated area with powers granted by the State to govern themselves through their elected officials and authorized appointees. The powers of the Town are established in its Town Charter approved by the Delaware General Assembly and most recently amended in June 2000. The elected governing body consists of a five member Town Council comprised of a Mayor and four councilpersons and a Treasurer. Officers serve a two-year term – the Mayor, Treasurer, and two members of Council are elected in odd numbered years, the other two Council members are elected in even numbered years. Municipal elections are held the first Monday in April each year. The Town Council meets the first Monday of each month at 7 p.m. in the Old Academy Building on Main Street. The Mayor presides over the meeting.

Through the Town Council, a Planning Commission has been formed to assist the Council with its zoning and land use duties. The Planning Commission is composed of five members who must be registered voters of Odessa. The Commission is appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by Council. The Planning Commission is an advisory body to the Council and its major responsibilities are to interpret and recommend revisions of the Town's Zoning Ordinance and to evaluate and recommend modifications of the Town's Comprehensive Development Plan. The Planning Commission is also responsible for arranging public hearings for proposed subdivision plans and must forward the Commission's recommendations to the Mayor and Council. The Planning Commission meets as necessary.

A Board of Adjustment is authorized by the Town Council for Odessa. It is comprised of three citizens who are registered to vote in Odessa. The Mayor, with the approval of Council, appoints the members of the Board of Adjustment. The Town Solicitor is a non-voting advisor on the Board. The Board has the task of ruling on appeals from aggrieved parties concerning zoning variances, administrative reviews, and Historic Commission decisions.

Odessa's Historic Commission advises the elected officials on proposed changes to the exterior of buildings within the Odessa Historic District. The Commission consists of five members appointed by the Mayor with the consent of Council. The Commission must review applications and issue a historic review report to the Zoning Administrator for exterior changes visible from the street, demolitions, additions, and the construction of new structures.

The Town has no full time employees and has contracts for services necessary for the operations of the town. Odessa contracts for building inspections, police service, snow removal, street lighting, and refuse collections. The Town maintains the local streets and sidewalks in common areas and its parks through commercial contracts.



## **Public Safety**

Police services are provided to Odessa through a jurisdictional agreement between the New Castle County Police and the Delaware State Police. This agreement provides for 24-hour a day services for the Town from the State Police Troop 9 office located on Main Street in Odessa. The location of this office also provides a continual police presence. Emergency medical services are provided by the Odessa Volunteer Fire Department and dispatched through the New Castle County 9-1-1 Emergency Communications Center ambulance and paramedic service.

Fire protection is provided by the Odessa Volunteer Fire Company located on Main Street. The Fire Company operates a dry hydrant system that was installed several years ago that can be pressurized using a pump located at the east end of Town that withdraws water from the Appoquinimink River. The Odessa Volunteer Fire Company participates in the mutual aid agreement with surrounding volunteer fire companies and its responses to incidents are dispatched through the New Castle County 9-1-1 Emergency Communications Center operated by New Castle County government.

## **Education and Library Facilities**

The Town of Odessa is within the Appoquinimink School District, which is among the fastest growing districts in Delaware. The Appoquinimink School District operates three elementary schools (grades K-4), one intermediate school (grades 5-6), one middle school (grades 7-8), and one high school (grades 9-12). Children in Odessa attend the Silver Lake Elementary School, Redding Intermediate School, Middletown Middle School, and Middletown High School. Buses transport children residing in Odessa to these schools.



*The Corbit-Calloway Memorial Library was established in 1847.*

The library in Odessa was established in 1847 and is the oldest free library in Delaware. The Corbit-Calloway Memorial Library, located at 2<sup>nd</sup> and High Street, is a contract library to the New Castle County Department of Libraries. The Library was originally located next to the Old Academy Building and is currently located in a building constructed in 1947. Additionally, Odessa has easy access to a much larger community library

located at the new Middletown High School called the Middletown-Odessa-Townsend Library. Opened in 1996 to serve the needs of this regional area, the library is about 20,000 square feet in size and offers a wide range of materials and services.

## **Senior Services**

The Middletown-Odessa-Townsend Senior Citizens Center, Inc. is a private, non-profit senior center located at 300 South Scott Street in Middletown. This center provides a variety of services for seniors living in southern New Castle County.

## **Health Care**

There are no health care facilities within the Town of Odessa, although there is a facility located within 15 minutes in nearby Middletown. The Christiana Care Health System (formerly the Medical Center of Delaware) operates a Family Health Care Center at 200 Cleaver Farm Road in Middletown. A Wound Care Center was recently added to this facility. The closest major hospital is the Christiana Care Christiana Hospital located north of the C & D Canal in Stanton, Delaware, about 25 miles from Odessa.

## **Postal Service**

Odessa is served by a small United States Post Office. The building is located on Main Street and serves as a central gathering point in the town since mail is not delivered and must be picked up at the Post Office. A town bulletin board is located at the Post Office and is used for posting meeting notices and public announcements.

## **Solid Waste Disposal**

The Town of Odessa provides refuse collection to residential and commercial properties in its incorporated area. A fee is assessed to property owners to fund this service. The Town currently has a contract with Home Waste Inc., a private refuse collection service.

## **Recreation**

Recreational space for residents is available at Memorial Park and at a park located behind the Old Academy Building. Memorial Park is located on the western side of the Town and consists of about 4 acres of grass ringed by trees and a small basketball court. The Park provides mostly a passive recreational area, but reportedly it is seldom utilized in part due to the difficulties of crossing U.S. Route 13 to reach the park. A second town park, located behind the Old Academy Building offers a tennis court and playground equipment and reportedly is often used by residents. Parks are valuable assets in a community, therefore it is important that efforts be made to ensure that these assets are available for use by all residents. If Memorial Park is under-used, the Town should determine why and develop a strategy to increase its use. Perhaps developing a small parking area would increase accessibility. A pedestrian and bike path might be developed that includes improved crossings of Route 13. Additional facilities might also be added such as playground equipment or a picnic pavilion that could be reserved through the Town for social gatherings.



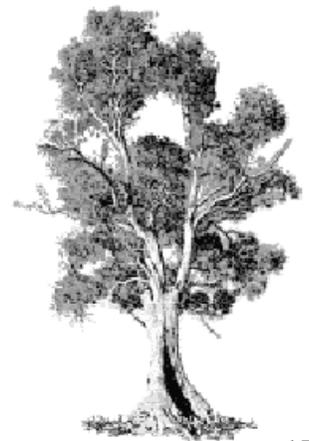
On the east end of Odessa, the State operates a small boat ramp located on the east side of the Appoquinimink River. In 1994 the State met with the Town to discuss its proposal to build a parking lot for the boaters on the

parcel across from the ramp on the west side of the River, which was at the time an industrial site. The proposal included a pedestrian bridge to connect the two sides. Recently, the State revised this plan and has proposed completely relocating the boat ramp and parking area to this now State-owned parcel on the west side of the River. Odessa Town Council has discussed the new boat ramp project and voted to oppose this new proposal favoring the original project design.

***RECOMMENDATION***

1. The Plan recommends the pursuit of opportunities for improving the recreational potential for Memorial Park, including increased accessibility. Accessibility could be enhanced by developing additional sidewalks and bike paths including improved signalized pedestrian crossings at Route 13, and the installation of parking facilities.

2



## Chapter 4: Infrastructure Issues



### Utilities

The Town of Odessa does not directly provide or invoice for any utility services. However, electric, natural gas, phone, and sanitary sewer services are available. The residents and businesses in Odessa are provided electric service from Conectiv, natural gas from Chesapeake Utilities Corporation, and communication services are available from a variety of companies.

### **Sanitary Sewer**

Sanitary sewer service is available in most of the town. A large transmission pipe for the New Castle County sanitary sewer system runs from Middletown to the bridge on the east end of Odessa. There, a pump station pushes the flow across the Appoquinimink River and on to the Water Farm #1 Wastewater Treatment Facility operated by New Castle County. The 1990 Census reported that 102 of the 146 housing units in Odessa (70%) are connected to the sanitary sewer and additional units have been connected during the 1990s. The remaining units utilize on-site septic systems.

It was reported that there is an area in Odessa where sewer service is not readily available due to the location of the transmission mains. That area is located on the northwest side of Odessa along Route 299 where the road sharply bends to the west. This is also an area where new development is likely to occur in the future. It is important that when development occurs in this area, the provision of sewer service to new development is secured from the provider, New Castle County.

### ***RECOMMENDATION***

1. The Plan recommends that Odessa discuss with New Castle County the provision of sanitary sewer service for new development and existing homes that are currently using septic systems. Discussions should include the capacity available to Odessa, the costs, and the determination of actions necessary to make sewer service available to all properties in town.

### **Public Water Supply**

Currently, most of Odessa is not served by a public water supply system although a small water supplier, Cantwell Water Company provides water to some residences in and around the southern part of the town. The issue is whether a public water supply system should be developed for the entire Town. There are two basic uses served by a public water system. First, a water system provides potable water supply to residents and businesses to satisfy their daily needs and, second, a system provides a reliable source of water to combat fires through a constantly pressurized network of water mains and hydrants. Public water systems are highly regulated by federal

and State statutes and are continually monitored for water system pressure and water quality.

Potable water needs for most residents and businesses in Odessa are now met by the use of small private wells. In most instances, the cost for water supply is the installation cost for the well, the electricity used to run the pump, and perhaps the cost of operating a water conditioning unit. Comments offered by residents indicate that there have been some quantity or quality problems reported with these private wells during the last decade. When there is a problem, it is usually resolved by replacing the well.

The value of a public water system for fire protection has been recognized for decades by insurance companies that typically offer lower rates for structures located near a public water supply system. Odessa does not have a public water system, however there is a series of pipes and “dry hydrants” in Town that are used by the Odessa Volunteer Fire Company to fight fires. This system was installed in the mid-1970s and consists of several miles of ductile iron water mains, about a dozen fire hydrants, and a diesel-powered pump station on the eastern boundary of Odessa next to the Appoquinimink River. When water supply is needed at the hydrants, fire company personnel start the pump which withdraws water from the River and pumps it into the water mains for withdrawal at the hydrants. The Odessa Volunteer Fire Company has owned and maintained the dry hydrant system since it was constructed over 25 years ago.

A public water system is considered a necessary service for most towns, providing residents and businesses reliability concerning the quantity and quality of water it is using. A public water system would also increase the ability of the Odessa Fire Company to minimize damages to structures within the town from fire. The dry hydrant system currently in use is not as reliable as a continuously pressurized water system and is a maintenance issue for the operator. The availability of flow at the hydrant is dependent on the operation of the pump and the level of the water in the River. A continually pressurized hydrant system would provide a constant source of water for fighting fires and should reduce fire insurance premiums. With many of the valued historic structures in Odessa located so close to one another, a pressurized water system would reduce the possibility that a fire in one structure would spread to other structures.

The major negative for a public water system is the cost. There will be a one-time cost of installing the system and connecting the structure to the water main at the curb and the continual cost of service to the consumer from the provider. When a home is connected to a public water system, the well must be completely disconnected from the distribution system for the dwelling. The well can be maintained for outside watering as long as proof is provided that the well water is not interconnected with the public system.

It should be noted that the establishment of a public water system was recommended in Odessa’s 1969 Comprehensive Plan. If the Town decides to pursue the establishment of a system, there are several options that can be explored. Odessa could develop its own town system including

developing the water source, treatment, and distribution facilities and administrative mechanisms for billing and system repairs. This would be expensive for a town the size of Odessa. Odessa could approach Middletown and request that it extends its municipal water system across SR1 into Odessa. This option is also unlikely since the costs of extending service would be difficult to absorb by a system as small as Middletown and most of these costs would be passed to Odessa water customers, increasing their initial costs. As a third option, the Town could contract with a private water supplier to establish service. Two private suppliers, the Artesian Water Company and Tidewater Utilities operate in this area of New Castle County. A contract with a private supplier would be the most economical option for establishing a public water system in Odessa. A water supplier would have to get approval from the Odessa Town Council and a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN) from the State before it would have the right to provide water supply to customers in Odessa. The CPCN is a State permit that grants exclusive rights to an entity to provide public water within a specific area.

## ***RECOMMENDATIONS***

1. The Plan recommends that the Town continue to investigate and review establishing a public water system in the future.
2. The Plan recommends that the reliability of the dry hydrant system be increased or maintained to ensure the availability of water for fighting fires.

## **Transportation**

Most historic towns owe their existence to a fortuitous location along major transportation routes – Odessa is no exception. The Town developed on the banks of the Appoquinimink Creek and near a well traveled road which afforded residents and businesses easy access to the surrounding area. The landing on the creek and “Old Herman’s Cartway” represented two of the most significant pieces of transportation infrastructure in the region in the late 17<sup>th</sup> and early 18<sup>th</sup> century, and undoubtedly drew many early residents to settle in Odessa.

Today, Odessa remains a crossroads town bisected and impacted by major regional transportation facilities. River transportation is no longer a primary mode of travel, and the landing has been replaced by a recreational boat ramp. Old Herman’s Cartway has been replaced by three regional roads that define the Town. State Route 299, also named Main Street as it goes through the historic center of town, connects Odessa to Middletown. U.S. Route 13 was until recently the main north - south transportation artery in northern Delaware. It bisects the town, occupying what were once 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> streets. SR 1 is a limited access toll road that will also move traffic north and south through the state. It has been constructed just to the west of Odessa with one of the limited interchanges located on Route 299.



The main transportation issues facing Odessa concern the impact of these roadways on the town, the maintenance of the municipal streets serving the town, and the opportunities for alternative transportation like mass transit, bicycle and pedestrian routes.

There are mainly two public agencies that are involved in transportation matters in Delaware – the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT) and the Wilmington Area Planning Council (WILMAPCO). DelDOT’s principal responsibility is to conduct 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 for the regional area that includes New Castle County, Delaware and Cecil County, Maryland and it is responsible for coordinating transportation plans of local government within this region including town, county, and state plans. It is important for Odessa to work with both of these agencies to address its transportation issues.

### **Regional Traffic/Roadways**

For decades Odessa has been significantly impacted by traffic from what was the only major highway running north-south in Delaware, U.S. Route 13. Where it runs through Odessa, Route 13 is actually two two-lane highways running in opposite directions separated by a town block where homes and businesses are located. Impacts from this road includes the normal daily impact of vehicular noise and air pollution from the large number of vehicles passing north and south through the town and the ever-present chance for accidents. For years, residents have voiced concerns about the dirt and the vibrations from the steadily increasing traffic on Route 13. Perhaps even more important to the functioning of the town, the traffic makes it very dangerous for pedestrians to move across the town from east to west since they must cross Route 13 twice. Therefore, Route 13 has actually cut Odessa in half separating many residents within the town from their neighbors. Residents in the eastern portion of the town are also separated from the Odessa’s largest park, Memorial Park, and most residents find it difficult to access the town’s commercial area.

The State Department of Transportation has monitored and recorded the volume of traffic passing through Odessa for many years. The measurements of traffic volumes are expressed as the “Average Annual Daily Traffic,” or AADT. This measurement represents the average number of vehicles that pass through various locations on a given day. Because this is an average, there are some periods when traffic is much less, but also peak periods with greater traffic than the numbers reported below.

Table 7 shows the Average Annual Daily Traffic at various locations along Route 13 in the vicinity of Odessa:

Table 7:  
1998 AADT at Selected Locations,  
U.S. Route 13

<b>Between</b>	<b>And</b>	<b>AADT</b>
Pine Tree Corner	Southern Odessa Limits	41,310
Southern Odessa Limits	Route 299 Intersection	42,825
Route 299 Intersection	Northern Odessa Limits	51,791

Source: 1998 Traffic Survey, Delaware Department of Transportation

This data indicates that in 1998 there were about 50,000 vehicle trips a day that passed through Odessa on both Route 13 and, to a lesser extent, on Route 299. During the summer months, traffic can be expected to increase as much as 18% to 20% over this average figure resulting in as high as 60,000 vehicle trips per day.

Approximately 10,481 of the 51,791 trips either originated or ended within Odessa, or traveled through Odessa on Route 299. The average single family home generates 10 one way vehicle trips per day. Based upon the number of housing units in Odessa (146 in 1990), it can be expected that the Town's residents generate approximately 1,460 trips. Therefore, as many as 9,021 of the 10,481 vehicle trips represent traffic which is passing through Odessa along Route 299.

Even though the 1998 data is the most recent available, it may not be adequate to describe the current and future traffic patterns through the town. The future impact of State Route 1 must be considered.

### **State Route 1 and its Impact on Odessa**

Recently the Town experienced a reason to be optimistic that there may be some relief from the high number of cars and trucks passing through Odessa on Route 13. The newest section of the new major north-south toll highway, State Route 1 (SR1), was opened which provides a bypass to the west of town. It is the belief of the State that SR1 will be used as the preferred alternative to Route 13, particularly by regional traffic passing through the area. However, SR1 is not yet completed so the full impact of this roadway on reducing traffic on Route 13 will not be measurable until the last section of roadway between south Odessa and north Smyrna is completed. It was notable that during a brief trial period when SR1 was opened but tolls were not collected, it was observed that there was much less traffic passing through Odessa. When toll collection started, some of the traffic returned to Route 13 suggesting the decision on which road to use may be made based on the cost-benefit to the user, particularly for local users.

Presently, there are no reliable traffic counts that adequately characterize the impact of SR1 on Odessa. Whenever a new road is opened there is a period of six months to a year when commuters and other motorists are experimenting with their new travel options. DelDOT has reported that the few traffic counts that have been taken vary widely, showing that between 10% and 70% of the north-south traffic is using the new roadway. Once this unsettled period is over, DelDOT planners expect that 50% of the north-south traffic will use SR1. This effect may not fully be realized until the final section of SR1 is opened south of Odessa to Smyrna which is expected to be completed in 2002. In real numbers, this means that the traffic going through Odessa is expected to decrease from approximately 50,000 vehicle trips per day AADT to 25,000 vehicle trips per day AADT. Due to growth in the area it is expected that traffic on both roads will increase by 2% each year (or by about 500 trips, AADT).

DelDOT does not expect that the existence of SR1 will reduce the importance of Route 13 or Route 299 as regional transportation routes. It is expected that Routes 13 and 299 will function as the desired travel routes for trips with local origins and destinations, while SR1 will likely be used for longer distance trips. Those who live in Odessa, Middletown, or the areas east of the town are not likely to enter SR1 and pay the toll after traveling only a few miles. It is more likely that these commuters will continue their current travel patterns, using Route 299 and Route 13. Odessa will continue to be impacted by the population and commercial growth in the Middletown area, which will use Route 299 to access Route 13. The Town could also be negatively impacted in the future by new traffic generated by housing developments within the county to the east of the town. These new residents will likely travel along Route 299 (Main Street) to get to and from Route 13 and SR1. The Town is concerned that increased traffic along Route 299 will increasingly negatively impact their quality of life. Therefore, Odessa is opposed to any increase in traffic along this roadway, which is Odessa's Main Street and a focal point for its residents.

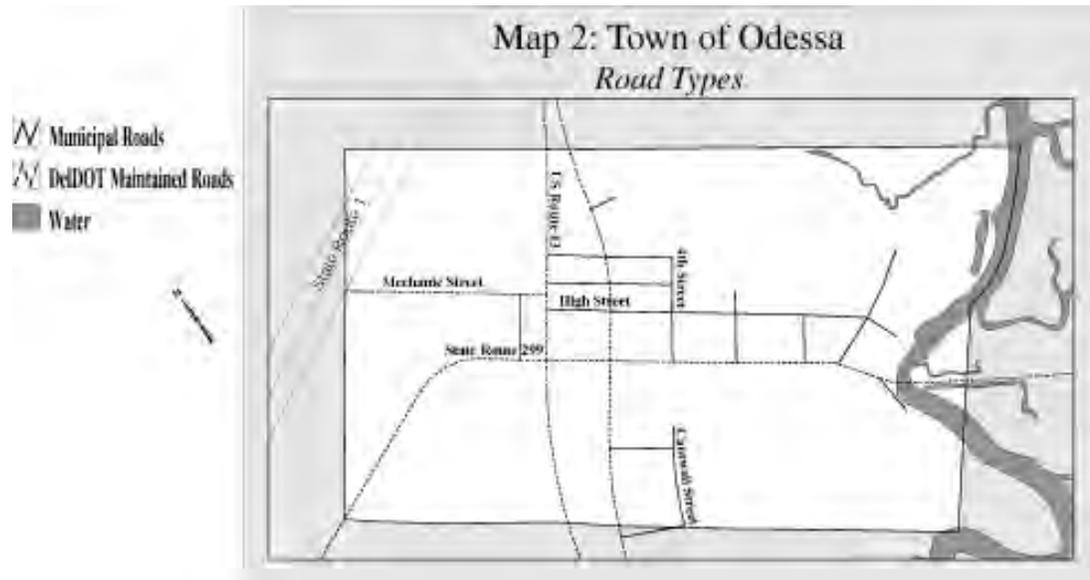
Several residents have expressed concerns associated with SR1. This new highway is being built as part of a regional transportation system along with improvements to I-95 and the proposed U.S. Route 301 corridor improvements into Maryland. With all of these road improvements, there is a good probability that traffic on SR1 bypassing Odessa could significantly surpass the number of vehicles that Odessa has had to live with on Route 13. Although the traffic would be on the outskirts of the town, the impacts of noise and air pollution on Odessa could increase due to the increasing number of vehicles. It will be important for the Town to work with DelDOT to continually monitor traffic volume and the associated impact in and around the town as SR1 is completed. Also, it is important that potential opportunities to mitigate these impacts be included in any discussions of developing those properties to the Odessa-side of SR1. This includes comments on the type of development, the design and positioning of new structures adjacent to SR1, the construction of fencing or sound barrier walls, and the planting of trees and bushes as buffers.

A comment was received suggesting that in the future the Town might want to pursue the return of two-way traffic on 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Streets (Route 13 north/south) when the last phase of SR1 is completed. With an improvement to the existing short connector road between Route 13 north and south on the northeast end of Odessa near the service station, a loop would be created for moving between the commercial and residential parts of the town, improving traffic flow within Odessa. However, DelDOT likely will not be receptive to reducing the roadway capacity that would result from this action.

### **Municipal Roadways**

Odessa has a mix of State and municipal roadways. The larger roads, U.S. Route 13 and State Route 299, move traffic through the town and are maintained by the State. The smaller municipal roads facilitate the move-

ment of vehicles within the town or to the state roads and are maintained by Odessa with the help of State Municipal Street Aid Funding. This funding is provided to municipalities by the Delaware General Assembly based on a formula that considers the amount of roadway and population. At this time, Odessa does not anticipate the construction of additional roads within its boundaries and will provide periodic maintenance to existing roadways as needed. The roadway circulation pattern is adequate for the Town since it is predominantly a residential community. Map 2 displays the State-maintained and Odessa-maintained roads.



### **Alternative Transportation**

Currently there are some alternative transportation options available to Odessa. The Town is on a public bus route serviced by DART First State, Delaware’s bus, train, and intermodal transportation provider that operates as a division within the State Department of Transportation. DART Route 301 runs from Dover to Wilmington, traveling along SR1 and stopping at the Park-and-Ride facility located at the Route 299 interchange. A bus runs this route about eight times a day, but only on weekdays.

There are several Park-and-Ride facilities near Odessa, parking lots along major roadways that facilitates the transfer from single occupancy vehicles to higher occupancy vehicles, including buses, vanpools, and carpools. DelDOT also operates DART First State Paratransit. This door to door service is only available to Americans with Disabilities Act certified customers.

There are also some opportunities for Odessa to develop pedestrian and bike paths. Priority should be given to developing pathways for improving accessibility to Memorial Park. Pedestrian and bicycle paths should also be considered when the development of properties on the western side of Odessa are proposed, perhaps linking with efforts being considered in Middletown which has annexed land adjacent to the western side of SR1. Additionally, there may be opportunities for creating a pedestrian path along the Appoquinimink River. River walkways have been very successful in many areas in the region.

## ***RECOMMENDATIONS***

1. The Plan recommends that the Odessa Town Council work with the State DelDOT and WILMAPCO to develop a plan for monitoring vehicular traffic (including the vehicle mix of cars vs. trucks) and noise to track changes over the next decade. The plan should include an Annual Report from DelDOT to Odessa Town Council.
2. The Plan recommends that Odessa work with the State to establish a seasonal air quality-monitoring program in the vicinity of Route 13 to track change over time. Results should be included in the Annual Report to the Town from DelDOT.
3. The Plan recommends that discussions be initiated with the State DelDOT and WILMAPCO to evaluate options for calming traffic, improving aesthetics, and providing pedestrian and bicycle facilities along Route 13 through Odessa. This should include the design and installation of signalized pedestrian and bicycle crossings at the Route 13 and Route 299 intersections.
4. The Plan recommends Odessa coordinate with DelDOT and WILMAPCO to monitor traffic conditions on Main Street (Route 299). Traffic has increased partly from new development east of Odessa. The Town should discuss with these agencies methods of calming traffic through this historic area including diverting traffic to existing roads or constructing an alternative route.
5. The Plan recommends that Odessa develop a municipal road maintenance schedule to enable it to better plan for significant expenditures.
6. The Plan recommends Odessa periodically survey its residents to determine if their mass transit needs are being met and should forward results to DART First State.
7. Opportunities should be explored for developing bicycle and pedestrian pathways, particularly with new development projects. A designated pathway with signage throughout the town using existing roads and sidewalks would be relatively low-cost and could encourage non-vehicular movement within the town.



# Chapter 5: Land Use

## Current Land Use

In Odessa's 1969 Comprehensive Plan, maps were developed depicting Land Use within the town at that time (Map 3) and a Land Use Plan for the Town (Map 4). During the last 30 years, the Land Use Plan has served as a guide for town officials for making land use decisions in Odessa. The two maps from 1969 are provided for reference. A key part of Odessa's Comprehensive Plan 2001 is a reevaluation of land use within



**Map 3: 1969 Land Use**

RESIDENTIAL 1-FAMILY	UTILITIES	WATER
2-FAMILY	WOODED ARE	VACANT LAND
COMMERCIAL	AGRICULTURE	INDUSTRIAL
COMMUNITY FACILITIES	RECREATION AREA	

**Map 4: 1969 Land Use Plan**



the town and a comparison of the older Plan to the current uses. From this and in consideration of the Town's current goals, a new Land Use Plan map was developed.

Map 5 displays the current land use in Odessa. As would be expected in a small historic town that has not annexed any property in its recent history, much of the land within Odessa has been developed. However, there are some parcels where new development or redevelopment is possible. There are also two small residential subdivisions in town that have been plotted and recorded but not developed to date.

Odessa has also recently amended its Zoning Ordinance to improve land use management. The Ordinance, adopted by the Town Council in 1997, establishes two basic zoning categories in the town – Single Family Residential and General Commercial. There is also a third zoning district, Historic, that serves as an Overlay District. An Overlay District provides an additional management tool for governing specific areas for a specific purpose. Land uses within overlay zones are initially governed by the base zoning, in this case either residential or commercial, and then governed by the additional provisions specified in the overlay zone. Odessa established the Historic District zone to ensure that the historic character of the town, including its valued architecture, will be preserved for the future.

The Zoning Ordinance provides very detailed descriptions of the land use activities permitted in each district. Map 6 displays the current zoning in Odessa, including the historic district, and Map 7 provides the zoning in the New Castle County area surrounding Odessa. The following land uses are relevant to Odessa.

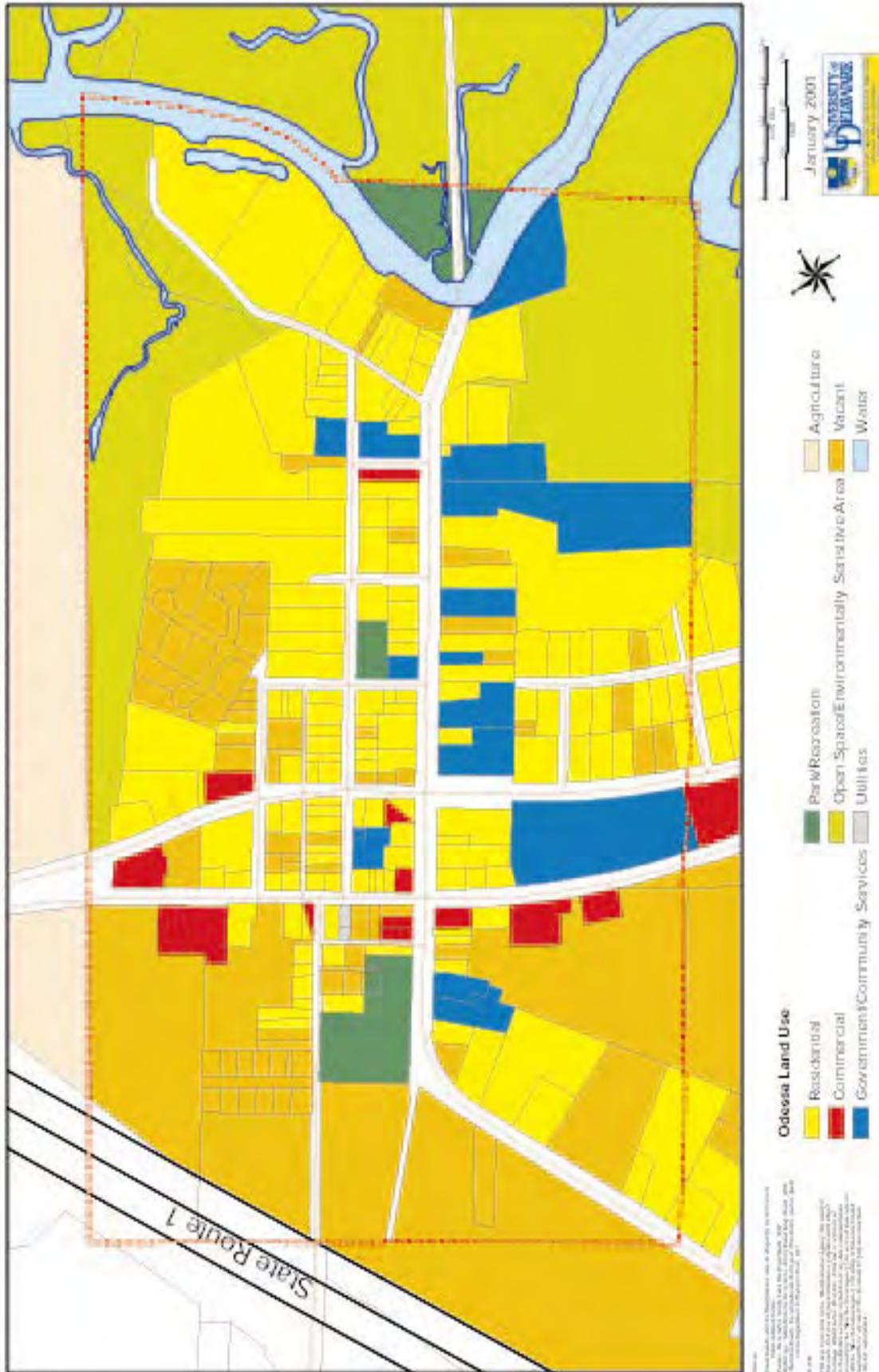
### **Agricultural**

In the 1969 Plan, a significant portion of the land in Odessa was used for agriculture. Thirty years later, the agricultural land use that remains within the town is relatively small and on lands prime for future development. There are also a few parcels on the outer boundaries of the town where there is agricultural activity. Some of those parcels are split by the Town's boundaries and are adjacent to developed areas within town. Therefore, in the 2001 Plan the agricultural land use designation within Odessa has been eliminated and lands where there may be some limited agricultural use are now labeled as vacant.

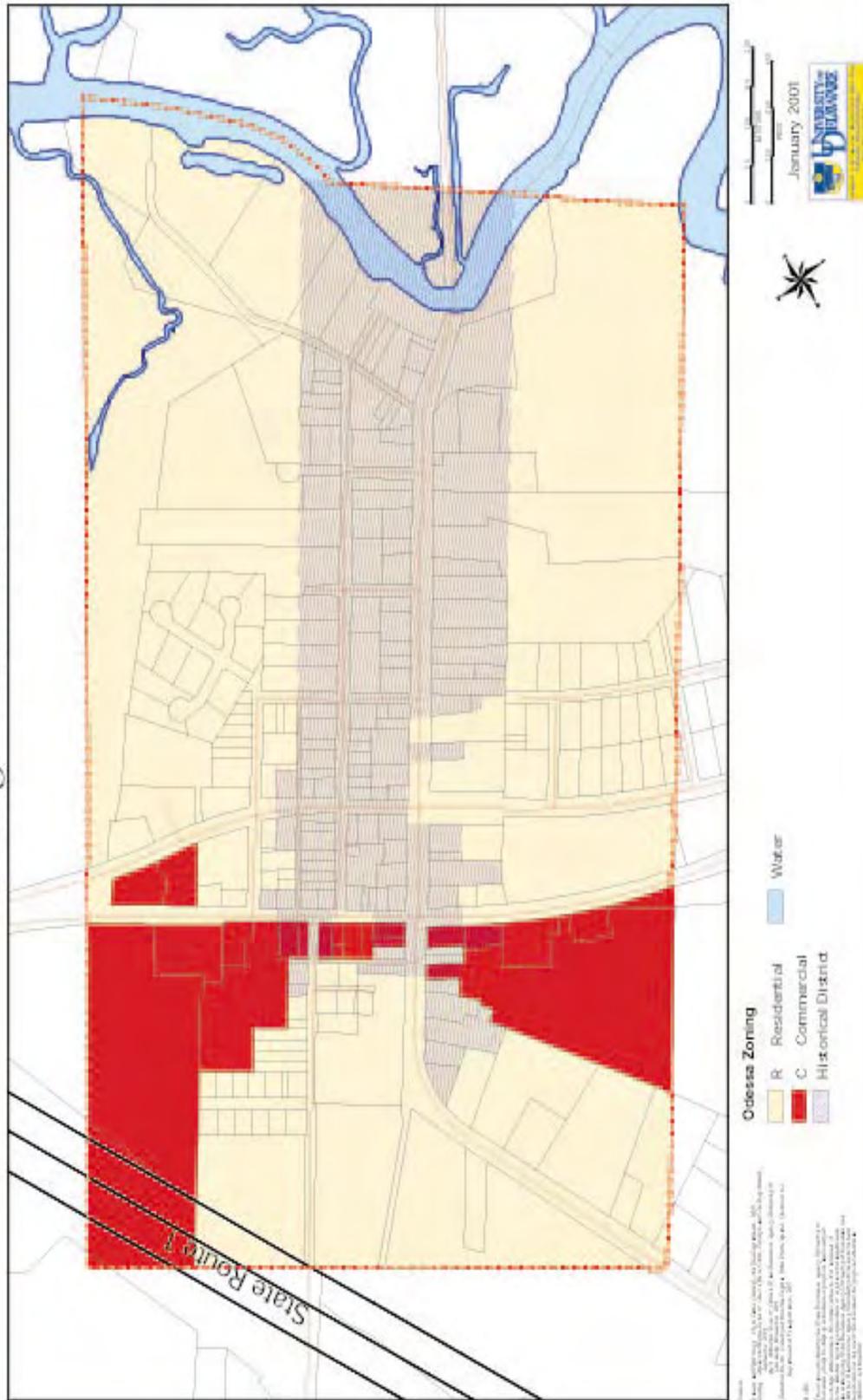
### **Residential**

The predominant land use in Odessa is residential. Within the town there are single-family detached homes and single-family attached homes, but no multi-family dwelling units (apartments). The majority of residential properties in Odessa are single-family detached homes. There are several duplexes in Odessa, but no townhouses. The Town's Zoning Ordinance, revised in 1997, only permits the new construction of single family detached homes.

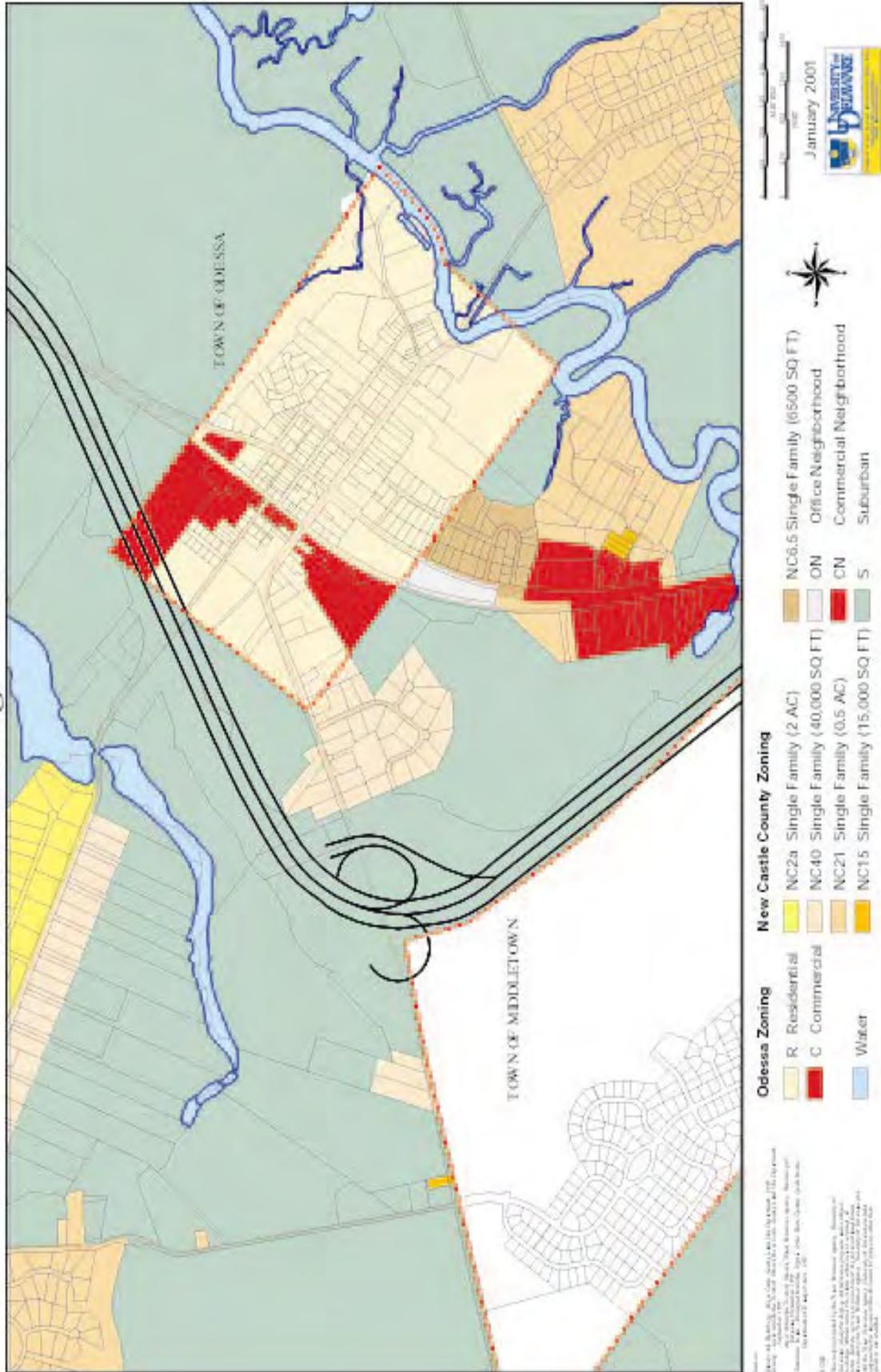
# Map 5: Town of Odessa Land Use - Year 2001



# Map 6: Town of Odessa Zoning - Year 2001



# Map 7: Town of Odessa Base Zoning - Year 2001



## **Commercial**

Commercial land use refers to property that is used for conducting business involving retail sales or services. Odessa has followed its 1969 Land Use Plan by locating most of the commercial activity in the western side of town along U.S. Route 13 south and within the island area between Route 13 north and south on the northern end of town. These areas are the only areas zoned commercial by Odessa. Unlike many towns, there is a very limited amount of commercial activity on Odessa's Main Street and the businesses (bank, small shop) that are on Main Street are pre-existing uses to the 1997 Zoning Ordinance. There is also one pre-existing business (used car dealer) on the east side of Route 13 north.

At this time, much of the commercially zoned land in Odessa is either vacant or contains older structures that could be improved. The existing commercial activities in town include a gas station/convenience store, two day-care centers, a dance studio, an administrative office for a water utility, a pizza shop, a bank, a used car dealer, a karate studio, and a couple of small specialty shops.

## **Government/Community Services**

These land uses, also called institutional land use, are associated with services that are provided by a local or State government or community groups. There are a significant number of properties used for government or community services, including the Old Academy Building (town hall), the Post Office, Volunteer Fire Company, Winterthur's Historic Homes, the Odessa Women's Club, the Delaware State Police, the Appoquinimink School District offices, and several churches. These institutional land uses are located on land zoned residential and have been included in the zoning ordinance as permitted uses in a residential district.

## **Parks/Recreation**

There are three properties currently used for parks and recreation in town. On the western part of Odessa is Memorial Park, about 4 acres of grass field surrounded by trees owned and maintained by the Town for mostly passive recreation. Second, behind the Old Academy Building is land owned by the Town where there is a tennis court and some playground equipment for the public. The third property is a parcel on the east side of the river owned by the State that is used for launching small boats. The State also owns the parcel directly across the river from the boat ramp.



## Open Space/Environmentally Sensitive Areas

This category of land use consists of lands that have no development on them and will never have development on them due to natural features or legal restrictions associated with the property. These lands generally include floodplains, wetlands, and steeply sloped areas. There are a couple



*View up the Appoquinimink River from the Route 299 bridge.*

of these areas in and adjacent to the northern and eastern part of town, in some instances forming a natural municipal boundary. There is also an open space area to the east of the Corbit-Sharp House adjacent to the River owned by the Buckworth family. Most towns provide some open space, including land that will remain in a natural state. Map 8 provides a general view of the 100-year FEMA floodplain and topography in and around Odessa. Although the floodplain boundaries would have to be surveyed for their exact location, most of these lands within the floodplains and steeply sloped areas should not be developed in the future due to the adverse environmental impacts of development.

## Utility

Two small parcels in town are used for utilities. Both parcels are located on the west side of southbound Route 13 north of the intersection with Main Street. One of the parcels is owned by Chesapeake Utilities Corporation and used for a natural gas substation. The other parcel is owned by Bell Atlantic and used for telecommunication equipment.

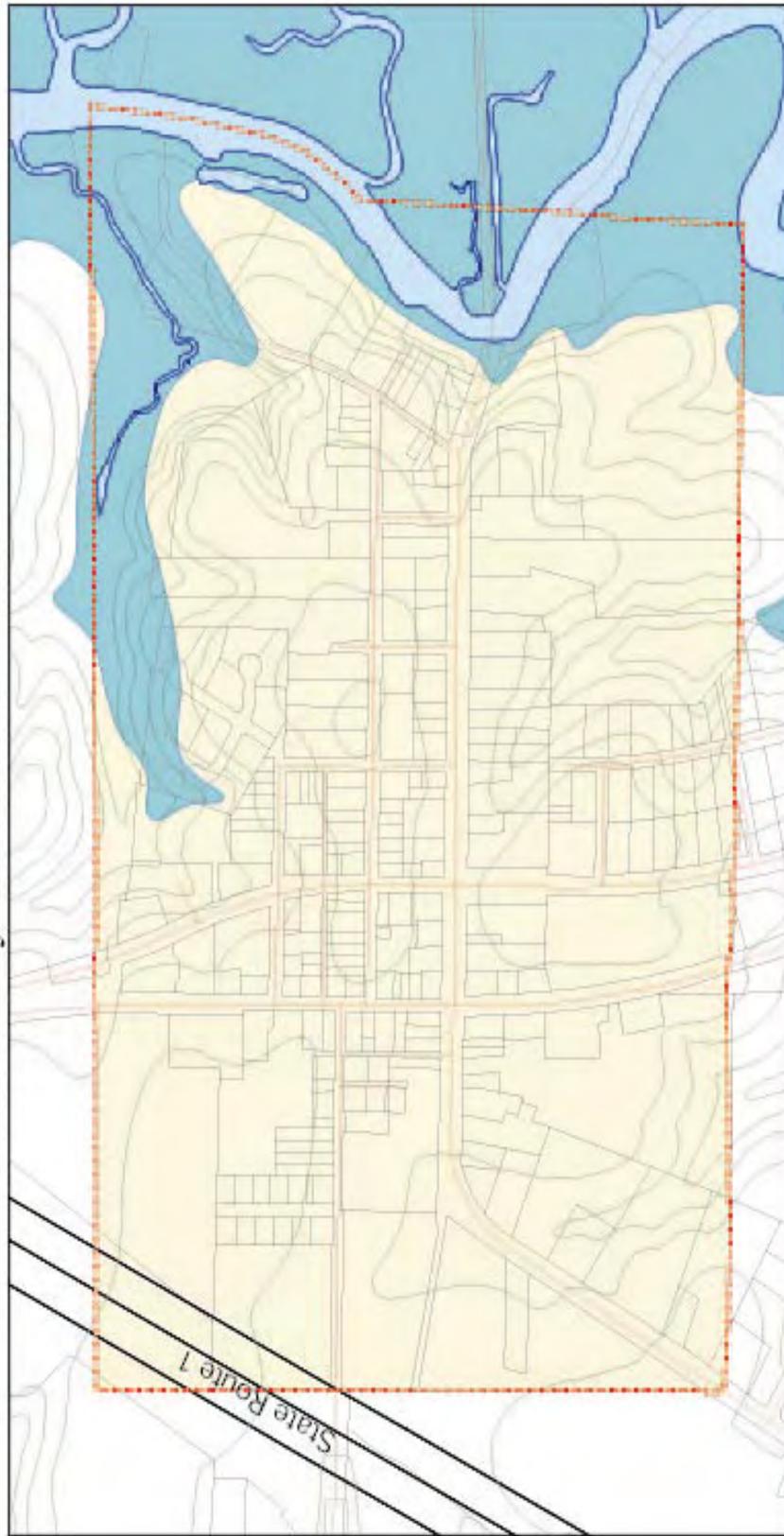
## Vacant

Vacant land refers to property on which there is currently no structure or on which there is a structure that has been abandoned. There are two basic types of vacant land – land that could and probably will be developed, and land that is usually associated with a nearby parcel and is unlikely to be developed (due to size, access, use as garden, etc.).

## Land Use Plan

The Town's Comprehensive Plan provides the legal basis to ensure that future development is consistent with this formally adopted vision for the Town. The Land Use Plan, Map 9, provides guidance for making future land use decisions by designating the type of land use desired for various sections of the town. The biggest impact of the Land Use Plan is its effect on the future use of vacant parcels.

# Map 8: Town of Odessa Environmentally Sensitive Areas - Year 2001



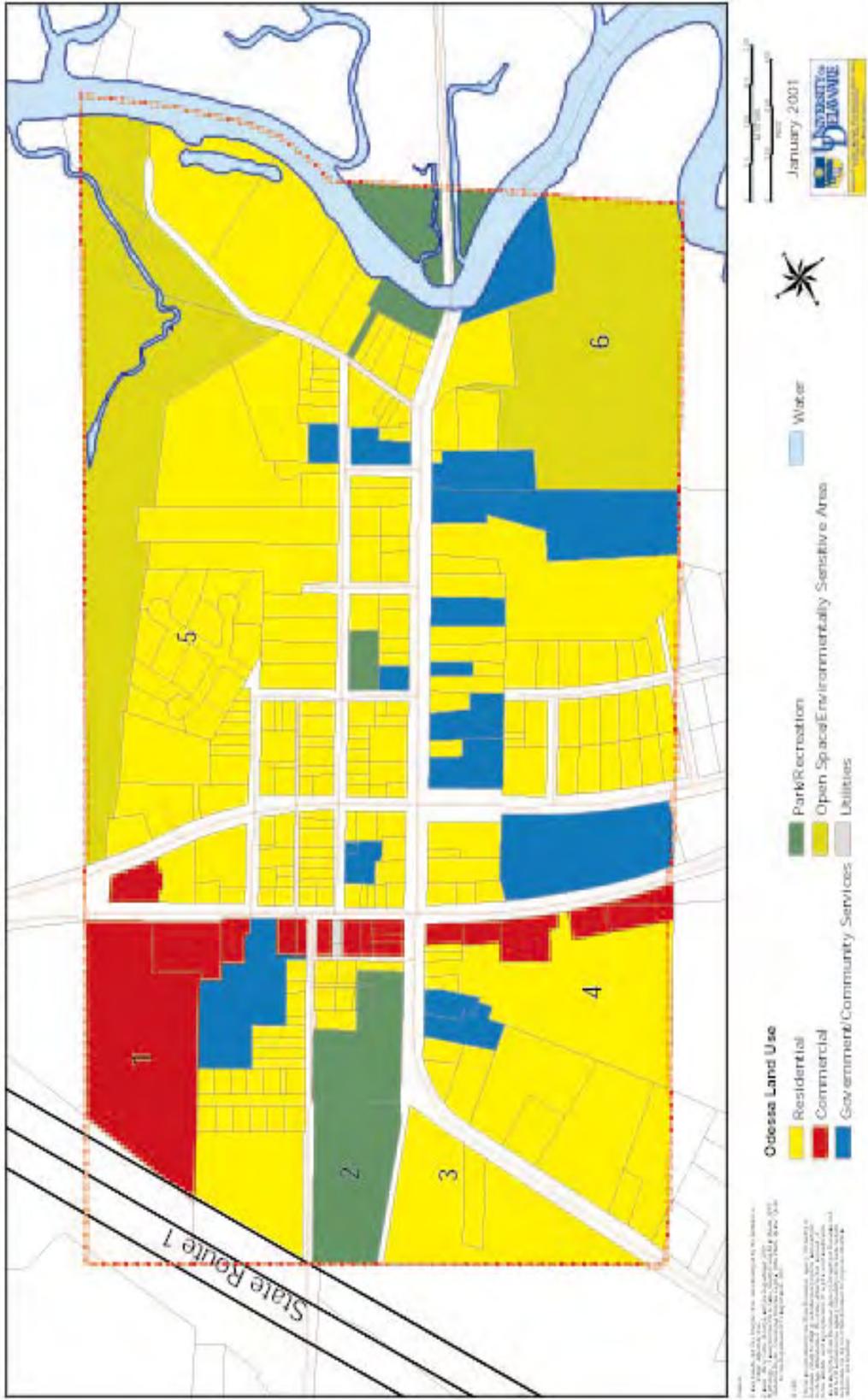
January 2001



- Environmental Features**
- 100 Year FEMA Q3 Floodplain
  - Topography
  - Water

Prepared by: Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT)
   
 Date: January 2001
   
 This map was prepared using data provided by the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT) and the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC).
   
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# Map 9: Town of Odessa Land Use Plan - Year 2001



Odessa has followed the Land Use Plan from the 1969 Plan fairly well during the last 30 years. It is basically a historic residential community with a few commercial services. In 1969, commercial land use was scattered throughout the town located among the residential properties. There were also a significant amount of agricultural and wooded areas around the interior perimeter of the town. The Land Use Plan proposed the commercial activity be concentrated on the west side of southbound Route 13, with residential and institutional activities dominating land use east of southbound Route 13. In 1997, Odessa added strength to many of the Plans intentions with a revised Zoning Ordinance and Map.

Most of Odessa is zoned residential with commercial zoning located only in the areas adjacent to Route 13 south on the western side of the roadway. The only exception to that is a parcel located between Route 13 north and south where a convenience store/gas station is located, and the parcel adjacent to this parcel to the south. There are a few other commercial operations within town on lands zoned residential, but they are non-conforming uses that were there for years preceding the zoning. The Zoning Ordinance specifies that if these properties discontinue commercial use for the period of one year, future use of the property is limited to residential.

There are a variety of land use issues that will have significant impacts on Odessa during the next ten years. The main issues that need to be discussed are presented here.

The impact of SR1 and the Route 299 interchange located near the western boundary of the town. These impacts include the development of vacant land between Odessa and SR1, the traffic impacts on the town from Route 13 and Route 299, the potential for increased traffic on SR1 and its impact on air quality and noise, and the potential for increased development surrounding Odessa.

The under-utilization of commercially zoned property within the town, much of which is currently vacant.

The future development of key developable parcels.

The increased development that is forecast to occur on lands surrounding Odessa. Additionally, the new Sanitary Sewer District proposed by New Castle County may enable the development of some lands that otherwise could not be developed because of the unsuitability of soils for septic systems.

### **State Route 1**

The new toll road being constructed in Delaware as the major north-south transportation corridor for the state, SR1, will have direct and indirect impacts on most of the land along its path. Since the right of way of this limited-access road is very close to Odessa, cutting into the northwest corner of the town, and there is an interchange on Route 299 about a half

mile from the Town's western boundary, there will be significant impacts on Odessa. At this time, SR1 is completed from I-95 near the Christiana Mall exit to just south of Odessa and from north Smyrna to Dover. The last phase of work, which will complete SR1 by connecting south of Odessa to north Smyrna, is scheduled for completion in the year 2003. Therefore some of the impacts to Odessa may not be fully realized for several years.

The most direct impact will be an increasing pressure for development of parcels between Odessa and SR1. Most of this land is currently vacant fields and there are few environmental constraints for development. Most of the parcels within Odessa are zoned Residential; those in New Castle County are zoned either Suburban (which allows a range of residential uses) or NC 40, which only permits single family residential on minimum 40,000 square foot lots.

Additionally, Odessa may experience a gradual decrease in the traffic passing through town on Route 13 as more vehicles choose the convenience of SR1 with its tolls over the stop and go hassles of the "free" Route 13. It is also likely that much of the peak traffic occurring during summer weekends will utilize SR1. However, the interchange may also attract traffic from the east which would use Route 299 and pass through town.

### **Underutilization of Commercial Property**

A windshield survey of commercially zoned properties in Odessa indicates that much of the commercial land is either vacant or underutilized. Since these properties have the potential to provide necessary services to residents of the town in addition to greater tax revenues for the Town's operating budget, efforts should be made to improve the use of these properties. This will be a challenge, since the benefits for the residents of decreased vehicular traffic on Route 13 will probably have the opposite effect on the viability of existing and potential commercial establishments. Traditional commercial uses for the vacant commercial properties located along Route 13 within town, like retail stores or restaurants, might have a difficult time attracting sufficient customers. However, the Town is one of the most unique historic communities in the State and may be able to utilize that unique characteristic in assisting the property owners in marketing these properties. The Town should discuss the development of a strategy to try to maintain the viability of the commercial activity in town. The Town should also consider encouraging an alternative use of some of some vacant commercial property, particularly areas that sit back from the Route 13 frontage.

### **Key Vacant Developable Parcels**

There are six parcels in Odessa that are currently vacant that will impact the Town when developed. These parcels are numbered 1 through 6 on Map 9, the Land Use Plan.

**Parcel 1** is commercially zoned land at the northern entrance to Odessa west of Route 13 south. The rear part of this parcel was bought by the State

for SR1. The parcel has significant frontage on Route 13 south, but is difficult to reach because of the configuration of the roadways. It is important that the commercial use proposed for this site is attractive since it is at the entrance to Odessa. The parcel has good exposure to regional traffic since it backs to SR1, helping to make it a marketable property for the right use and if roadway access can be improved.

**Parcel 2** is residentially zoned property located adjacent to Memorial Park between the Park and SR1. Since the land is adjacent to the Park, there is currently a unique opportunity for Odessa to double the size of its main Park. An expanded Park would provide the opportunity to accommodate more active recreational facilities, like fields for softball or soccer and pet walking areas. Vehicular access could also be improved with the additional parkland, providing more space for a small parking lot and entry way. Since this parcel is located adjacent to SR1, the rear of the property could be developed with trees or plantings to help screen the negative visual and noise effects of this roadway. It is recommended that Odessa initiate discussion with the State to determine if there is funding assistance available since Odessa does not have the financial capability to purchase this land without assistance.

**Parcel 3** is a large residential zoned property located along Route 299 to the west of the town that is partly within Odessa and partly in New Castle County. Since this parcel is split by the two jurisdictions, the owner may approach Odessa for annexation. The Town's current policy towards annexation has not been clearly articulated, although there has not been an annexation in Odessa for decades. The Town Charter requires a general referendum of the voting residents for approval of an annexation. This procedure can be found in other towns in Delaware, however it is more common to have the power to approve annexations provided to the Town Council. After discussing this issue, it is clear that Odessa wants the power to annex to remain an issue to be decided by the residents.

This large parcel to the west of Odessa is partly within the town and partly within New Castle County. Currently, both Odessa and New Castle County zone this property for some type of residential development. Although the property may be attractive for some commercial development due to its proximity to SR1, it is best suited for residential use. Certain community uses, such as schools, would also be acceptable.

This parcel has a fairly unique and prominent location in the town. Because it is situated near SR1 and along Route 299, it serves as an important and visible gateway into Odessa. The property is also adjacent to Memorial Park, and is currently within a residential area. If a residential use is developed on this property, consideration should be given to alternative



design strategies for the parcel. The goal of these strategies would be to allow a development that is compatible with the style and character of the town and the existing neighborhood, to encourage the integration of open space with Memorial Park, and to ensure adequate buffering of the residences from the highway. Two design strategies that may be used on this parcel are *Cluster Development* and *Neo-Traditional Design*.

*Cluster Development* is a design strategy that encourages the preservation of open space and environmentally sensitive features. In traditional suburban style zoning regulations, all land must be contained within lots. In this style of development there is usually no opportunity for parks or other open spaces to serve the development. Also, it is difficult or impossible to preserve important environmental features of the site, such as wetlands, woodlands, and farmlands. These features are typically incorporated into individual lots and transformed into private yard areas.

Cluster development techniques regulate the density of development on a parcel, while allowing some design flexibility in order to preserve open space. The number of houses will be the same with either style of development. The difference is a cluster development might have smaller lots and narrower streets in order to preserve open space. The preserved open areas might be managed in common by the homeowners association, transferred to the town as parkland, or leased to a local farmer.

Another option for the Town to consider would be to allow developers to utilize *Neo-Traditional Design* techniques. These design techniques seek to mimic and improve upon design styles that were prevalent before World War II. Some characteristics of these styles include grid street patterns, shallow front and side setbacks that place the front of the houses close to the street, narrow lots, and sidewalks. Although these characteristics describe most of the historic areas of Odessa, the current Zoning Ordinance would not allow these styles to be used in new developments. As a result, any new development on this parcel will more closely resemble the homes currently being constructed in suburban New Castle County rather than the typical homes found in Odessa.

This parcel may be the perfect opportunity to combine Cluster Development with Neo-Traditional Design techniques. Through the cluster techniques, open space could be preserved for active recreation adjacent to Memorial Park and also for a substantial buffer along the SR1 right of way. Within the remaining buildable area on the parcel a housing development utilizing neo-traditional design techniques could be constructed which would complement the historic character of Odessa. There are several areas in Odessa where this type of design could be used.

There would be traffic impacts from any type of development on this property, but the interchange would provide some relief to downtown Odessa. A change in the Odessa Zoning Ordinance would be needed to enable *Cluster Development* and *Neo-Traditional Design*.

**Parcel 4** is a property located to the west of Route 13 south that is currently zoned commercial. This area has some frontage on Route 13 but the rear of

the property extends completely along a developed residential area. The area along Route 13 is adjacent to a couple of small commercial uses and this area should remain commercial. However, the area behind this commercial strip could be developed as a neo-traditional designed residential area. This mixed-use for this property should make it more attractive for development, should lessen the traffic impacts that would result if the entire area was developed commercial, and would keep the area consistent with the adjoining land uses to the rear of the property which is its longest boundary. It should be noted that the Land Use Plan from 1969 also envisioned the use of this land for residential purposes. The properties adjacent to Route 13 should remain for commercial use. A change in the Odessa Zoning Ordinance would be needed to permit this land use.

**Parcel 5** is a plotted tract of land consisting of 13 subdivided lots on about 9 acres. The subdivision was recorded before the Zoning Ordinance was adopted in 1997, but no improvements have been made to the site to date. The design of this proposed subdivision, consisting of three curved streets ending in cul-de-sacs and curvilinear building lots, is out of character with the overall layout of the town. This parcel is another example where if the Zoning Ordinance permitted clustering and neo-traditional design techniques, there could be an opportunity to improve this subdivision to better fit the character of the town.

**Parcel 6** consists of about 20 acres of open space located behind several parcels to the south of Main Street near the Appoquinimink River. The property has limited accessibility and is reportedly deed restricted to remain as open space, but deed restrictions can vary in their enforceability and will always require legal council. This open land provides a nice vista from the front of the Corbit-Sharp House as well as from several of the adjoining properties. Development of this parcel would have a number of impacts on the Town including traffic, noise, and the visual aesthetics of this part of historic Odessa. Additional actions may be needed to ensure it remains as open space.

### **Effects of Southern New Castle County Sewer District**

Recently New Castle County has released its boundaries for the development of a Southern New Castle County Sanitary Sewer District, shown in Map 10. All new major development within the district is proposed to be connected to this sewer system. The construction of this new sewer system will help to ensure that groundwater in this area will not be contaminated by the effluent from septic systems. However, the availability of sanitary sewers may also facilitate the development of land that could not be developed with septic systems due to poor soils. It may also facilitate the development of homes on smaller lots than would be permitted if the lands were developed with septic systems. This coupled with the improved transportation corridor provided by SR1 would probably increase development around Odessa during the planning period.

Map 10:  
Southern New Castle County Proposed  
Sanitary Sewer District



***RECOMMENDATIONS***

1. The Plan recommends that the potential annexation of properties to the west and south of the town be discussed; no consideration should be given to the annexation of land to the north and east. The evaluation should include the ability to manage the new development and the revenues versus the costs to the Town. Any annexation to Odessa must be approved by a town referendum.
2. A strategic plan should be developed for increasing and improving the use of the commercial properties in Odessa. This plan could include increased marketing of the historic character of the town, increased cooperative ventures with the State including improved access to Odessa’s commercial properties, and the rezoning of selected parcels.
3. An amendment to Odessa’s Zoning Ordinance should be considered to permit the option of clustering residential dwelling units in order to promote neo-traditional housing designs that would complement the historic character and small town feeling of Odessa.
4. The Plan recommends that the Odessa Zoning Ordinance be amended to allow recorded development plans to be unrecorded, or “sunset” when no improvements have been made to the site within a specified time period.
5. The Plan recommends that the Zoning Ordinance be amended to prohibit the construction of any structures in environmentally sensitive areas, including the 100-year floodplain and on steeply sloped areas.

6. The Plan recommends that the Town pursue the development and adoption of Historic Design Guidelines.
7. The Plan recommends an assessment of the costs and benefits of acquiring the property adjacent to Memorial Park for expanding the Park. This assessment should include future uses of this property for recreation, the funding assistance that may be available, and the long-term maintenance costs. If this property is included as part of the development plans for the adjacent parcels, efforts should be made to dedicate some of this land for open space as a buffer between the Town and the new development.



## Chapter 6: Intergovernmental Coordination



The Town of Odessa is influenced by a wide variety of intergovernmental activities. The Town receives services from New Castle County in the operation of its sewer collection and treatment facilities and the provision of public safety services. The major roads through the town and area transit services are maintained by the Delaware Department of Transportation. Since the Town is located within the rapidly developing southern New Castle County area, the activities of the New Castle County Department of Land Use in administering the Unified Development Code, and the Department of Special Services development of the Southern NCC Sanitary Sewer District will significantly impact the lands surrounding the Town. The regulations and fee structures built into the New Castle County ordinances impact existing and new development within the town.

The Delaware Economic Development Office impacts the Town with its efforts to attract new businesses to the area including the potentially explosive semi-conductor industry initiative. The Delaware Department of Agriculture manages an Agricultural Preservation Program that could enable some of the surrounding farmlands to resist the pressures of developers and continue raising crops. Much has already been written concerning the influence that the State Department of Transportation has had on Odessa with its construction and maintenance of U.S. Route 13 and SR1. And, on the municipal level the Town of Middletown has developed a growth management program that includes the annexation of land along State Route 299 between Middletown and SR1. Middletown has accepted annexation requests for lands right to the edge of the SR1 right of way. The need for intergovernmental coordination will continue to be important as the Town continues to depend on other governments for the provision of basic municipal services and as development occurs in the southern New Castle County region.

The above-cited activities illustrate the range of impacts that decisions made by other governmental jurisdictions can have on Odessa. Now more than ever it is important for Odessa to embrace, and perhaps initiate intergovernmental coordination with other governmental jurisdictions. Odessa's location within the rapidly developing southern New Castle County area demonstrates the importance of interaction with other governments to discuss initiatives being developed or enacted that will impact the quality of life of the residents and businesses within its borders. This coordination should involve State, New Castle County and municipal governments regarding such topics as land use and annexation, transportation, infrastructure and public services, and natural resources management.

A good example of the need for intergovernmental coordination is a discussion of the impacts upon the Town from a newly adopted New Castle County Unified Development Code and subsequent pro-active zoning. Currently New Castle County has zoned most of the land bordering Odessa for "Suburban" development. This zoning category permits a "full range of

residential uses in a manner consistent with providing a high quality suburban character.” Exceptions to this pattern exist along the Town’s southwest boundary where New Castle County has zoned land “NC40” (Single-family 40,000 square ft.), “NC6.5” (Single-family 6,500 square ft.) and “ON” (Office Neighborhood). It should be noted that there is existing development on most of these lands near Odessa that are not zoned Suburban. As development continues in New Castle County, the Town will need to monitor the character, location and impact of development and strive to minimize negative impacts to the town character. Thus, Odessa should express its land use concerns to the New Castle County Department of Land Use through its land development process.

Of critical importance to the Town will be the impact on the land in and around Odessa from the recently completed SR1 and the Route 299 interchange located to the west of the town. Historically, interchanges have increased the pace and the intensity of land development changes within an area. In addition, new travel patterns may develop on the area’s roadways. Both of these activities if not properly coordinated, could negatively impact the town.

As the Town works to advance the recommendations in this Plan, the key agency for coordinating efforts involving the State is the Delaware Office of State Planning Coordination. The Office helps to coordinate public policy and shape growth in Delaware and has a primary role in supporting the activities of the Governor’s Cabinet Committee on State Planning Issues.

The Plan recommends the following array of intergovernmental coordination techniques to protect the Town’s interests. These techniques include the following:

Initiate/participate in discussions between the State, New Castle County, and municipalities regarding planning issues important to the Town.

Monitor and as necessary participate in the land development activities of the State, New Castle County and municipalities.

Inform other governmental jurisdictions of the Town’s goals and objectives in regards to its future.

Continue to review and as necessary amend the Town’s Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance.

## ***RECOMMENDATIONS***

1. The Town of Odessa should institute regularly scheduled meetings with other governmental jurisdictions e.g. State, County, and Municipal governments. The purpose of these meetings would be to establish an ongoing line of communications regarding issues, topics, opportunities and concerns of mutual interests. The Delaware Office of State Planning Coordination should be requested to participate in all meetings involving State agencies.

2. The Plan recommends the Town enter into Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) as needed with the various governmental units to formalize their relationship, especially as it pertains to notification procedures related to land development, construction of infrastructure and the mitigation of environmental impacts. MOUs should be made with the following key agencies. A MOU concerning coordination of planning activities and maintenance of roads should be made with the Delaware Department of Transportation. An agreement with the New Castle County Department of Land Use should be made concerning the coordination of planning review in the County and within Odessa concerning zoning changes and annexation requests. Also an agreement should be negotiated with the Town of Middletown concerning the extent of development that Middletown plans in the State Route 299 corridor and to discourage Middletown from considering annexation across SR1.
3. The Plan recommends that Odessa consider budgeting funds to compensate someone on a part-time basis to represent and manage the Town's interest in the range of issues discussed throughout this Plan.





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