

# DELAWARE STATE STRATEGIES

2025 Update



December 11, 2025





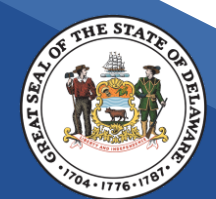
# DELAWARE STATE STRATEGIES

Smart Growth:

**Efficient Spending.**  
**Affordable Housing.**  
**Climate Resiliency.**  
**Land Conservation.**  
**Economic Development.**



# Strategies Update Timeline

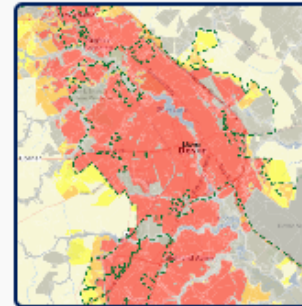


## Review Draft Strategies & Maps

Explore the current work in progress by clicking below to view the draft document and maps.



**State Strategies  
Policy Document Draft**



**Explore the  
Map**

The 2025 Strategies for State Policies and Spending (State Strategies) was released by the Cabinet Committee on State Planning Issues (CCSPI) for public review on September 10, 2025. During the 30-day comment period, the Office of State Planning Coordination (OSPC) hosted 3 workshops and received over 80 comments.

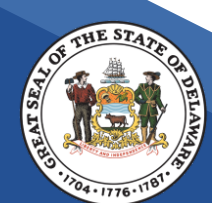
On behalf of the CCSPI, OSPC has prepared this document to categorize, summarize, and respond to all comments on the draft State Strategies document and maps.

**[Comments Received & OSPC Responses](#)**



# Purpose of State Strategies

- To coordinate the provision of infrastructure and services with land-use decisions at the local level.
- Why Coordinate:
  - Land use decisions are a local responsibility;
  - The provision of infrastructure and services is a State responsibility
  - If the above aren't coordinated, then waste and inefficiency can occur
  - The State and local governments must be **partners in planning** to avoid waste and inefficiency and implement smart growth.
- State Strategies is required by Delaware Code
  - Title 29, Chapter 91, Section 9101 (c) (5)





# 2025 Update

- Delaware Code: Title 29, Chapter 91, Section 9101 (c) (5) requires an update every 5 years
- Incorporate updated data
  - Comprehensive Plans certified since 2020
  - State Agency data layers
  - New data not available in 2020
- Review and refine State Agency implementation policies



Figure 6: GIS Datasets Included



## Promoting Growth

Visit the [Data Storymap](#) for full details

Planned Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• County Growth Areas</li><li>• Municipalities</li><li>• Municipal Annexation Areas</li><li>• Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) Receiving Areas</li><li>• 2020 Census Urban Areas</li><li>• 2022 Built Areas</li><li>• DelDOT Transportation Improvement Districts (TIDs) - (operational only)</li><li>• Housing Areas of Opportunity</li></ul>
Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Public Transit - (1-mile major stop and ¾-mile other bus stop buffers, micro-transit areas)</li><li>• Bike and Pedestrian Connectivity Priority Areas</li><li>• Public Libraries - (3-mile buffers clipped to public transit and growth areas)</li><li>• Public Schools - (2-mile buffers of upper schools, 1-mile buffers of lower schools)</li><li>• State Service Centers - (2-mile buffers)</li></ul>
Public Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fire Stations - (3-mile buffers)</li><li>• Emergency Medical Services (EMS) - (3-mile buffers)</li><li>• Hospitals - (5-mile buffers of full-service and 24-hour emergency facilities)</li><li>• Local Police Jurisdictions – (municipal only)</li></ul>
Utilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Public Sewer and Water Service Areas</li><li>• Water and Wastewater Certificates of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN) Service Areas – (within designated growth areas)</li></ul>

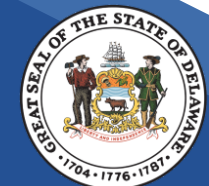


Figure 6: GIS Datasets Included



## Promoting Preservation

<b>Natural Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Coastal Zone</li><li>• 100-Year Floodplains – (Sussex County only)</li><li>• Excellent Groundwater Recharge Areas</li><li>• Non-Tidal Wetlands - (100-foot buffers)</li><li>• Tidal Wetlands - (100-foot buffers)</li><li>• Wellhead Protection Areas</li><li>• Delaware Ecological Network (DEN)</li></ul>
<b>Resiliency</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Coastal Inundation – (3-foot sea level rise scenario)</li><li>• Flood Risk Adaptation Map (FRAM)</li></ul>
<b>Agriculture and Forests</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Agricultural Preservation Districts – (with agreements through 2030)</li><li>• Agricultural and Forest Lands of Importance</li></ul>
<b>Limits on Growth</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Areas East of Route 1 in Kent County</li><li>• Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) Sending Areas</li><li>• Areas Outside of Designated Growth Areas</li></ul>
<b>Misc. Protection</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Correctional Facilities - (1-mile buffers)</li><li>• Dover Air Force Base Noise Zones and Accident Potential Zones (APZs)</li></ul>







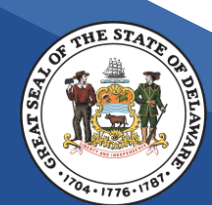
Figure 6: GIS Datasets Included



## Out-of-Play

### Out-of-Play

- Permanent Agricultural Conservation Easements
- Permanent Forestry Conservation Easements
- DelDOT Constraint Areas
- 100-Year Floodplains – (New Castle and Kent Counties only)
- Protected Lands (government and private conservation lands, and dedicated open space)
- Tidal Wetlands
- Dover Air Force Base Properties





# Data Storymap

# DELAWARE STATE STRATEGIES

## Descriptions

### Planned Growth: 2020 Census Urban Boundaries

#### What is it?

Urban Areas are designated by the US Census Bureau and defined as, "An area consisting of a densely developed territory that contains a minimum residential population of at least 5,000 people and/or 2,000 housing units."

#### Why is it used?

Urban Areas are used by the federal government to allocate funds for transportation infrastructure that supports growth and development.

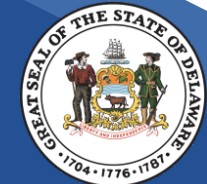
## Metrics

### Metrics Urban Areas From 2020 Census



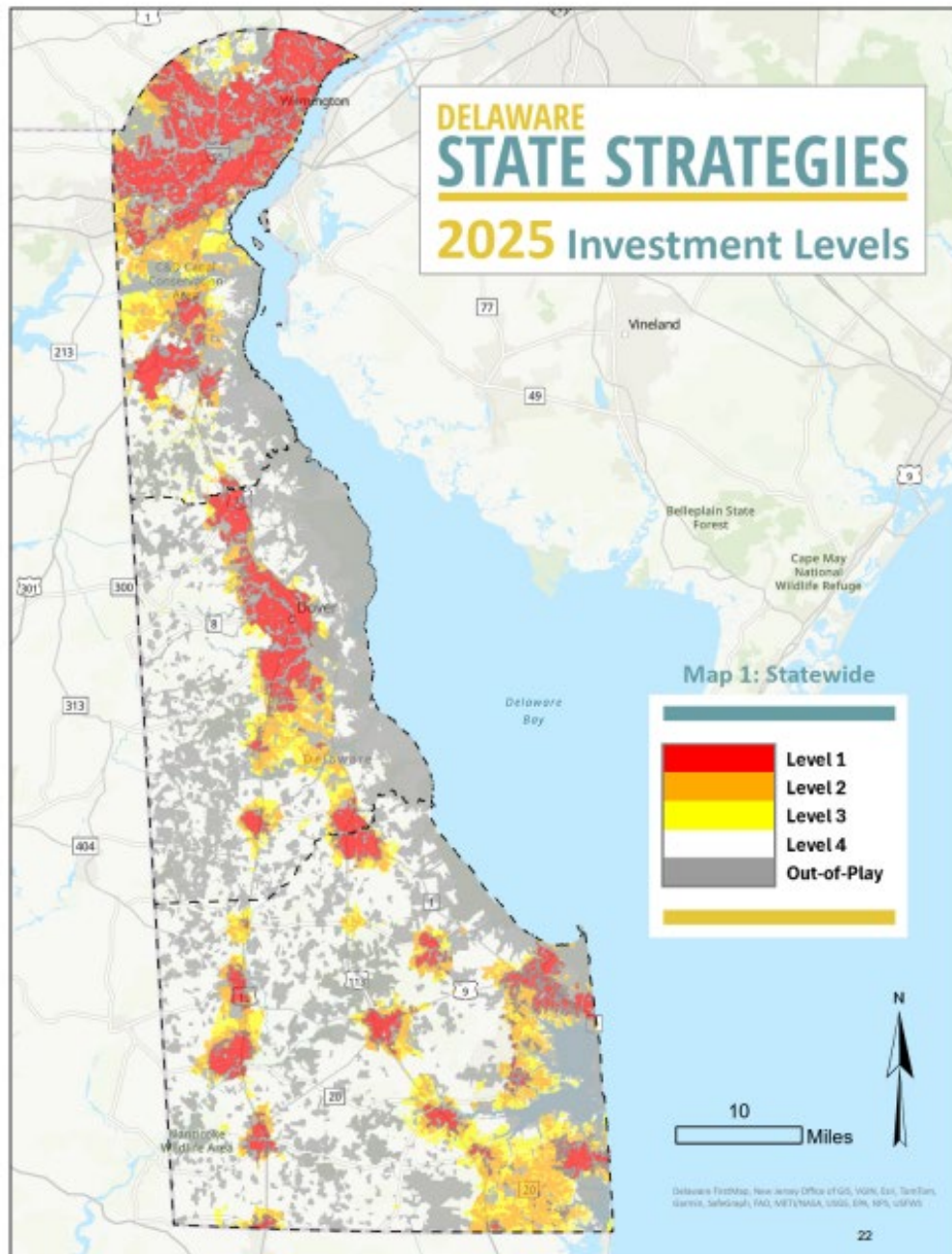
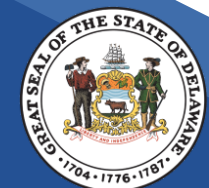
Map click triggers pop up window with metrics

County: Kent	
Zoom to	
Acreage	52273
Urban Areas From 2020 Census (Growth)	1
County	Kent





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# Level 1



Union Park Gardens, Wilmington

## Location

- Municipalities, downtowns
- Urban centers in unincorporated areas

## Characteristics

- Higher density development
- Mixed-uses, housing and transportation options
- Walkable communities

## Policy Focus

- Wide range of uses and densities
- Infill and redevelopment, downtown revitalization
- Efficient use of public and private investments
- Maintain/enhance existing infrastructure
- Infrastructure investments for new growth



# Level 2



Cannery Village, Milton

## Location

- Suburban areas in or near municipalities
- Rapidly growing areas surrounding urban centers

## Characteristics

- Mid to low density development
- Access to public water and wastewater, utilities
- More automobile oriented

## Policy Focus

- Broader mix of housing and commercial options
- Efficient use of public and private investments
- Maintain/enhance existing infrastructure
- Infrastructure investments for new growth
- New higher density development where applicable



# Level 3



## Location

- Certified growth areas of municipalities and counties
- Disconnected areas with development pressure

## Characteristics

- Environmentally sensitive and/or agricultural lands
- Access to infrastructure and utilities may be limited
- Urban to rural transition with leapfrog development

## Policy Focus

- Development in near-term may not be appropriate
- Long-term growth areas after Levels 1 and 2
- Maintain/enhance existing infrastructure
- Infrastructure investments may be lower priority
- Growth compatible with agricultural/rural character





# Level 4



## Location

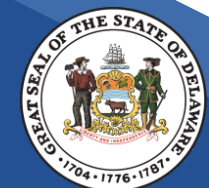
- Mostly unincorporated rural areas and open space
- Small settlements and disconnected homes

## Characteristics

- Predominantly natural lands and agricultural uses
- Access to infrastructure and utilities may be limited
- Single-family homes with reliance on automobiles

## Policy Focus

- Limited development retains the rural landscape
- Preserve open space, farmland, and forests
- Maintain/enhance existing infrastructure
- Infrastructure investments not for residential growth
- Growth only for agricultural and environmental uses



# Out of Play



## Location

- Lands not available for private development
- Legally protected lands for conservation/preservation

## Characteristics

- Public parks, wildlife refuges, state forests, etc.
- Protected farmland and forests
- Tidal wetlands and 100-year floodplains

## Policy Focus

- Permanent legal protection (such as easements)
- Maintain/enhance supporting infrastructure
- Development limited to improvements that serve the purpose of the protected lands



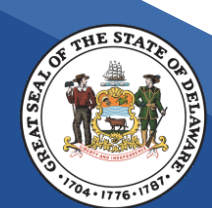


# DRAFT

## DELAWARE STATE STRATEGIES

- **Cabinet Committee Policy Statement**

- “The Cabinet Committee on State Planning Issues (CCSPI) adopts the 2025 Strategies for State Policies and Spending as its policy guide. The CCSPI encourages state agencies to implement the policies contained herein through daily business practices. It also encourages local governments to maintain a steadfast commitment to their comprehensive plans and respect the link between them and State Strategies. This will ensure a shared path towards success.”







**Climate Resiliency through:**  
Energy efficiency, multi-modal transportation, reduced emissions, natural and working lands preserved



**Affordable Housing through:**  
Compact, dense development patterns, variety of housing types, increased housing inventory, lower housing costs, proximity to multi-modal transportation, employment and services

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### Smart Growth

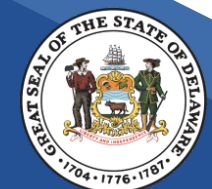
Efficient Infrastructure  
Investment and Service  
Delivery, Economic  
Development and  
Redevelopment, Protect  
and Enhance  
Agricultural Economy

**Promote Growth in Levels 1 & 2** to enable compact mixed-use development, infill, and redevelopment in county growth areas, and municipalities.

**Level 3 contains transition areas** where future growth is predicted but natural resources conservation remains crucial.

**Promote Preservation in Level 4** to protect natural resources, and promote the agricultural industry, while discouraging sprawl in low-density rural areas.

DELAWARE  
**STATE STRATEGIES**



# Progress Update

- OSPC hosted 3 public workshops and received over 80 public comments during the public comment period.
- OSPC addressed all comments and published a response document, refined the data, and revised the maps and policy document. Several themes emerged from feedback received.
- Added 2 new maps to provide greater insight into the Investment Levels and support Strategies implementation.
  - Titled “Strategies Insights”
- The Cabinet Committee met on November 10, 2025, and released the latest draft.



# Public Comment Themes and Responses

- What the State Strategies is and is not
- Economic Development
- Environment / Sustainability / Resiliency
- Location specific requests
- Private sewer in Sussex
- Sussex Government comments
- Transportation Data
- Other





# DELAWARE STATE STRATEGIES 2025 Investment Levels

