

*League of Women Voters of New Castle County*  
Comprehensive Development Plan Update 2012  
PUBLIC STATEMENT

The 2012 Comprehensive Development Plan Update is a welcome continuation of the 2007 Comprehensive Development Plan, a plan which resulted in an enlightened hamlets and villages ordinance. The League of Women Voters is impressed with the 2012 update's renewed emphasis on directing growth into growth zones and preserving farmland and open space.

Of special interest to us are objectives which encourage infill and redevelopment where there is existing infrastructure, a goal which is not only a money saver but which will also encourage greater densities in appropriate core areas, making public transit viable, and will provide increased opportunities for walking.

Even though our transportation network currently meets EPA air quality standards, it is important that we look ahead to the time when ever-increasing numbers of car drivers outstrip the technological improvements which have resulted in lower air pollution and carbon dioxide levels.<sup>1</sup> In this context, strengthening our efforts to direct growth into growth zones and to preserve our farmland and open space appears to be crucial.

Specific elements of the Update which the League especially applauds are continuation of the exemplary Master Plan concept in Southern New Castle County, an idea we hope might be extended to other areas in the County, and improvements in Transfer of Development Rights. Additional zoning designations to improve the viability of sub-regional commercial areas and to permanently preserve open space associated with developments will also improve the quality of life in New Castle County. Increasing density on transit corridors will complement these other changes.

As this Comp Plan Update moves ahead we believe that particular attention ought to be given to ensure that public transit is available in workforce housing communities. We further support realistic Level of Service (LOS) requirements that take into account the need to both nurture more compact development in urban areas (acceptance of D or E levels) and to keep development low in rural areas (requirement of LOS C or better).

The League looks forward to the implementation of the innovative ideas represented by the Comp Plan Update of 2012.

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<sup>1</sup> Reid Ewing et al, *Growing Cooler: The Evidence on Urban Development and Climate Change*, Washington, D.C.: The Urban Land Institute. 2008 <http://www.uli.org/ResearchAndPublications/Reports/~media/Documents/ResearchAndPublications/Reports/GrowingCooler.ashx>