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TOWN, COUNTY, AND STATE OFFICIALS

Town of Magnolia

Mayor and Council

James Frazier, Mayor
Scott Fowler, Vice Mayor
Ashton McLaughlin, Council Member
Buck Dougherty, Council Member
Brian Howard, Council Member

Planning Commission

James Frazier
Shawn Ramsey
Cheryl Roe
Thomas Summers
Frances Zornes

Town Secretary

Diane Cahall

Town Solicitor

D. Barrett Edwards IV

Kent County

County Administrator

Michael Petit de Mange

County Council

P. Brooks Banta, 1st District
James E. Husfelt, 2nd District
Allan F. Angel, 3rd District
Eric L. Buckson, 4th District
G. Jody Sweeney, 5th District
Glen M. Howell, 6th District
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Department of Planning Services

Sarah E. Keifer, AICP, Director

State of Delaware

Governor

John C. Carney

Senate

Colin R. J. Bonini, 16th District

House of Representatives

Charles S. Postles Jr., 33rd District

Office of State Planning

Constance C. Holland, AICP, Director

INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Production of the original 2009 Comprehensive Plan that this revision was based upon was performed by staff of the Institute for Public Administration (IPA), a unit within the College of Human Services, Education & Public Policy at the University of Delaware. IPA links the research and resources of the University of Delaware with the management and information needs of local governments. Due to budgetary limitations and the Town's desire to reuse much of the original plan in 2019, IPA provided assistance primarily through updates of the statistical data, charts, graphs and maps that were key parts of the 2009 plan.

The remainder of the plan update was done by the Town of Magnolia Planning Commission, keeping in mind the sentiments expressed by the Town's residents in the distributed questionnaire.

IPA Primary Contact

William DeCoursey, Planning Services Manager

IPA Mapping and GIS Development

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In addition to the IPA staff listed above, thanks also go to David Edgell of the Delaware Office of State Planning Coordination for his guidance during the preliminary stages of the production of this plan.

**A MUNICIPAL COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR
MAGNOLIA, DELAWARE
April 2019**

INTRODUCTION

This Comprehensive Development Plan is intended to serve as a document for the future development of the Town of Magnolia. When adopted by the Town Council, it will be given official recognition as a guide for future planning efforts of the community and its representatives. The legal means for the implementation of the goals and objectives of this plan are included in zoning codes and other municipal codes and ordinances. This plan is a flexible document, and the updating or revision of planning goals and objectives is essential to keep the planning program responsive to the changing needs of the community.

The public's understanding of the role and contribution to the efforts of the Planning Commission are needed to keep the community's best interests aligned with the town's growth and development plans for the future. Community interest and cooperative commitment to practical planning and the timely implementation of the goals and objectives of comprehensive development planning will contribute to a higher quality of life in Magnolia.

The plan is also an informational document for the public. Citizens, business people, and government officials can turn to the plan to learn more about Magnolia and its policies for future land use decisions. Potential new residents can use the documents as an informational resource about the town, including its characteristics and facilities, to help them make decisions about moving to Magnolia. This document contains the most current information on population, transportation, housing, employment, and the environment, which may be of interest to land developers, economic-development professionals, and financiers.

Finally, the Magnolia Comprehensive Plan is a legal document. The Delaware Code specifies that “. . . any incorporated municipality under this chapter shall prepare a comprehensive plan for the city or town or portions thereof as the commission deems appropriate.” The code further specifies, “after a comprehensive plan or portion thereof has been adopted by the municipality in accordance with this chapter, the comprehensive plan shall have the force of law and no development shall be permitted except as consistent with the plan.” (§ 702, Title 22, Delaware Code)

CHAPTER 1. BACKGROUND

1-1. The Authority to Plan

Delaware law requires that municipalities engage in comprehensive planning activities for the purpose of encouraging “the most appropriate uses of the physical and fiscal resources of the municipality and the coordination of municipal growth, development, and infrastructure investment actions with those of other municipalities, counties and the State....” This plan was written to comply with the requirements of a municipal development strategy as described in the Delaware Code (below) for towns with population of 2000 or fewer.

The municipal comprehensive plan for small communities (such as Magnolia) with fewer than 2,000 residents is to be 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 its 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.” In addition, the town’s comprehensive-planning process must demonstrate coordination with other municipalities, the county, and the state during plan preparation. (22 Del. C. 1953, § 702; 49 Del. Laws, c. 415, § 1.)

State law requires that planning be an ongoing process and that municipalities identify future planning activities. This document is Magnolia’s Municipal Comprehensive Development Plan as required by state law. It is intended to cover a ten-year planning period and be reviewed at least every five years.

In January 2018, the Town of Magnolia approached individuals who might be willing to assist with the update of the 2009 plan. This group of five persons assembled in March 2018 and decided that, rather than reinvent the wheel, it would be wiser to use the 2009 plan, largely unrealized, as a base point for its updated conclusions. Their subsequent discussions, coupled with the residents’ input acquired through a distributed questionnaire and an open public meeting, plus research support by the University of Delaware’s Institute for Public Administration (IPA), helped to craft this plan to be used for the next ten years.

1-2. A Brief Overview of the Community

This section will provide some basic information about the town and serve as a foundation for more specific data and information provided in following sections of the plan.

Location

The Town of Magnolia is located near Delaware’s Atlantic coastline in eastern Kent County. The town comprises approximately 126 acres and has a unique municipal boundary which is shaped as a complete circle. Magnolia is located just south of Dover near the Dover Air Force Base. An aerial of the town is provided as Map 1 in Appendix A of this plan.

History

The Town of Magnolia claims both Swedish and Dutch heritage, but was formally founded in 1885 by Murderkill Hundred citizens, including Thomas H. McIlvaine, John B. Conner, Thomas Draper, James L. Heverin, William S. McLain, John W. Wall, Alexander Jackson, Jacob Prettyman, and Captain James Grier. These founders laid out the boundary of the town, designing it as a circle to represent brotherhood. They used chords to create the circular boundary with a radius measuring 0.25 miles in length from the town center. Magnolia was built approximately one mile from the St. Jones River and, according to folklore, originated because settlers depended on the river, but wanted to escape the mosquitoes that accompanied it.

The original area where the town is located was known as Caroon Manor, a 3000-acre tract of land owned by the Duke of York. The Magnolia tree was the Duke’s favorite tree, and hence the name of the town. A number of magnolia trees are planted throughout the town and still exist. The Sons of Liberty played a part in the early legal system in Magnolia and also influenced the selection of a circular town boundary.

Churches have made a significant impact on the community of Magnolia. The Magnolia Methodist Church was built in 1856 and is located on Main Street. It burned down on Pearl Harbor Day (December 7, 1941) but was rebuilt soon afterwards. The Magnolia Baptist Church was built in 1872 and was on Walnut Street. Motherkill Friends’ Burial Ground, a historic Quaker cemetery, is located adjacent to the town’s northeastern border. This area is known as the “Quaker Graveyard” dating back to the late 1700s with fieldstones marking the gravesites.

The Town of Magnolia was officially recognized by the Delaware General Assembly as an incorporated area on April 3, 1885. There are two locations in Magnolia that appear on the National Register of Historic Places. These locations include the John B. Lindale House, a privately owned residence that was built in the early 1900s that has both agricultural and architectural significance and was home to one of the last great peach barons in Delaware. A sign once located outside the house proudly boasted:

“This is Magnolia, the center of the universe around which the earth revolves.”

Another registered location is the Matthew Lowber House, which also has architectural historical significance. Built in 1774 as a domestic dwelling, this Quaker mansion has brought much publicity to Magnolia with its intricate brickwork and two huge sycamore trees (The Bride and Groom Trees), which remained intact until falling victim to disease in the mid 1970s.

In 1928, Magnolia formed one of the first volunteer fire companies in the state, and in 1931 the town installed its first water well. In 1957, the Legislature authorized a referendum to be held in Magnolia to decide whether the boundaries of the town should be extended in order to annex previously unincorporated areas. However, due to the limited services provided by the town, residents of the areas in question felt they would simply acquire a greater tax burden with few advantages and the referendum was defeated. Much of this same sentiment still exists today.

Possibly in response to this defeat, the town was reincorporated in 1960 with the scope of the town's governmental authority greatly expanded. The council, with one member now designated as Mayor, was authorized to establish zoning ordinances which were to control growth within the town. In 1972 the State Legislature provided Magnolia's outlying property owners with the ability to join together and request annexation but at present, the town's boundaries remain unchanged.

1-3. Public Participation, Community Vision, and Overall Plan Goals

As the initial step in the comprehensive planning process, the Magnolia Town Council reformed its Planning Commission during the fall of 2017. The first meeting was held on March 27, 2018, at which time the group focused primarily on the summary recommendations in the 2009 plan to determine which were still appropriate, which could be deleted and which could be combined. They also redrafted the questions to be included in the general questionnaire to be sent to all town residents in early April 2018.

The second meeting of the group was held on June 12, 2018, where the results of the questionnaire were revealed and discussed, and agreement was reached on the final goals and recommendations. During the summer of 2018, the University of Delaware Institute of Public Administration prepared and submitted updated versions of all of the tables, data sets and maps utilized in the 2009 report. Text was then edited, with some segments removed, some updated and new text inserted as needed.

A final draft of the plan was rolled out at an open town meeting on October 8, 2018 in conjunction with the regular Town Council meeting. A review of the primary plans and goals was performed, with comments noted accordingly.

Final touches were subsequently made to the draft and it was submitted to the Office of State Planning and Coordination for review in November 2018. Comments were received in late December 2018, adjustments were made and it was resubmitted to OSPC in March of 2019.

Overall Plan Goals

All town plans contain goals, broad concepts that form the foundation for implementation actions that should follow the completion and adoption of the plan. The Town of Magnolia understands its current character and identity and thus presents the following goals as the guiding principles for the future of Magnolia over the next decade.

- Continue to provide residents with services and facilities necessary to maintain a good standard of living and assess opportunities to provide additional services.
- Coordinate with nearby municipalities, Kent County and the State to mitigate the impacts of development of surrounding areas on the Town of Magnolia.

CHAPTER 2. MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

2-1. Community Profile

This section of the plan provides details regarding the past, present, and future population of the Town of Magnolia. The data contained in this section may be used to help plan for future service and facility needs, as well as information regarding anticipated changes in the character of the Magnolia community.

Total Population

In 2010, the resident population of the Town of Magnolia was 225 people and 96 households according to the 2010 U.S. Census (Summary File 1). From 2000 to 2010, Magnolia’s year-round population dropped from 226 to 225, approximately a 0.4 percent decrease. The general trend of increasing population growth in the state and county during the past few decades suggests that new transfers to the area do not prefer older housing but would rather locate within developments in outlying areas.

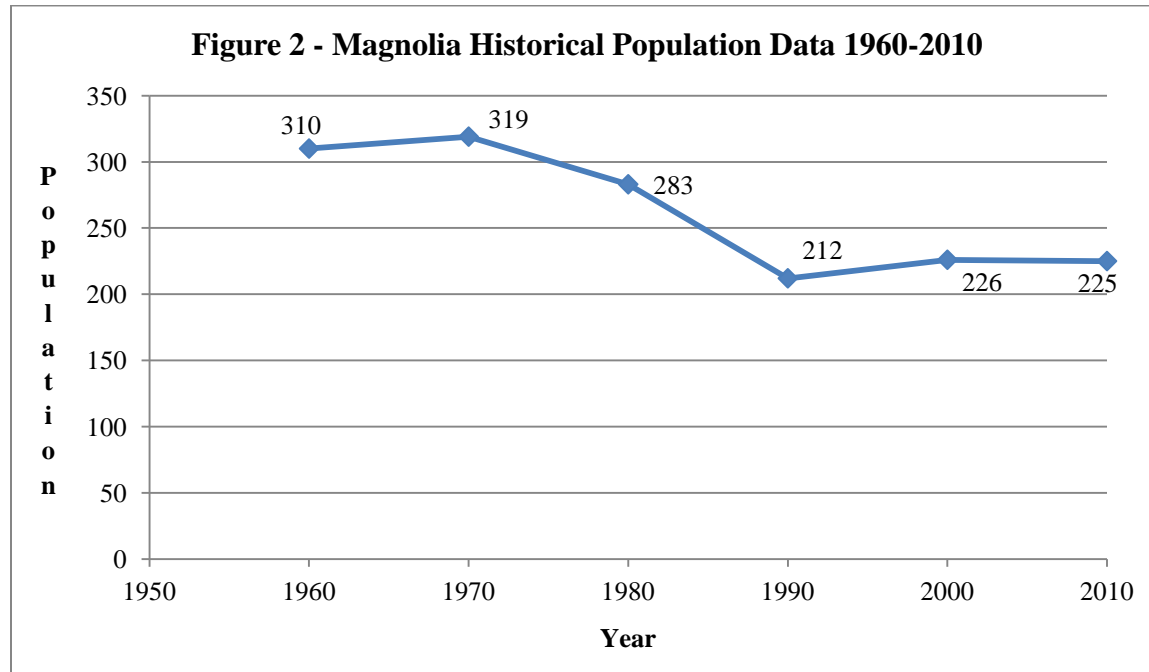
The growth rate between 2000 and 2010 is well below the growth rate of both the county and the state, and seems to have leveled off. While there may be some desirability to living in Magnolia, the types of older housing stock and the explosion in traffic volume have slowed the growth of the town.

Table 1 and Figure 2 display historical population data for the Town of Magnolia, Kent County, and the State of Delaware developed from U.S. Census data, unless otherwise noted. Temporary fluctuations in the population in Magnolia might also relate to the fact that fully 1/3 of the residents of the town are renters, a very transient and unpredictable group.

Table 1 – Total Population, 1960-2010

Place	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
Magnolia	310	319 (+2.9%)	283 (-11.3%)	212 (-25.1%)	226 (+6.6%)	225 (-0.4%)
Kent County	---	---	98,219 (---%)	111,641 (+13.7%)	126,697 (+13.5%)	162,310 (+28.1%)
Delaware	---	---	594,919 (---%)	669,063 (+12.5%)	783,600 (+17.1%)	897,934 (+14.6%)

Source: CADSR/UD Delaware Demographic Base and Census 2010 Summary File 1*



Population Projection

It is very difficult and less than reliable to project future populations for towns as small as Magnolia. The demolition, rehab or construction of one or two homes can translate into double-digit population swings, in percentage terms. Running projections on such percentages can easily lead to significant errors over the course of ten or twenty years. The town treats these assumptions and projections with skepticism, though they may prove helpful in the town’s planning context.

Three methods were used in projecting Magnolia’s potential future population. Scenario one simply carries forward the observed rate of population growth. Scenario two assumes Magnolia will continue to comprise a similar percentage of Kent County’s population as it did in 2010 (.139%). Scenario three assumes Magnolia’s household size will track well with projections for the County (2.48 people per household).

Table 2 – Population Projection Scenarios, Town of Magnolia, 2006-2030

Growth Scenario	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020	2030	2040
Scenario 1: Trend Projection of Decadal Growth (3.08%)	283	212 (-25.08%)	226 (+6.60%)	225 (-.44%)	232	239	246
Scenario 2: Portion of Projected Kent County Population (.139% of Kent Co)	283	212	226	225	246	273	288
Scenario 3: Household Size * Kent County’s	283	212	226	225	263	250	245

Sources: IPA, U.S. Census, 2017, Delaware Population Consortium
 Standard font = Decennial U.S. Census Figures, Italics = extrapolated projections

Scenario one makes an important assumption: that the 1990 population of 212 represents a bottoming out for Magnolia. The average of the two observed decadal growth rates (3.08%) is then carried forward until 2040, resulting in a projected, potential population of 246 by 2040. This is entirely possible, given the town has, in the past, hosted a population of over 300. However, the decadal growth rate has varied widely in the town's history, and the three percent growth figure is, at best, an educated guess.

Scenario two assumes Magnolia will grow relative to the Delaware Population Consortium's projections for Kent County. Were this to hold true, the town could expect to see significant growth over the next 20 years, before slowing, as is projected for Kent. By 2040, Magnolia could have a population of 288. This projection is also imperfect, as the town's population has not kept pace with the county's in the past. Likewise, the county has continuously added housing units, whereas Magnolia has not.

Scenario three makes a different assumption, that Magnolia's average household size will continue to essentially mirror that of Kent County. Given the town's size, its 2010 figure of 2.34 persons-per-household is, statistically speaking, more or less identical to the county's figure of 2.48 persons-per-household. Moreover, the town recorded 96 housing units in the 2000 and 2010 U.S. Census. Additionally, the Town reports no change since 2010. The second assumption that scenario three makes is that new homes are unlikely to be built, above and beyond the replacement of aging structures. Kent County's persons-per-household figure, according to DPC projections, will top out at 2.74 in 2020, before incrementally falling to 2.55 by the year 2040. Accordingly, Magnolia's population would be expected to peak in 2020 at 263, before gradually falling back to 245 by 2040. In all likelihood, the large gain shown for 2020 is overstated. Still, however small the town may be, it is likely to be affected by the same overarching familial and social trends as the state and the county. The one somewhat reliable takeaway may be that, given a static housing supply, the town can expect modest short-term growth that slows over time.

Conclusion: It cannot be overstated how finicky long-term projections for very small towns can be. Still, taken together, the three scenarios do suggest potential trends. For one, the fundamentals for growth, certainly at least in the short to medium term, are there. Given the town's recent history, and growth trends in the county, Magnolia might well expect modest to significant population gains over the next ten to twenty years. It would appear this regional growth is being driven by marginally larger households than the national average of 2.58, and by the steady addition of new households.

Likewise, in the medium to long term, if it chooses to not add to its newer housing supply within the corporate limits, Magnolia may see its population remain stable as households become smaller and smaller.

Racial and Ethnic Composition

Tables 3, 4 and 5 detail the racial and ethnic composition of the Town of Magnolia as compared to Kent County and the State of Delaware. Magnolia is less racially diverse than Kent County and the State of Delaware as a whole, but as indicated in Table 4 diversity has slightly increased since 2000. However, due to the extremely small size of the population of Magnolia, only a few individuals can have a very large impact on the percentage of the population. For example, one full percentage point consists of only slightly more than two individuals. Therefore, it is hard to make meaningful statements based upon the percentage of the population, as reported by the Census, for such a small population.

Table 3 – Racial Composition (%) by Place, 2010

Race	Magnolia	Kent County	Delaware
White	77.8	67.8	68.9
Black	11.6	24.0	21.4
Asian	.4	2.0	3.2
Other	10.2	6.2	6.5

Source: U.S. Census, 2010

Table 4 – Racial Composition (%) Magnolia, 1990-2010

Race	1990	2000	2010
White	94.8	85.4	77.8
Black	4.7	10.2	11.6
Asian	0.5	0.4	.4
Other	0	2.7	10.2

Source: U.S. Census, 1990-2010

Table 5 – Hispanic or Latino Population (%), 1990-2010

	Magnolia	Kent County	Delaware
Hispanic or Latino, 1990	1.0	2.3	2.4
Hispanic or Latino, 2000	3.1	3.2	4.8
Hispanic or Latino, 2010	4.0	5.8	8.2

Source: U.S. Census, 1990-2010

Age

Table 6 provides some basic information regarding the age of persons living in Magnolia, Kent County, and the state of Delaware. Interestingly, from 2000 to 2010 Magnolia’s population shifted somewhat from younger to the working ages, with the 65+ group remaining about the same.

Table 7 displays the age profile for adults for the town, Kent County, and the state. The proportion of adults aged 20-64 and 65 and older is slightly less than Kent County and the state. Persons of both prime working age and retirees represent a smaller portion of Magnolia as compared to the surrounding region. This may be no more than a reflection of the proliferation of 55 Plus communities in the outlying Kent County area, which is where many transfers locate, having given up their full-sized homes in their state of origin. It also may simply underscore the current trend of younger generations to either remain at home longer or return to parental homes due to lack of opportunities or financial and social reasons.

Table 6 – Age Groups (%) by Place, 2010

Age Range	Magnolia	Kent County	Delaware
0-19 years	24.5	28.4	26.0
20-64 years	64	58.2	59.5
65+ years	11.6	13.6	14.5

Source: U.S. Census, 2010

Table 7 – Age Profile (%) of Adult Population by Place, 2010

Age Range	Magnolia	Kent County	Delaware
15-19 years	8.0	7.6	7.2
20-34 years	26.2	19.9	19.4
35-54 years	23.6	27.0	27.8
55-64 years	14.2	11.3	12.3
65-84 years	9.8	12.1	12.7
85 + years	1.8	1.5	1.8

Source: U.S. Census, 2010

Education

Table 8 presents data regarding the educational attainment of persons over the age of 25 living in Magnolia, Kent County, and Delaware. As shown, Magnolia has a slightly higher percentage of residents who have graduated high school or higher (94.3%) than the state (86.9%). Approximately 52.9% of the population of Magnolia has at least some college education, compared to 53.3% in the state.

Table 8 – Educational Attainment of Population 25 Years and Older (%) by Place, 2016

Highest Level Achieved	Magnolia	Kent County	Delaware
Less than High School	4.1	4.1	4.4
Some High School	1.6	1.6	8.7
High School Diploma	41.5	41.5	33.6
Some College	26.0	26.0	21.6
Associate Degree	10.6	10.6	8.6
Bachelor Degree	11.4	11.4	14.4
Graduate or Professional Degree	4.9	4.9	8.7
Total high school graduate or higher	94.3	94.3	86.9

Source: U.S. Census, 2012-2016 ACS Survey 5-year Estimates

Income and Unemployment

Table 9 shows median household income data for Magnolia, Kent County, and the State of Delaware and Table 10 gives a more specific breakdown of income distribution in the town. Median household income in Magnolia lags behind Kent County, and is 28% lower than the State as a whole. However, the percent of the civilian labor force that is unemployed is well below that of the county and the state; there is also a lower percentage of residents who collect public assistance. It is important to note that there is a higher percentage of government workers, most likely due to proximity to the State Capitol and Dover Air Force Base. Significantly fewer people collect Social Security and have retirement income than the county or the state, further indicating that Magnolia has a generally working population, although likely in non-professional positions not equal to their educational level.

Table 9 – Selected Income and Employment Data, 2016

	Magnolia	Kent County	Delaware
Median Household Income	\$44,861	\$55,184	\$61,017
% Government Class of Worker	14.0	21.8	14.4
% of Pop. collecting Social Security	14.8	34.2	33.6
% of Pop. with retirement income	13.6	26.7	18.3
% of Pop. on Public Assistance	1.2	3.5	2.4
% of Civilian Labor Force Unemployed	1.3	4.9	4.5

Source: U.S. Census, 2012-2016 ACS Survey 5-year estimates (Selected Economic Characteristics)

Table 10 – Magnolia Household Income, 2016

Household Income	Number of Households	Percent
Less than \$10,000	0	0.0
\$10,000 to \$14,999	1	1.2
\$15,000 to \$24,999	6	7.4
\$25,000 to \$34,999	8	9.9
\$35,000 to \$49,999	28	34.6
\$50,000 to \$74,999	4	4.9
\$75,000 or higher	34	42.0

Source: U.S. Census, 2012-2016 ACS Survey 5-year estimates (Selected Economic Characteristics)

Table 11 displays data regarding poverty status among the populations of Magnolia, Kent County, and the state of Delaware. Poverty status is determined by the U.S. Census by the use of specific poverty thresholds identified and refined each year by the federal government. Poverty thresholds are the statistical version of the poverty measure and are issued by the U.S. Census Bureau to calculate the number of people in poverty in different states and regions in the United States. For example, the poverty threshold for a family of four in the 2010 Census was an annual income of \$22,050, not including public assistance or other unearned income.

As shown in Table 11, the town’s percentage of persons living in poverty has dropped and is now much lower than Kent County or the state. The number of people over the age of 65 below the poverty level is negligible compared to Kent County and the State of Delaware. This positive data extends to children under the age of 18 as well.

Table 11 – Poverty Status by Age Group and Place, 2016

Age Group	Magnolia	Kent County	Delaware
All Ages	4.4%	13.2%	12.0%
Related children under 18	0.0%	19.2%	17.3%
65+ years	0.0%	6.6%	7.0%

Source: U.S. Census, 2012-2016 ACS Survey 5-year estimates (Selected Economic Characteristics)

Table 12 provides some specific income-related data for the Town of Magnolia, Kent County, and the State of Delaware. In every income classification except retirement income, residents of Magnolia had a

lower mean income. The average wage and salary income in Magnolia lags behind the county by \$7,000 and behind the state by almost \$19,000.

Table 12 – Selected Income Data by Place, 2016

Income Type		Magnolia	Kent County	Delaware
Wage or Salary	% of Households	82.6	74.0	81.6
	Mean Annual Income	\$61,014	\$68,923	\$80,432
Social Security	% of Households	14.8	34.2	33.6
	Mean Annual Income	\$15,358	\$19,227	\$19,849
Retirement or Pension	% of Households	13.6	26.7	23.6
	Mean Annual Income	\$20,709	\$24,255	\$26,617
Public Assistance	% of Households	1.2	3.5	2.4
	Mean Annual Income	N/A	\$2,533	\$2,761

Source: U.S. Census, 2012-2016 ACS Survey 5-year estimates (Selected Economic Characteristics)

Table 13 gives a general overview of the occupations of the residents of Magnolia. While there is no one industry that employs the majority of the population, the most common employment categories are education and health care, manufacturing, retail, public administration and food service, with construction, transportation and professional categories in the single digits. Overall, there are a significant number of jobs that required a higher educational attainment than a high school diploma, but there is a good mix of both “white collar” and “blue collar” occupations.

Table 13 - Occupation by Industry

Occupation	Percent
Wholesale trade	0.0
Information	0.0
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	13.2
Construction	8.3
Manufacturing	19.0
Retail trade	12.4
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	2.5
Educational, health and social services	23.1
Public administration	14.0
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing	0.0
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	4.1

Source: U.S. Census, 2012-2016 ACS Survey 5-year estimates (Selected Economic Characteristics)

2-2. Housing

This section of the plan addresses the current and future housing needs of Magnolia. Housing concerns focus on the availability of residential structures in the town and if there is adequate housing to meet the needs of residents.

Total Housing Units

Housing, or dwelling units, are defined as one or more rooms, designed, occupied, or intended for occupancy as a separate living quarter with cooking, sleeping, and sanitary facilities provided within the dwelling unit for the exclusive use of a single family maintaining a household. Table 14 displays basic data on total housing for the town, county, and state since 1980. As shown, this information for

Magnolia indicates limited growth in total housing. No new housing units were added to the town between 2000 and 2010, with all activity relegated to rehabbing and upgrades to existing units. By comparison, housing units in the county increased nearly 30% during the same period in nearby unincorporated areas. It is worth noting that access to those outlying areas runs almost exclusively through the streets of Magnolia on outdated roads.

Policies and regulations regarding local housing and residential areas should be aimed at preserving the integrity, quality, and sustainability of the existing housing stock of Magnolia.

Table 14 – Total Housing Units, 1980-2010

Year	Magnolia	Kent County	Delaware
1980	81	35,350	238,611
1990	86 (+6%)	42,106 (+19%)	289,919 (+22%)
2000	96 (+12%)	50,481 (+20%)	343,072 (+18%)
2010 (est.)	96 (+0%)	65,338 (+29%)	405,885 (+18%)

Source: U.S. Census 2010, Summary File 1; Kent County Comprehensive Plan

Housing Types

Table 15 provides data regarding the types of residential structures located in Magnolia. There are both detached and attached types of single-family dwelling units with traditional detached single family units being the dominant type of housing. The town has a relatively small proportion of multi-family dwellings compared to the county and the state, which aligns with the results of the questionnaire..

Table 15 – Housing Types, 2016

Housing Type	Magnolia	Kent County	Delaware
Single Family, Detached	86.0%	65.8%	58.6%
Single Family, Attached	5.0%	8.6%	14.8%
Multi-Family	8.0%	12.9%	17.8%
Mobile Home, Boat, Other	1.0%	12.7%	8.8%

Source: U.S. Census, 2012-2016 ACS Survey 5-year estimates (Units in Structure)

Age of Housing Stock

Table 16 displays 2012-2016 Census data regarding the age of local housing stock compared to the county and state. In general, the housing in Magnolia is older than that in Kent County and the state. The majority of the housing in town was built before 1940, and older housing presents many maintenance challenges, but rehabbing opportunities as well.

Table 16 – Age of Housing (%), 2016

Period Built	Magnolia	Kent County	Delaware
2010-2016	4.0	5.0	3.4
2000-2009	8.0	27.9	19.6
1990-1999	2.0	18.7	16.3
1980-1989	1.0	12.3	14.4
1970-1979	4.0	12.1	12.1

1960-1969	12.0	8.0	10.7
1940-1959	6.0	9.4	14.8
1939 or Earlier	63.0	6.6	8.6

Source: U.S. Census. 2012-2016 ACS Survey 5-year estimates (Year Structure Built)

Occupancy and Use

Tables 17 and 18 display data regarding occupancy and vacant housing units in Magnolia compared to Kent County and the state. In 2010, Magnolia hosted a 10% vacancy rate, which was higher than the county but lower than the state. No doubt this was the downside of the recession, and currently there are only two vacant units in town, with one being a pending sale.

Table 17 – Occupancy Status for Magnolia, Kent County and Delaware, 2010

Housing Status	Magnolia	Kent County	Delaware
Occupied Units	84 (87.5%)	60,278 (92.3%)	342,297 (84.3%)
Vacant Units	12 (12.5%)	5,060 (7.7%)	63,588 (15.7%)
Total Housing	96 (100.0%)	65,338 (100.0%)	405,885 (100.0%)

Source: U.S. Census, 2010 Summary File 1

Table 18 – Vacancy Status for Magnolia, Kent County and Delaware, 2010

Housing Status	Magnolia	Kent	Delaware
Rental Property	3 (3.1%)	1,572 (2.4%)	11,399 (2.8%)
For Sale	1 (1.0%)	1,168 (1.8%)	5,985 (1.5%)
Not Occupied	0	344 (0.5%)	1,687 (0.4%)
Seasonal	1 (1.0%)	457 (0.7%)	35,939 (8.9%)
Other Vacant	7 (7.3%)	1,519 (2.3%)	8,578 (2.1%)
Total Vacant Units	12 (12.5%)	5,060 (7.7%)	63,588 (13%)

Source: U.S. Census, 2010 Summary File 1

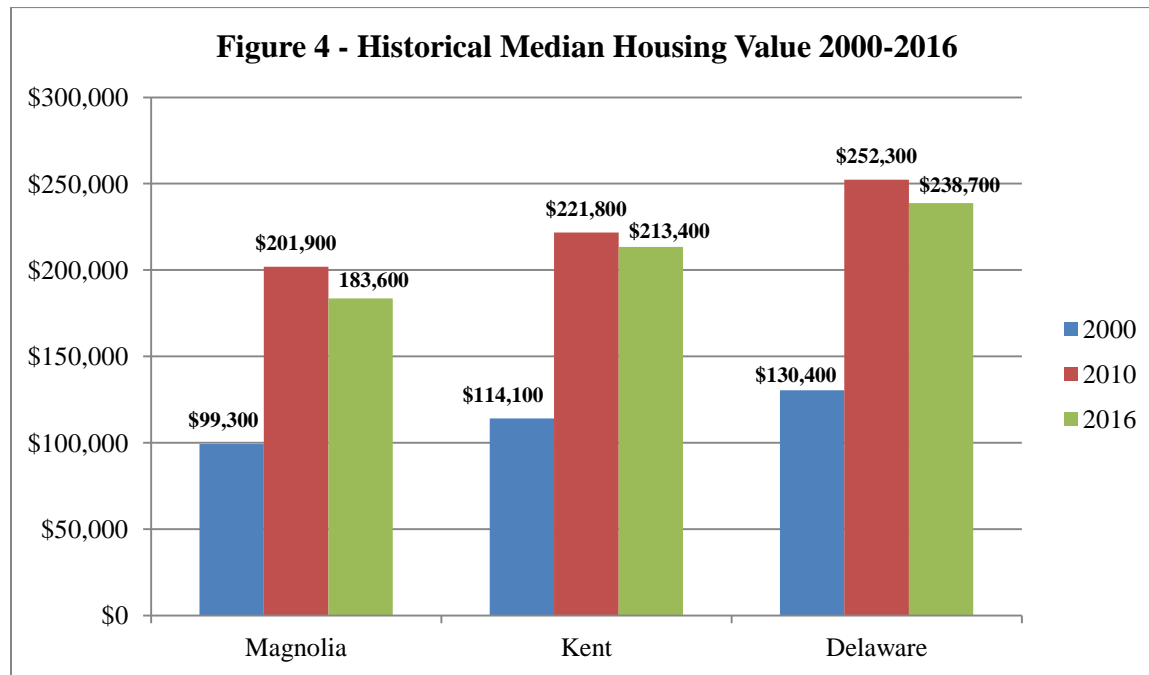
Housing Value

Table 19 and Figure 4 display data regarding the value of housing in and around Magnolia. As shown in Table 19, the median housing value in Magnolia in the 2010 Census was 15% less than that of the county and 24% less than the state (compared to 15% and 30% in the previous plan). The value of housing in Magnolia almost doubled between 2000 and 2016, but is still less than the surrounding area. This implies that housing is relatively more affordable in Magnolia for those who wish to purchase housing in the region. The lower median housing value probably correlates to the fact that many houses were constructed before 1940 and can benefit from upgrades and improvements

Table 19 – Historical Median Housing Value, 1990-2016

	Magnolia	Kent	Delaware
1990 Median value	\$61,500	\$80,800	\$100,100
2000 Median Value	\$99,300	\$114,100	\$130,400
2010 Median Value	\$201,900	\$221,800	\$252,300
2016 Median Value	\$183,600	\$213,400	\$238,700

Source: U.S. Census, 2012-2016 ACS Survey 5-year estimates (Financial Characteristics for Housing Units with a Mortgage)



Since the census data is dated, an attempt was made to develop more recent information on the cost of housing. Table 20 shows the trend for the average value of housing in Central Kent County, which includes Magnolia along with other neighboring towns. During the eight years noted, the average home price has floated with a rough range of about \$30,000. It is important to note that the only available real estate data was for Central Kent County, which includes Magnolia, Camden, Wyoming, Felton, and Viola.

Table 20 – Real Estate Data, Kent County, 2010-2017

Quarter	Kent County Median Home Price
July – Sept. 2010	\$191,000
July – Sept. 2011	\$178,700
July – Sept. 2012	\$180,000
July – Sept. 2013	\$185,250
July – Sept. 2014	\$191,100
July – Sept. 2015	\$199,995
Jan. – Dec. 2016	\$200,000
July – Sept. 2017	\$225,000

Average	\$193,880
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Source: Delaware State Housing Authority, Quarterly Affordability Gap Report

Housing Pipeline

According to the U.S. Census, there was a net gain of 10 dwelling units in the town from 1990 to 2000. However, since 2000, there has been no new home construction in town, apart from two new constructions that simply replaced older units that were demolished.

Summary of Key Issues

The population of the Town of Magnolia leveled off at about 225 between 2000 and 2010. The population may increase, but the future improvement of the town is contingent upon how to best use agricultural land and/or vacant land that is available within the municipal limits. The future appears to show potential for continued growth, but only to the extent the housing stock can physically support it.

Based on the 2010 Census, Magnolia is less racially diverse, slightly younger, and more educated than Kent County or the state. Despite being more educated and unemployment remaining low, the median income still lags behind the county or the state.

If the value of Magnolia lies principally in its small town environment, a managed-growth position must be supported to ensure that infrastructure meets future demand and that new growth does not place an undue burden on existing populations or affect the quality of life in town.

Based on responses to a questionnaire mailed to property owners in April 2018, the town largely believes its future development pattern should continue to be mainly a residential community. The town has a variety of assets for attracting future residents, led by its proximity to two larger employment areas - Dover Air Force Base and the City of Dover (including the State of Delaware complexes). The town also has adequate central sewer and water capacity, low property taxes, and a small-town atmosphere. The town should ensure that any future growth will fit with the character of the town and complement its positive characteristics.

Plan Recommendations – Housing

1. The town should utilize its zoning authority by updating zoning codes to carefully and appropriately shape the residential development in Magnolia. In particular, the town should identify and protect areas of traditional, small-scale residential development.
2. To attract future residents, focus on first-time home buyers and “fixer-uppers” willing to invest time and money in rehabilitating older housing within the town. Encourage usage of programs such as DNREC’s Energy Efficiency Fund and Weatherization Assistance Program, plus those of Delaware State Housing Authority in serving to improve the housing stock in the Town.

3. The town should preserve Magnolia’s traditional, quiet, friendly, small town character and quality of life by allowing only development that supports this character and relates to Kent County designated growth zones.
4. The town should encourage conservation of the town’s assets through increased enforcement of property maintenance ordinances for existing structures in cooperation with Kent County Inspections and Enforcement.

2-3. Government, Community Services, and Facilities

This section provides an overview of the town’s government structure and the variety of community services and facilities available to the residents of Magnolia.

Town Government

The Town of Magnolia operates as an incorporated municipal government and was originally recognized by the State of Delaware in 1885 and reincorporated in 1960. Its governmental structure includes five town council members who are elected to staggered 2-year terms, or reappointed if no election is required. The town charter requires anyone running for a council position to be a property owner in the town, and to be at least 21 years of age and current on all tax payments. Annual elections are held the second Monday in January and residents who have lived in Magnolia more than thirty days are eligible to vote. Meetings are held on the second Monday of each month in the Town Hall.

A mayor is chosen by a vote of the five town council members. The council is comprised of a Mayor, Vice Mayor and three council members. Council members are not paid, and the only paid employees are the Secretary/Town Clerk, Water Operator, Solicitor and a part time employee for general maintenance. Information about town services and departments is available in the Town Charter and can be found online at: magnolia.delaware.gov.

Utilities

Magnolia does not provide or bill for electric services. Delmarva Power provides electric service to Magnolia residents and businesses, and maintains the delivery system. There is no natural gas service located within the town, although gas lines do run to within a mile of the town’s northern border. Comcast provides cable, phone and internet service bundles. Other connectivity options include satellite service and/or streaming services. Currently, Verizon offers land-line phone service but does not offer FIOS bundled services in Magnolia due to the small population.

A discussion of water and wastewater services is provided in the next section of the plan.

Community Services

Public Safety

The Town of Magnolia does not have a Police Department; prior contracted service with the State Police proved to be too costly to maintain. However, the recent relocation of State Police Troop 3 to a property three miles due north of town does result in an increased police presence, by simply doing their routine patrolling in the area.

Kent County enforces the building codes, governs inspections and zoning, and performs condemnations on appropriate dwellings in Magnolia. The Town uses direct contact with property owners in cases where property maintenance is lacking. For more involved situations, the Town enlists Kent County staff for assistance. Over the last ten years, the Town has been successful in having four derelict structures taken down. A half dozen other structures were rehabbed and put back into service.

Fire and Emergency Medical Services

The Magnolia Volunteer Fire Company, located on the northeast corner of the intersection of Main and Walnut Streets, provides emergency medical and fire-protection services. The MVFC operates a total of ten trucks and rescue vehicles, and participates in mutual assistance agreements with the surrounding volunteer fire companies. In 2017 it responded to 244 calls for fire service and 1342 calls for emergency services.

Paramedic service is provided by Kent County Emergency Medical Services, which operates four Medic Stations in Kent County. The closest stations to Magnolia are Stations 65 and 67, both operating out of the Department of Public Safety Headquarters in nearby Dover. The April 2018 town questionnaire indicated overwhelming satisfaction with the fire and emergency medical services provided to residents of the town.

Libraries and Schools

Apart from a recently-installed book nook at MVFC, there are no library facilities within the town limits of Magnolia, but a Kent County library facility is located about 5 miles due west of town on South DuPont Highway south of Camden and offers books, periodicals, public online access and public programming. The Dover Public Library is also located nearby in Dover and offers similar services. The Milford and Harrington Public Libraries are located approximately 12 miles and 14 miles respectively to the south and offer many of the same services. The Barratts's Chapel Museum and Library is a specialty library near Frederica, roughly 4 miles south of Magnolia, that emphasizes Methodist Church history. It has limited hours and offers services usually provided by museum libraries.

The Town of Magnolia is located in the Caesar Rodney School District. The Caesar Rodney District has 13 schools that serve over 7,000 students and covers a distance of about 107 square miles in an area that stretches across Kent County from the Delaware Bay to the Maryland state line, just south of the City of Dover. Overall the school district is highly regarded and continually reaches its target percentages in reading/language arts and math for the Delaware Standardized Tests. Table 21 provides information on the schools operated in the District.

The McIlvaine Early Childhood Center (MECC) is an eight classroom school facility located on East Walnut Street in Magnolia. This small school is home to eight all-day kindergarten classes, which are bused in daily from every elementary school in the Caesar Rodney School District. The MECC offers specialized programs such as speech therapy, home visitations, reading programs and literacy training and offers a traditional school yard, surrounded by open space, located in the heart of the small town. New to the school within the last ten years are immersion programs in both Spanish and Chinese, both of which have been very well received in the community.

MECC received the 2014-2015 Lt. Governor’s Award for Excellence as well as the 2014 National Title I Distinguished School award. The school provides yet another element making Magnolia a desirable place to live.

Table 21 - Public Schools Operated by the Caesar Rodney School District

School Name	Location	Date Built/ Renovated	Enrollment (2017)	Academic Achievement Rating out of 5 stars (2017)
Caesar Rodney High School	Camden-Wyoming	1967/2005	1,893	3 stars
F. Niel Postlethwait Middle School	Camden	1999/1999	868	4 stars
Dover Air Force Base Middle School	Dover	1963/1963	201*	5 stars
Fred Fifer Middle School	Camden	1999/1999	901	3 stars
J. Ralph McIlvaine Early Childhood Center	Magnolia	1934/1934	534	4 stars
Allen Frear Elementary School	Camden-Wyoming	1963/1963	731	4 stars
Major George S. Welch Elementary School	Dover	1960/1962	446*	4 stars
Nellie Hughes Stokes Elementary School	Dover	1997/1997	441	3 stars
Star Hill Elementary School	Dover	1926/2003	435	5 stars
W. B. Simpson Elementary School	Camden-Wyoming	1962/1995	615	4 stars
W. Reily Brown Elementary School	Dover	1970/1996	504	4 stars
John S. Charlton School	Camden-Wyoming	1963/2005	201	3 stars
Kent Elementary Intensive Learning Center	Camden-Wyoming	1994/1994	42	Not Applicable
<i>Total Enrollment</i>			7,812*	

Source: Caesar Rodney School District, Delaware Department of Education, Compiled by IPA, 2018.

*Enrollment numbers for Dover Air Force Base Middle School and Major George S. Welch Elementary School were taken from 2014, the most recent enrollment data available for these schools.

Health Care

The closest major hospital facility to Magnolia is Bayhealth Medical Center in Dover. The expansive facility provides both outpatient healthcare and emergency medical services to all residents and visitors in the region. Construction of a sister facility in Milford is almost complete. There are also a number of walk-in commercial clinics within five miles of the town.

State Service Center

The James Williams State Service Center is located at 805 River Road in Dover. The center offers a wide variety of public services to help people with their health and human services needs. The center can help the public obtain services provided through the State Department of Health and Social Services, the State Department of Services for Children, Youth, and their Families, as well as many non-profit community services groups.

Waste Collection and Recycling

Waste collection and recycling services in Magnolia are provided to individual residents by private companies such as Independent Disposal Services and Waste Management. Community collection facilities have been eliminated county-wide by the Delaware Solid Waste Authority (DSWA), but are still available at the DSWA Administration Office, plus their Milford, Cheswold and Sandtown sites for residents wishing to use them.

Postal Services

Residents in corporate Magnolia must go to the Magnolia Post Office on North Main Street to pick up their mail at individual postal boxes, which are free to them per USPS regulations. The Post Office is an integral part of the character of the town, but is often mentioned by town residents and officials as being too small to adequately provide mail services to the town and the even-larger 19962 zip code delivery area. Residents have expressed interest in having the Post Office moved to an out of town location and would welcome home mail delivery. The town will continue to discuss the need for a larger and more efficient post office and possible locations for a new facility.

Summary of Key Issues

Magnolia residents have access to many services provided by local, county, state, and federal levels of government and private sector companies. Part of the attraction of the town is the availability of these services; accordingly, the town will strive to maintain access to them, and continually evaluate the adequacy of these services.

Plan Recommendations – Community Services and Facilities

1. Explore the Neighborhood Crime Watch Program for any suggestions and ideas to enhance the security of the Town’s residents.
2. The town should continue to work with the Magnolia Volunteer Fire Company to ensure that all options are explored to ensure residents’ public safety.
3. The town should continue to discuss options for a new post office, deciding if the majority of the residents favor an in-town or out-of-town location. Depending on the outcome, home delivery of mail might be entertained.

2-4. Water and Wastewater

Public Water System

The Town of Magnolia has a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN) to provide potable water within the town and to an area immediately adjacent to the town. The management and operation of the system is overseen by the contracted Water Operator, with help from the part-time maintenance assistant. The Town of Magnolia provides water service to approximately 200 residences, two commercial operations, and two institutional uses.

The water system is made up of two primary wells (#2 and #3), one emergency well (#1), and a 250,000 gallon elevated water storage tank prominently located at the center of town, near the crossroads of Main and Walnut Streets. According to the allocation permit issued by the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC) to Magnolia in 1987, the Town of Magnolia is allowed to draw groundwater from the Frederica aquifer at three wellhead locations on East Walnut Street. The wells are located at Town Hall (#1), in a large empty lot 500 yards due east of Town Hall (#2) and adjacent to the MECC school yard (#3). Table 22 shows wells #2 and #3 are the main wells that provide potable water to the town and have a maximum pumping capacity of 700 gallons per minute (gpm) and 315 gallons per minute, respectively. Emergency use well #1 has a maximum pumping capacity allotted at 160 gpm. The allocation permit allows for a maximum total withdrawal of 85,000 gallons per day (gpd).

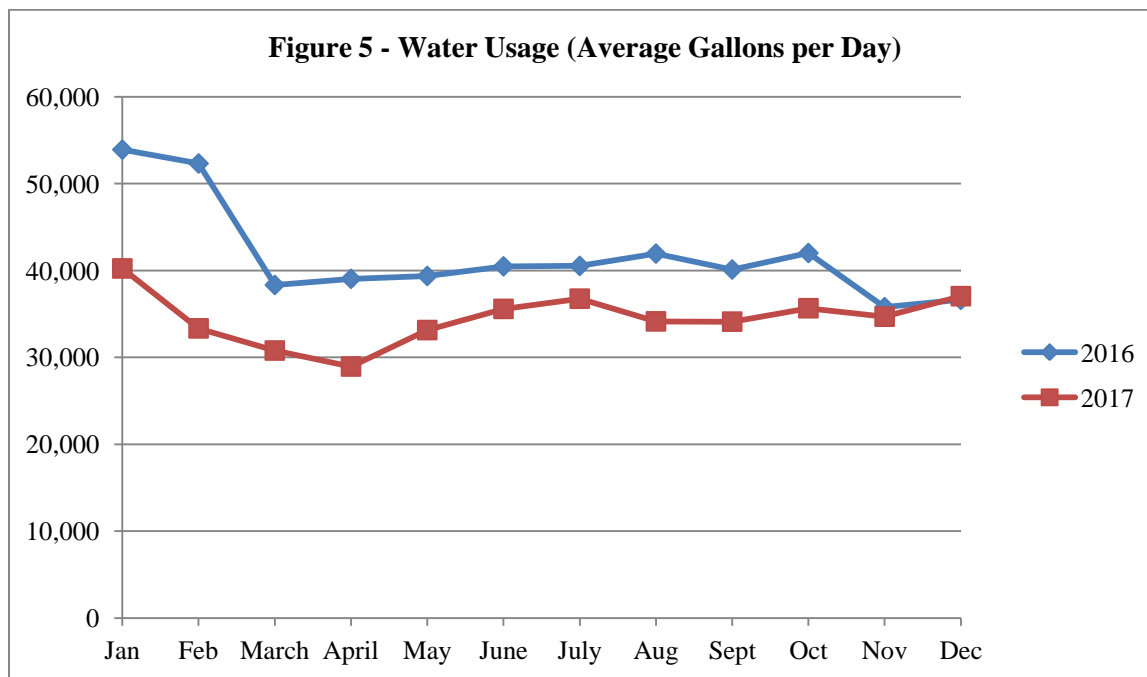
Table 22 - Water Supply Wells in the Magnolia Municipal Water Service

Well # - ID #	Aquifer	Year Constructed	Depth to screen (feet below ground surface)	Max Pumping Capacity (gpm)	DNREC Allocation (gpd)	2017 Average Production (gpd)
1a - 69351 (Emergency)	Frederica	5/26/1987	110-130	160	85,000	49
2a - 68805	Frederica	5/26/1987	130-150	700	85,000	14,836
3a - 46358	Frederica	10/24/1980	128-148	315	85,000	19,677

TOTAL						34,562
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Source: DNREC, Division of Water Resources, 2017

Figure 5 shows the average gallons per day used in 2016 and 2017. According to the production reports submitted to DNREC, the average total daily water production for the year 2017 was 14,893 gallons for well #2 and 19,808 gallons for well #3 for a total of 34,701 gallons per day. Assuming usual peak day demands are about 30% higher, or about 45,111 gallons per day, the town is still well below its 85,000 gpd allocation limit. No more than 2.5 million gallons per month (30 day period) and 30 million gallons per year may be removed from the aquifer by the town. Currently the DNREC records indicate that Magnolia is also below that annual limit. In 2017, Magnolia used an average of 1.05 million gallons per month of their 2.5 million gallon allocation, and 12.6 million gallons per year of their 30 million gallon allocation.



Considering that the average daily usage in 2017 was approximately 34,701 gallons per day, or 173 gpd per household, the pumping system has more than adequate capacity given the current water withdrawal permit to allow for some additional flexibility. Yet, although there is adequate water capacity, one significant problem is the current supply infrastructure and whether it could support any increase in flow that would occur with additional residential development.

Water service customers in town are charged a flat rate of \$75 per quarter (up from \$55), or \$300 per year for water service. This increase covers only increased costs in labor and materials to keep the water system functioning and cover any water main repairs. Decreased water pressure already occurs for residents who live further away from the water tank due to the size and condition of the water mains. For example, residents on Thorn Street have only a 2-inch water main and residents have reported to the

town that their water pressure fluctuates. The town must first address the issue of water system upgrades before even considering future residential growth. In order to continue to provide an adequate level of service to all residents in Magnolia the water system will likely need to be upgraded or replaced.

Source Water Assessment and Protection (SWAP) Program

The Safe Drinking Water Act Amendments of 1996 mandated that each state develop a Source Water Assessment and Protection (SWAP) Program to better protect public-drinking-water sources. There are three basic components of all SWAP Programs:

- Delineate the boundaries of the land area most important to public water sources;
- Identify the potential sources of contamination within those boundaries;
- Assess the susceptibility of the public water source to these contaminants.

In Delaware, the SWAP Program is coordinated mainly by the State Department of Natural Resources & Environmental Control (DNREC), which developed the majority of the assessments for all public water systems in Delaware. The assessment for the Town of Magnolia can be found at:

http://www.wr.udel.edu/swaphome/Publications/fagw_kentcounty.html.

It is difficult to summarize the results of the assessment report for each water system since it is necessary to understand the methodology and rating system (explained in the report) to understand the final susceptibility assessment. Magnolia does rely on groundwater from its three wells for its drinking water supply. All public water systems that rely on groundwater for their source of supply need to protect two land areas—the wellhead areas surrounding the wells and excellent-groundwater-recharge areas. Wellhead areas are usually the most important areas to protect from activities on the surface or subsurface of the land. These are the areas where the quality or quantity of groundwater moving towards the well may most likely be affected by land use. In Magnolia, the Wellhead Protection Areas were delineated by DNREC using a computer model that simulates groundwater movement and is shown on Map 4 in Appendix A.

The other land areas that are very important to protect are excellent-groundwater-recharge areas. These are areas where water on the surface is most easily absorbed into the land and the underlying aquifer which increases the chance of contamination from the surface reaching the aquifer. A review of the recharge area mapping developed for DNREC by the Delaware Geological Survey reveals that there is a very small area in the north of town that is designated as an Excellent Water Recharge Area. Most of Magnolia is classified as a “good” water recharge zone, as opposed to an “excellent” water recharge zone, which limits the chance of infiltration and contamination of the aquifer.

In 2001 the Delaware General Assembly passed Senate Bill 119, which requires all jurisdictions with a population over 2000 persons to implement measures to protect sources of public drinking water within its boundaries by December 31, 2007. Towns with populations numbering under 2000 are not required to implement source-water-protection measures, but are strongly encouraged to do so to better protect

their drinking water supplies. There are a variety of tools available to assist jurisdictions in better protecting sources of public water, including model ordinances, best management practices, and education. These measures are provided in the *Source Water Protection Guidance Manual for the Local Governments in Delaware*, developed for DNREC by the Institute for Public Administration's Water Resources Agency at the University of Delaware.

It would be prudent for the town to review the measures recommended in the guidance manual. Generally, the regulations for the protection of water resources seek to minimize the impacts of land use on the aquifers recharging ability. This is accomplished by limiting the percentage of impervious surfaces that are allowed on the land, such as a maximum allowable percentage of impervious cover per lot. Wholesale development of undeveloped areas within the Town flies in the face of this initiative; without it, this can be easily accomplished. Additionally, the Town also limits the materials stored in wellhead protection zones to only those that are used for system maintenance. No petroleum products or pesticides currently are present in recharge areas that might contaminate the aquifer.

Wastewater

Kent County owns, operates and maintains the collection and treatment system that serves the Town of Magnolia. The town is part of Kent County Sewage Disposal District No. 1. Kent County created a service area for properties in the Town on January 28, 1975. Subsequently, Kent County borrowed funds for the construction of the infrastructure to provide sewer service to existing and vacant properties in the district. If the town were to annex, the Town should notify Kent County Department of Public Works so that comments may be provide on the capacity of the collection and treatment system. Should the expansion or modification of Kent County Sewage Disposal District No. 1 be pursued, it must follow Chapter 180, Kent County Code and Title 9, Chapter 46 of the Delaware Code.

The County's main transmission line (a 36" diameter forcemain) runs directly through Magnolia. Pump stations, located just north of town and south of town on South State Street and Clapham Road, respectively, pump wastewater to the Kent County Regional resource Recovery Facility (KCRRF) located south of Frederica. This facility treats wastewater from the entire center portion of the state, including most of Kent County, properties in southern New Castle County and unincorporated areas of Milford in northern Sussex County. The KCRRF is a secondary waste treatment facility, meaning it is designed to degrade the biological components of sewage through a process known as biological nutrient removal (BNR). Wastewater treated at this facility is discharged to a tributary of the Murderkill River.

The facility is currently treating about 13.5 MGD of wastewater from all of Kent County. The plant has been upgraded to treat up to 20.0 MGD, so there is still treatment capacity available, but there are also discharge load limits that must be met under the NPDES permit issued by DNREC for discharges into the Murderkill River. It's possible that, if growth in Kent County continues at the rate expected, the load limits for nutrients may be reached. Kent County will continue to plan for facility improvements and alternative disposal methods such as spray irrigation. Kent County's provides wastewater treatment service whenever technically, legally, and economically feasible in accordance with the Kent County Code. Magnolia is located within the County's Growth Zone Overlay District.

Stormwater Management & Surface Water Protection

Stormwater management is an important factor in protecting surface waters, or water collecting in streams, rivers, lakes, wetlands or oceans. There is a direct relationship between the percentage of impervious cover and water quality in streams because as impervious cover increases, stormwater runoff increases. The increased runoff that comes into contact with pollutants transfers them into the waterways. Pollutants that accumulate due to runoff include nutrients such as nitrogen and phosphorus, metals such as copper and lead, or organic chemicals such as oil and gas. A system of vegetative or structural measures to control the volume and rate of stormwater runoff and to reduce erosion should be enacted in accordance with Kent County Regulations to aid in surface water protection.

There are various ways to compensate for inadequate stormwater management to reduce pollutant loads and flooding. For example, the incorporation of stream and wetland buffer regulations, the integration of “green” development methodologies such as Low-Impact Development, limitations on impervious surface levels in new development and redevelopment, and increased stormwater management requirements for redevelopment of properties. As more development occurs in town, Magnolia should continue to work with the State, Kent County and other agencies to try and identify a strategy that will work with the goals of the town as well as with the needs of the surrounding ecosystem.

As stated in Magnolia’s subdivision regulations, Article II, Section 5, any new subdivisions must provide for storm or flood water runoff channels that are separate from the sanitary sewer system and meet the guidelines of the Kent County Drainage Code. These guidelines include the requirement to assure that “developments are designed and constructed with drainage adequate to prevent flooding that will cause serious personal harm or property damage and approved by the appropriate agencies” and “to control soil erosion and sedimentation along the waterways and ensure conformity with topography so as to create the least erosion potential for developments”.

Summary of Key Issues

Magnolia residents are provided water supply service by the town and has adequate water supply from its wells to meet current and anticipated service needs. However, the water system is aging and in need of upgrades. Inadequate pressure has been reported in parts of the town and is likely due to the capability of the water distribution pipes - both the mains and the customers’ service lines. The town’s customers are not metered and users are charged a flat rate of \$300 a year rather than a charge based on usage. The town relies on groundwater as its sole source of water supply and must be careful to protect the quality of the groundwater. Source water protection measures are not required for jurisdictions in Delaware with populations under 2000 so Magnolia is not required to adopt land use ordinances to better protect its drinking water sources, but measures are in place to accomplish such.

Magnolia’s wastewater disposal needs are met by Kent County and its transmission and treatment system are well maintained, with a plan for meeting future needs. Kent County’s current policy is to provide wastewater treatment service in County growth areas whenever technically feasible and Magnolia is within the County’s growth area.

Stormwater management has not been a major problem within Magnolia, although there have been localized problems associated with roadway stormwater runoff and blocked storm grates. However, presently only about half the land in town is developed; the other half is mostly agricultural or open fields. If more land is developed within the town, it will become increasingly important to work with Kent County and the Kent County Conservation District to make sure the town's subdivision ordinances include the most advanced regulations for managing stormwater.

Plan Recommendations – Water, Wastewater, and Stormwater Management

1. The town should consider applying for grants to upgrade the water mains and encourage residents to upgrade their service lines from those mains when needed.
2. Magnolia should also study the costs and benefits of continuing to operate a water supply system given the staffing and budgetary constraints of a small town.
3. Magnolia should maintain an open dialogue with Kent County to ensure that future wastewater disposal services are available to properties within the town boundaries.
4. The Town should work with Kent County and the Kent County Conservation District to make sure the town's stormwater practices for lands within town limits are as stringent as required on lands outside of town.

2-5. Natural Resources

Natural resources are an important part of Magnolia. Large amounts of undeveloped land in town, mostly for agricultural use, and the proximity to the St. Jones River provide residents with opportunities to enjoy the natural landscape. Open space and natural areas in town are important for maintaining the town's character and quality of life for its residents.

St. Jones River Watershed

There are four major drainage basins in Delaware and the Town of Magnolia is located within the Delaware Bay Basin. The Delaware Bay Basin is about 814 square miles in size, or 520,960 acres and is divided into 16 watersheds. Magnolia is located within the St. Jones River Watershed and is surrounded by the Leipsic River Watershed to the north, the Little Creek Watershed to the east, and the Murderkill River Watershed to the south. The Delaware Bay is the eastern border, making the protection of the St. Jones Watershed an integral part of protecting the Bay.

The St. Jones River Watershed covers approximately 55,000 acres of land and is the most densely populated watershed in Kent County. The main body of water in the watershed is the tidally influenced St. Jones River that slowly meanders in a general southeastern direction towards the Delaware Bay. Major lakes in the watershed include Silver Lake, Moores Lake, and Wyoming Lake. The Lower St.

Jones River Delaware National Estuarine Research Reserve, a federally protected reserve of 3,750 acres that was established to protect and manage natural estuarine habitats, is located southeast of Magnolia.

The St. Jones River Watershed has highly productive agricultural soils, comprising about 42% of the land area. The remaining area in the watershed is about 30% urban/residential, 15% wetlands, 9% forest, and 4% other. Most of the wetland areas are tidally influenced marshes near the Delaware Bay.

Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL)

Total Maximum Daily Load regulations are authorized under federal code, but states are charged with developing and implementing standards to support the federal legislation that ensures that the water of the United States meets certain thresholds for fishing, swimming and drinking. The purpose of TMDL programs is to reduce the overall amount of pollution entering waterways through best management practices that take a comprehensive approach to the entire watershed. A few examples of best management practices include stormwater management, erosion control, nutrient management plans and pollutant removal at wastewater treatment plants.

Delaware State Code 7426 describes the regulations adopted in 2006 for TMDLs in the St. Jones watershed which sets specific limits for pollutants that can enter into watershed and still protect water quality that supports activities such as swimming and fishing. In Delaware, strategies for pollution control are typically managed on a watershed basis by a coordinated effort between DNREC and Tributary Action Teams made up of stakeholders and the general public. Implementation of strategies to meet these TMDL regulations is achieved through the development and implementation of a Pollution Control Strategy by the Tributary Action Team. To date, a Pollution Control Strategy has not yet been completed, but partnerships between DNREC, the Delaware National Estuarine Research Reserve, and the public have resulted in the collection of stream data that will be used to evaluate problems and identify solutions. In addition DNREC has been collecting water quality data in the St. Jones since 1970.

The main impact to the Saint Jones Watershed is from nonpoint sources and includes excess nutrients and bacteria, low levels of dissolved oxygen, and elevated levels of chlorophyll-a. The watershed has dissolved oxygen levels less than the state minimum of 4mg/L, which severely limits the viability of certain plant and animal species. The origin of nonpoint source pollutants is determined according to the type of land use. Areas such as forests and wetlands naturally add minimal amounts of nutrients and bacteria to waterways. Agricultural uses add nutrients and bacteria from animal feed lots, nutrients from fertilizers, and sediments from run off. Urban uses increase nonpoint pollution due to increased impervious cover and nutrients from septic systems, residential fertilizers, industrial wastes and pet wastes.

Since the land use in Magnolia is primarily residential and agricultural, a nutrient runoff mitigation strategy is needed to reduce nitrogen and phosphorus loading from land use activities. The town should work with DNREC, the Kent County Conservation District and other local and county governments to

aid in nutrient reductions. In the event of future development, the Town of Magnolia should implement appropriate stormwater management techniques to reduce nutrient load.

TMDLs have been established for nonpoint source pollutants for nitrogen, phosphorus and *enterococcus* bacteria and are aimed in improve water quality in the entire St. Jones River and its tributaries, including the Isaac Branch, Tidbury Branch, Fork Branch, Moores Lake, Silver Lake, and Derby Pond.

Many of the issues involving surface water quality in Kent County focus primarily on the health of the Delaware Bay. The protection of these sensitive natural resources and the surrounding waterways and water bodies is dependent upon the efforts of public, private, and corporate stakeholders alike. The Town of Magnolia is a member of this group of necessary participants in the protection of the regional environment and should participate along with the many other stakeholders whose actions have an impact on regional water quality.

Floodplain

A floodplain is defined as a flat low lying area adjacent to a watercourse that is subject to periodic inundation with water. While every flood event will have a unique flood plain based on the amount of rainfall received, the 100-year-flood plain is accepted as the “regulatory” limits of flooding for flood insurance purposes and for many jurisdictional zoning and development practices. As can be seen on Map 4 in Appendix A, Magnolia is not located within, or near a 100-year flood plain and has a very low risk of flooding. The elevation in Magnolia increases from approximately 25 feet above sea level in the north of town to 30 feet above sea level in the south. The lowest elevation is 10 feet above sea level just outside of town adjacent to a small unnamed stream that is a tributary of the St. Jones River. The closest 500 year flood plains are those of the St. Jones River which are located about one mile to the east and over three miles to the north. A 500-year flood plain can be described as the highest level of flood expected in a 500 year period.

The Town of Magnolia joined the FEMA National Flood Insurance Program in April 2018. Even though the risk is low, residents can now avail themselves of the program if they so desire.

Wetlands

Wetlands protect water quality by naturally filtering runoff on its way to water bodies, provide wildlife habitat, and provide protection from flooding. Regulatory protection of wetlands is mandated under the Section 404 provisions of the federal Clean Water Act. In Delaware, non-tidal and tidal wetlands are regulated under this act. Certain wetlands (mainly in tidal areas or sites containing regulated headwater streams) are accorded additional regulatory protection under Title 7, Chapter 66 provisions of the Delaware Code. Verification of the presence of wetlands is provided through a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers-approved field-wetlands delineation and/or an official DNREC jurisdictional determination.

Magnolia has only 0.18 acres of non tidal wetlands located near the northern boundary of town as delineated in the Wetlands Statewide Mapping Project. These wetlands extend further to the north and east and are characterized as having three distinct qualities - hydrophytic vegetation (those plants suited

to wetter soils), hydric soils (those soils which are seasonally to permanently saturated), and hydrologic connection. These wetlands are hydrologically connected to a tributary of the St. Jones River.

If development were to occur, wetland areas should continue to be protected. Permitting for development in these areas is under the authority of the Army Corp of Engineers and DNREC. The town should consider wetland buffers to protect the viability of these important habitats.

Soils

The high quality soils in Magnolia easily support farming activities. Almost all of Magnolia's soils are Sassafras sandy loam soils. The only soils that are not Sassafras are about 3.5 acres in the northwest of town that are Runclint loamy sand soils. Sassafras soils are classified as well drained soils and Runclint soils are classified as excessively drained. Sassafras soils have a land capability classification of "1" for irrigated and non-irrigated lands. The land capability classification system groups soils based on their capability of producing common cultivated crops without deteriorating over a long period of time. A classification of "1" is the highest classification with the least restrictions for agricultural use. The Runclint soils are less productive and have severe limitations for cultivation.

If development were to occur, neither Sassafras soils nor Runclint soils are limiting to development, although Runclint soils sometimes limit the ability to construct houses with a basement.

Trees

The character of the Magnolia community includes the protection of the natural aesthetics of town, including the trees and landscaping. Many mature trees are located throughout the town in both residential and institutional settings. The trees and ornamental plants located within the town contribute greatly to the visual appeal and healthy environment that exists in Magnolia. If development were to occur, the town should continue to protect this valuable resource.

Open Space

Although there is currently a lot of undeveloped land in town, it is all privately owned. The town does not have a public park. The town should pursue the acquisition of acreage that could be utilized as a town park.

Summary of Key Issues – Natural Resources

Magnolia is located within the St. Jones River Watershed, the most densely populated watershed in Kent County covering approximately 55,000 acres of land. One of the two National Estuarine Research Reserves in Delaware established by the federal government to protect and manage natural estuarine habitats - the Lower St. Jones River Reserve - is located to the southeast of Magnolia. In 2006, TMDLs for the St. Jones watershed established specific limits for pollutants that can enter into the watershed and still protect water quality that supports activities such as fishing. TMDLs have been established for nonpoint source pollutants for nitrogen, phosphorus and *enterococcus* bacteria and are aimed to improve

water quality in the entire St. Jones River and its tributaries. In Delaware, strategies for pollution control for watersheds are typically implemented by a coordinated effort between DNREC and Tributary Action Teams made up of stakeholders and the general public. The Town of Magnolia is a member of this group and should participate along with the other stakeholders whose actions have an impact on regional water quality.

Magnolia is not in a floodplain and has only a very small area of wetlands. Finally, the town does not have any park; effort should be put forth to locate and acquire land that could serve as a town park.

Plan Recommendations – Natural Resources

1. The town should encourage the use of “green” practices and materials in local construction.
2. The town should require best management practices for any future development that are consistent with the State of Delaware’s guidance documents for the protection of natural resources including, but not limited to, wetlands, forest resources and streams.
3. The town should consider incorporating open space preservation guidelines into their ordinances and pursue the creation of a town park.

2-6. Transportation

This section of the plan provides transportation-related data and develops an understanding of the modes of travel and transportation infrastructure in Magnolia. Since transportation involves linking both areas within the town and areas outside of the town, this section of the plan includes extensive use of a regional context and an intergovernmental approach to research and planning. The Town of Magnolia recognizes that successful regional-transportation systems require the cooperation of local, county, and state governments, and has developed its transportation plan with this basic concept in mind.

Roadway Facilities

Map 2 in Appendix B details the simple transportation network that exists within the circular boundary of the Town of Magnolia. The primary regional transportation corridor for the town is the north-south South State Street/Clapham Road corridor, all of which is state-maintained and subsequently identified as North and South Main Street within the town boundaries. The primary east-west corridor is Kent County Road 31 that is also maintained by the state and is identified as East and West Walnut Street within town. There are only two other streets in Magnolia - Thorn Street and Jado Terrace. The Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT) manages the maintenance and improvements for Main Street and Walnut Street. Thorn Street is a municipal street maintained by the town. Jado Terrace is a dead-end gravel drive that is maintained by those residents served by it.

South State Street / Clapham Road

This north-south road connects Magnolia with U.S. Route 13 and the City of Dover to the north, and Delaware Route 1 to the south. It is a two lane highway classified by DelDOT as a minor arterial road; exactly one half mile of this roadway runs through Magnolia. Unfortunately, the road is frequently used by residents around the area as a primary route to reach Delaware Route 1 (to the east), Delaware Route 1 (to the south), Dover (to the north), or to the school, church, restaurant and/or post office in town. This traffic all converges at the single stop light and intersection in Magnolia, located at the center of the town. Not surprisingly, traffic/congestion was identified by residents via the town questionnaire as the most important issue in Magnolia, even greater than the aging water system.

Table 23 (a/b) displays data regarding recent traffic estimates for the section of South State Street/ Clapham Road in Magnolia. (Note: To emphasize the extent of the problem, data from the prior comp plan has been repeated here as well.) While the town agrees with the upward trends, both recent and long-term, it also feels that some of the data is suspect. For instance, in 2016, if 8,563 vehicles travelled north to the Southern Magnolia limit, and then 6,422 vehicles travelled from the Southern limit to Walnut Street, where did the other 2,141 vehicles go? There are also large inconsistencies between the 2002-2006 and 2013-2016 reportage. Anecdotally, no resident would believe that there were 1000+ fewer vehicles travelling on the two in-town segments than were reported in the earlier report. As such, one of the town’s greatest challenges will be to obtain accurate statistics on exactly how many vehicles are using its streets.

Table 23a – Traffic* on Main Street through Magnolia from South to North, 2002-2006

	2002 Report	2003 Report	2004 Report	2005 Report	2006 Report	Change 2002-2006
Road 8 (South of Magnolia) to Southern Magnolia limit	4910 (2000)	4941 (2000)	5109 (2000)	5199 (2000)	5250 (2000)	+ 6.9%
Southern Magnolia limit to Walnut Street	7027 (2000)	7071 (2000)	7311 (2000)	7442 (2000)	7516 (2000)	+ 6.9%
Walnut Street to North Magnolia Limits	11170 (2000)	11239 (2000)	11621 (2000)	11830 (2000)	11948 (2000)	+ 6.9%
Northern Magnolia limit to Sorghum Mill Road	10010 (2000)	10063 (2003)	10846 (2004)	11041 (2004)	11151 (2004)	+ 11.4%

Source: DelDOT 2008

*Traffic is measured in average annual daily traffic (AADT), which is an average of traffic volume on all days of the year.

Shaded cells represent road segments within the town limits.

Items in parentheses are the year the last measurement was done.

Table 23b – Traffic* on Main Street through Magnolia from South to North, 2012-2016

	2013 Report	2014 Report	2015 Report	2016 Report	Change 2013-2016	Change 2002-2016
Road 8 (South of Magnolia) to Southern Magnolia limit	7,061 (2011)	7,047 (2011)	8,416 (2015)	8,563 (2015)	+ 21.2%	+ 74.0%
Southern Magnolia limit to Walnut Street	5,989 (2013)	5,972 (2013)	6,312 (2013)	6,422 (2013)	+ 7.2%	- 9.0% ???????
Walnut Street to North Magnolia Limits	8,872 (2008)	10,299 (2014)	10,874 (2014)	11,064 (2014)	+ 24.7%	- 1.0% ???????
Northern Magnolia limit to Sorghum Mill	11,329 (2012)	11,306 (2012)	11,939 (2012)	12,148 (2012)	+ 7.2%	+ 21.3%

Road						
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Source: DeIDOT 2018 *Traffic is measured in average annual daily traffic (AADT).

Shaded cells represent road segments within the town limits

Items in parentheses are the year the last measurement was done

The growing average annual daily traffic (AADT) likely occurs in Magnolia due to the outflow from the dozens of new residential developments north, south and particularly west of town. The data suggests that the flow of traffic is proportionately from west and/or south to north. It is also important to note that Main Street in the northern half of town is almost one and a half times greater than the amount of traffic on the south end of town on the same road.

Kent County Road 31(Walnut Street)

Approximately half a mile of Kent County Road 31 runs east-west through the town and it is classified by DeIDOT as a major collector road. Table 24 (a/b) displays data regarding recent traffic estimates for the section of it that runs through Magnolia. (Note: To emphasize the extent of the problem, data from the prior comp plan has been repeated here as well.) While the town agrees with the upward trends, both recent and long-term, it again feels that some of the data is suspect.

For instance, in the earlier table, volume on West Magnolia-Main Street was in the mid-4000s, whereas the more recent table shows it in the lower 3000s. Main Street-East Limits in the earlier report ran in the lower 2000s; in the more recent table, it’s dropped by anywhere from 16% to 30% from that. Members of both Town Council and the Planning Commission question the accuracy of these figures.

Table 24 - Traffic* on Kent County Road 31 (Walnut Street) through Magnolia from West to East, 2002-2006

	2002 Report	2003 Report	2004 Report	2005 Report	2006 Report	Change 2002-2006
Woodlytown Road to west Magnolia limit	2394 (2000)	2193 (2003)	2246 (2003)	2292 (2003)	2317 (2003)	-3.2% ???????
West Magnolia limit to Main Street	4250 (2000)	4129 (2000)	4228 (2000)	4316 (2000)	4363 (2000)	+2.7%
Main Street to east Magnolia limit	2119 (2002)	2059 (2002)	2108 (2002)	2152 (2002)	2175 (2002)	+2.6%
East Magnolia limit to DE Route 1	1463 (1996)	1494 (2003)	1530 (2003)	1561 (2003)	1578 (2003)	+7.9%

Source: DeIDOT 2008 *Traffic is measured in average annual daily traffic (AADT), which is an average of traffic volume on all days of the year.

Shaded is actually in the town limits

Year the last count was done shown in parentheses

Table 24 - Traffic* on Kent County Road 31 (Walnut Street) through Magnolia from West to East, 2012-2016

	2013 Report	2014 Report	2015 Report	2016 Report	Change 2012-2016	Change 2002-2016
Woodlytown Road to west Magnolia limit	2,539 (2010)	3,576 (2014)	3,906 (2014)	3,808 (2014)	+50.5%	+ 59.0%
West Magnolia limit to Main Street	2,781 (2008)	3,122 (2014)	3,399 (2014)	3,314 (2014)	+19.5%	- 28.2% ???????
Main Street to east Magnolia limit	1,825 (2010)	1,843 (2010)	1,695 (2015)	1,652 (2015)	-9.2%	- 28.2% ???????
East Magnolia limit to	1,862	1,766	1,929	1,881	+1.3%	+ 28.5%

DE Route 1	(2010)	(2014)	(2014)	(2014)		
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Source: DelDOT 2018 *Traffic is measured in average annual daily traffic (AADT)

Shaded is actually in the town limits

Year the last count was done shown in parentheses

Magnolia is a crossroads town and has a significant amount of traffic for such a small town. Overall, the amount of average annual daily traffic has steadily increased over the past twenty years and will most likely continue to increase as more development occurs in the surrounding county. However, there appear to be some significant inaccuracies in the traffic estimates for the Magnolia area. The town should discuss these concerns with DelDOT and the Dover/Kent County Metropolitan Planning Organization and request that more accurate traffic count information be taken in order to better assess the impacts of increasing traffic on the residents.

Even minor increases in traffic volume and vehicle speed can create major challenges to pedestrian safety, local mobility and community character. Working with DelDOT to develop accurate forecasts and long-range improvement plans for both Main Street and Walnut Street will be essential in planning for the transportation needs of the Magnolia community in the future. Because of the width restrictions of the existing streets, coupled with primary water system infrastructure lying beneath these same streets, it is very likely that a new roadway bypassing Magnolia entirely will be a better solution than expending monies to focus on Main Street and Walnut Street.

Public Transportation

Relatively reliable, year-round public transportation is provided by DART First State in Magnolia. The Route 303 Dover-Milton-Georgetown bus route transports patrons between Dover and Georgetown Monday through Friday except major holidays. Residents traveling north to Dover can be picked up at the corner of Main Street and Walnut Street on the same schedule.

DART provides paratransit service for elderly and disabled riders. The service is door-to-door and rides need to be arranged at least one day in advance. Also available is the Senior Citizens Affordable Taxi (SCAT) service, which provides elderly or disabled persons with a 50 percent discount on taxi fares from participating companies.

Bicycles and Pedestrians

Automotive congestion and the restricted width of the two main streets in Magnolia make bicycling a dangerous proposition, but until a way is discovered to reroute traffic around Magnolia, cyclists will have to use the streets at their own risk, as they do now.

Pedestrians have better options, as there is a complete run of sidewalks throughout the town. There are still a couple of spot sections, specifically on East Walnut Street and North Main Street, where previous property owners declined offers to have sidewalks installed. The Town may approach current owners to see if a new agreement could be reached. Regardless, full sidewalk is still available opposite each missing section.

Delaware Bayshore Byways

In 2016, the Town agreed in principle to support the Delaware Bayshore Byways Program, whereby natural resources are linked for adaptive reuse, tourism, local business outreach, historic preservation and sea level measures.

Rail

The closest passenger-rail service in Delaware is in the City of Wilmington. From there, Amtrak provides daily service to many major cities. In addition, the Delaware Transit Corporation (DTC) and the South Eastern Pennsylvania Transit Administration (SEPTA) provide daily commuter-rail service between Newark, Wilmington, and Philadelphia along Amtrak's Northeast Corridor.

Airport

The closest commercial passenger service for Magnolia residents is either Philadelphia International Airport or Baltimore-Washington International Airport. The travel time to each is from two to two and a half hours. Additionally, a small regional airport with limited service is available to the south near Salisbury, MD.

Summary of Key Issues – Transportation

The one issue continually raised during the revision of this plan is the increasing level of traffic in town. Responses to the town questionnaire overwhelmingly noted the amount of cars and trucks using Main Street and Walnut Street. Magnolia is a crossroads town and increasing numbers of vehicles are passing through the center of town to connect to areas north (Dover, Dover Air Force Base) and north/south (Delaware Route 1). Most residents believe the actual number of vehicles passing through town is much higher than the estimates provided by the State. In addition, the residents believe there is an increasing number of heavy trucks passing through town and that these trucks are tearing up the roads and damaging the homes tightly located along Main Street and Walnut Street. Also, the major water supply pipes for the town lie directly beneath these same streets and suffer the abuse of traffic volume and traffic weight. Public transportation is available in town and responses to the questionnaire indicated the level of service is adequate.

Plan Recommendations – Transportation

1. The town should work with DelDOT to develop strategies for generating accurate and timely data regarding the increasing motor vehicle traffic, particularly the number of vehicles passing through the Main Street traffic light intersection.
2. Once the new traffic data is developed, the town should work with the State and the Dover/Kent County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to develop a strategy to mitigate the impacts of pass-through vehicles.

2-7. Existing Land Use, Future Land Use, and Annexation

This section of the plan describes the existing land uses in Magnolia, discusses future land uses in the town, and considers the possibility of future growth within the town.

Existing Land Use

The Town of Magnolia totals about 120 acres and contains six land uses within its boundaries: residential, commercial, agricultural, institutional, utilities, and vacant. Map 6 in Appendix A displays the current pattern of land use.

Open Space and Agricultural

Open space and agricultural land currently being farmed comprise about 69.5 acres, or over half of the Town of Magnolia (58%). Four parcels are currently being used for agricultural crops such as grain, soy beans, and corn. Open space areas (private and public) offer potential for stormwater facilities, parks and/or recreation facilities.

Residential

Residential areas predominantly contain any type of dwelling units. Residential land comprises the next highest percentage of land use in Magnolia, totaling about 30%. Residential land uses vary, depending upon where a particular use is located, but single family detached homes is by far the most common type of residence (93.5%). Residential uses are concentrated along the two main arteries in town - Main Street and Walnut Street. Most residential dwellings are oriented towards the street, scattered along each side of the main road, helping to create Magnolia's small town feel. Thorn Street connects Main Street to Walnut Street to create a denser pocket of residency.

Commercial

Commercial areas are those developed with retail, office and service industry entities. The Town of Magnolia has very limited commercial development, totaling only a little over an acre in area. The town has zoned several contiguous parcels along the South Main Street corridor for commercial use; a restaurant, a furniture store and a professional luthier are the only active uses currently located within this commercially-zoned land.

Institutional

Institutional land uses include Federal, State or local government facilities, public safety facilities, public and private schools, places of worship, public works buildings, civic buildings and structures,

libraries, service centers, public healthcare facilities, and other such uses. Five land uses that serve the public exist in Magnolia, totaling about 10% of the total land in town. These institutional land uses are Magnolia Town Hall, McIlvaine Early Childhood Center, the Magnolia Volunteer Fire Company, the Magnolia Post Office, and the Orchard Church (formerly Magnolia Methodist Church).

Utilities

Parcels currently used for utilities include the elevated water storage tank (including cellular phone installations) and three water pumping stations, all of them critical pieces of the Town's water supply system.

Industrial

Even though noted in the Town's current zoning ordinances, there currently are no industrial entities within the corporate boundary.

Current Zoning within Magnolia

The town's Zoning Ordinance was originally enacted October 8, 1980 and was revised and annotated in 1981. Since then there have been some revisions to the Zoning Ordinance as noted. The zoning within Magnolia is provided on Map 5 in Appendix A.

Residential Zoning

There are two residential zoning districts that provide the basis for residential land use in town: R-1 and R-2. The R-1 District (Single Family Residential) provides for a minimum lot size of 21,780 square feet (.5 acre) as described in the January 10, 2005 amendment. Permitted uses on R-1 properties include single family detached dwellings, public and private schools, churches, municipal and public buildings, cultural facilities, farming and agricultural activities, and accessory buildings like private garages and farm buildings. The R-2 District (Apartment Residential) allows for more dense development with a minimum lot size of 6,500 square feet (.15 acre). R-2 uses include all R-1 uses plus single family semi-detached dwelling units, boarding and lodging houses, and conversions of one-family dwellings into multiple units with a minimum lot area of 2000 square feet for each unit.

Community Commercial Zoning

The C-1 District (Community Commercial) provides the basis for commercial land uses in town. Most of the commercially zoned properties are located along the west side of Main Street from Walnut Street to Thorn Street, and to the east side of Main Street near the town's southern boundary. The minimum lot size for commercial properties is 3,500 square feet and there is a building height restriction of 35 feet. A variety of uses typically allowed in commercial districts are permitted, including banks, beauty shops, medical clinics, food stores, restaurants (excluding franchise fast-food businesses), specialty retail stores, repair and servicing centers, parking lots, bookstores, auctions and public services. There are also several additional commercial uses conditionally allowed subject to special requirements.

Industrial Zoning

There is an Industrial (I) zoning classification detailed in the Zoning Ordinance that requires a minimum lot area of two acres and permits light manufacturing/processing and professional and administrative offices. There are no parcels zoned I on the current zoning map.

Current Zoning/Land Use Adjacent to Magnolia

At this time, most of this land within a half mile of the town is being used for residential or agricultural purposes. All of the land around Magnolia is governed, and therefore zoned, by Kent County and is displayed on Map 5 in Appendix A. Except for a few parcels to the northwest and southwest of town, most of the land adjacent to the town is zoned Agricultural Conservation (AC). According to the Kent County Zoning Code, the purpose of the AC District is “To provide for a wide range of agricultural and farm related services while providing for low density residential development in areas that are rural in character and where farming may not be the optimum land use activity.” These areas also serve as transitional zones between agricultural uses and residential uses.

Future Land Use

A variety of land use issues were discussed during the updating of this plan. The future land use map will be the foundation for any proposed land use changes and the town is required to update its zoning map to correspond with this plan document within 18 months of plan adoption.

Open Space and Agricultural

Open space and agricultural land comprises about 69.5 acres, or over half of the Town of Magnolia (58%). Four parcels are currently being used for agricultural crops such as grain, soy beans, and corn. The Town anticipates continued use of these parcels for the same purposes. Two ideas that the Town has recently heard about are possible usage as farmettes and/or a horse farm.

Residential

Residential areas predominantly contain any type of dwelling units. As seen in Map 6, the majority of the developed land in Magnolia is residential and residents have clearly expressed the desire to keep the town as mainly a residential community. As explained in the previous section on zoning, the town Zoning Ordinances permit two types of residential development, with most of the town zoned R-1 or 0.5 acre lots. However, there are eight lots on West Walnut Street, five lots on Thorn Street, and six lots on Main Street that are zoned R-2, permitting more dense residential use with 0.15 acre lots. The Planning Commission discussed rezoning some of these back to R-1, since many of them already are being used as R-1, but there was no consensus to take action at this time.

Commercial

Commercial areas are those developed with retail, office and service industry entities. There is a small downtown section of Magnolia that is zoned for commercial use, but only three of the 14 commercially zoned lots are being used for commercial activities. The other lots are being used for residential activity and have been for many years. Because of the restricted width of Main Street and heavy traffic volume, there is little usable parking available for commercial parcels, so the potential viability of commercial uses will be limited. Similar to ***Residential*** above, there was no consensus to take action at this time.

Institutional

Institutional land uses include Federal, State or local government facilities, public safety facilities, public and private schools, places of worship, public works buildings, civic buildings and structures, libraries, service centers, public healthcare facilities, and other such uses. Five land uses that serve the public exist in Magnolia, totaling about 10% of the total land in town. These institutional land uses are Magnolia Town Hall, McIlvaine Early Childhood Center, the Magnolia Volunteer Fire Company, the Magnolia Post Office, and the Orchard Church (formerly Magnolia Methodist Church). No changes are anticipated.

Utilities

Parcels currently used for utilities include the elevated water storage tank (including cellular phone installations) and three water pumping stations, all of them critical pieces of the Town's water supply system. The Town is currently pursuing funding for upgrades and improvements to this system.

Industrial

The town has an Industrial classification in its Zoning Ordinances, but there are no parcels zoned as such at the present time. The potential for future industrial land uses in town was discussed, and the classification will remain in place to afford the town some future flexibility.

Redevelopment

The Town of Magnolia does not have a specific area in need of revitalization; it is and always has been a predominantly residential town. Additionally, the town is unique in that over half of the area within town is currently agricultural and mostly used for growing crops. Most of the energy and effort should be expended on trying to maintain the town's small-town character and enhancing the services provided to current residents.

As presented earlier in the Housing section, the town continues to be concerned about the maintenance of existing housing stock, particularly the appearance and structural integrity of the properties located in highly visible areas of town. Since the last plan in 2009, Magnolia has revised its property maintenance ordinances for existing structures and actively increased the enforcement of those standards.

Annexation

The issue of annexation is always difficult for towns. Towns that annex risk growing beyond their ability to manage the resulting increased population and housing, leading to a decrease in their ability to address the needs of long-time residents. Growth also often results in dramatic changes to the character of the town. However, towns that do not annex risk becoming stagnant with static population and little opportunity for increasing town revenues to meet constantly growing expenditures. Towns end up having to still deal with the consequences of development outside their boundaries without receiving any of the benefits.

The annexation issue was discussed during this update process and the issue was included in the town questionnaire to receive more input from its residents. Although there were different opinions on this issue, in the end it was decided that the town would not consider annexation at this time. There are two main reasons for this decision – more than half of the land within the current town boundaries is currently undeveloped and, perhaps more importantly, the desire of the majority of the residents to maintain Magnolia’s small town character.

Area of Concern

Although the town is not currently considering the annexation of land adjacent to its boundaries, it has identified an *Area of Concern* on Map 7, Future Land Use and Growth Map, extending an additional 0.25 miles beyond the existing circular boundary . Development in this area would likely impact the town, particularly the increased traffic that would be generated. Magnolia would like to have any proposal submitted to Kent County for developing this land shared with the town for its review and comment and Magnolia would reciprocate this courtesy to Kent County.

Summary of Key Issues – Future Land Use and Annexation

Consideration should be given to developing an open-space provision in the Town Zoning Code to ensure that some public open space is always available. The town is comfortable being a residential community with limited commercial activity and plans to review its entire Zoning Code.

There are several institutional land uses that currently exist on residentially zoned properties, like the Magnolia Volunteer Fire Company, the McIlvaine Early Childhood Center and the Magnolia Post Office. These are complementary land uses and most residents hope they stay in town. The one exception is the Magnolia Post Office. Some residents would like it to relocate out of town. Others want it to remain in the town’s center.

The town does not plan to annex adjacent property in the near future and instead has designated an Area of Concern on its Future Land Use and Growth map. However, the town is concerned about the potential

development that may occur on the land adjacent to the town under the jurisdiction of Kent County. The town and county agree to keep each other informed of potential development activity in areas adjacent to the town.

Plan Recommendations – Future Land Use and Annexation

1. The Town should review its Zoning Ordinances to ensure they match the character of the Town and are easy for residents and Town Council to interpret. Review parcels zoned R-1, R-2 and C-1 (Commercial) in light of current land use and characteristics to determine if any of them should be otherwise rezoned.
2. Although no annexation is currently desired, the Town has established an Area of Concern extending an additional ¼ mile around the Town from the Town’s center. They are in agreement with Kent County to keep each other mutually informed as to any proposed development in this area.
3. Engage knowledgeable professional assistance to research and prepare an impact study for the Town, which would detail the pros and cons of annexing land beyond its current circle boundary (e.g. financial, logistical, administrative, environmental, infrastructure, etc.).

CHAPTER 3. COORDINATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

3-1. Intergovernmental Coordination

The residents of Magnolia and the services and operations of the town will be affected by activities occurring within the town and on lands within Kent County's jurisdiction surrounding the town. Therefore, it will be of great benefit to Magnolia and Kent County to continue to develop a more cooperative relationship. The town should meet with the County to discuss matters for which Magnolia might be interested in receiving or providing assistance. Likewise, Kent County may find this enhanced relationship can help keep them informed of issues that arise in Magnolia - issues that could adversely affect residents living outside of town in Kent County.

All new development, or redevelopment, that occurs around Magnolia is relevant to the town due to the economic and social impacts that it may have upon the town. It will be very important that Magnolia remains aware and informed of land use changes and development proposals in nearby areas that would likely affect the town. The town should continue to follow and comment on these proposals through the state PLUS processes or through the planning process in Kent County. Magnolia should also continue to review and comment on the DeIDOT and Dover/Kent County Metropolitan Planning Organization Transportation Plans, since traffic will continue to be a major issue for Magnolia.

Additionally, the town will continue to work with the State of Delaware Office of State Planning Coordination (OSPC) and the professional planner the OSPC has designated as the Kent County Circuit Rider Planner. This planner can help the town with a variety of issues, such as providing assistance with identifying the appropriate contact persons within state or county departments, identifying funding sources for programs developed to assist municipalities in Delaware, and providing direction on alternatives to locating data and information the town may need in its efforts to apply for loans and grants.

3-2. Plan Implementation

Implementation is one of the most important parts of the comprehensive planning process, as it provides direction to the town to accomplish the ideas discussed in its Comprehensive Plan. Also, it is recognized that the Town of Magnolia cannot implement this plan without coordinating with other governments and agencies, in particular Kent County and the many agencies within the State of Delaware.

The following is a summary of the main recommendations made throughout this plan. It provides a guide to actions that will be needed following the certification and adoption of this plan. It should be noted that the most immediate recommendation requiring attention should be the updating and revision of the town's Zoning Code. An updated Code will provide the town with better tools for maintaining the town's character and charm as growth occurs in and around Magnolia.

Plan Recommendations – Housing

1. The town should utilize its zoning authority by updating zoning codes to carefully and appropriately shape the residential development in Magnolia. In particular, the town should identify and protect areas of traditional, small-scale residential development.
2. To attract future residents, focus on first-time home buyers and “fixer-uppers” willing to invest time and money in rehabilitating older housing within the town.
3. The town should attempt to preserve Magnolia’s traditional, quiet, friendly, small town character and quality of life by allowing only development that supports this character and relates to Kent County designated growth zones.
4. The town should encourage conservation of the town’s assets through increased enforcement of property maintenance ordinances for existing structures in cooperation with Kent County Inspections and Enforcement.

Plan Recommendations – Community Services and Facilities

1. Explore the Neighborhood Crime Watch Program for any suggestions and ideas to enhance the security of the Town’s residents.
2. The town should continue to work with the Magnolia Volunteer Fire Company to ensure that all options are explored to ensure residents’ public safety.
3. The town should continue to discuss options for a new post office, deciding if the majority of the residents favor an in-town or out-of-town location. Depending on the outcome, home delivery of mail might be entertained.

Plan Recommendations – Water, Wastewater, and Stormwater Management

1. The town should consider applying for grants to upgrade the water mains and encourage residents to upgrade their service lines from those mains when needed.
2. Magnolia should also study the costs and benefits of continuing to operate a water supply system given the staffing and budgetary constraints of a small town.
3. Magnolia should maintain an open dialogue with Kent County to ensure that future wastewater disposal services are available to properties within the town boundaries.
4. The Town should work with Kent County and the Kent County Conservation District to make sure the town’s stormwater practices for lands within town limits are as stringent as required on lands outside of town.

Plan Recommendations – Natural Resources

1. The town should encourage the use of “green” practices and materials in local construction.
2. The town should require best management practices for any future development that are consistent with the State of Delaware’s guidance documents for the protection of natural resources including, but not limited to, wetlands, forest resources and streams.
3. The town should consider incorporating open space preservation guidelines into their ordinances and pursue the creation of a town park.

Plan Recommendations – Transportation

1. The town should work with DelDOT to develop strategies for generating accurate and timely data regarding the increasing motor vehicle traffic, particularly the number of vehicles passing through the Main Street traffic light intersection.
2. Once the new traffic data is developed, the town should work with the State and the Dover/Kent County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to develop a strategy to mitigate the impacts of pass-through vehicles, such as construction of a bypass.

Plan Recommendations – Future Land Use and Annexation

1. The Town should review its Zoning Ordinances to ensure they match the character of the Town and are easy for residents and Town Council to interpret. Review parcels zoned R-1, R-2 and C-1 (Commercial) in light of current land use and characteristics to determine if any of them should be otherwise rezoned.
2. Although no annexation is currently desired, the Town has established an Area of Concern extending an additional ¼ mile around the Town from the Town’s center. They are in agreement with Kent County to keep each other mutually informed as to any proposed development in this area.
3. Engage knowledgeable professional assistance to research and prepare an impact study for the Town, which would detail the pros and cons of annexing land beyond its current circle boundary (e.g. financial, logistical, administrative, environmental, infrastructure, etc.).

APPENDIX A: TOWN QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

APPENDIX B: MAPS

- Map 1: Aerial View of the Town of Magnolia**
- Map 2: Transportation Network**
- Map 3: Investment Strategies for State Policies and Spending**
- Map 4: Environmental Features**
- Map 5: Magnolia and Adjacent Area Zoning**
- Map 6: Existing Land Use**
- Map 7: Future Land Use and Growth**

APPENDIX C: COMMUNICATIONS WITH GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

APPENDIX D: FORMAL APPROVALS BY PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS