

**A METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH TO PRESERVING
DELAWARE'S SMALL TOWN SUBURBAN LANDSCAPES**

by

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A thesis submitted to the Faculty of the University of Delaware in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Urban Affairs and Public Policy

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ABSTRACT

The Delaware landscape is undoubtedly comprised of building patterns and spatial organizational forms from the recent past. Yet despite the significant presence of post-World War II architecture on the landscape, these structures have not been recognized through policy boundary decisions. The current National Register of Historic Places historic districts automatically exclude this recent past based on their dates when the nomination was written. This thesis draws upon a visual analysis of historic maps and aerial photography for a sample of small towns in Delaware to propose a more cohesive methodology for looking at the landscape as a vernacular form in order to better understand where and how towns grew. The towns included in this study are Bridgeville, Camden, Delaware City, Georgetown, Milford and New Castle. By identifying historic resources and spatial land use patterns, specifically suburban and decentralization patterns from the recent past, this methodology encourages interpretation of these patterns on the landscape of Delaware's small towns and reinforces the importance of including these resources in historic districts.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

All towns, from their original inception, have political boundaries, and the politics of the place can be seen on the landscape, through the original town plans and layouts as well as through the boundaries of a historic district. Almost all follow a grid pattern, one of the most effective spatial organizational tools. The ideas of political boundaries are deeply embedded in the American landscape, so deeply that they might not even be considered by the average resident. The basic function of political boundaries is to impose structure on our lives in order to create structure and order.¹ Imposing boundaries is the first step towards organizing space.²

While the historic district is a very important zoning mechanism, it is also significant to understand that these boundaries are not imposed in a scientific order, but in a subjective, political fashion. Like other political boundaries, historic districts do not conform to the topography of the region, nor do they reflect the society in which they exist. They are most often the work of outside professionals, and in the case of Delaware's historic districts, they are often outdated, reflecting ideas and wants for a society that have long since changed.

¹ Jackson, John Brinckerhoff, *Discovering the Vernacular Landscape*, Yale University Press: New Haven, 1984, 13.

² Jackson, John Brinckerhoff, 13-14.

The rigidity of nominations is also a problem. The boundaries imposed upon the towns are arbitrary at best. The historic districts are tied to the National Register nominating process, on the basis of whether they are of a contributing or non-contributing property type.³ To over-simplify the process, one would simply walk around the proposed district, either saying, yes or no, to whether a property should be included within the boundaries. This gives the nominator a large amount of control over the process, and in turn, the historic districts tend to be irregularly shaped, have keyholes, or are simply very small, in order to tell whatever story is valued at the time. The historic districts often represent part of the historic downtown. It very rarely addresses the historic growth outside of the initial town.

Currently the state of Delaware has 82 historic districts, 90 percent of which were approved in the 1970s and the 1980s.⁴ While those nominations include buildings dating up to 1930, they leave out virtually all of Delaware's more recent growth, including the periods of the Great Depression and World War II. These periods are now eligible for nomination under the 50-year rule of the National Register

³ In the National Register Bulletin 16A, "How to Complete the National Register Registration Form," published in 1997, the National Park Service, defines contributing properties as "adds to the historic associations, historic architectural qualities, or archeological values for which a property is significant." The definition for non-contributing was defined as, "A noncontributing building, site structure, or object does not add to the historic architectural qualities, historic associations, or archeological values for which a property is significant."

⁴ Data for the Historic Districts in Delaware available by keyword search through <http://chris.delaware.gov/> (Accessed November 09, 2009).

for Historic Places (hereafter NRHP).⁵ Delaware's many small towns are now faced with the challenge of determining how best to approach planning for the preservation of these resources, which occur in large volume. This thesis develops a methodology for analyzing small town growth in the recent past and proposes one strategy for facing that challenge.

Like the rest of the nation, the state of Delaware saw huge population gains during the post-World War II period,⁶ and as result of this population influx, many new buildings were added to the landscape. Due to the fact that Delaware suburbanized so rapidly during this period, much of the current architectural landscape cannot be attributed to earlier periods of significance, those typically used to determine the boundaries of NRHP historic districts in the past. In order to accommodate this new wealth of buildings, the present historic districts should be expanded.

Expansion of the historic districts in Delaware is not a common practice. Only nine of the 82 historic districts have increased their boundaries since their initial nominations were approved, and some have actually suffered boundary decreases.⁷

⁵ National Register guidelines stating that a building must be 50 years old to be eligible for inclusion; thus nominations written in the 1970s and 1980s could not address any resources built after 1930.

⁶ Based upon United States Census data for available for the state of Delaware for the census years 1860-1960. During this time the state population quadrupled from 112,216 people to 446,292. With the biggest growth year occurring between 1950-1960, where the statewide population grew by more than 125,000.

⁷ Data for Historic District boundary increases and decreases available from <http://www.nationalregisterofhistoricplaces.com> (Accessed November 29th, 2009).

The fact that so few towns have increased the boundaries of their districts indicates a lacuna in both policy and practice for expanding existing historic districts in the state of Delaware. This thesis examines the typical towns present in Delaware through a methodological approach relying on visual analysis of the landscape, and makes initial recommendations about strategies for expanding districts in the state as more and more properties become eligible.

The current structure of the nominations does not account for ideas and problems that have occurred since the original nominations. I will primarily focus my research efforts on the idea of historic growth. Towns change and evolve every day. Due to the rigid nature of historic districts, these changes have not been accounted for. Once the nomination is approved, they are not often revisited. They are frozen in time, not reflecting the fluidity of town growth.

Secondly, the current historic districts do not have different gradations of significance. This new approach can reflect current thinking, such as the character of streetscapes, the character of neighborhoods, and ideas about infill, essentially a “Character District.” A character district essentially identifies several different periods of significance within a town. The character districts would be a potential series of character overlay zoning districts, designed to preserve and maintain the integrity and intent of the suburbs, at a less invasive policy level.

For instance, if a town has a current historic district intact of 1850s architecture, and much of the growth outside the district boundaries occurred in the 1950s and 1960s, there is a gap in the story being told. With a character district strategy, the original, traditional historic district would be kept intact, while the post-

World War II growth would have a variable of character and a different level of protection applied to it. While not all of the growth maintains the necessary significance that the National Register requires, there is an underlying element of character to the neighborhood. It would be detrimental to lose whole blocks of these types of suburbs, representing the largest building boom in American history,⁸ only because they do not reflect the story of the original nomination.

One clarification is needed on why I chose to focus on National Register Historic Districts. The primary function of the National Register Historic District is to protect historically significant properties. Through this protection, a historic ordinance is usually established. Many of the small towns in Delaware adopt the Historic District boundaries, and use them as their own local zoning ordinances. Some do not. Based on the scope and time available for this project I only explored the National Register Boundaries as a way to increase protection of historic resources at a local level. While some towns may already be protecting these resources, the local ordinances aren't readily available in GIS files. As a way to simplify the process of finding resources, and keeping the resources consistent I choose to use the National Register Historic Districts.

METHODOLOGY

⁸ Ames, David L. and Linda Flint McClelland, "Historic Residential Suburbs: Guidelines for Evaluation and Documentation for the National Register of Historic Places," National Register Bulletin, September 2002, 3.

In order to understand the importance of the cultural shift away from local town planning models, to that of national ones, one must analyze the landscape. This thesis will analyze historic patterns and spatial organization in Delaware, dividing it into two main periods. The first is pre-1940s growth, drawing on a series of historical maps (Beers' Atlas of Delaware, 1868; Sanborn Insurance Company maps, 1885-1927) and finishing with the first aerial photographs available for the entire state in 1937.⁹ This period marks the beginning of all town development, while covering all of the periods of significance included in the National Register nominations, and it ends with the last year in which growth conforms to previous spatial organizations of the towns. With the change in technology of mapping growth, it also brings about consistency; from this point forward data for all towns are available from the same years.

The second division of growth is the post-World War II period. The visual data available for this year compares the 1961 aerial photography for the state with the evidence from the 1937 photographs. This growth will be National Register eligible in the year 2011. The aerials for 1961 reflect the boom years of post-World War II America, and had yet to be influenced by the economic collapse of the 1970s. This period marks the first visual break from historic spatial forms to that of the suburban model, a form that continues to dominate the Delaware landscape today.

⁹ First year that aerial photography is available for the entire state of Delaware, available from the Delaware DataMIL, <http://datamil.delaware.gov/geonetwork/srv/en/main.home> (Accessed November 29, 2009.).

Case Studies

In order to demonstrate this methodology for studying growth, I have selected six towns as case studies, each with a distinct character. Karen Theimer's Master's Thesis constructed a typology for small towns in Delaware and defines six distinct types of towns in the state, referring to them as property types: the crossroads town, the railroad town, the maritime town, the mill villages, the resort town, and the market town.¹⁰ Each property type represents distinct trends in Delaware, while some types of towns have intersecting qualities and functions. Building on Theimer's initial work, I intend to highlight the important ways in which property type has an initial effect upon the footprint of the landscape.

I have selected six towns in Delaware for this study, representing four of the defined property type classifications--New Castle, Delaware City, Georgetown, Bridgeville, Camden, and Milford--each with different histories, economies, locations, founding dates, and functions (Table 1.1) (Figure 1.1).¹¹ Towns chosen for this study represent a range of different property types. I chose to forgo the inclusion of a resort town in this study because of the sheer amount of current uncontrolled growth around those towns. I have included two maritime towns because of the critical role these towns played in Delaware's history at different points in time. The two towns selected

¹⁰ Karen Theimer's Master's Thesis "Delaware's Small Towns and Main Streets: Planning and Preservation" approved in Spring 1998, by the University of Delaware, Newark, Delaware.

¹¹ The property types that are included in this study are, maritime, crossroads, railroad, and market town. An additional property type not identified by Theimer, but by Lisa C. Tolbert, of "county-seat" was also included.

represent very different types of maritime towns and demonstrate significant differences in settlement periods. Lastly, I also chose to forgo the inclusion of a mill town because mill towns were often incorporated into other municipalities, or they lacked sufficient visual evidence for inclusion in the study. Each of the selected towns contain at least one existing historic district nomination, generally covering much of the historic downtown area (Table 1.2). Lastly, each town was documented with historic maps that provide evidence for growth and evolution of those towns.

By using a wide array of towns I can establish the importance of including suburban growth in historic districts. Targeting different types of growth, historic or new suburban model it allows me to place Delaware in a larger context of change in the landscapes nationwide. The goal is to establish the fact that despite differences in small town communities across the Delaware landscape, all of the growth trends in the post-World War II period conformed to the suburban models. The historic landscapes once dictated by local needs, traditions, and geographic features are now shaped by federal building policies. Analysis of the towns will result in recommendations on how to expand historic districts to include new suburban growth, based on the history, growth patterns, and suburban character of the towns.

Visual Analysis

This entire methodology is dependent upon a visual analysis of the landscapes. Lisa C. Tolbert places a similar importance on the method of visual

analysis in her book, *Constructing Townscapes*.¹² She states, “analyzing spatial and architectural development offers a more reliable method for identifying and understanding the elusive small-town.”¹³ By using Beers’ Atlas, Sanborn maps, aerial photographs, historic district boundaries, municipality boundaries, and current parcel maps, I created a series of maps in a geographic information system (GIS) which chart the growth of these towns. Each historic map, or aerial photograph represents a growth period in the state of Delaware, by combining all of these resources; I can pinpoint where growth is occurring in each town, and also visually represent the changes in spatial arrangement.

The parcel maps provide a current view of the division of property distribution and are my base layer in GIS. After the base layer was established, I worked forward chronologically to chart growth in Delaware. The first area of growth identified was extrapolated from the 1868 Beers Atlas. The next two to three areas of growth are from the Sanborn fire insurance maps. The number of Sanborn maps used depended largely on the town. Some towns had up to seven sets of published maps, while some only had two. If the town had more than three maps, the beginning, midpoint, and end dates were used to provide a more evenly distributed range, while

¹² Using a similar methodology of looking at the impact of small-town organization and architecture on the landscape, in her case social histories as well, it provided a way to conceptualize this project. Layouts, spatial organizations, and townscapes all have an important place in helping to define histories, and aid in understanding landscape preservation.

¹³ Tolbert, Lisa C. *Constructing Townscapes: Space and Society in Antebellum Tennessee*, The University of North Carolina Press: Chapel Hill, 1999, 6.

still keeping the amount of work manageable. Presumably, in most cases, a lot of the growth and properties that appear in these earlier resources already appear in the historic district nominations. However, the end dates for all of the Sanborn maps occur right around the cut-off dates for most of the nominations.

Lastly, the aerial photographs, provided by the state of Delaware through the DataMIL website were used.¹⁴ These dates are consistent across all towns. Unlike the Sanborn fire insurance maps, the aerial photographs were all taken in the same years. The dates chosen for this study are 1937, 1961, and 1997. These dates are the most evenly distributed years that were photographed. Dates too close in range to chart a significant amount of growth, such as 1992 and 1997, were not used.¹⁵ (All maps and images were produced by the author, unless otherwise noted. It is also advised that the maps and images are viewed or printed in color, to enhance the visual information conveyed.)

After analyzing all of the information present in the maps and photos, growth was visually charted using GIS. This information not only visually displays Delaware's small town growth, but also provides an easy to understand evolution. GIS was also used to experiment with how the current boundaries, also overlaid on these maps, could be expanded to include this twentieth century growth. These maps

¹⁴ Information about the Delaware DataMIL available at <http://datamil.delaware.gov/geonetwork/srv/en/main.home>

¹⁵ Aerial images for the state of Delaware are available for the years, 1937, 1954, 1961, 1968, 1992, 1997, 2002 and 2007.

illustrate how and where the towns grew, making it easier to justify the expansion of historic districts, as well as the inclusion of character districts.

Table 1.1 Basic information on Case Study Towns

Town Name	Property Type	County
New Castle	Maritime	New Castle County
Delaware City	Maritime	New Castle County
Camden	Crossroads Town	Kent County
Milford	Market Town	Kent and Sussex Counties
Bridgeville	Railroad Town	Sussex County
Georgetown	County-Seat	Sussex County

Table 1.2 National Register Information for Case Studies

Historic District Name	City/Town	Date added to NR	Boundary Increase	Boundary Decrease	County
New Castle Historic District	New Castle	1967	Y-1984	N	New Castle
Delaware City Historic District	Delaware City	1983	N	N	New Castle
Camden Historic District	Camden	1974	N	N	Kent
North Milford Historic District	Milford	1983	N	N	Kent
South Milford Historic District	Milford	1983	N	N	Sussex
Sussex County Courthouse and the Circle*	Georgetown	1973	N	N	Sussex
Bridgeville Historic District	Bridgeville	1994	N	N	Sussex

*= Nominated to the National Register as a building, but appears on Delaware's GIS layer as a district. No other National Register historic district nomination for Georgetown appears on the GIS layer or National Register itself.

The historic district boundaries also provide visual information. While they do not provide growth information like other resources, they do identify areas that were initially identified as areas of the towns worth preserving. I am using the historic districts as base boundaries for expansion. Only after the historic district has been identified can one begin to talk about growth needed.

Not all of the buildings built before 1961 are significant properties, nor should they all be included in the nominations. The process is much more complex than that. This methodology simply offers a visual tool to see where upcoming historic structures are most likely to be located, and provides an alternative way of thinking about the levels of ordinance that could be applied to these newer areas.

There are limitations to relying only on a visual analysis method of evaluating historic resources. Relying solely on documentary evidence of this type does not allow for a complete understanding of the landscape, or of social and cultural interactions. It does not relay any of the more fascinating aspects of studying town histories. There is not much that can be learned about people from studying these types of growth patterns besides how and where the town elected to grow. There are several other sources that can be utilized in order to fully understand the growth, and dynamics of towns such as oral histories, historical accounts, tax records, and orphans court records. Due to the nature of this project these sources will not be pursued.

The process that I am advocating is reliant upon what was drawn historically. If a certain road was not included on the maps, it could not be included in that mapping sequence. Only when a road was visually represented on the map was it included. This type of analysis has problems because it does not accurately reflect the

landscape. In order to remain consistent, I tried to keep assumptions out of my research. The use of historic maps for the earlier parts of the analysis is contingent upon the mapmakers. It is hard to make any judgments about why they failed to include certain blocks of the towns. Were they underdeveloped or perhaps were they deemed uninteresting?

Similarly, there are also limitations to relying on early aerial images. While they are good at providing a general idea of where growth is in the towns over a larger area than present in the historic maps, they do not provide the same level of detail. Because I am using these resources to get an overview of town growth at a town block level, they are still usable and resourceful.

This type of analysis does not account for where infill occurred in the towns. I am not attempting to verify the resources identified on earlier maps and photographs. I am merely trying to identify when the towns were growing and in which direction in order to identify parts of the town that should be studied for inclusion in the ordinances.

ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS

This thesis is organized into an introduction and three subsequent chapters. Chapters 2 and 3 are devoted to the explanation of growth patterns in Delaware's small towns during two periods, pre- and post-1940. The last chapter focuses on recommendations for expansion of historic districts and conclusions.

Chapter 2 develops the first period, the pre-1940s growth, drawing on historic maps through the 1920s and terminating with the first set of aerial maps that document the entire landscape of the state in 1937. In this period, the original footprint of the town was the dominant feature on the landscape. Property type classifications¹⁶ differentiated the initial growth patterns of the town, and simultaneously dictated the history and economic activities of the small towns. But the most important aspect of this period is that old settlement patterns were reinforced, so that growth and expansion never strayed from the original town layout.

Chapter 3 focuses on the growth during the post-World War II period, typical of post-World War II suburban booms found throughout the nation, the largest that Delaware or the country had seen.¹⁷ In Delaware, this growth is characterized by a break from tradition--existing townscapes were no longer used as the spatial pattern and it is clear that Delawareans' were abandoning local building traditions in favor of national trends. The GIS maps will be used to emphasize this movement away from local growth influences to national ones such as dependence on the automobile, low densities for residential development, detached housing,¹⁸ and a complete change of spatial scale.¹⁹ While subsequent changes on the landscape indicate related changes in

¹⁶ Adapted from Karen Theimer's Master's Thesis "Delaware's Small Towns and Main Streets: Planning and Preservation"

¹⁷ Ames and McClelland, 3.

¹⁸ Jackson, Kenneth T. *Crabgrass Frontier*. Oxford University Press: USA (1987), 239.

¹⁹ Jackson, Kenneth, 270.

social and technological phenomenon, these new spatial patterns continued to reshape town life through the twentieth century.²⁰

The fourth and final chapter begins with an exploration of recommendations on the current state of historic districts in Delaware. The first section addresses the need to expand the current historic districts to include the pre-1940s growth. The second section is devoted to the exploration of what to do with the wealth of post-World War II architecture. The main idea presented is on zoning overlays and character districts.

²⁰ Tolbert, 10.

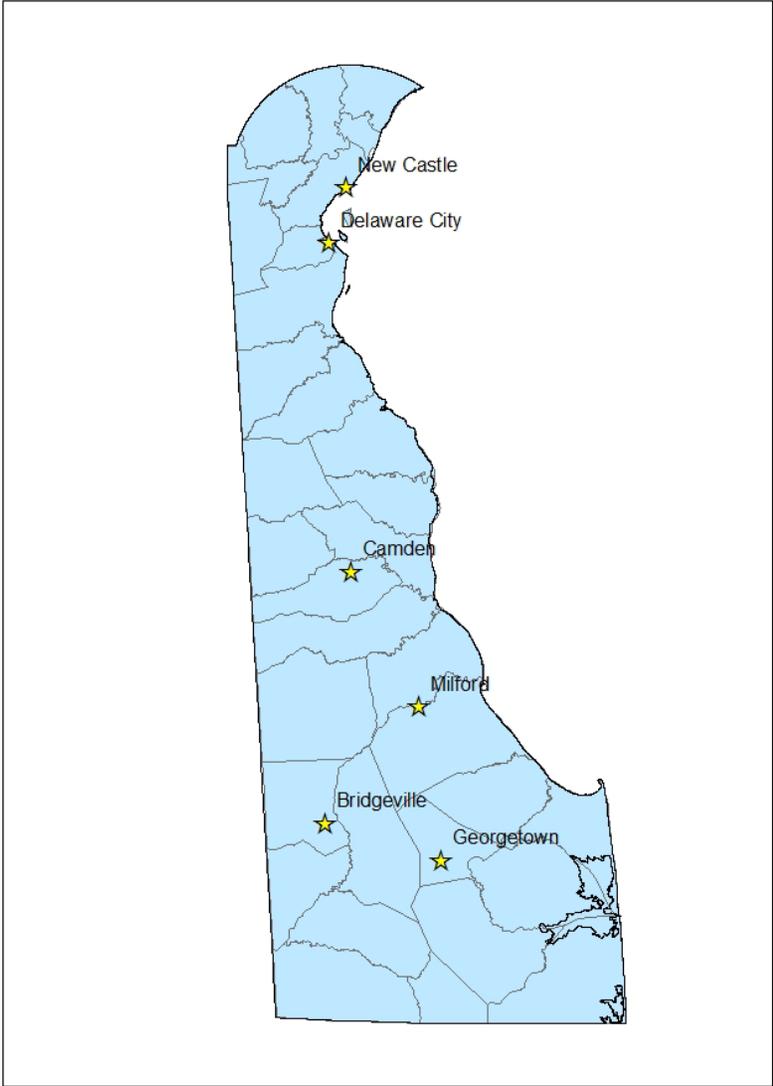


Figure 1.1 Location of Case Studies in Delaware (All images created by author, unless noted)

Chapter 2

DELAWARE'S SMALL TOWN GROWTH PRIOR TO 1940

This chapter explores the patterns of change and development in typical small towns in Delaware prior to 1940, through the examination of six towns: New Castle, Delaware City, Camden, Milford, Bridgeville, and Georgetown. By analyzing the town forms and the economic and social needs of the inhabitants, exhibited through property type, one can begin to identify the factors that shaped the early growth and development of small towns in Delaware: initial town layout, history, and town economies.

The year 1940 serves as a significant division for this study for two reasons. First, the current National Register nominations for the town identify their periods of significance as the eighteenth, nineteenth, and early twentieth century's, or growth that occurred before the 1940s, and the boundaries reflect this as well. Second, based on analysis of the historic maps, the 1930s represents the last decade in which growth followed historical patterns. Not until after World War II did new growth patterns emerge.

In order to better understand twentieth century development, small-town change, and the significance of it, this chapter explores the historic factors that contributed to land distribution in Delaware, including the impact of William Penn's Philadelphia model, and population trends, and then examines original town footprints

and the historic growth of the case study towns in relation to their current historic districts.

HISTORIC PATTERNS OF LAND DISTRIBUTION

There are three important factors that initially shaped Delaware's small town landscapes. The most influential was Philadelphia's grid plan. The second is the distribution of the urban and rural population of the state, and the fact that the pre-1940s landscape lacked urban centers (outside of Wilmington). Lastly, the history of Delaware, as the first state in the United States, and initial European settlement, all affect the landscape patterns.

Delaware's state motto proudly boasts of its status as “the first state,” referencing the fact that Delaware's state representative signed the United States Constitution first.²¹ This fact has even greater significance in a planning context, since Delaware's growth and settlement can be traced far earlier than its founding as the first state to the founding of Lewes in 1631.²² Like all of the original thirteen colonies, Delaware towns developed for almost two centuries before the new federal government began to set standards for land division.

On July 13th 1787, the Constitutional Convention passed the Northwest Ordinance, which had significant implications for how land in the United States would

²¹ “State of Delaware: A Brief History.” <http://portal.delaware.gov/facts/history/delhist.shtml> (Accessed November 09, 2009).

²² “State of Delaware: A Brief History.” <http://portal.delaware.gov/facts/history/delhist.shtml> (Accessed November 09, 2009).

be divided from that point forward.²³ The Northwest Ordinance, addressed the problem of what to do with the Northwest Territory, which land west of the Ohio River ceded to the United States by the British in the 1783 Treaty of Paris, and was very influential on how future new territories would be surveyed and platted. It established rectangular plots as the standard subdividing practice across the new land west of the Appalachian Mountains, In the ordinance, it was determined that all future land should be, “surveyed into six-mile square townships. Townships were to be divided into thirty-six one-mile square sections, each [consisting] of 640 acres.”²⁴ This system of dividing land into a regular grid pattern had profound effects on as much as three-fourths²⁵ of the United States, but the one thing that this ordinance did not alter was the way in which the previously established colonies had to survey and subdivide land. Thus, Delaware’s method of subdividing land did not change and this fact is still evident today. Delaware does not have square townships, rather the subdivisions of land lower than the county level are referred to as “hundreds” and their boundaries are largely based on geographical features such as waterways (Figure 2.1).

Although the Northwest Ordinance did not shape the landscape of Delaware, it is not a landscape devoid of the grid system. In fact, the majority of

²³ Hill, Robert S. “Federalism, Republicanism, and the Northwest Ordinance,” Publius, vol. 18, No. 4, Autumn 1988, p.41.

²⁴ Cartensen., Vernon. “Patterns on the American Land,” Publius, vol. 18, No. 4, Autumn 1988, 31- 34.

²⁵ Cartensen, 31.

Map of Delaware Hundreds

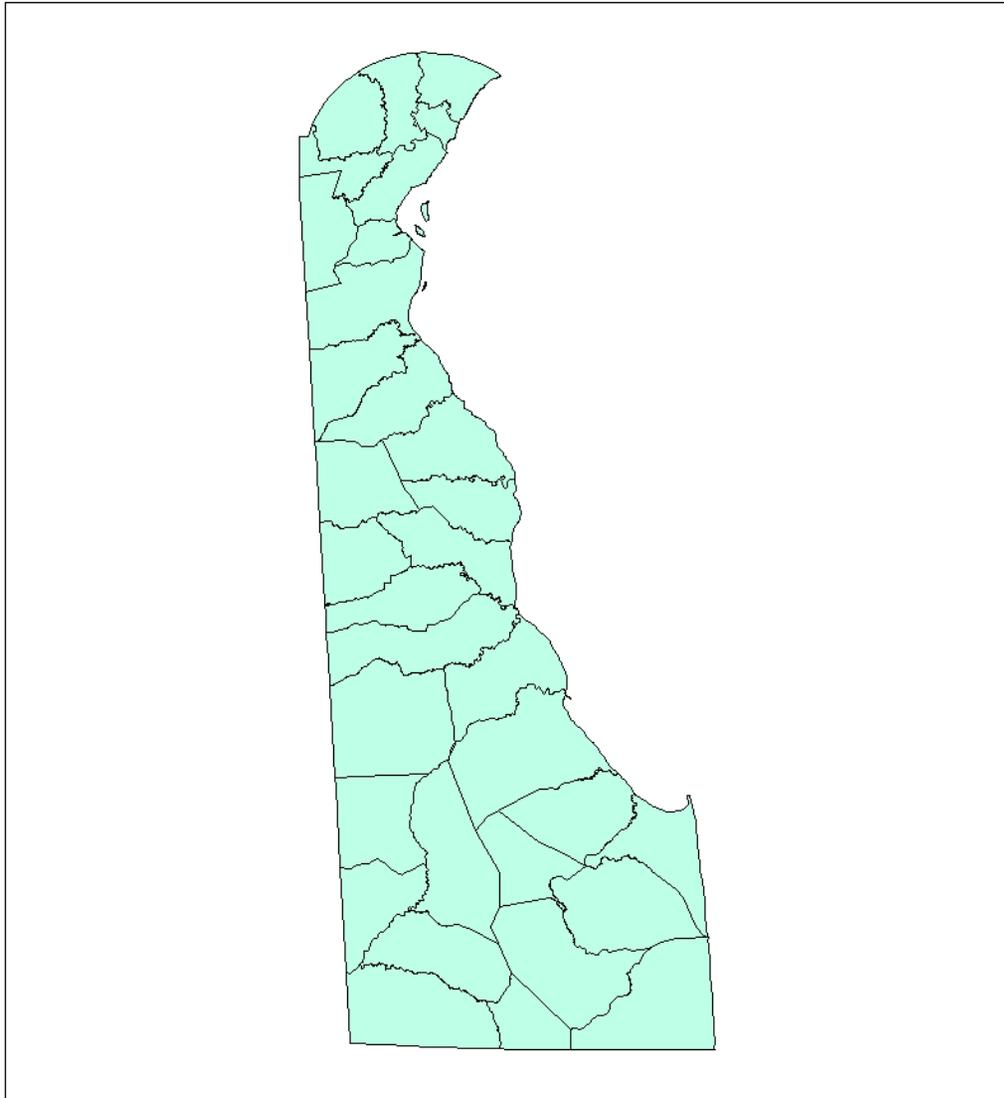


Figure 2.1 Map of Delaware Hundreds

Delaware's small towns are laid out in the grid system due to the influence of William Penn and his use of the grid in Philadelphia. The grid system, or sometimes what is referred to as a gridiron, "is ...the commonest pattern for planned cities in history...the grid is an exceedingly flexible and diverse system of planning...the only thing that all grids have in common is that their street pattern is orthogonal—that right angle rules, and street lines in both directions lie parallel to each other."²⁶ Delaware was originally a colony under William Penn's control, whose "greatest accomplishment in city building,"²⁷ was the city of Philadelphia. Penn's influential city model permeated to Delaware as well.

The city of Wilmington is the largest example of the grid system in Delaware, with its origins traced to "the building of Fort Christina by the Swedish pioneers in 1638," long before the Northwest Ordinance took shape.²⁸ The original boundaries of the fort are contained in the present day city.²⁹ In 1731, Thomas Willing, acquired land along the Christina River in present day Wilmington.³⁰ "Along this part of the shore Thomas Willing laid out streets at right angles with each other,

²⁶ Kostof, Spiro. *The City Shaped: Urban Patterns and Meanings Through History*. Bulfinch Press: Boston, 1991, 96-97.

²⁷ Reps, John W. "William Penn and the Planning of Philadelphia." The Town Planning Review. Vol. 27, No. 1. April, 27. 1956, 27.

²⁸ Scharf, J. Thomas. *History of Delaware: 1609-1888*, 630.

²⁹ Scharf, 630.

³⁰ Ferris, Benjamin. *A History of the Original Settlements on the Delaware: From its Discovery by Hudson, to the Colonization of William Penn*. Wilson & Head: Wilmington, 1846, 203.

after the Philadelphia model, and sold a number of lots with a view to the erection of the town.”³¹

The use of the grid pattern is not limited to Wilmington alone. The influence of “the Philadelphia model” can be seen on other towns in Delaware. Three of the six towns included in this study, all founded prior to 1787, are laid out on a grid system; New Castle, Delaware City, and Bridgeville, are all small examples of this design. Georgetown, founded in 1791, felt the influence of both Philadelphia and the federal ordinance. There are two towns not laid out in a grid system, Camden and Milford. This is most likely attributed to the informal way in which these two towns developed, taking shape around an intersection of roads and waterways where economic or social needs were met.

Despite the fact that historically, as well as currently, Delaware is composed of a system of small towns. This fact has been overshadowed in the scholarship by the city of Wilmington. The only current and historic urban center³² in the state is Wilmington. However, the percentage of people living in Wilmington today pales in comparison to what it once was. Based on the 2000 census, the number

³¹ Ferris, 203.

³² My use of the word “urban” is not tied to the census definition, or any other quantitative definition of the word. It is intended merely to highlight the cultural and economic differences between Wilmington and the small towns. Lisa C. Tolbert explains a definition of small town spaces in her book *Constructing Townscapes: Space and Society in Antebellum Tennessee*. Small towns exist in an ambiguous landscape on the urban and rural continuum, being neither of the two. This does not indicate stagnation, but an election to assemble in a small town setting, often tied to social or economic functions.

of residents living in Wilmington City was 72,664, roughly 9 percent of the total population in Delaware,³³ meaning that more than ninety percent of all Delaware residents live in smaller urban and town centers, or in a rural environment. A significant proportion of Delawareans lived outside of the city of Wilmington historically too (Table 2.1). As Delaware industrialized, the population center of Wilmington began to grow. With this growth, the population percentage of people residing in Wilmington increased through the 1920s. But over the course of the Great Depression and World War II, Wilmington lost population both in terms of its percentage within the state, and eventually in actual numbers. Like the rest of the country after World War II, the industry and residents of Delaware decentralized, leaving behind the city of Wilmington. Today, Wilmington's population is comparable to its 1900 population, but the percentage of Delawareans residing in an urban environment is much less. The city has never recovered from the effects of post-World War II American policies.

These facts reinforce the importance of studying small town development in Delaware. Large urban growth and population was not typical in this region. While the towns did grow and benefit from having an urban center in the state, the size, scale, and shape of Wilmington is not indicative of what was occurring elsewhere in Delaware. Rather, Wilmington is the anomaly. The census data reinforces the need to look at locations outside of Wilmington.

³³ 2000 U.S. Census

Table 2.1: Comparison of population census data for Wilmington and Delaware, 1860 to 1960

Census Year	Population of Delaware	Population of Wilmington	Percentage of population living in Wilmington
1860	112,216	21,258	19
1870	125,015	30,841	25
1880	146,608	42,478	29
1890	168,493	61,431	36
1900	76,508	184,735	41
1910	202,322	87,411	43
1920	223,003	110,168	49
1930	238,380	106,597	45
1940	266,505	112,504	42
1950	318,085	110,356	35
1960	446,292	94,234	21

THE TOWNS

Property type has an initial effect on the footprint of the town’s landscape, establishing overall cultural and economic patterns and characteristics of the town. This original footprint is central to understanding the historic downtowns, and how the initial historic districts boundaries were drawn. Pre-1940s development varied depending on property types and origin, but fell within a traditional set of parameters; it was not until the mid-twentieth century that new growth broke free from the initial

town patterns. The following case studies illustrate the differences between the town property types, as well as the common features in their pre-1940 growth.³⁴

Camden: A Crossroads Town

Based on Theimer's definitions, a crossroads town is an intersection of two to five roads where residential development is clustered, later joined by commercial and civic buildings.³⁵ This description of initial town formation is the story of Camden. The town of Camden was originally a 436 acre tract of land granted to Colonel John Vining in 1680.³⁶ In 1780, the Vining Estate sold the entire parcel to Warner Mifflin, who granted his brother, Daniel Mifflin a 112-acre plot.³⁷ Included in this property were two roads which formed a crossroad. At that intersection, Mifflin built a tavern, marking the source of the first development in the town.³⁸ The establishment was initially known by a few different names, first Piccadilly, then

³⁴ John Thomas Scharf's massive two-volume history of Delaware, *History of Delaware: 1609-1888*, provided a great deal of information on the six towns selected for the study. *The Delaware Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan* published by the Center for Historic Architecture and Design, was helpful in providing contexts, and insight into the Delaware landscape.

³⁵ Theimer, 27.

³⁶ United States, National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places, "Nomination for Camden Historic District, 1974." Available by keyword search through <http://chris.delaware.gov/> (Accessed February 1st, 2010).

³⁷ United States, National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places, "Camden Historic District Nomination."

³⁸ Scharf, 1132.

Mifflin's Cross-Roads, and eventually the town of Camden.³⁹ Camden's lucrative location at the juncture of two roads, today Camden-Wyoming Road (Route 10) and Main Street (Route 13A), allowed merchants to flourish.⁴⁰

In figure 2.2, the 1868 Beers Atlas Map of Camden, illustrates the spatial relationship between the town layout and the crossroads. The Beers Atlas Map illustrates the lack of orthogonal town planning. Instead, the property type dictates the initial town layout. The next maps illustrate the town's growth patterns before the 1940s (Figures 2.3- 2.6). The dates charted for Camden were 1897, 1910, and 1929.

Visible in the GIS images generated for this study, is the retention of the original crossroads town function. This preservation of the initial historic settlement is something that was recognized in the National Register district nomination (added in 1974) for Camden.

The basic town fabric of Camden has remained intact...the crossroads predominates as the generator of the local development pattern, and is still viewed as the symbolic town center. The sense of scale, density, and use of open spaces has not changed drastically since the early part of the nineteenth century...the district presents a fairly accurate example of village life in rural Delaware during the early nineteenth century.⁴¹

The current historic district covers most of the built properties which appeared on the 1868 Beers Atlas Map (Figure 2.2). Before the 1930's, the initial growth that occurred

³⁹ Scharf, 1132-1133.

⁴⁰ Scharf, 1133.

⁴¹ United States, National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places, "Camden Historic District Nomination."

in Camden represented local development patterns. The initial growth and development pattern “commands attention as a visible product of early town settlement patterns in Delaware.” Throughout the decades leading up to World War II, the residents of Camden continued to plat the lands following the initial crossroads of Camden-Wyoming Road and Main Street. The majority of the pre-1940’s growth occurred west towards the settlement of Wyoming along the Camden-Wyoming Road.

Bridgeville: A Railroad Town

The creation of a new transportation technology, the railroad, created a new property type, railroad towns. These towns centered upon the transportation of goods and services.⁴² Where the tracks went in Delaware, so too, did new town development. The railroad freed people from their dependence on waterway systems of transportation, much to the benefit of rural inland communities, like Bridgeville. The Delaware Railroad first reached Bridgeville in 1858, and continued south through the east side of North West Fork Hundred.⁴³ The railroad’s arrival provided Sussex County farmers with an easier way to ship their goods to larger urban markets, such as Wilmington, Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New York.⁴⁴

According to historian J. Thomas Scharf, Bridgeville is the oldest town in western Sussex County, originally founded in 1730. The founding coincided with the

⁴² Theimer, 53-55.

⁴³ Scharf, 1276.

⁴⁴ Scharf, 1276.

erection of a bridge. This bridge connected a few sparse settlements in the area, named “Bridgebranch.”⁴⁵ Later, in 1810, the town was incorporated, but did little more than stagnate over the next forty years, suffering in Scharf’s words, from a “comatose condition.”⁴⁶ Like the settlement of Camden, the older portion of the town was not laid out in a grid manner, but followed the road network. “The town began in the 18th century as a scattered agricultural settlement at the crossing of Bridge Branch” a major north-south land route.⁴⁷ The lots of the initial settlement varied in size, but all abutted to the main points of transportation access, the roads that led to the bridge.

This original settlement stands in sharp contrast to the one William Cannon platted out. Cannon “laid out a portion of his extensive real estate holdings into a series of rectilinear blocks defined by a grid pattern of streets and alleys, containing uniform-sized lots. These lots were subsequently improved.”⁴⁸ The coming of the railroad invigorated the town, and in 1856, William Cannon platted out the land south of the initial settlement across the creek “a grid pattern of roughly uniform-sized lots fronting on principal avenues running east-west.”⁴⁹ This relationship between the

⁴⁵ Scharf, 1281.

⁴⁶ Scharf 1281.

⁴⁷ United States, National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places, “Nomination for Bridgeville Historic District, 1994.” Available by keyword search through <http://chris.delaware.gov/> (Accessed November 09, 2009).

⁴⁸ United States, National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places, “Bridgeville Historic District Nomination.”

⁴⁹ United States, National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places, “Bridgeville Historic District Nomination.”

original town of “Bridgebranch” and Cannon's platted town can be seen in the 1868 Beers Atlas for Bridgeville (Figure 2.7).

Cannon’s town plat is another example of local land planning. The pattern of development is typical for railroad communities in Delaware, and the larger Mid-Atlantic region.⁵⁰ These features include grid pattern streets, and the railroad tracks defining one edge of town. To this day Bridgeville remains “an exceptionally well-preserved example of this development pattern...with remarkably little alteration.”⁵¹

Only two Sanborn maps survive for Bridgeville, for the years 1912 and 1923, but it is easy to see the growth patterns over time (figures 2.8-2.10). During both of those years, the previous platted town filled in. The majority of the settlement occurred west of Market Street (Route 13A), and east of South Railroad Ave. But all the growth is contained within Cannon’s original plat. The proximity to the railroad station, and the fact that the lots were laid out seems to be the biggest influence of growth in Bridgeville. New growth outside of Cannon's plat is not something that occurs. Bridgeville’s historic district was added to the National Register in 1994.

Delaware City: A Maritime Town

From the founding of its first town, Lewes in 1631, the colony of Delaware organized its early settlement and towns along principal waterways. Waterways were the primary method of transportation in Delaware prior to the arrival

⁵⁰ United States, National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places, “Bridgeville Historic District Nomination.”

⁵¹ United States, National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places, “Bridgeville Historic District Nomination.”

of railroads in the mid-nineteenth century. Maritime towns, like Delaware City, were established along these water systems and became centers of mercantile activity.⁵²

Delaware City, added to the National Register in 1983, shares a similar history to the founding of many other towns. It was originally a tract of land granted to a prominent person, passed along by marriage and/or death to several other parties. But it was not until 1826 that one of the co-owners acquired a section of land containing part of the newly-constructed Chesapeake and Delaware Canal and embarked on a large improvement campaign.⁵³ The Reybold brothers drew up two plans for the town; “these plans differed somewhat, but not materially, the main difference consisting in the naming of the streets. Both plans included land on both sides of the canal and the intention was to found a city like Philadelphia.”⁵⁴ Although the town grew quickly from 1830 to the 1870s, it stagnated in the late nineteenth century and never approached the founders’ expectations. Delaware City was first incorporated as a town in 1851, then a city in 1871.⁵⁵

In 1888, Scharf was impressed with what he saw in Delaware City, particularly with the relationship between the waterways, and the town’s plan:

Delaware City has gradually grown and improved. It is located on the Delaware River, at its junction with the Delaware and Chesapeake Canal...It is laid out with carefulness and precision seldom seen in

⁵² Theimer, 40-46.

⁵³ Scharf, 971.

⁵⁴ Scharf, 971.

⁵⁵ Scharf, 972-973.

places of its size. The shipping facilities of this city cannot be excelled. The river is open to navigation at all times, even during the most severe winter weather.⁵⁶

While Scharf continued to praise Delaware City in a similar manner, and to expound upon its virtues, marveling that “eight trains are run daily” through Delaware City, his insights into the city's importance also provide an understanding of the town's initial layout.

However unlike the previous two case studies, Delaware City was not established at a crossroad, and had no previous settlement in the area before the town was founded.⁵⁷ “Conceived and designed as a city that would expand to take full advantage of its location on a major trade route, Delaware City was laid out on a formal grid plan with public squares and graduated street widths...development did not occur much beyond the original town limits, the aspirations for economic prosperity that founded Delaware City in 1826 can be seen in the carefully planned design that is still evident today.”⁵⁸

Only maritime towns have an explicit physical boundary. The most obvious constraints on a maritime town are the physical boundaries of the watercourses. These rigid physical boundaries historically controlled and dictated

⁵⁶ Scharf, 973.

⁵⁷ United States, National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places, "Nomination for Delaware City Historic District, 1983." Available by keyword search through <http://chris.delaware.gov/> (Accessed February 1st, 2010).

⁵⁸ United States, National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places, “Delaware City Historic District Nomination.”

where the town could grow. This is unlike any of the other town property types. While natural features can bound other towns, no other property type is required to have one by definition. Delaware City has two such constraints: the natural boundary of the Delaware River to the northeast, and the man-made water boundary of the Delaware and Chesapeake Canal to the southeast, both still visible today (Figure 2.11).

In the maps generated to establish the pre-1940s growth, the Sanborn maps for the years 1885, 1910, and 1923 were consulted. Due to the fact that the town had already been platted out (similar to Bridgeville) and had a low occupancy rate in 1868, the residents of Delaware City continued to improve upon previously platted plots. The lots that infilled during this period were to the southwest of the initial settlement. Most of the 1868 and subsequent growth is confined to the Washington and Market Streets. Due to the fact that the town was laid out before settlement had occurred, the lot and block sizes do not vary. Within this forty-year period, growth did not exceed the boundaries of the original town design (Figure 2.12-2.15).

New Castle: A Maritime Town

The town of New Castle was originally settled by the Dutch in 1651, chosen for its advantageous defensive position on the Delaware River. The early inhabitants of New Castle seized upon its defensible natural features, specifically that the town was “encircled by wetlands for its defense advantages,”⁵⁹ and created Fort Casimir.⁶⁰ Of the towns included in the case studies, New Castle alone was founded

⁵⁹ Boeschstein, Warren, *Historic American Towns along the Atlantic Coast*, The John Hopkins University Press: Baltimore, 1999, 179.

⁶⁰ Boeschstein, 177.

on the idea of defensibility. There is a discernible shift in town planning in America, barely visible in this case study. Only the very early seventeenth and eighteenth century communities located on waterways in the Mid-Atlantic needed a protective element to their designs. Later towns did not have a military or defensive aspect to them.

In 1655, shortly after the creation of the fort, the inhabitants' platted out the town on a grid system, including a town center, central precinct, and a greenbelt. Outside of the initial fort, the Dutch continued to build residences. They were built on two parallel streets, today The Strand and Fourth Streets. Under the Dutch rule, the town adopted an informal grid pattern.⁶¹ These features still dominate the landscape.⁶² An indication of the town's success and good standing is indicated by a passage from Scharf: "The prosperity of the community attracted the attention of persons interested in emigration, and various schemes for its settlement were devised and encouraged by governmental support."⁶³

In 1664 Delaware was ceded to the English. The new colonizers, the British, continued to employ the grid street in New Castle,⁶⁴ and New Castle became

⁶¹ United States, National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places, "Nomination for New Castle City Historic District, 1967, 1984." Available by keyword search through <http://chris.delaware.gov/> (Accessed February 1st, 2010).

⁶² Boeschstein, 177.

⁶³ Scharf, 857.

⁶⁴ Boeschstein, 180.

their seat of government.⁶⁵ New Castle was once the capital of the state of Delaware, and continues to be the county seat of New Castle County. The British continued to employ the grid-system established by the Dutch, into the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.⁶⁶

While the two centuries of inhabitation from the original settlement to its incorporation date could be expounded on in great detail, the main task at hand is to establish the town's pre-1940s growth patterns. As in Delaware City, the natural boundary of New Castle City is the Delaware River, restricting town growth to the south and the east. New Castle had a large section of the city platted out in the 1868 Beers Atlas which was not yet improved upon (Figure 2.16), this fact along with the nature boundary of the Delaware River, dictated the direction of growth, primarily to the north west.

The later Sanborn maps, from 1885, 1907, and 1923, also reinforce the pre-1940s growth in Delaware. The inhabitants of New Castle City (added to the National Register in 1967, and increased in 1984), like the rest of Delawareans, continued to follow the previous platted towns, and lots size (Figures 2.17- 2.20). The growth that occurred was primarily confined to three major north-south corridors, Delaware Street, Harmony Street and South Street. The east-west growth for New Castle was located along 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th streets.

⁶⁵ Scharf, 859.

⁶⁶ United States, National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places, "New Castle City Historic District Nomination."

Georgetown: A County Seat

Georgetown was platted with the intended function of a county seat. An entirely political body, it was designed to be in the center of Sussex County.⁶⁷ It is a unique property type to Delaware, not found in the other two counties. While other functions were attached to the town, its design was for the purpose of county government. This property type was not included in Theimer's thesis. While this classification is only found in one location in Delaware, it is found in other regions of the country. Lisa C. Tolbert describes the occurrence of this property type in Tennessee. "County seat[s] with their courthouse squares constituted a distinctive town form...They invariably arranged their streets in a grid design and reserved a square of land at the center...for a courthouse and other public structures."⁶⁸ While Georgetown is the only town platted out as a true County seat in Delaware, based on Tolbert's description of County seats, Georgetown can be included into a larger national typology.

Scharf provides a brief history of the founding of Georgetown, including the founders' goals, and how they intended to lay out the community:

The town was located solely to afford a more convenient place to transact the affairs of the county. An act of legislature [in] 1791, authorized the removal of the county-seat from Lewes...Georgetown was surveyed...in May, 1792, by Rhoads Shankland, who thus explained the plot: "In or near the center of the town is a spacious square of one hundred yards each way, for publick use; on the northeast side thereof stand the court-house and public office...The lotts are laid

⁶⁷ Scharf, 1239.

⁶⁸ Tolbert, 7.

off sixty feet front and one hundred and twenty feet back, each lott having the convenience of a street or an alley for an outlet.”⁶⁹

This initial character of the town, platted in a grid formation, with the focal point of the town circle, dominated the shape of Georgetown. Visible in the 1868 Beers Atlas, is the alley and main street construction, along with the center circle (Figure 2.21).⁷⁰ Also visible in this map is the larger trend of town planning, in Delaware, which is to plat out more lots than there are residents. This method of town planning greatly influenced the growth to come. Like all other areas in Delaware, the pre-1940s growth patterns continued to follow the previously laid out street pattern, and fill in the empty undeveloped lots.

The GIS maps generated from Sanborn maps in Georgetown utilized the 1885, 1910, and 1930 dates (Figures 2.22-2.25). While Georgetown had the advantage of being located in the middle of the state, without any natural boundaries, it still followed the initial grid. The initial settlement of Georgetown was clustered close to the Circle, between Pine and Laurel Streets, and Front and Race Streets. The subsequent growth in Georgetown continued to follow the grid-iron plan, primarily to the north-east of the city, along Race Street, Bedford and Railroad Avenues.

⁶⁹ Scharf, 1240.

⁷⁰ United States, National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places, "Nomination for Sussex County Courthouse and Circle, 1973." Available by keyword search through <http://chris.delaware.gov/> (Accessed February 1st, 2010).

Milford: A Market Town

Milford sits on the both sides of Mispillion Creek, in two separate hundreds, in two separate counties. Milford was originally a tract of land, sold in 1680, with the intention of building a sawmill in this location.⁷¹ This piece of land passed through many owners, and was first incorporated in 1807.⁷² The land was surveyed and laid out by John Johnson in 1817.⁷³ While this site's access to waterways was originally recognized for its mill power, the Mispillion Creek eventually lead to Milford's success as a Market Town.

This property type thrived off of their favorable position on transportation lines, waterways later replace by railroads, as a location to sell goods from rural areas without favorable access routes.⁷⁴ Milford has the beneficial advantage of being along the Creek and a railroad line. This property type has the most flexible interpretation of initial settlement. It has no distinct or required footprint; it only has an economic component to its property type. Market towns need to be located on a major mode of transportation, a road, railroad, or a waterway.

Milford was not laid out in a regular grid pattern (Figure 2.26). Some of the roads do form right angles; it is not a true gridiron. Another feature missing from the early settlement patterns of Milford was the fact that large tracts of land were not

⁷¹ Scharf, 1188.

⁷² Scharf, 1189.

⁷³ Scharf, 1188.

⁷⁴ Theimer, 64-65.

already subdivided. All of the growth on the 1868 Beers Atlas represents occupied space. This is unlike that of places platted on a true gridiron plan, like Delaware City, Georgetown, and New Castle.

While Milford (added to the National Register in 1983) does lack the typical initial growth patterns, it too has similar characteristics of pre-1940 growth in Delaware. Using the Sanborn maps from 1885, 1910, and 1930, the patterns of growth follow the footprint of the already established road system (Figures 2.27-2.30). The growth in Milford does not stray from these previously defined transportation boundaries.

CONCLUSION

While all of the towns have different histories and purposes, the type of growth occurring in Delaware's small towns from the 1860s to the 1940s looks remarkably similar. In all of the towns studied, the inhabitants and builders chose to either infill previously constructed grids, or to follow the established roadways. It was not until after World War II that new growth patterns emerged.

The pre-1940s growth patterns align closely with the current boundaries of the historic districts (Figure 2.31-2.36). With the exception of Georgetown, which lacks a National Register Historic District Nomination, the nominations seek to preserve this pre-1940s growth, the "historic core" of these cities, but exclude any post-World War II twentieth-century growth.

With the progression of the twentieth century, it becomes easier to relate Delaware's growth to larger national trends. The first year that aerial imagery is

available for the entire state, 1937, falls just near the end of the Great Depression, a tumultuous time in American history. During the decade of the 1930s, very little growth occurred, locally or nation-wide. The growth that occurred in Delaware in between the 1920s Sanborn maps and the 1937 aerials followed both local and national building trends, showing only minimal expansion that followed the original town footprints (Figures 2.37-2.42). The GIS maps also illustrate the fact that this is the last year in which growth followed the previously established town plat.

There are two problems with this methodological approach that become apparent in the transition from hand-drawn maps to that of aerial photographs. The hand-drawn maps did not completely coincide with the boundaries and growth of the town. Properties could have existed previously than the date they are attributed to, but do not show up earlier in the GIS maps because they weren't recorded in the documents. 1937 is the first year that the growth patterns for the whole state are visible. This means that some of the properties attributed to the year of 1937 are older than marked; perhaps making the growth during the Great Depression even smaller. Another problem with this methodological approach is the changing boundaries of the town itself. It is conceivable that as the towns grew so did the municipal boundaries of the town, which may explain the lack of inclusion in previous historical maps.

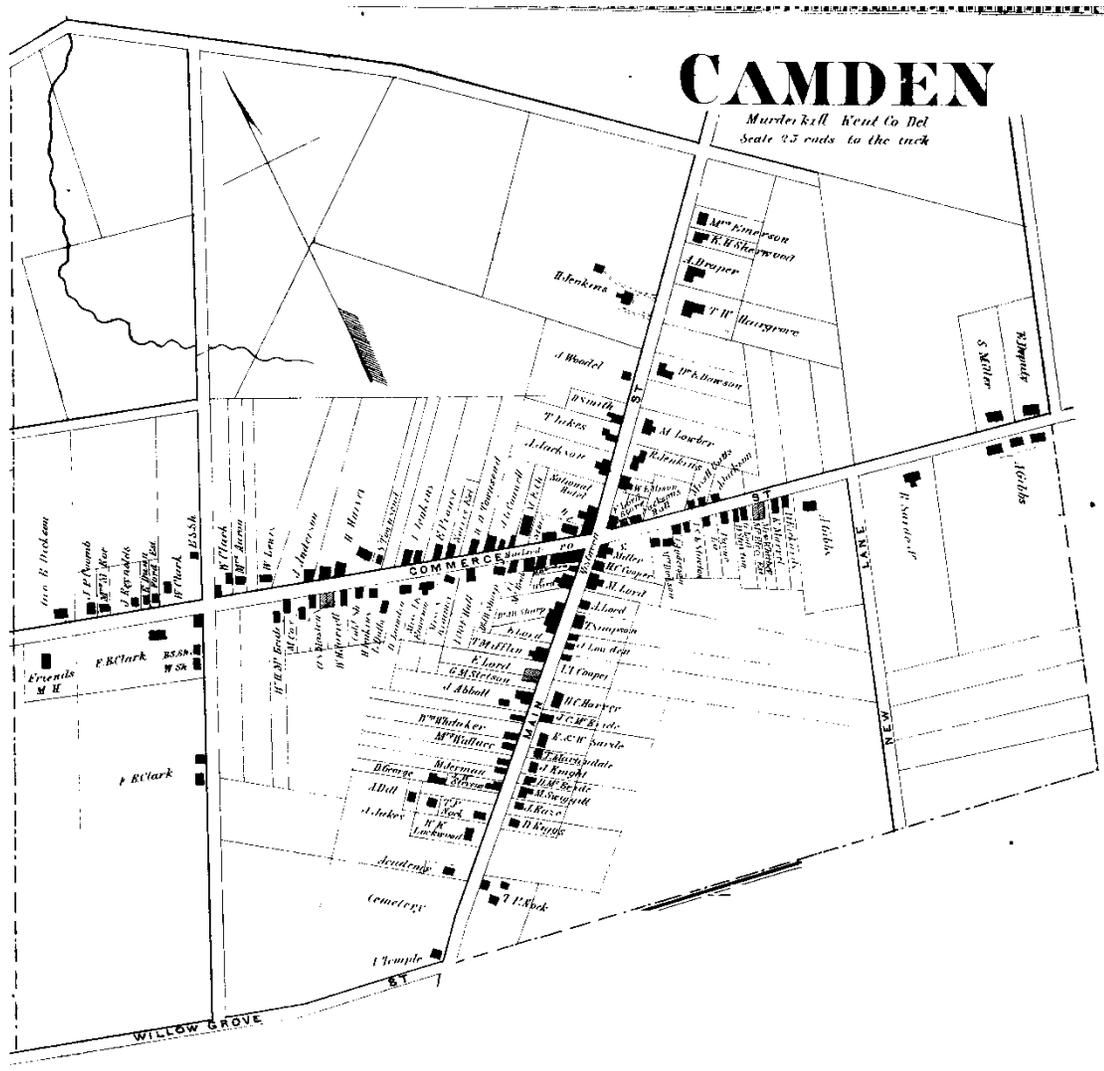


Figure 2.2 1868 Beers Atlas Map of Camden (Source: <http://www.dgs.udel.edu/publications/digitaldata/hundredmaps.aspx>)

Camden 1868

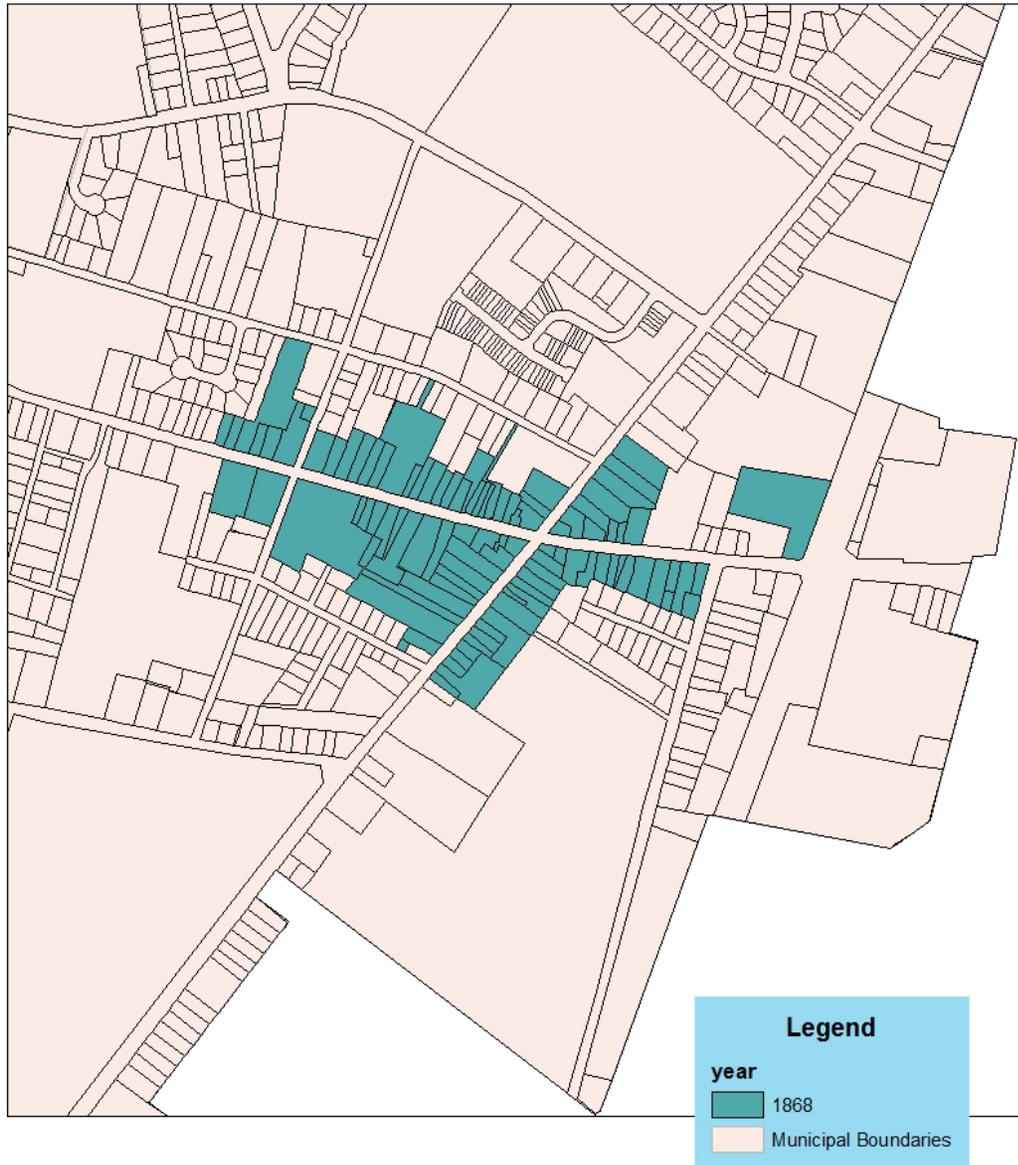


Figure 2.3 GIS Map of Camden illustrating the 1868 Beers Atlas

Camden 1897

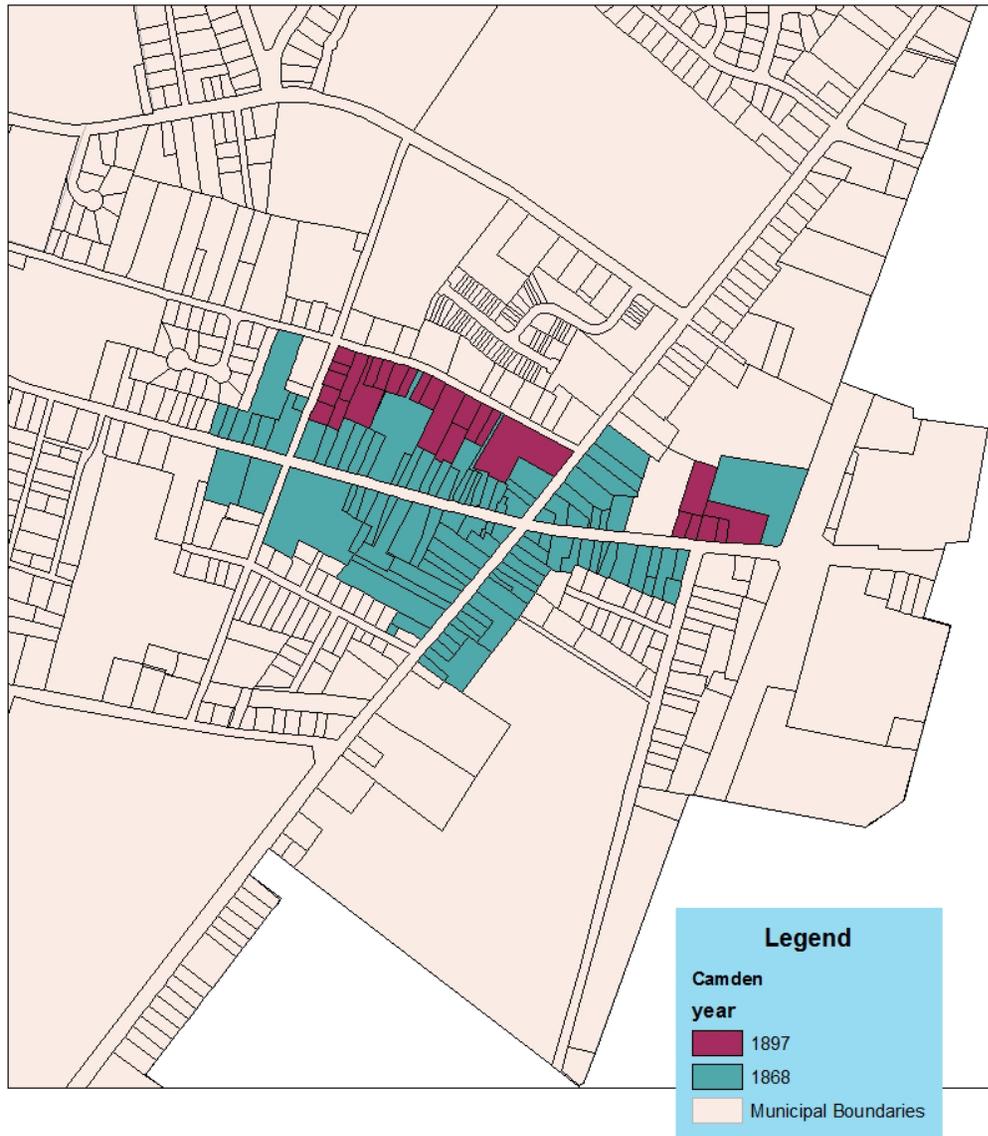


Figure 2.4 GIS Image illustrating the town growth from 1868 to the 1897 Sanborn Map

Camden 1910

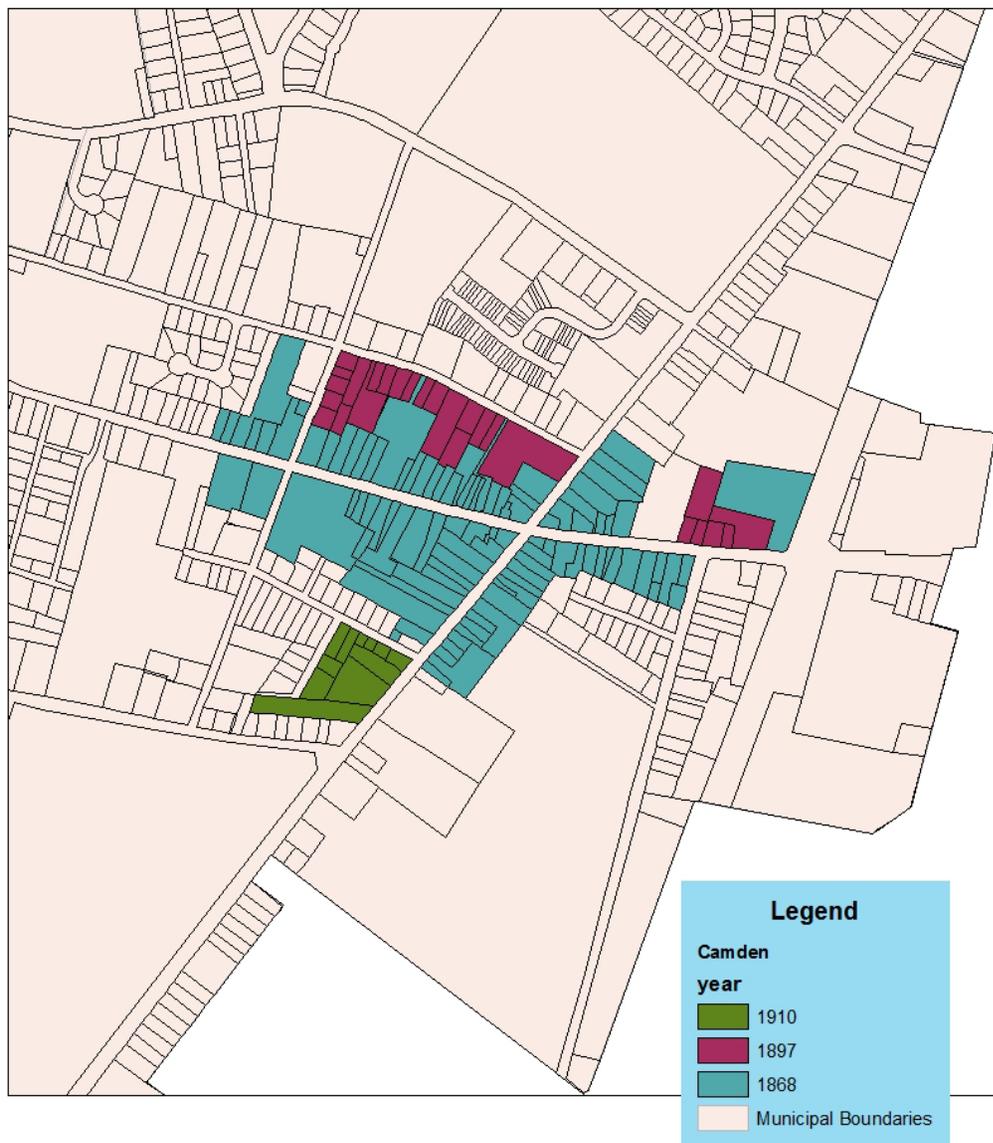


Figure 2.5 GIS Image illustrating Camden's growth from 1868 to 1910

Camden 1929

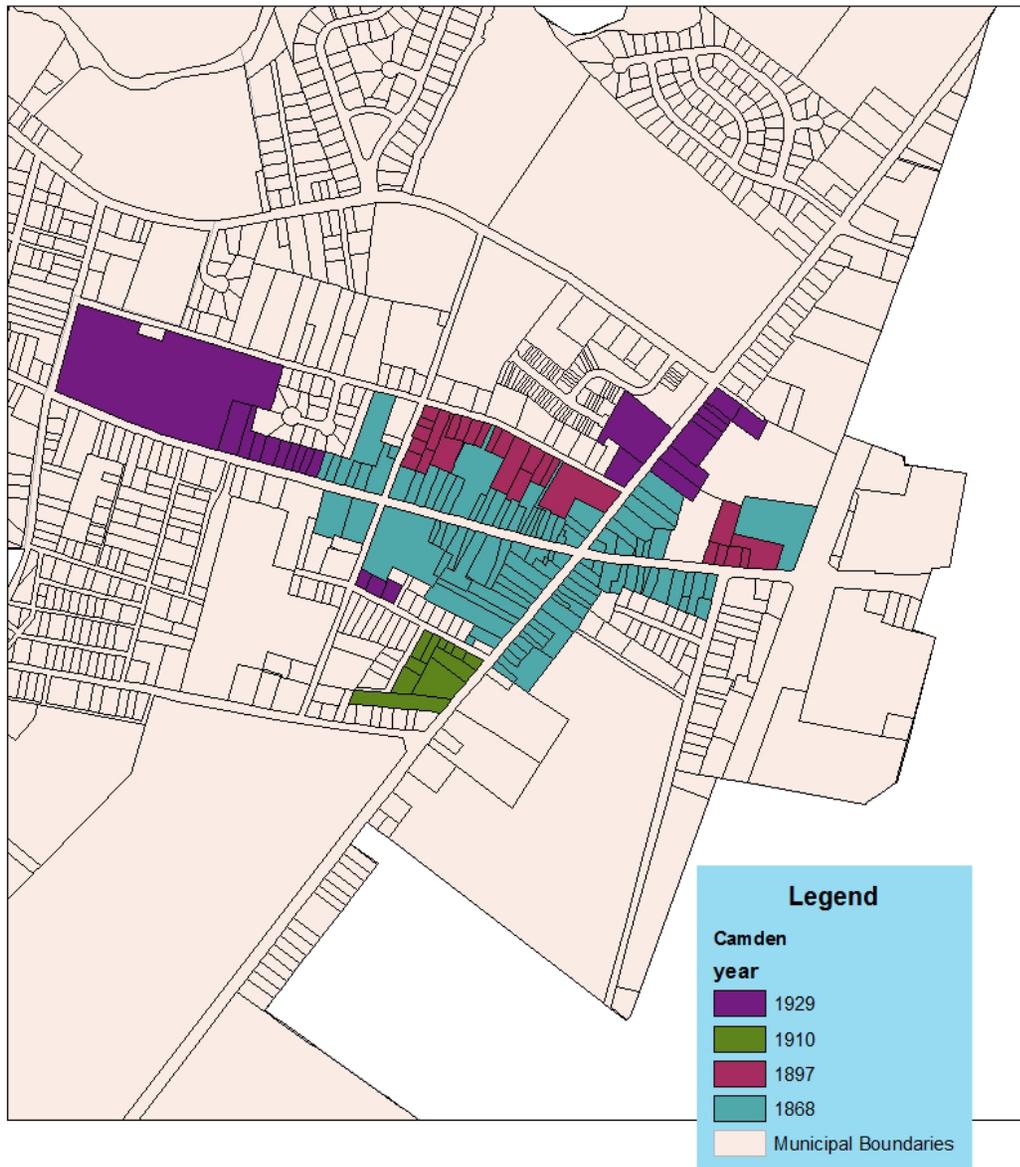


Figure 2.6 GIS Image illustrating Camden's growth from 1868 to 1929

Bridgeville 1868

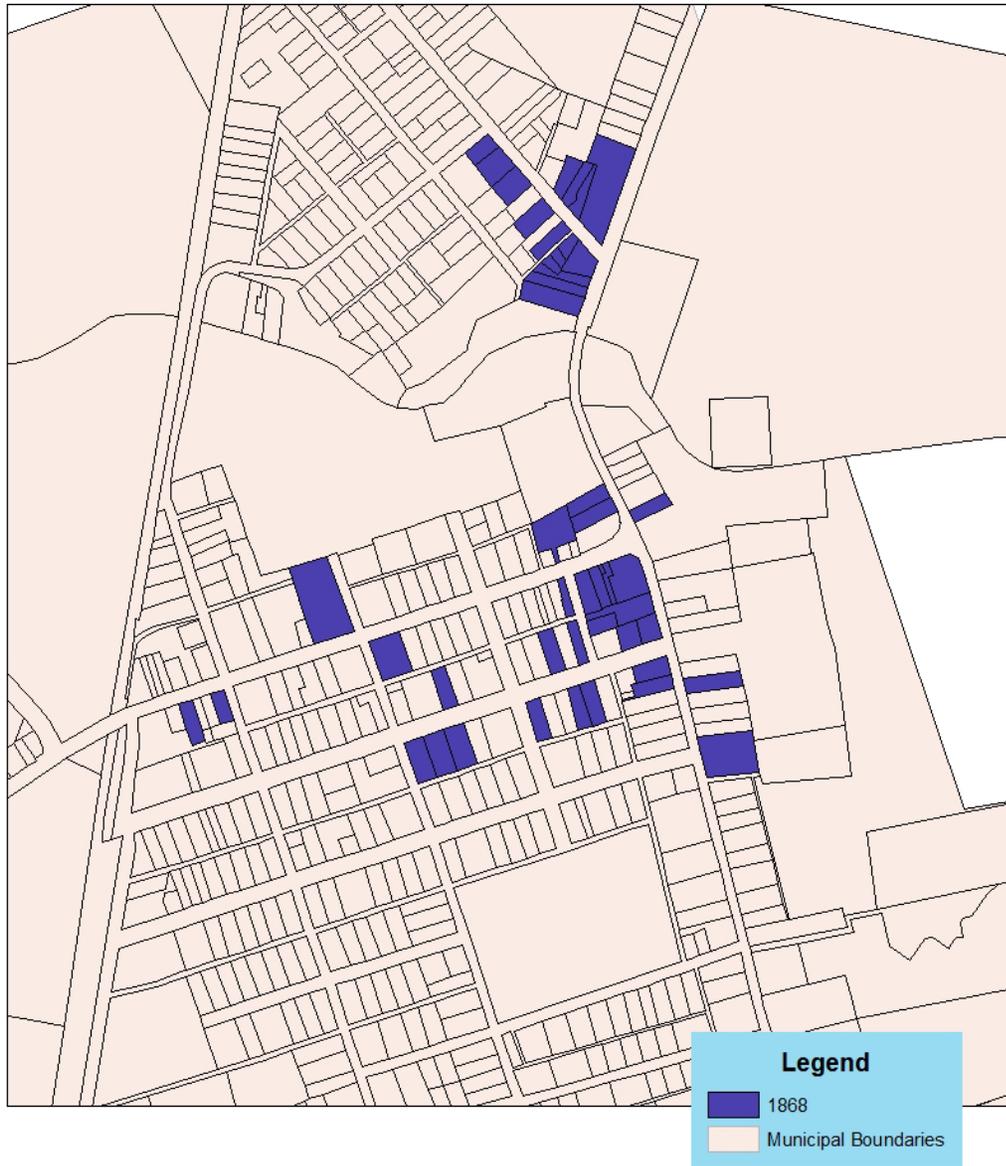


Figure 2.8 GIS Image illustrating Bridgeville's growth from 1868

Bridgeville 1912

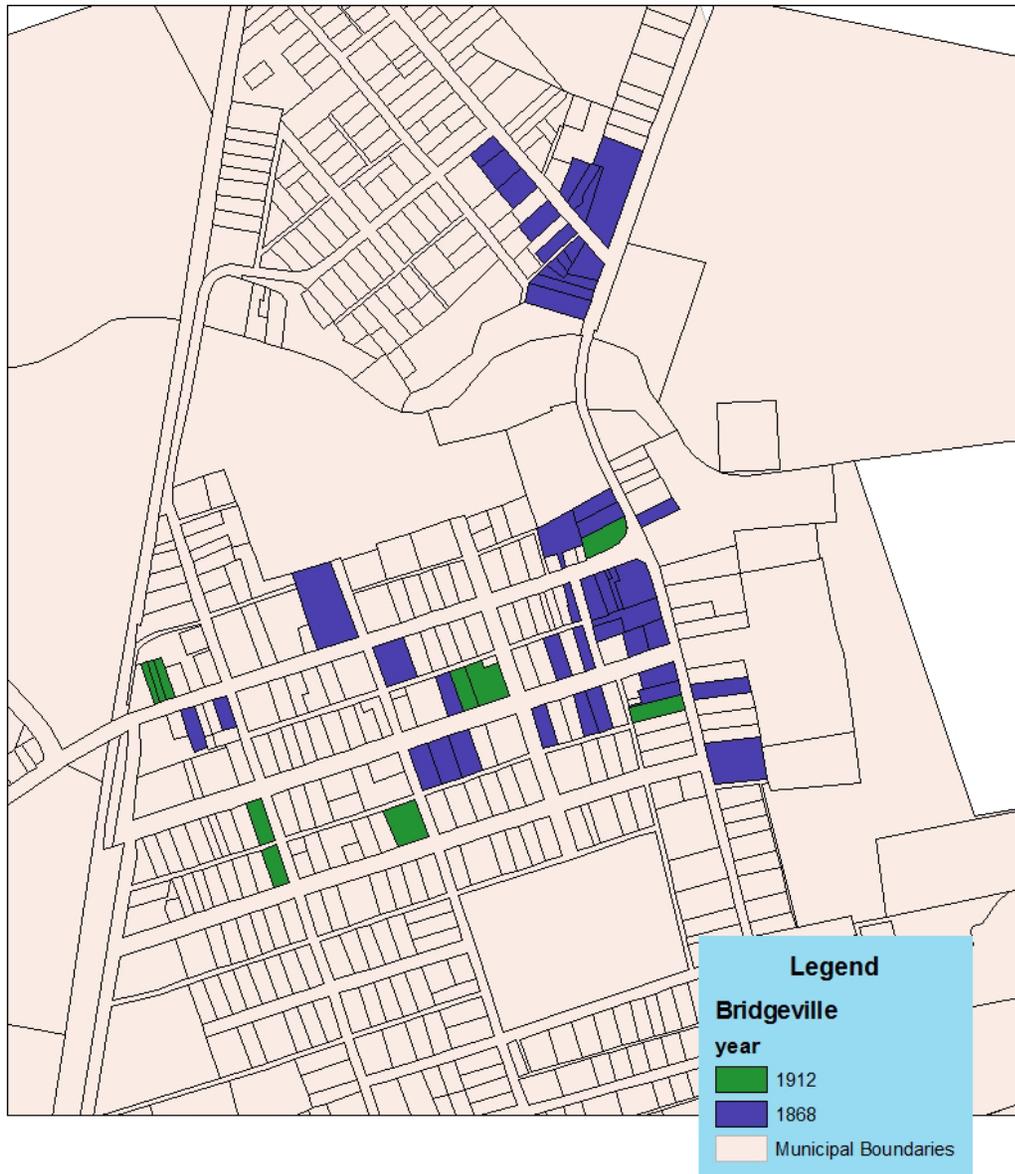


Figure 2.9 GIS Image illustrating Bridgeville's growth from 1868 to 1912

Bridgeville 1923

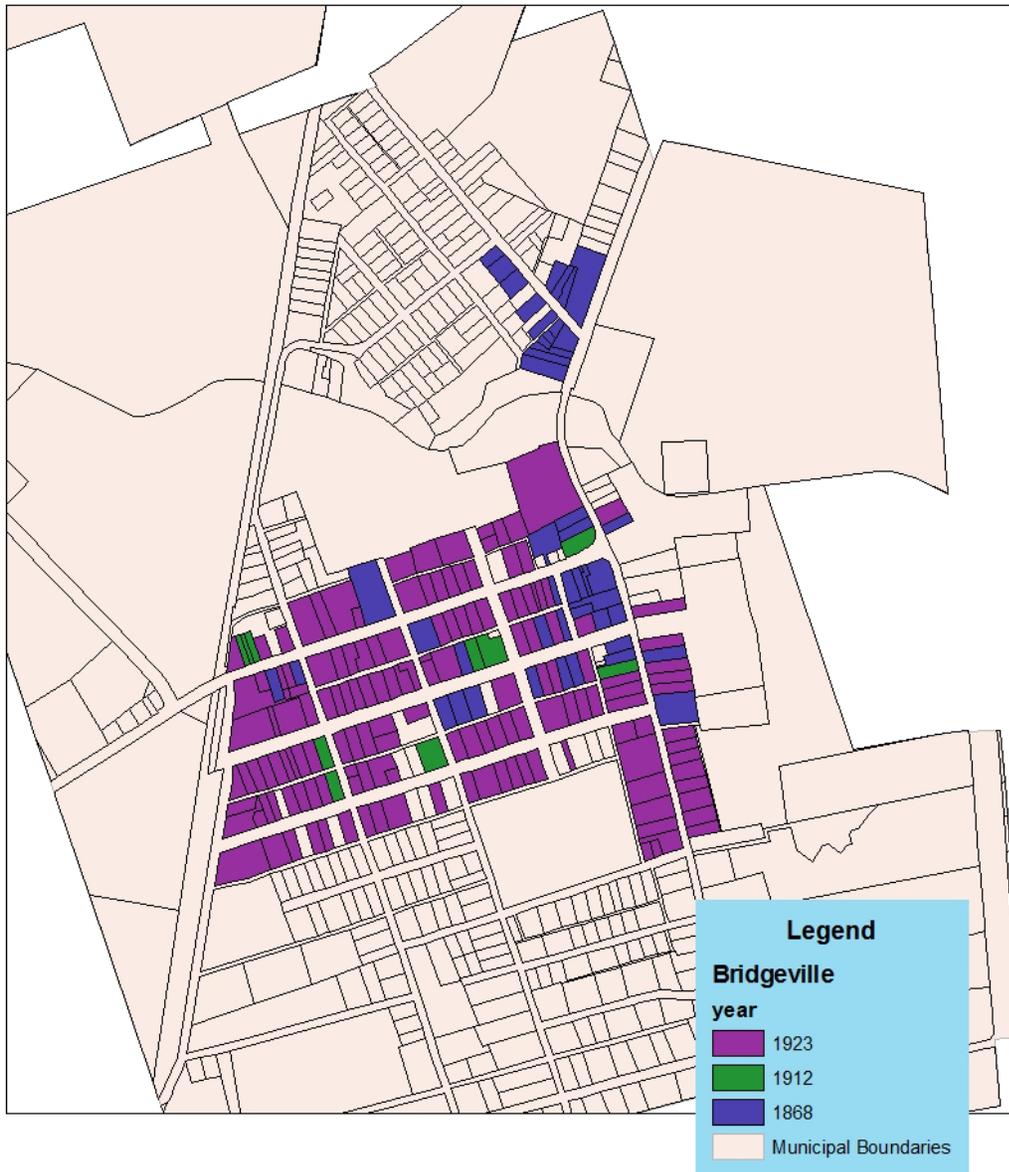


Figure 2.10 GIS Image illustrating Bridgeville's growth from 1868 to 1923

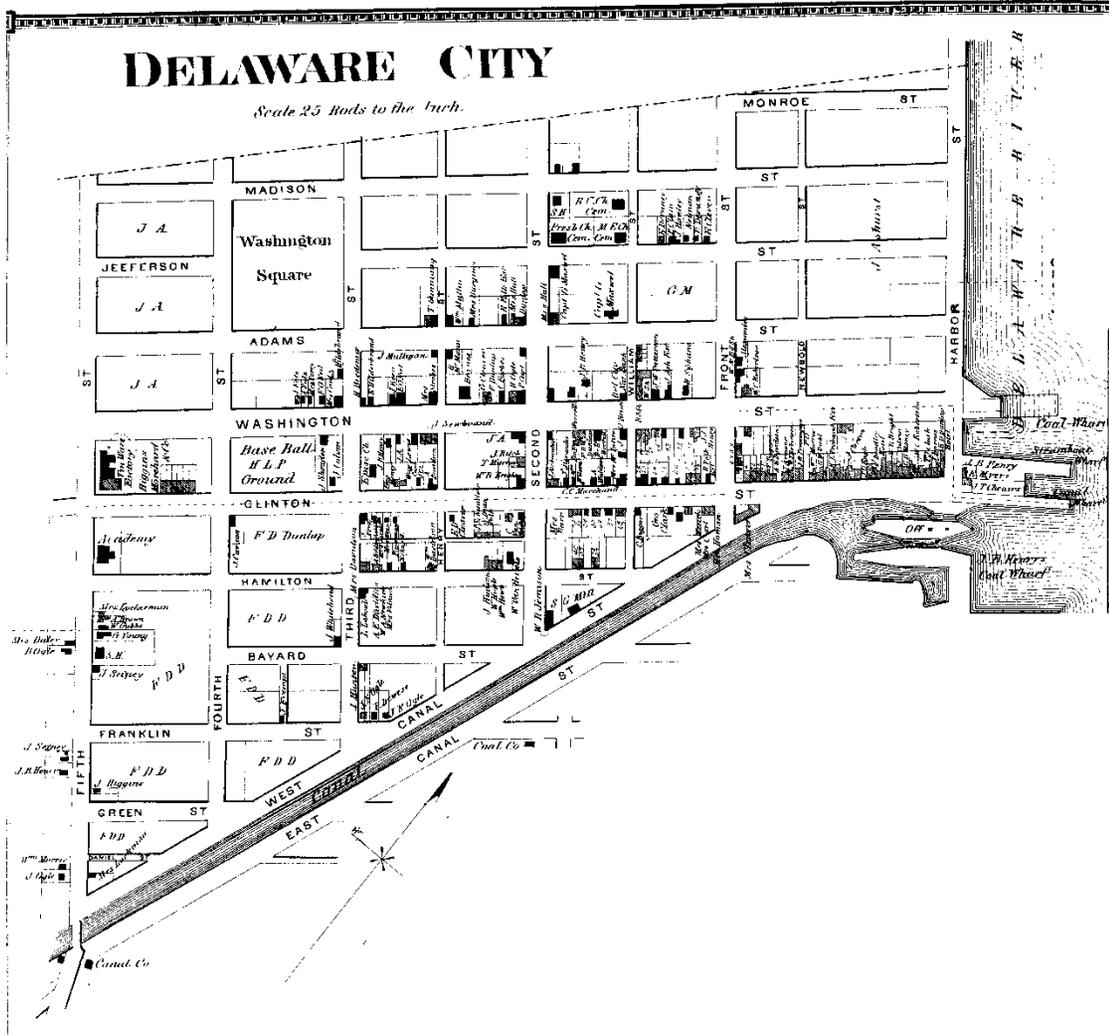


Figure 2.11 Beers Atlas Map of Delaware City, Delaware 1868 (Source: <http://www.dgs.udel.edu/publications/digitaldata/hundredmaps.aspx>)

Delaware City 1868



Figure 2.12 GIS Image illustrating Delaware City's growth from 1868

Delaware City 1885

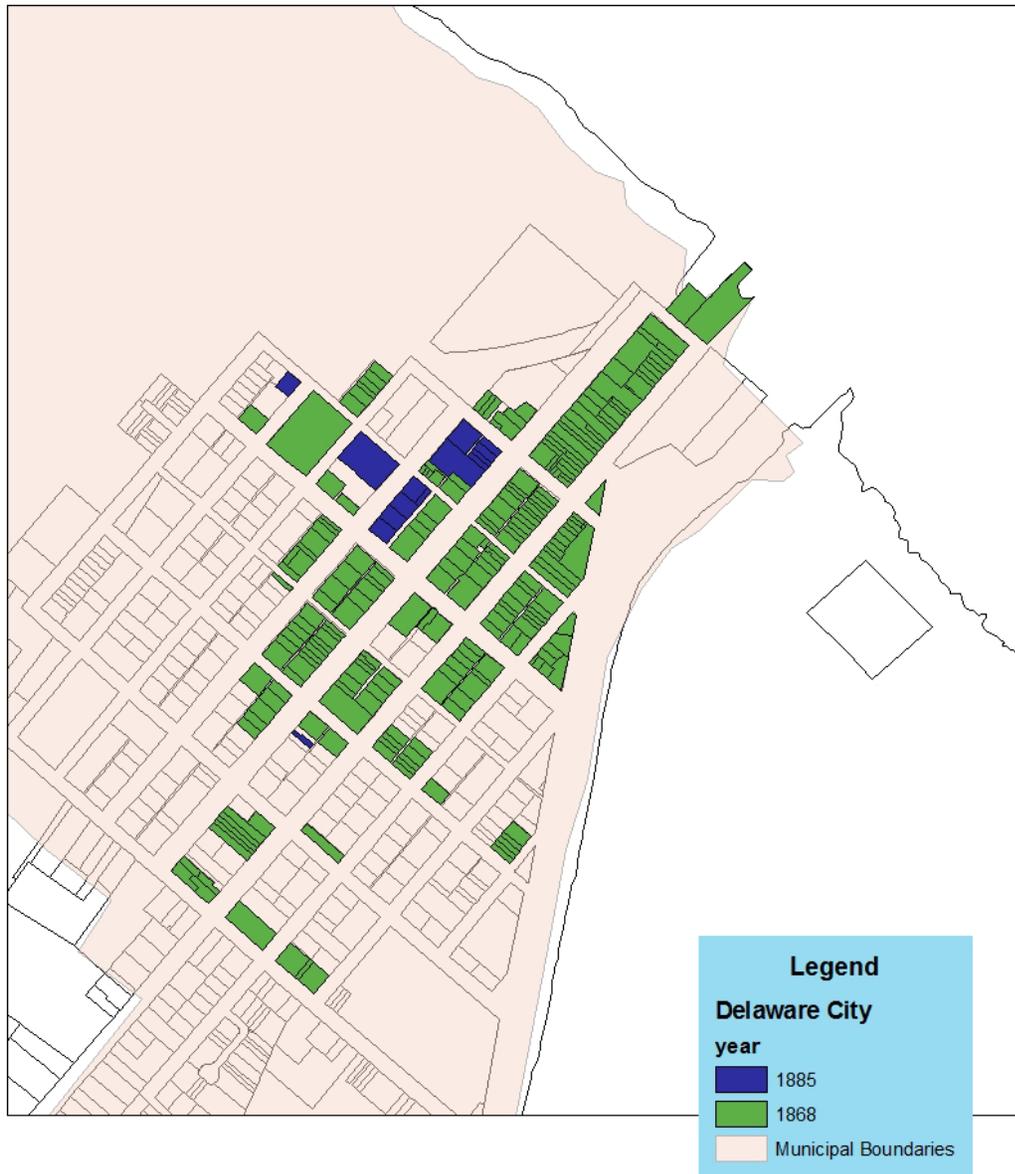


Figure 2.13 GIS Image illustrating Delaware City's growth from 1868 to 1885

Delaware City 1910

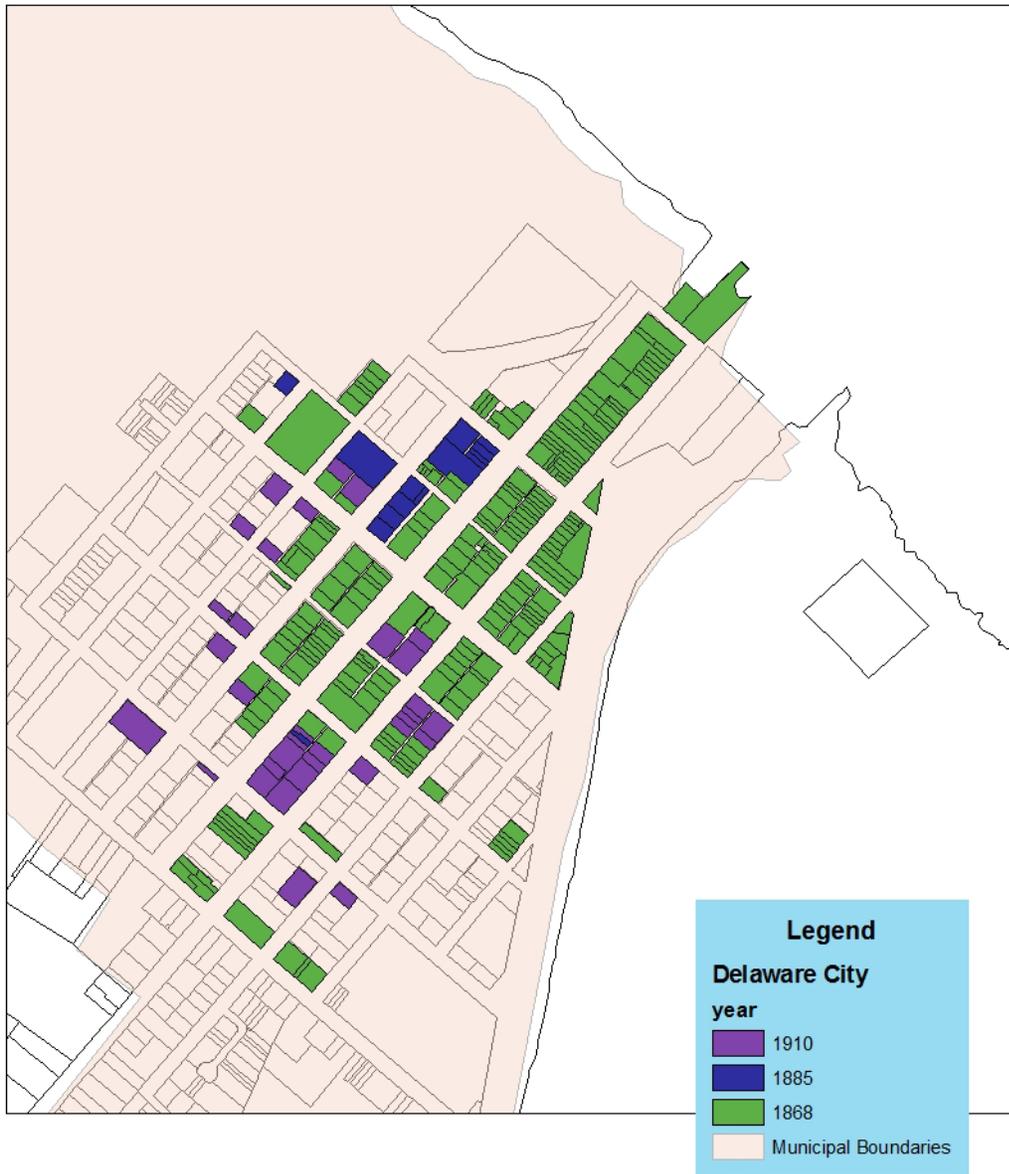


Figure 2.14 GIS Image illustrating Delaware City's growth from 1868 to 1910

Delaware City 1923

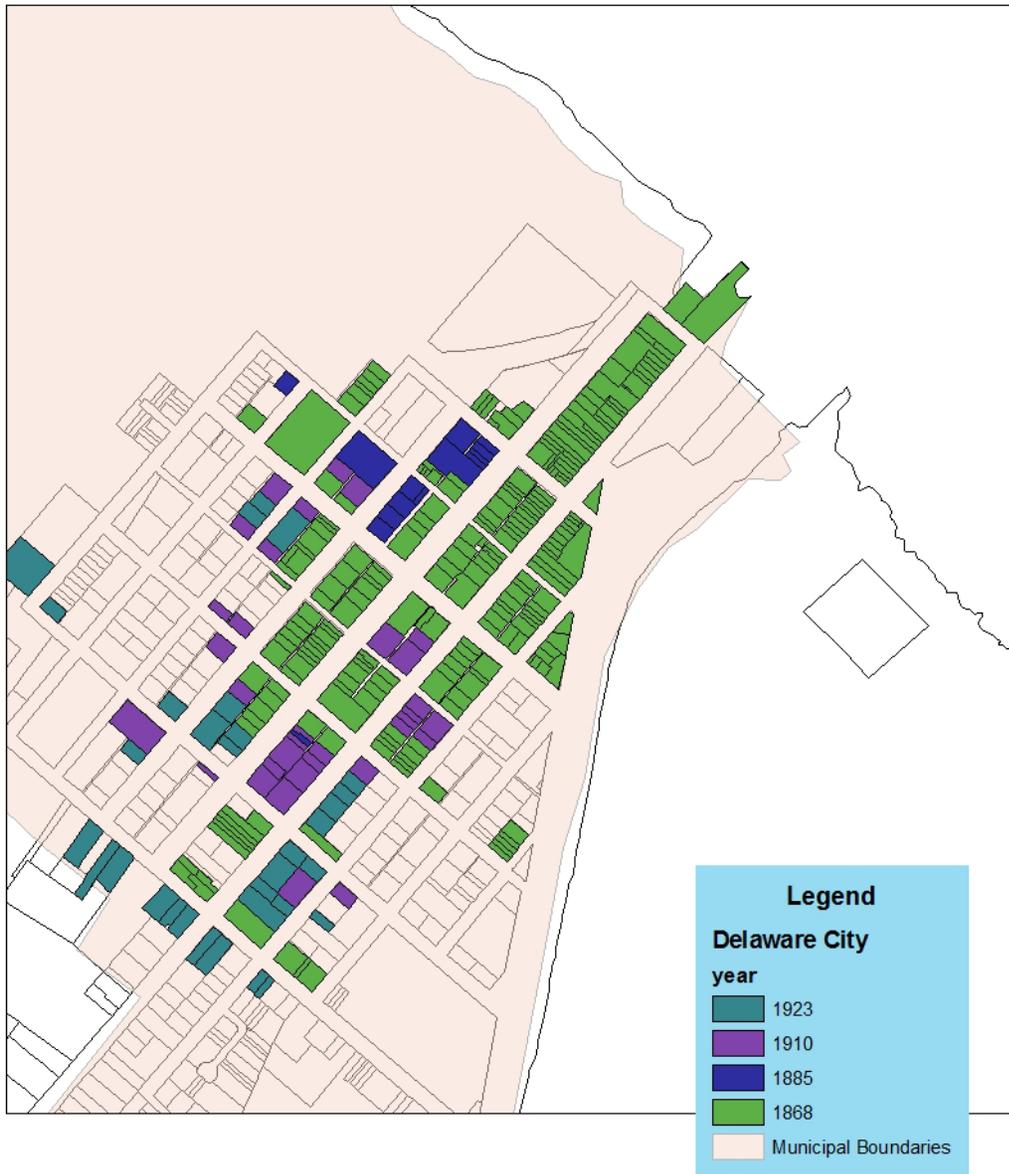


Figure 2.15 GIS Image illustrating Delaware City's growth from 1868 to 1923



Figure 2.16 Beers Atlas Map of New Castle City, Delaware 1868 (Source: <http://www.dgs.udel.edu/publications/digitaldata/hundredmaps.aspx>)

New Castle 1868

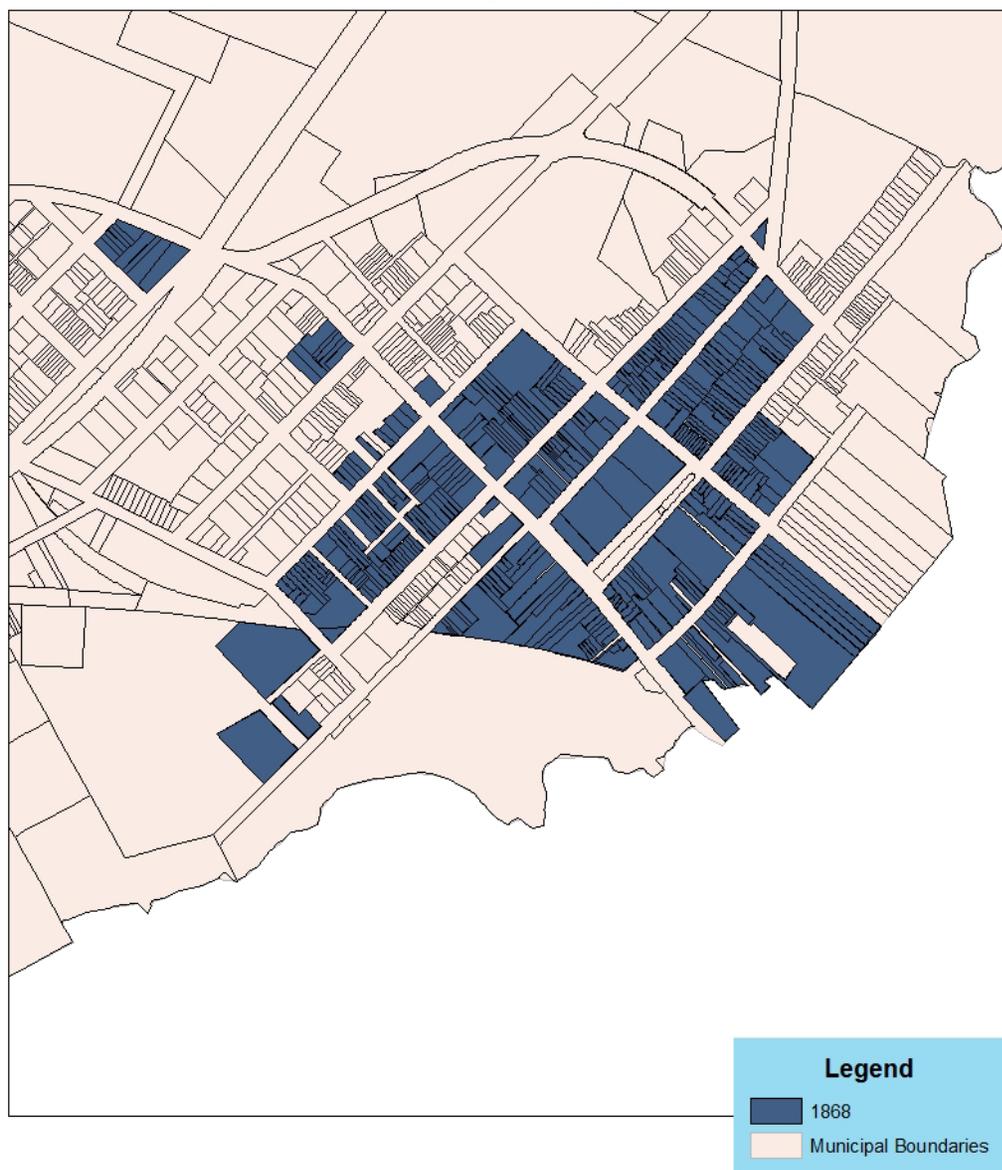


Figure 2.17 GIS Image illustrating New Castle City's growth from 1868

New Castle 1885

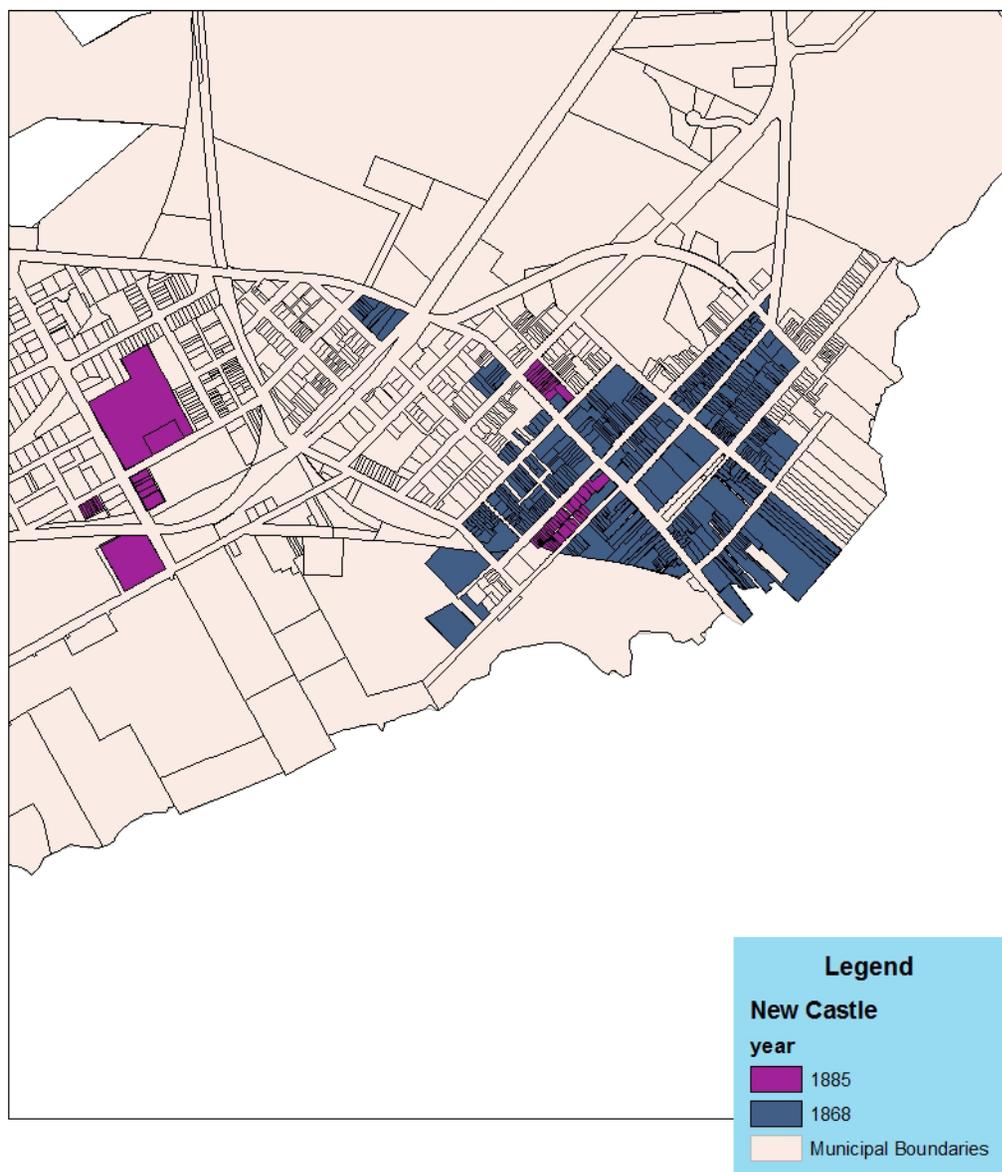


Figure 2.18 GIS Image illustrating New Castle City's growth from 1868 to 1885

New Castle 1907

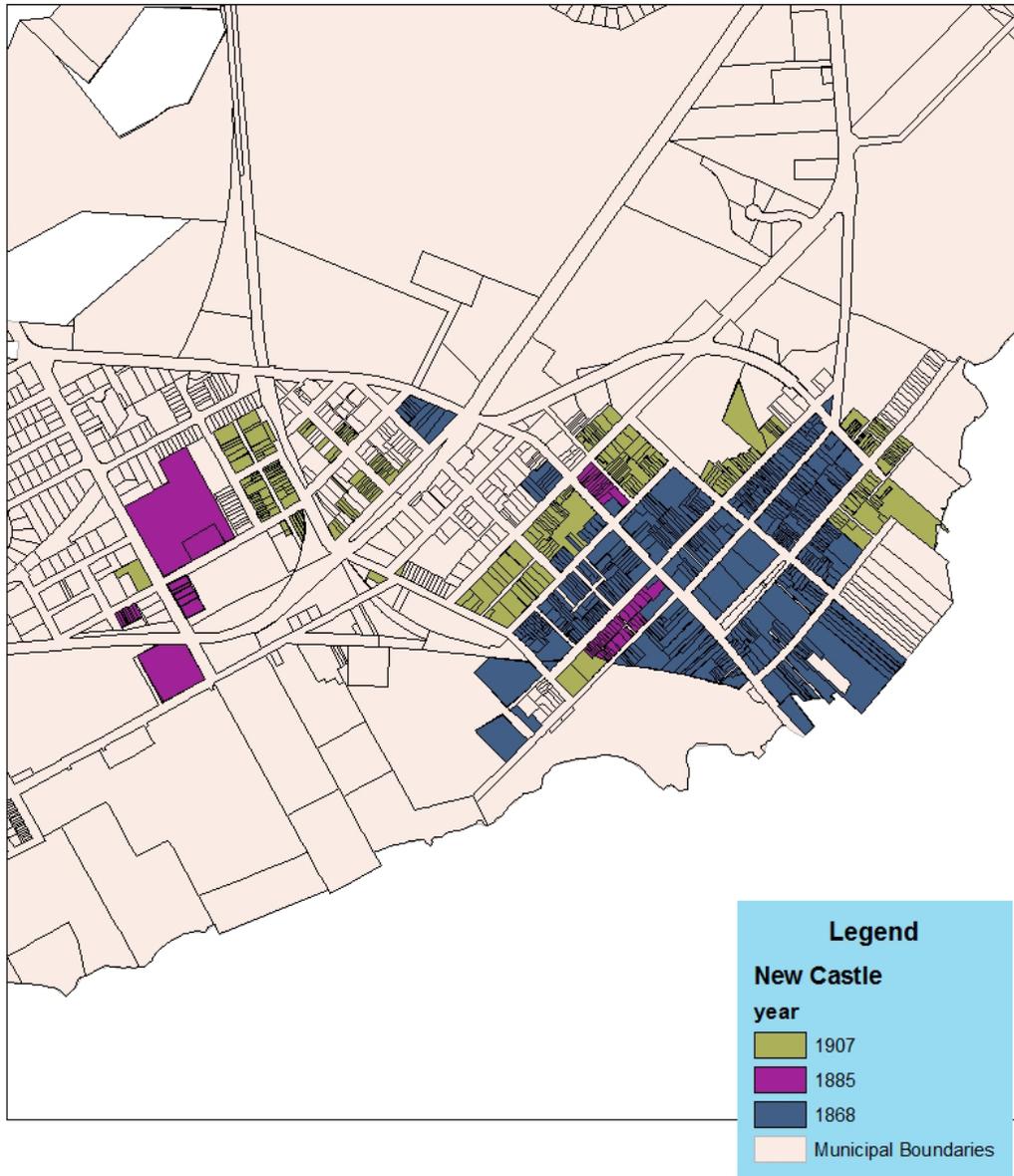


Figure 2.19 GIS Image illustrating New Castle City's growth from 1868 to 1907

New Castle 1923

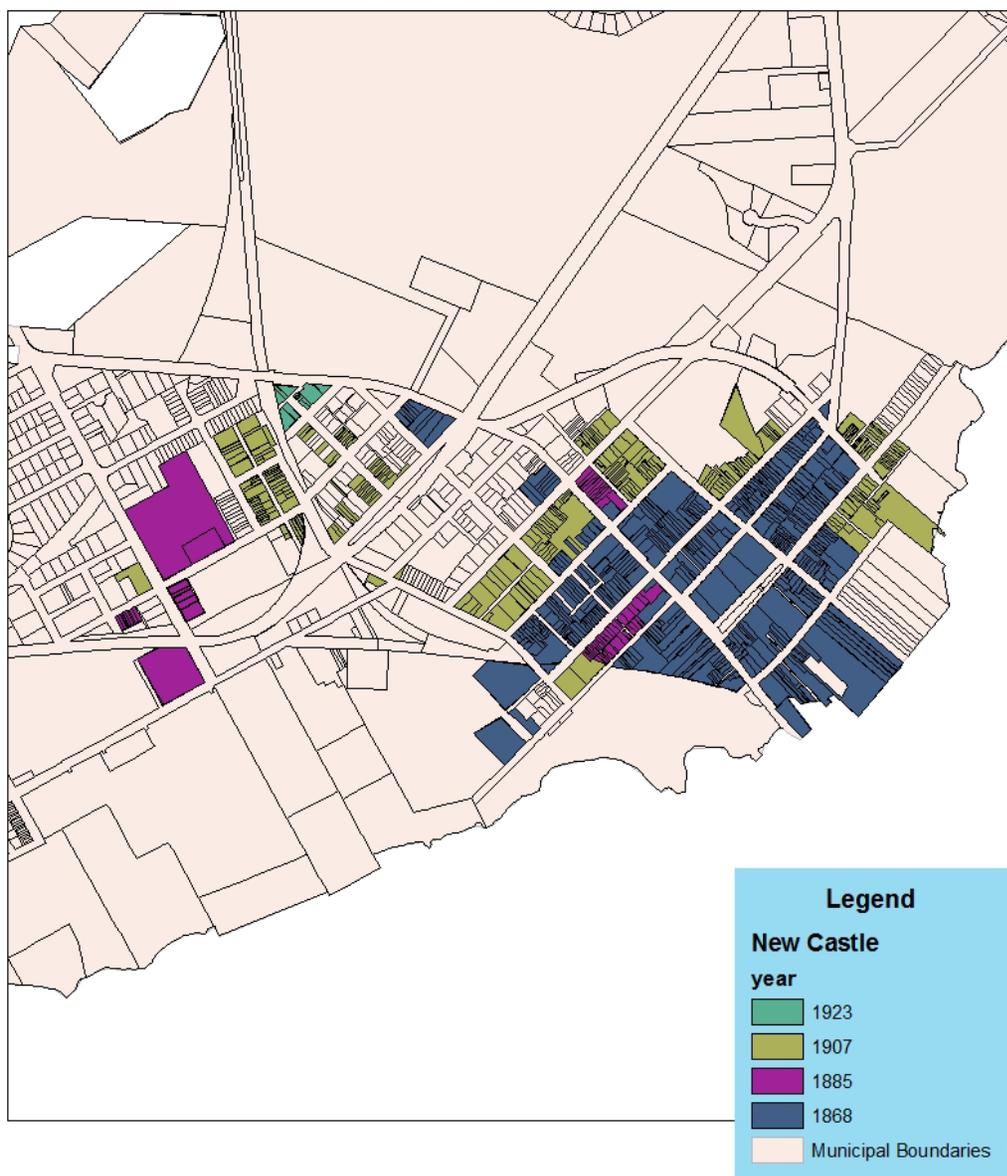


Figure 2.20 GIS Image illustrating New Castle City's growth from 1868 to 1923

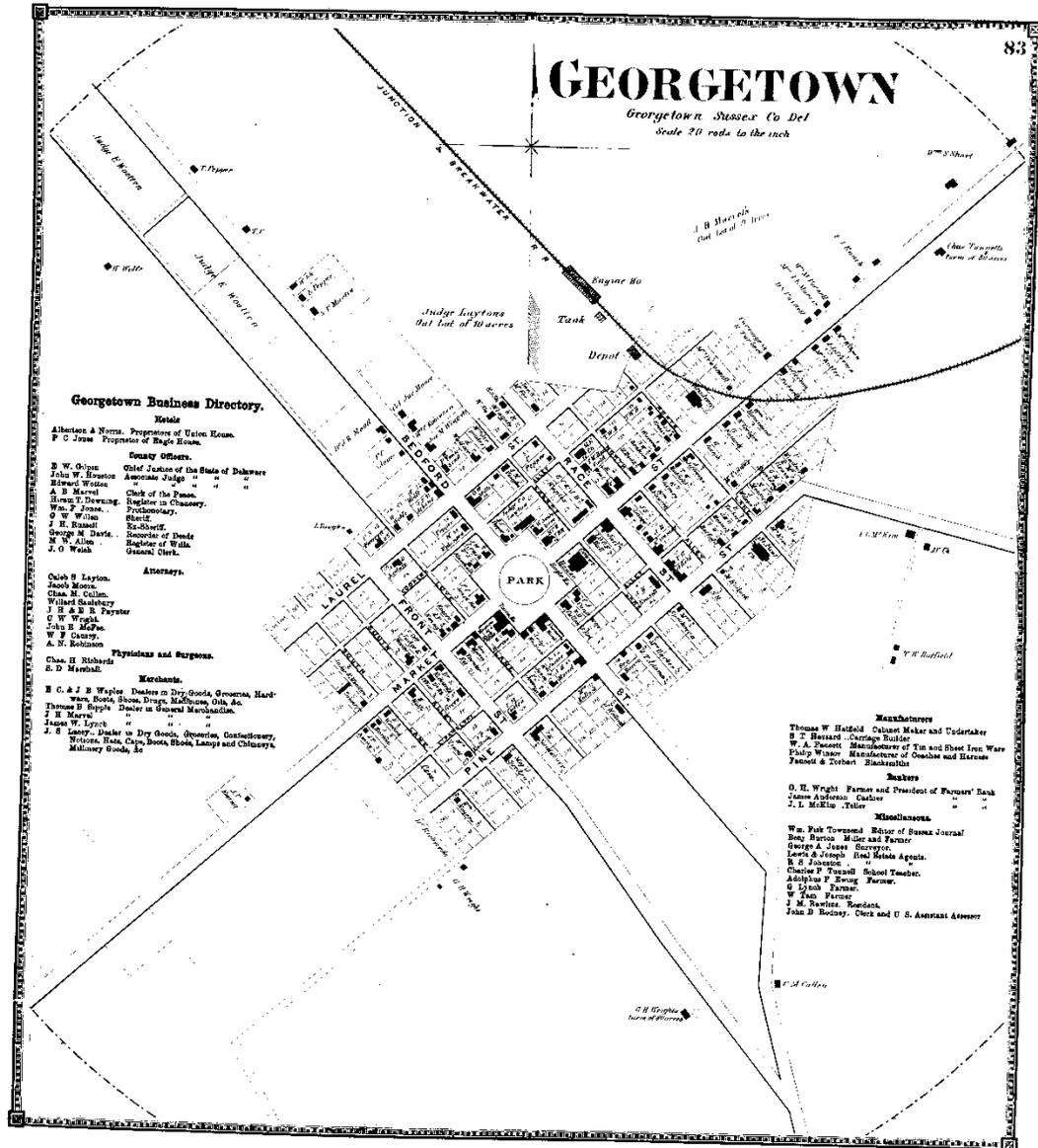


Figure 2.21 Beers Atlas Map of Georgetown, Delaware, 1868 (Source: <http://www.dgs.udel.edu/publications/digitaldata/hundredmaps.aspx>)

Georgetown 1868

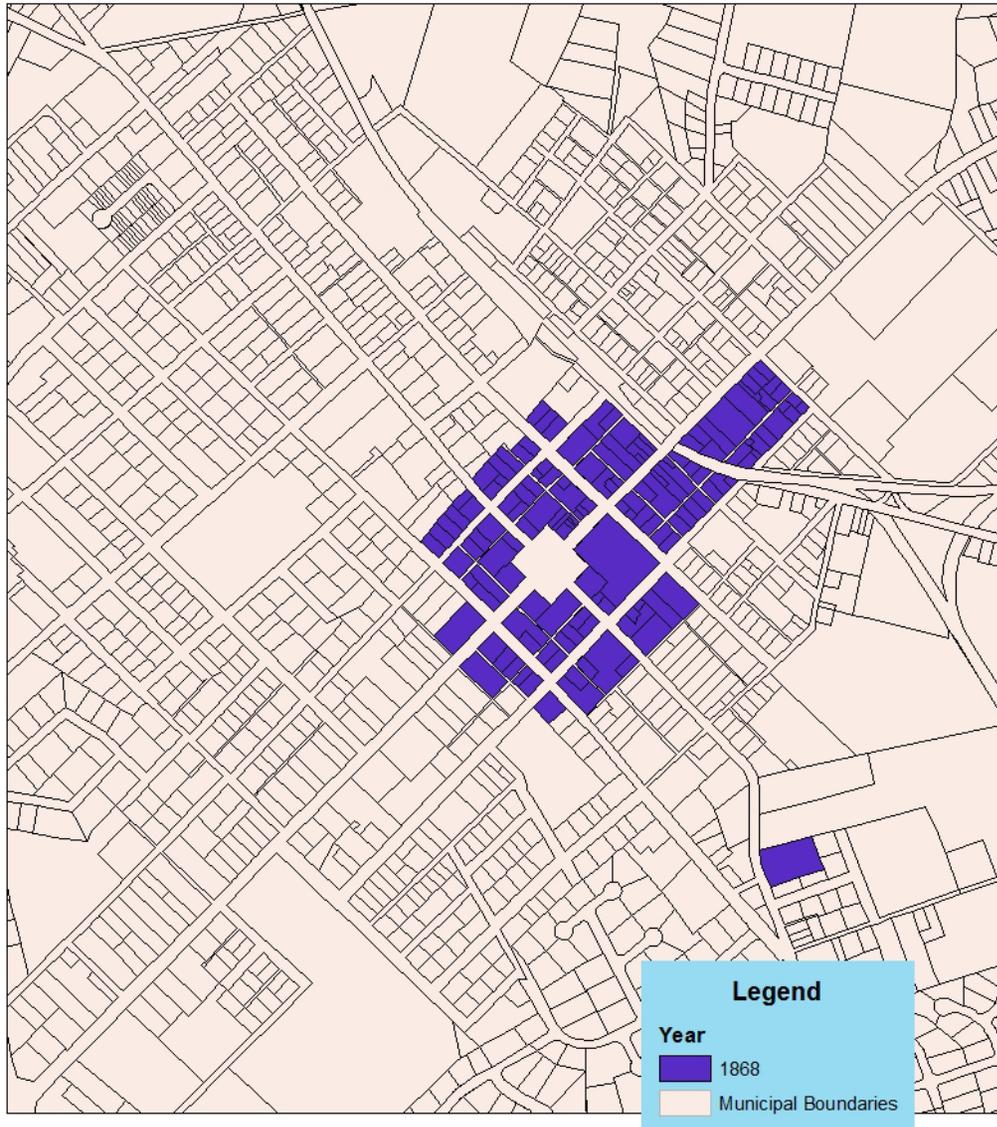


Figure 2.22 GIS Image illustrating Georgetown's growth from 1868

Georgetown 1885

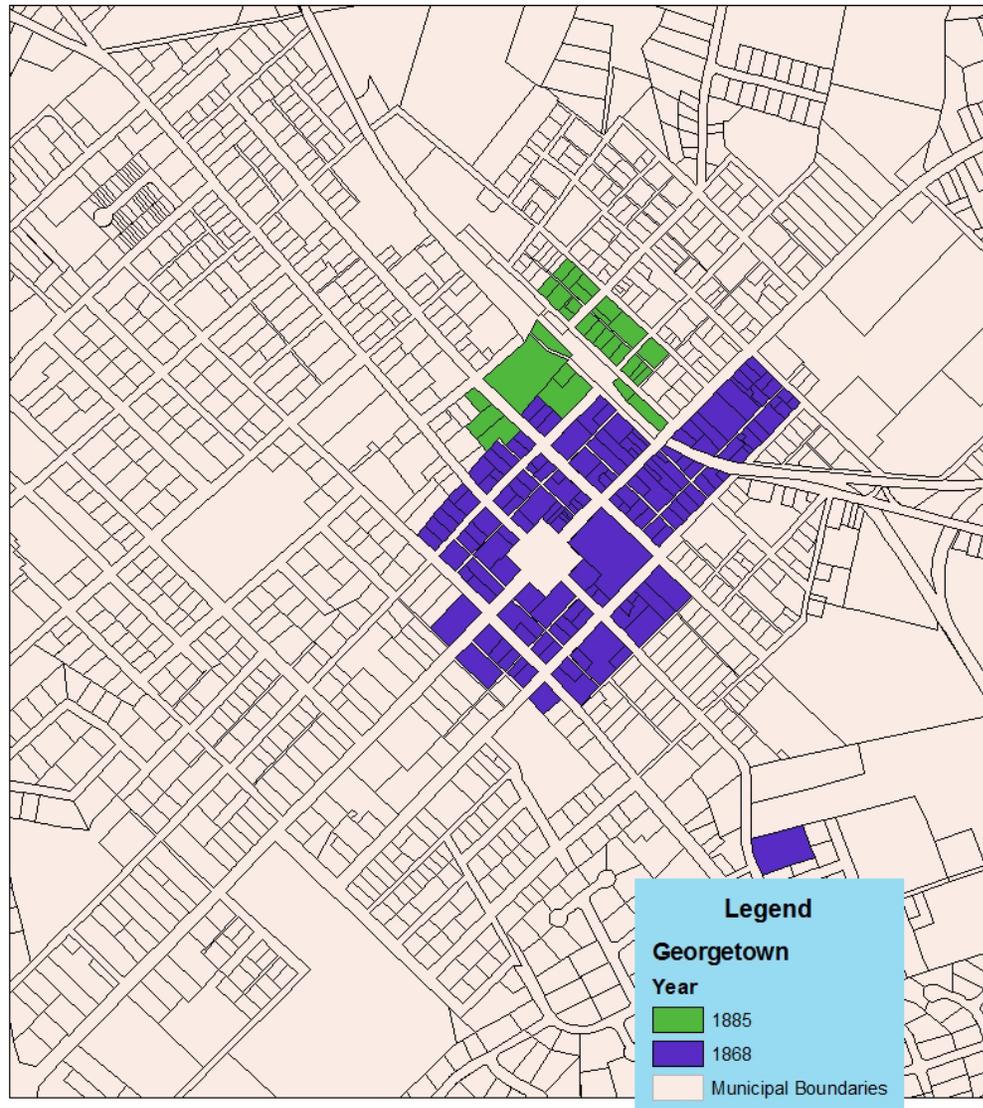


Figure 2.23 GIS Image illustrating Georgetown's growth from 1868 to 1885

Georgetown 1910

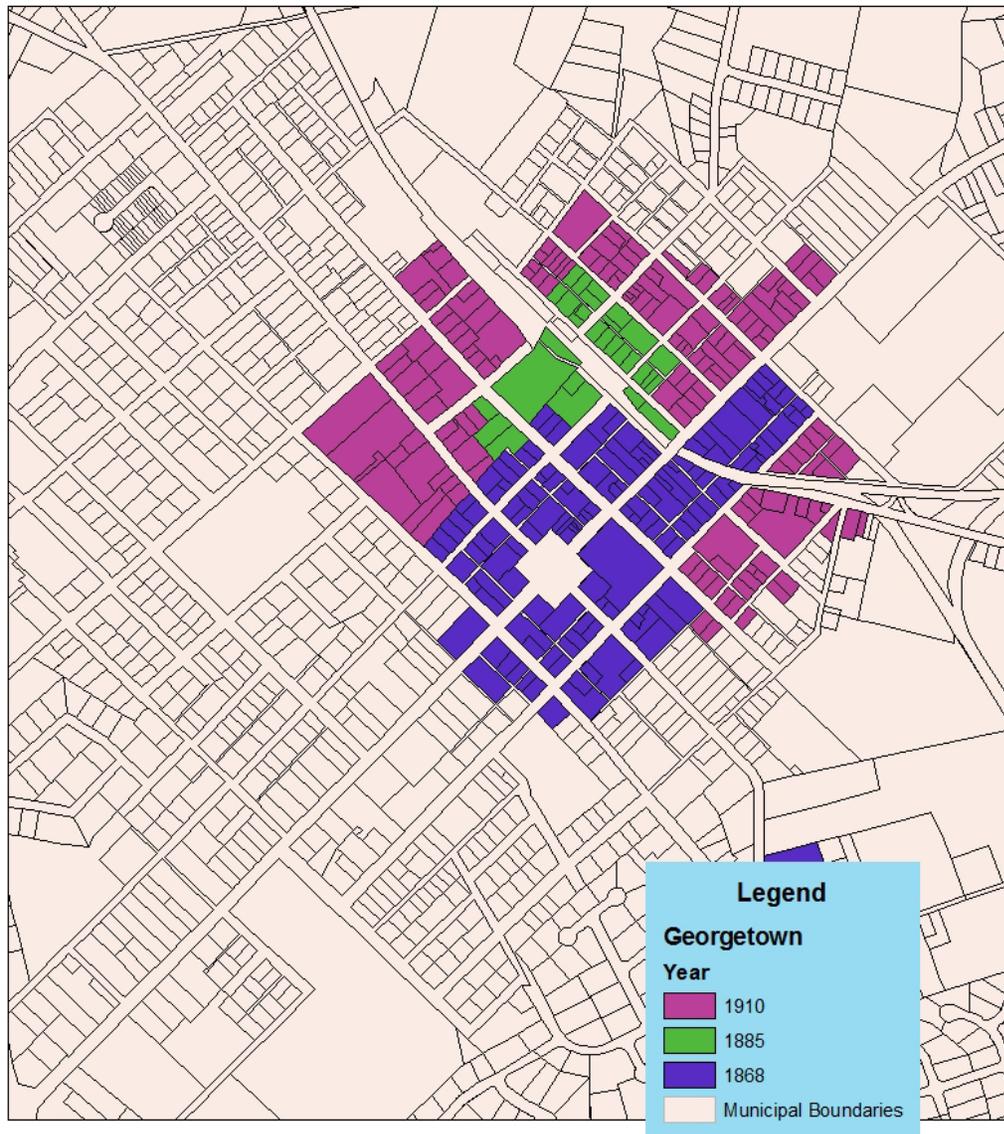


Figure 2.24 GIS Image illustrating Georgetown's growth from 1868 to 1910

Georgetown 1930

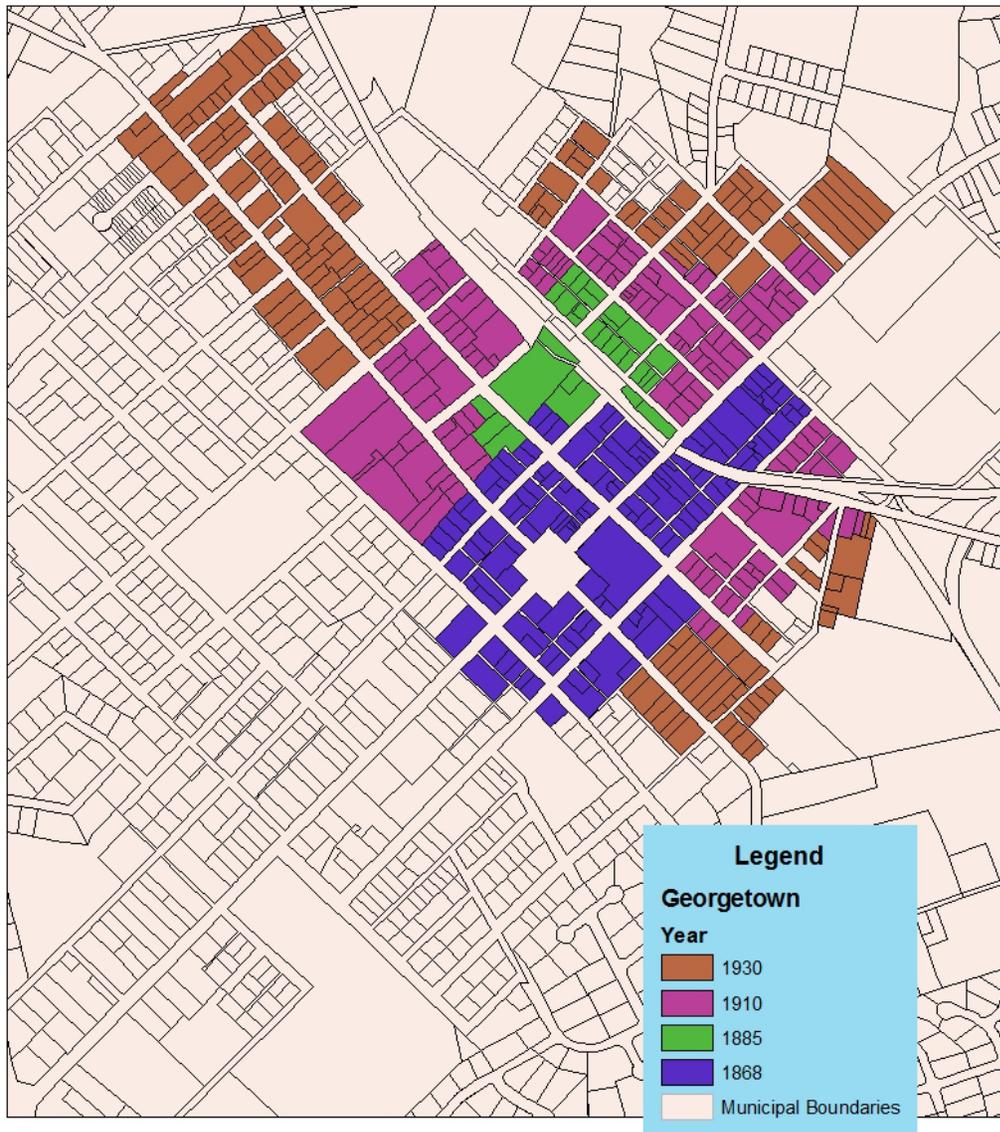


Figure 2.25 GIS Image illustrating Georgetown's growth from 1868 to 1930

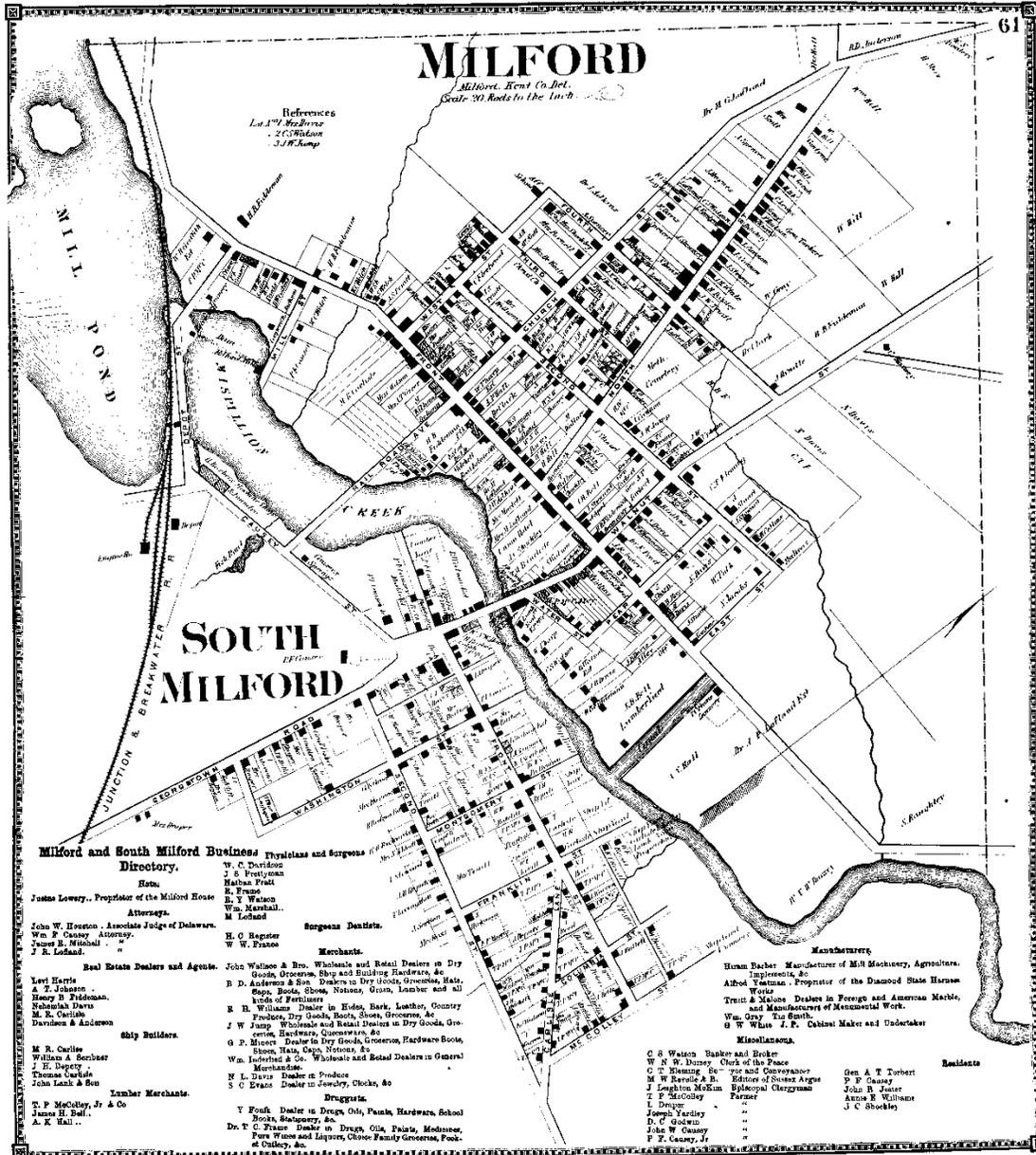


Figure 2.26 Beers Atlas Map of Georgetown, Delaware, 1868 (Source: <http://www.dgs.udel.edu/publications/digitaldata/hundredmaps.aspx>)

Milford 1868

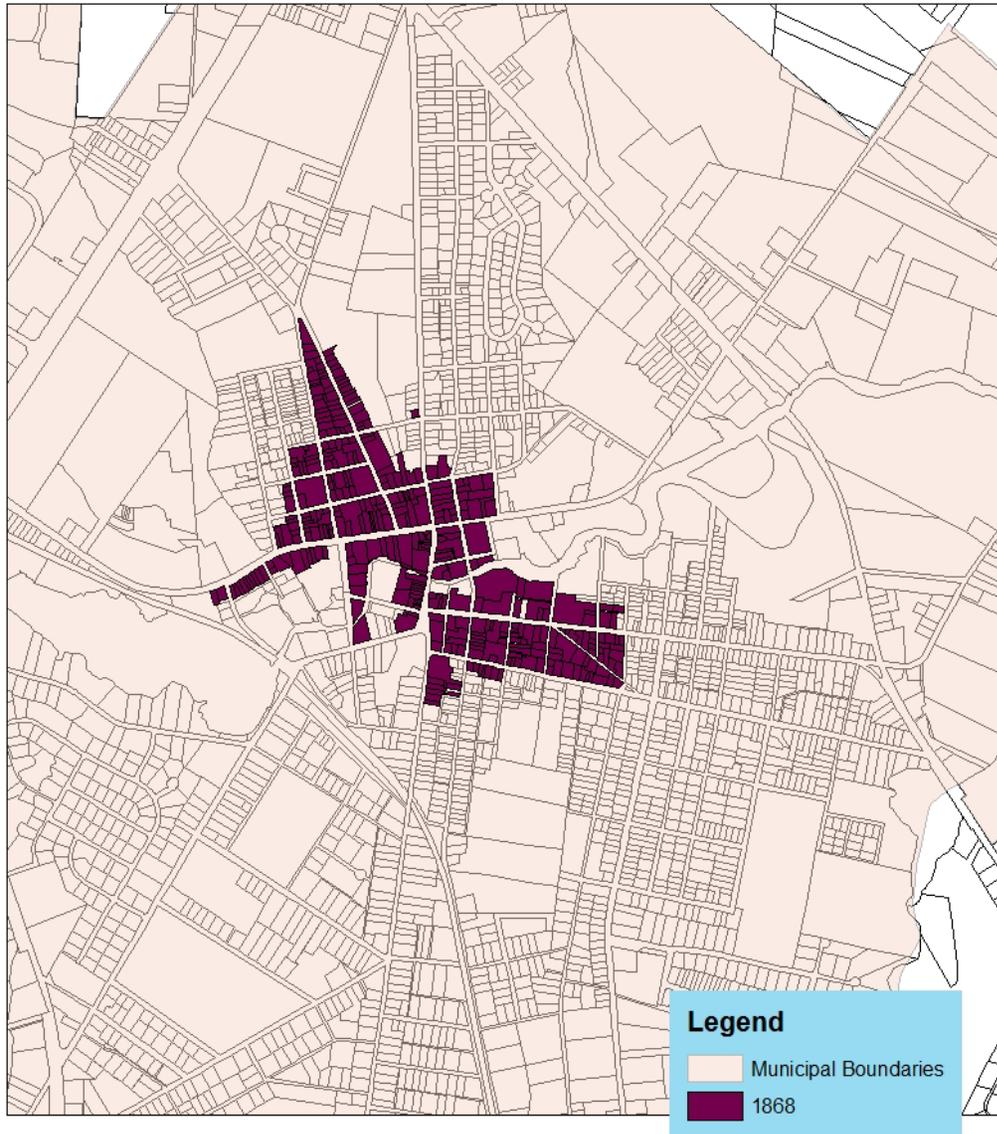


Figure 2.27 GIS Image illustrating Milford's growth from 1868

Milford 1885

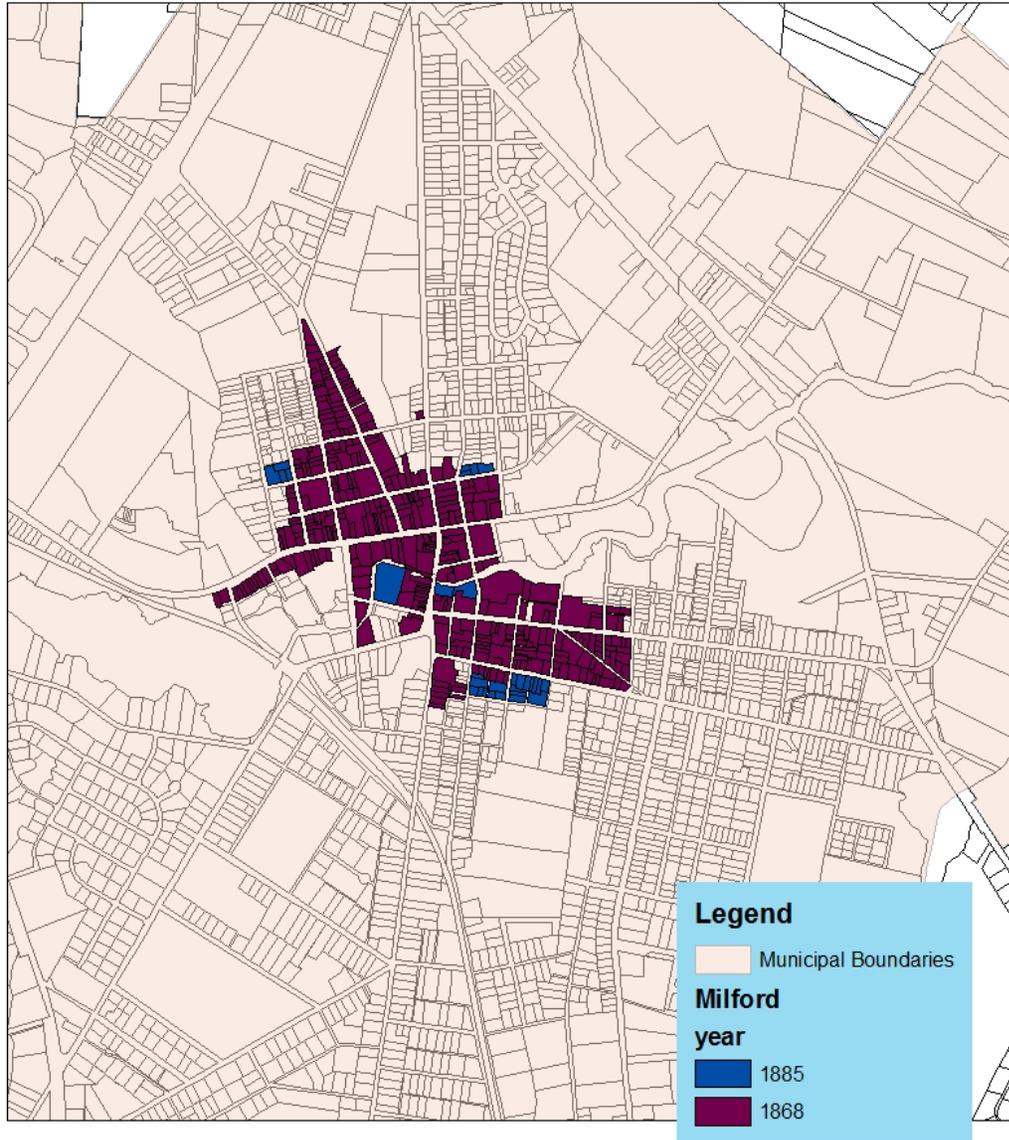


Figure 2.28 GIS Image illustrating Milford's growth from 1868 to 1885

Milford 1910

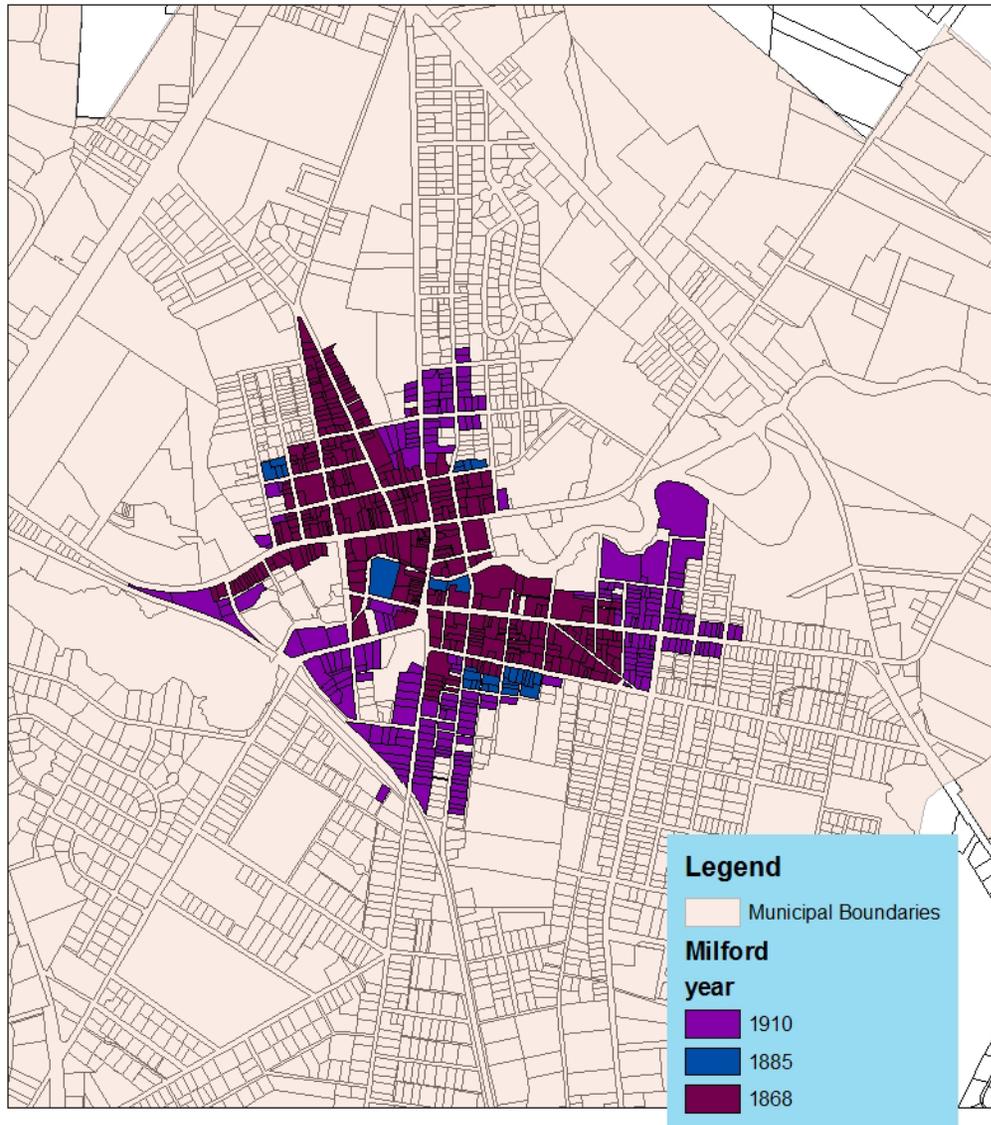


Figure 2.29 GIS Image illustrating Milford's growth from 1868 to 1910

Milford 1930

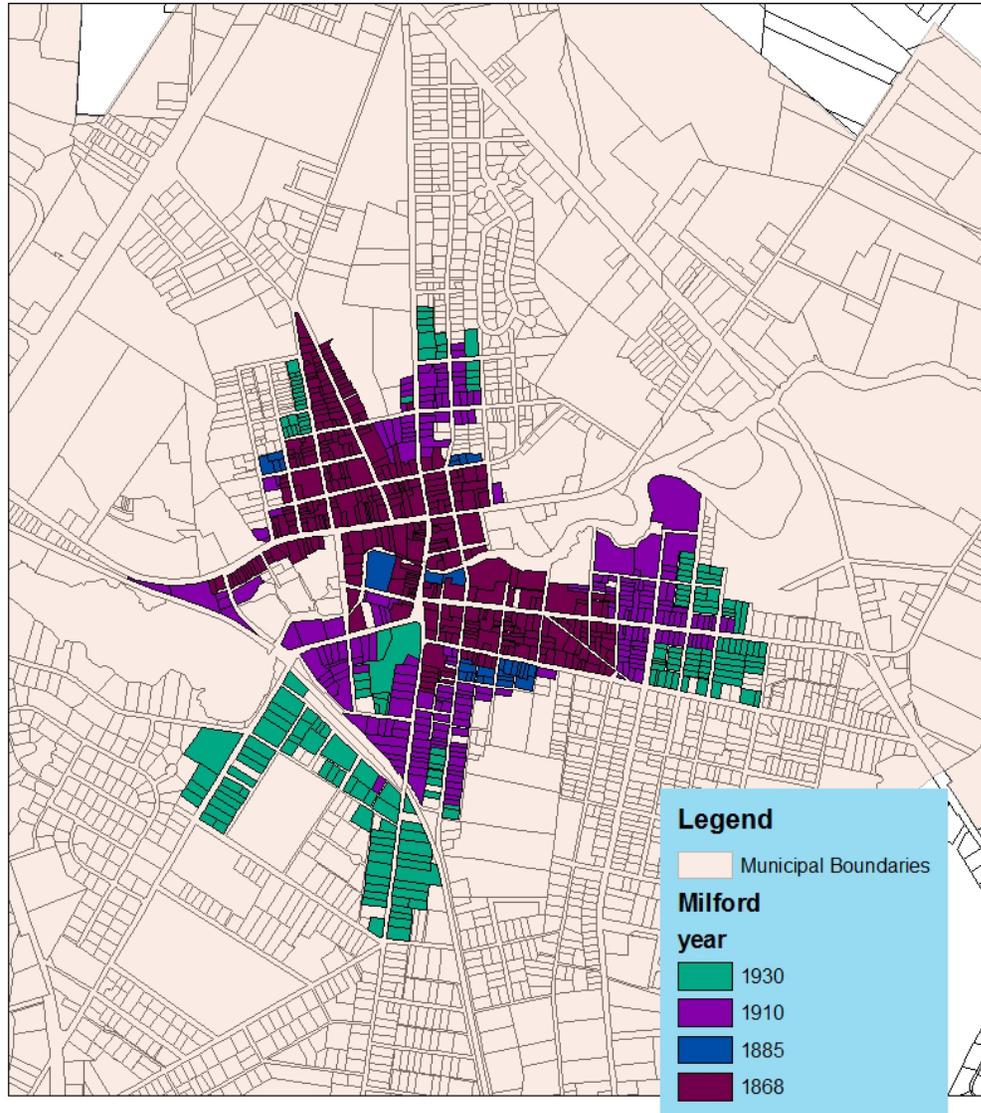


Figure 2.30 GIS Image illustrating Milford's growth from 1868 to 1930

Camden 1937

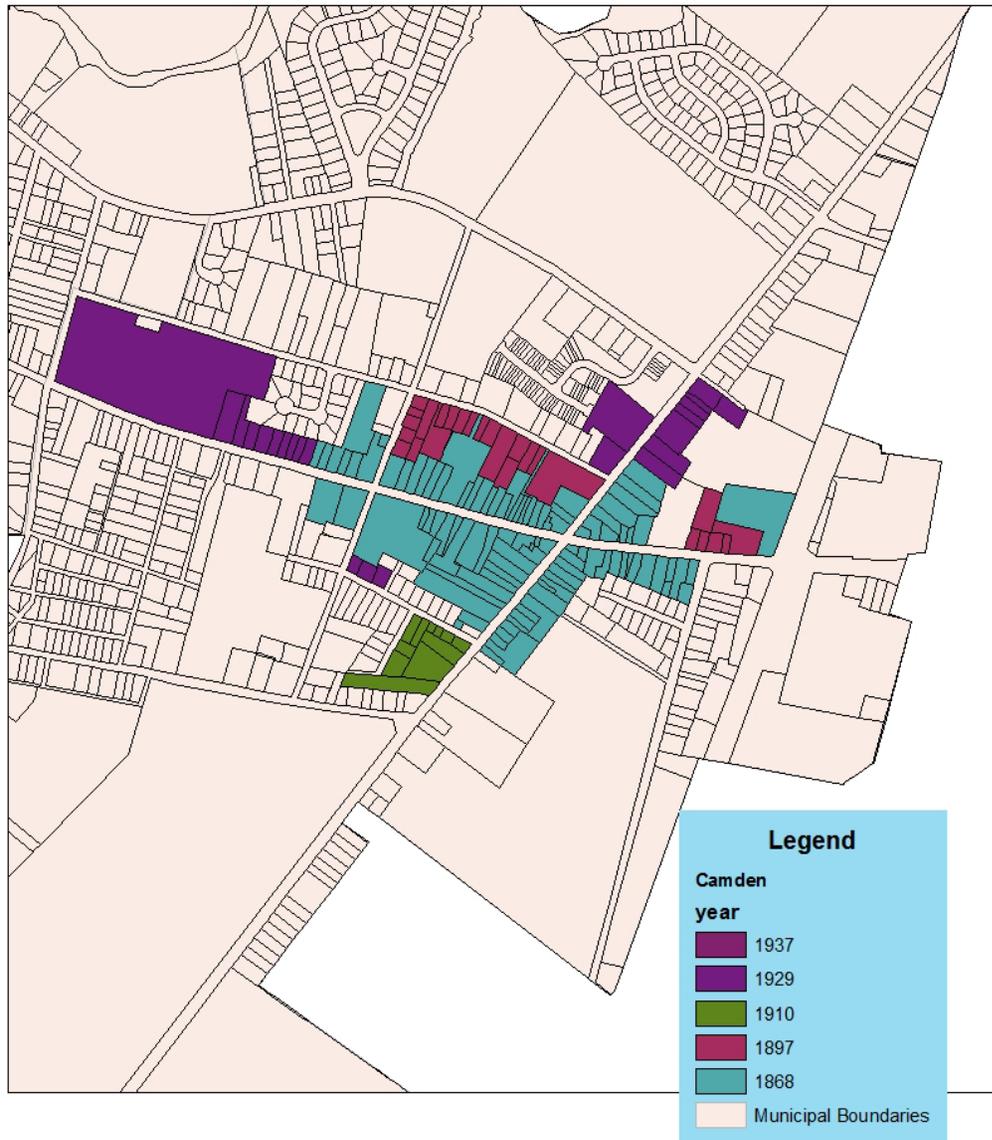


Figure 2.31 GIS Image illustrating Camden's growth to 1937

Bridgeville 1937

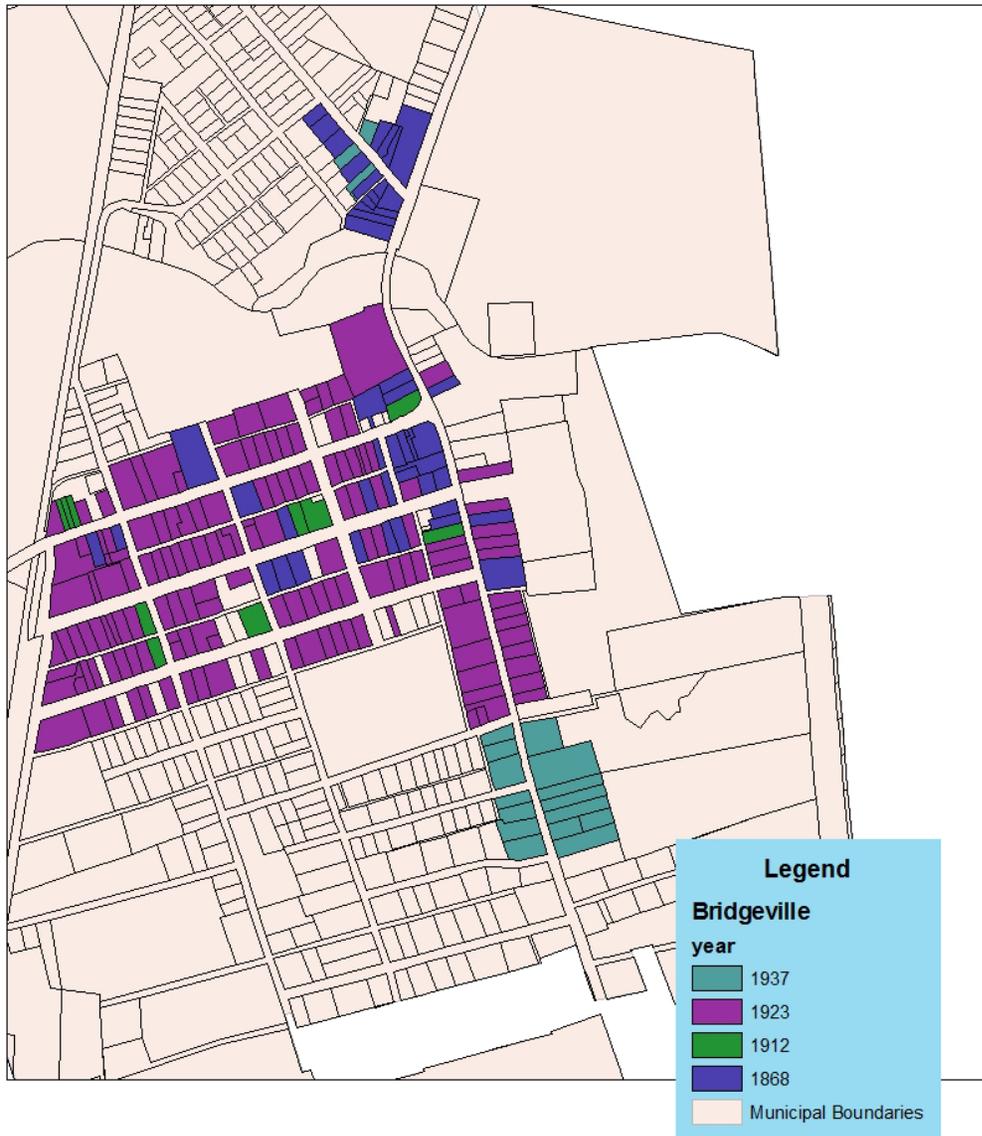


Figure 2.32 GIS Image illustrating Bridgeville's growth to 1937

Delaware City 1937

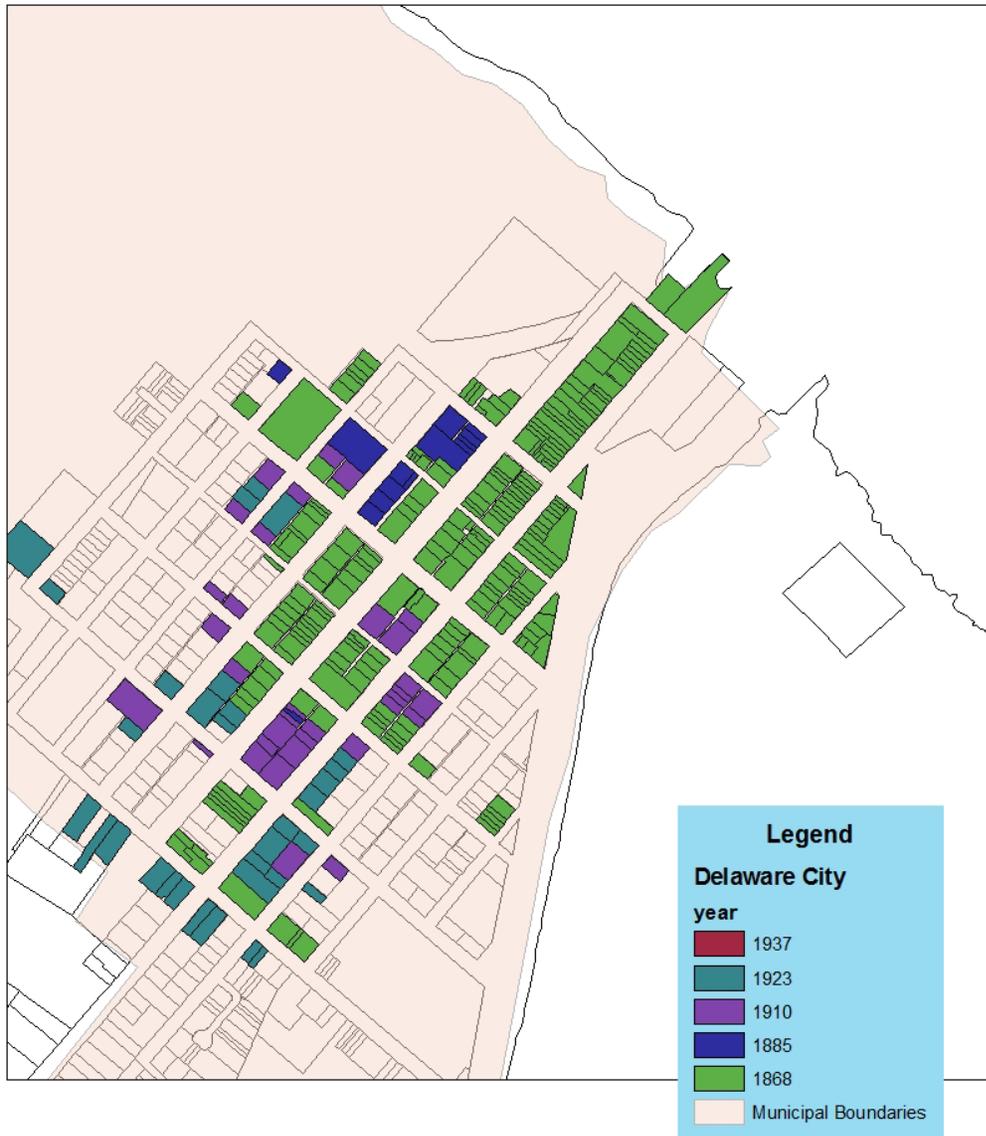


Figure 2.33 GIS Image illustrating Delaware City's growth to 1937

New Castle 1937

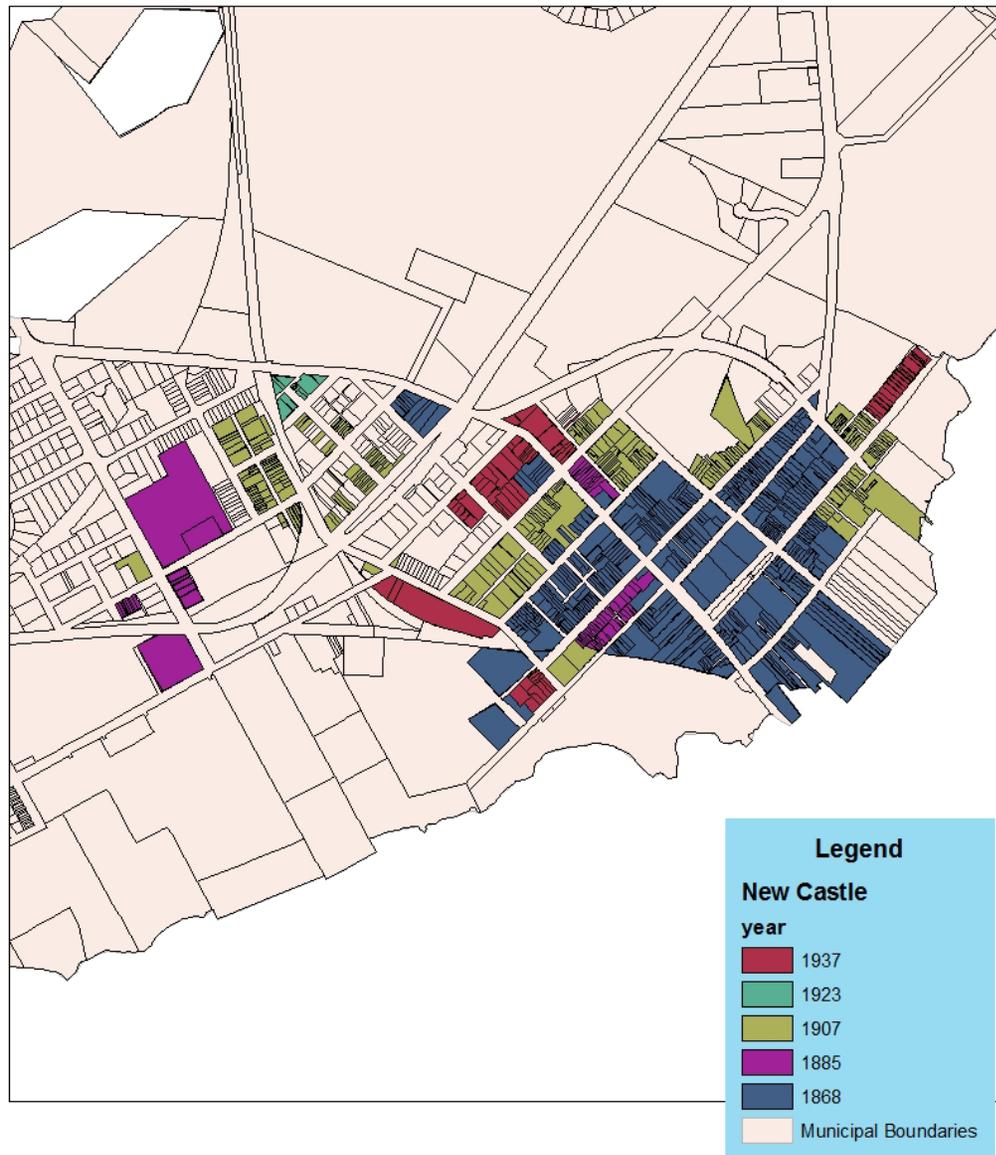


Figure 2.34 GIS Image illustrating New Castle City's growth to 1937

Georgetown 1937

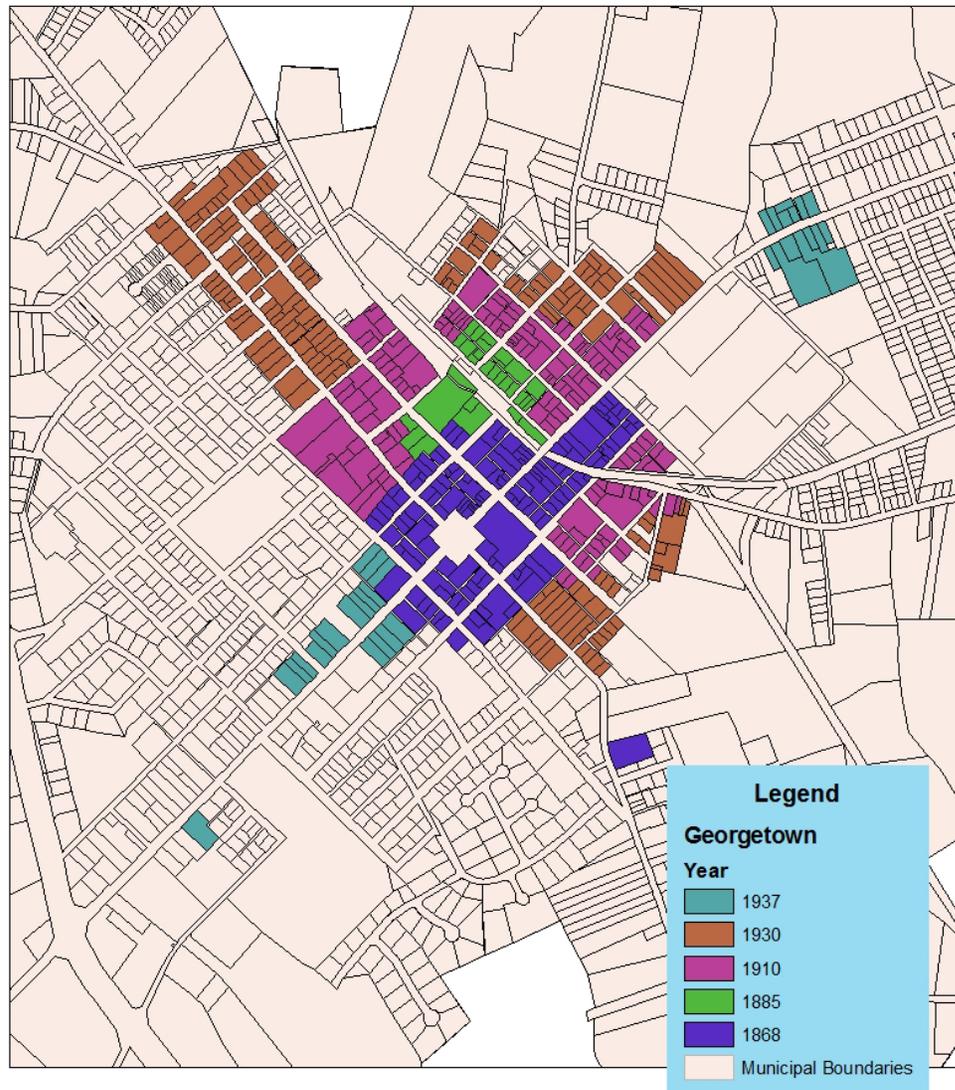


Figure 2.35 GIS Image illustrating Georgetown's growth to 1937

Milford 1937

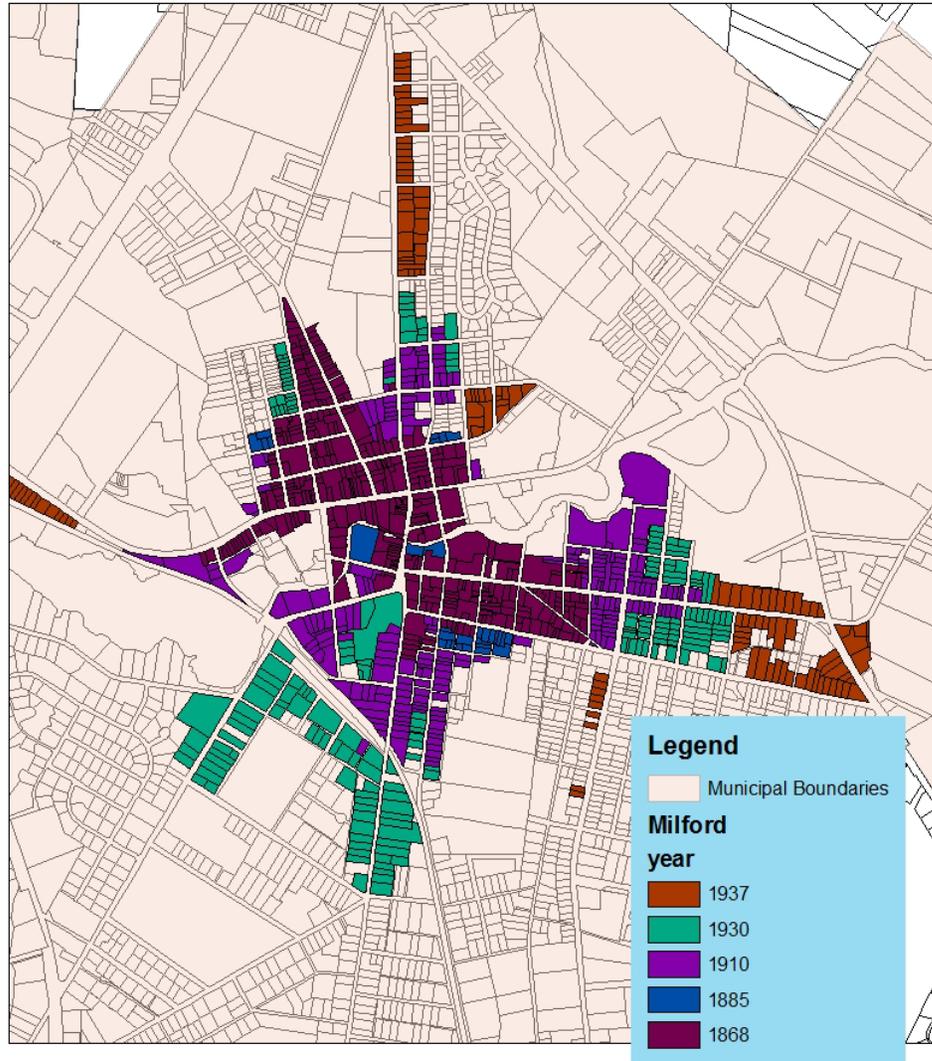


Figure 2.36 GIS Image illustrating Milford's growth to 1937

Camden's Pre-1940s Growth and Historic District Boundaries

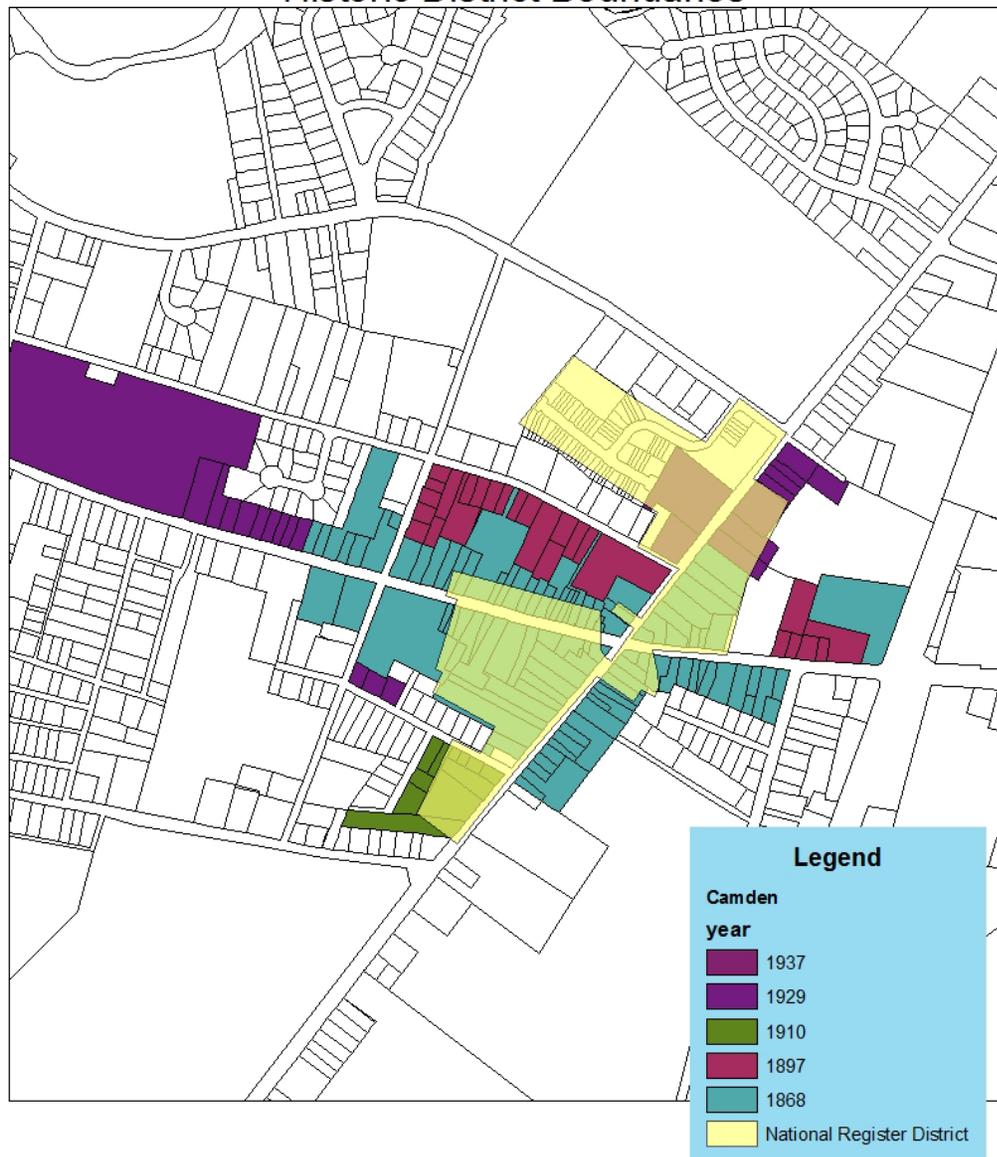


Figure 2.37 Camden's pre-1940s Growth and Historic District

Bridgeville Pre-1940s Growth and Historic District Boundaries

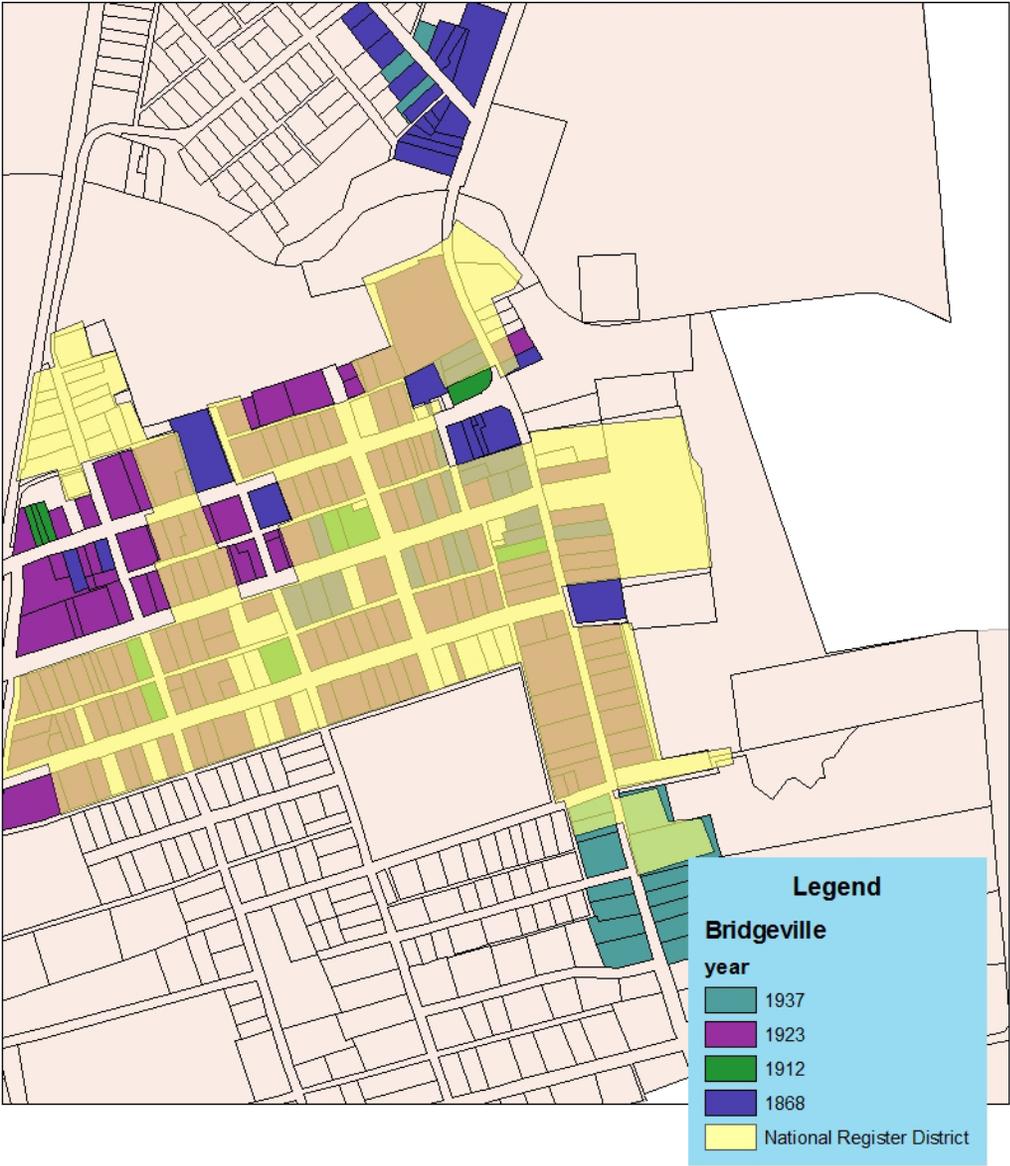


Figure 2.38 Bridgeville’s pre-1940s Growth and Historic District

Delaware City's Pre-1940s Growth and Historic District

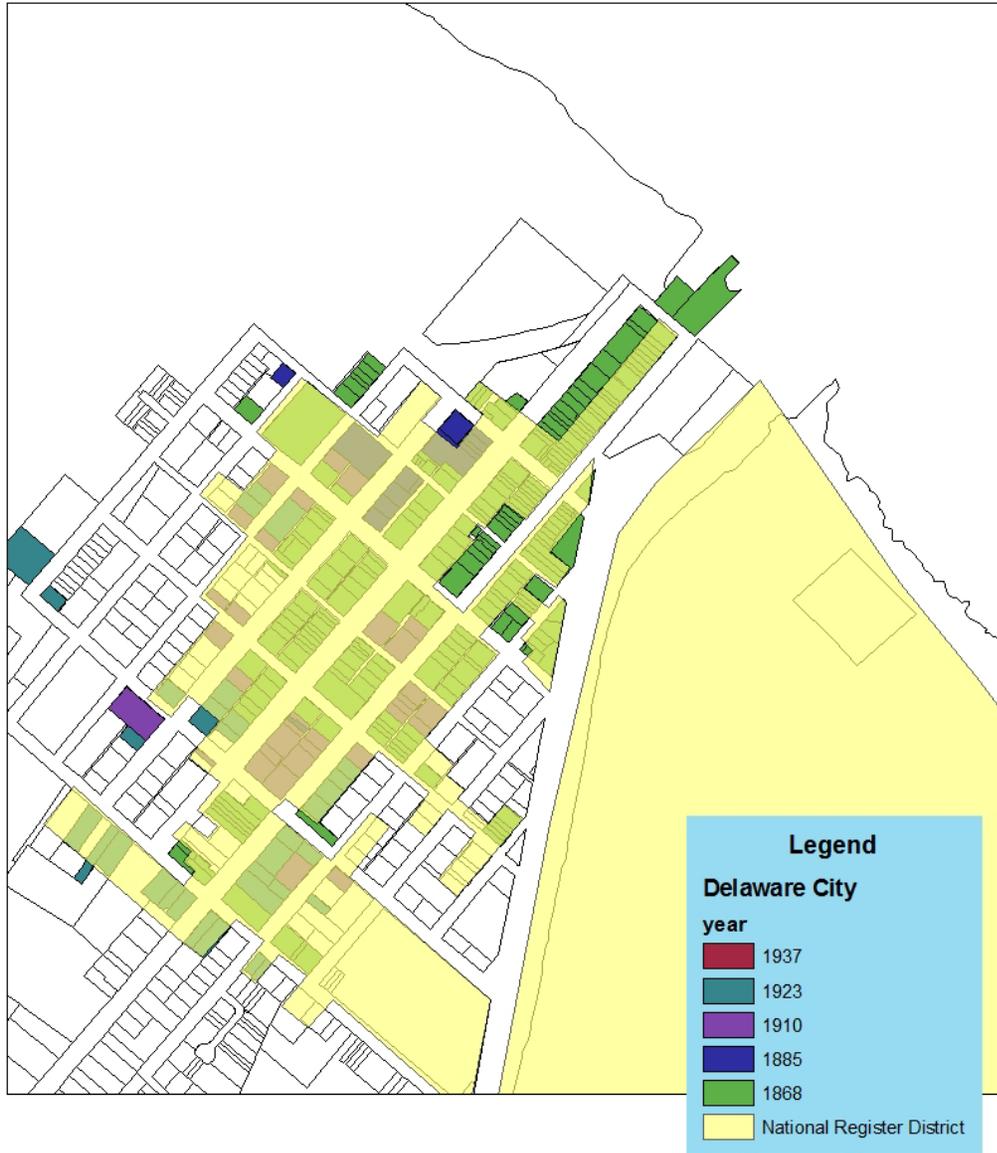


Figure 2.39 Delaware City's pre-1940s Growth and Historic District

New Castle Pre-1940s Growth and Current Historic District

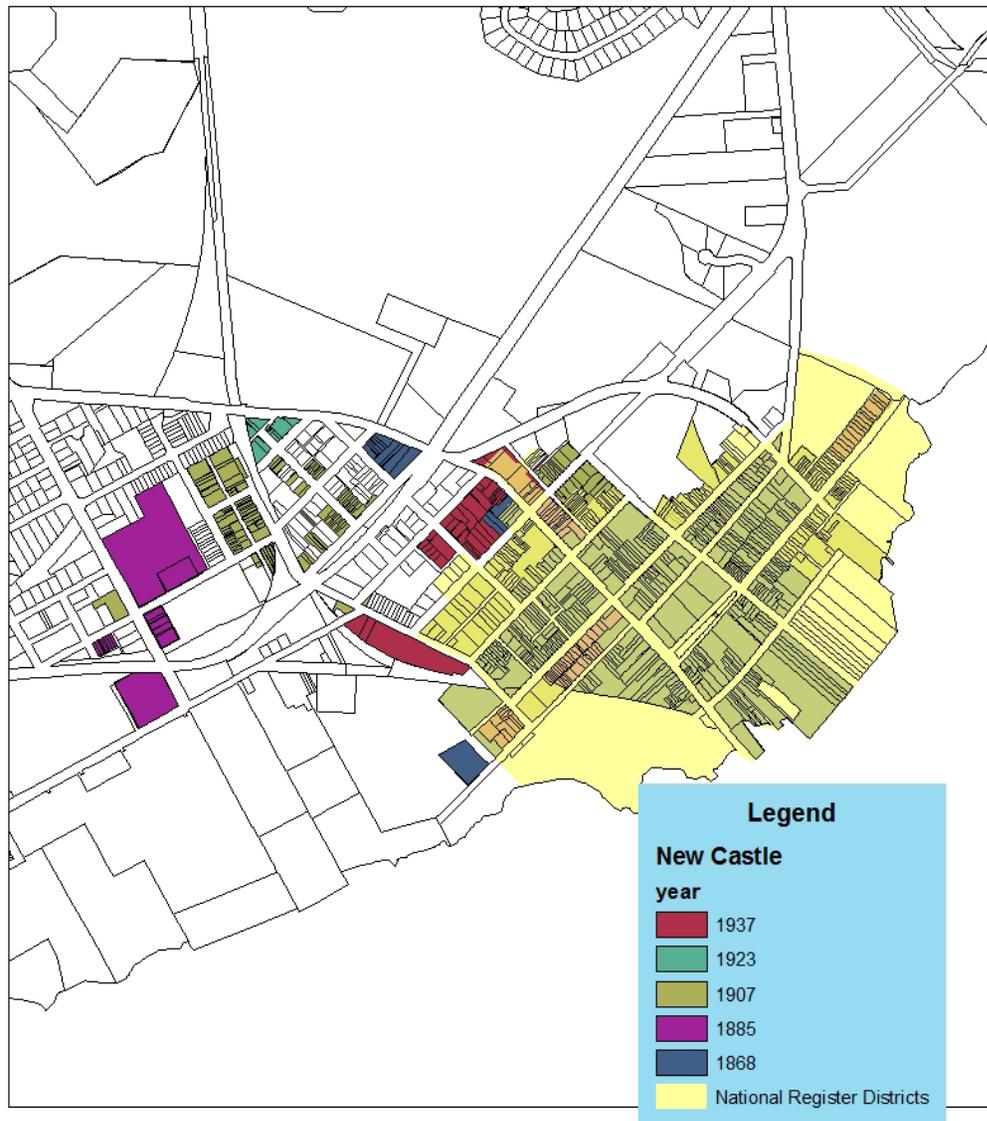


Figure 2.40 New Castle's pre-1940s Growth and Historic District

Georgetown's Pre-1940s Growth and Historic District

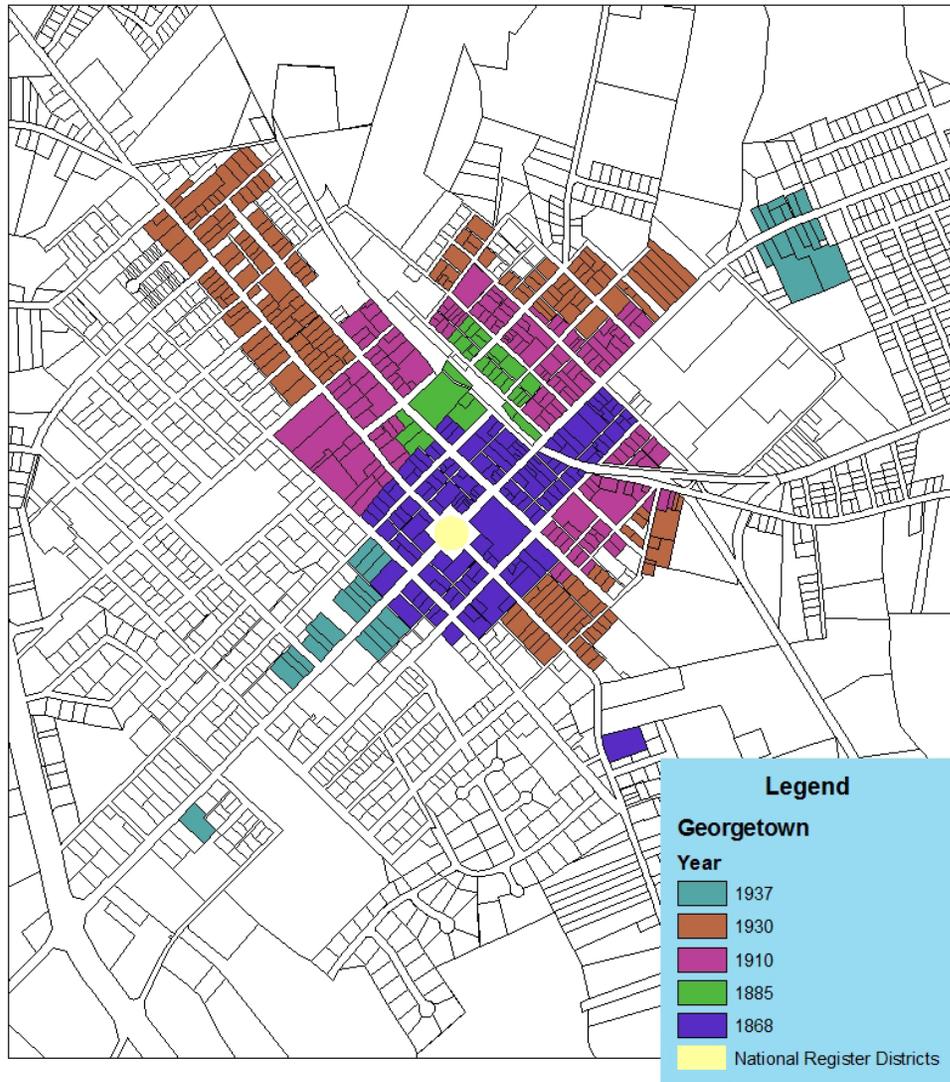


Figure 2.41 Georgetown's pre-1940s Growth and Historic District

Milford's Pre-1940s Growth and Historic Districts

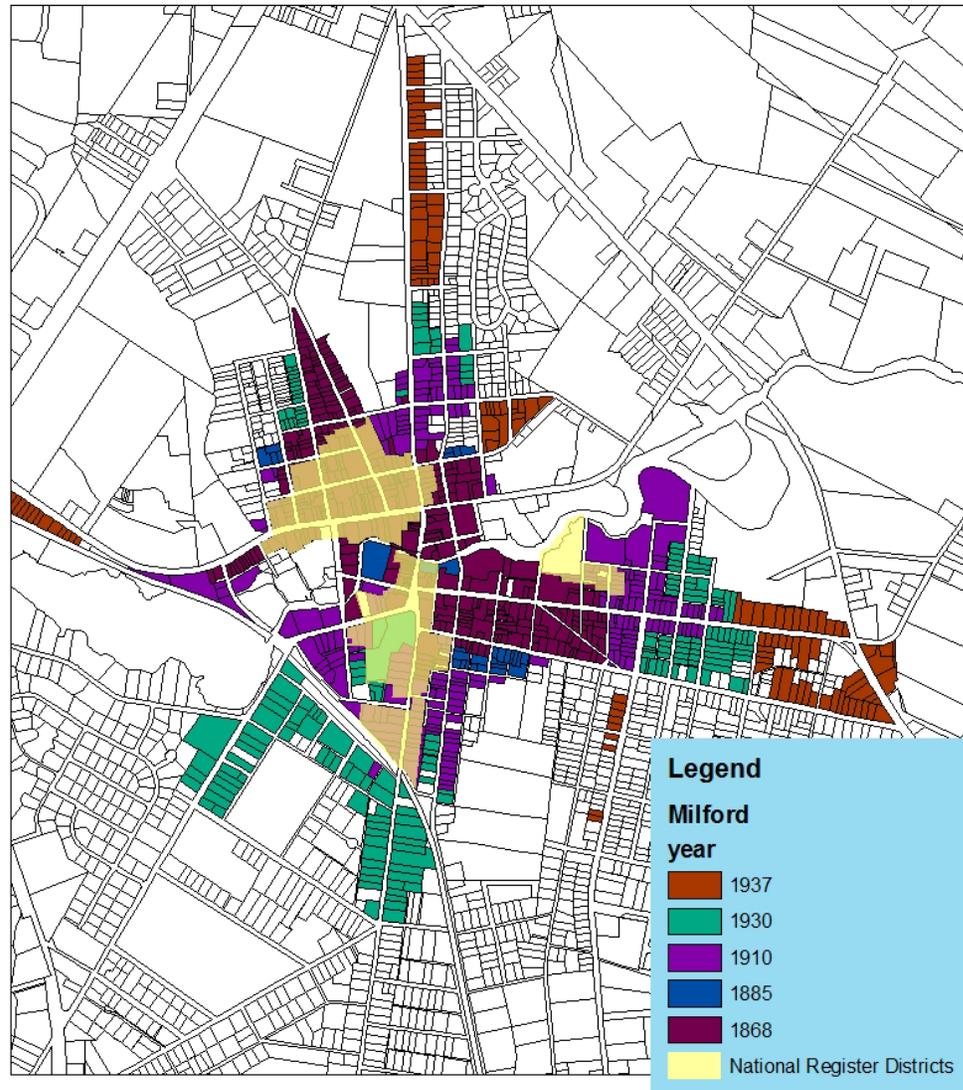


Figure 2.42 Milford's pre-1940s Growth and Historic Districts

Chapter 3

DELAWARE'S POST-1940 SMALL TOWN GROWTH

While the town typology was important in defining and sustaining town growth up until the 1940s, the national policies enacted before World War II had profound effects for the growth to come after its end. This shift marked a departure from historical town functions, needs, and typology, and created a sprawling landscape of residential developments devoid of local traditions. While the towns of Delaware developed in a distinctive ways, this later growth conforms to national building trends more than local tradition. The growth between 1940 and 1961 is typical of post-World War II suburban booms seen throughout the nation in response to federal building policies, the rise of the automobile, and the causal relationship between decentralization and suburbanization.⁷⁵

⁷⁵ The literature on the topic of suburbanization is vast, I mainly relied on a few overarching sources. Kenneth Jackson's *Crabgrass Frontier* provided an in-depth understanding of American suburbs through the 1980s. Adam Rome's *The Bulldozer in the Countryside* provided an ecological perspective on the mass-destruction of the landscape during this pervasive building boom. On the topic of building trends in the United States, *American Housing Production 1880-2000: A Concise History*, by Mason C. Doan, provided statistics, in depth analysis, and historical overview of the factors causing the suburban housing changes. Several books published on the topic of the suburbs by Dolores Hayden were also relied upon, providing a different perspective of isolation and marginalization mainly through gendered segregation.

FEDERAL POLICIES SHAPING THE LANDSCAPE

Federal policies developed starting in the 1920s contributed to the collapse of growth in the 1930s, and the subsequent explosion of growth after World War II. In 1922, President Herbert Hoover established “a division of building and housing in the Commerce Department,”⁷⁶ to stimulate the building industry. Hoover saw the construction industry as an integral aspect to aid the already ailing economy. Hoover’s initial interest in the building industry helped the economy set [residential] construction records,” during the years 1922 to 1928,⁷⁷ but this building and economic boom did not last. “By 1928 the housing market was clearly overbuilt. The increase of 6.7 million units in the housing stock from 1921 to 1928 exceeded the increase of 4.7 million households by 2 million units or 43 percent.”⁷⁸ This over-development and the accompanying increase in vacant housing was a contributing factor to the Great Depression.⁷⁹

Over-development and the bank failures leading to the Great Depression hindered new development during the 1930s. “Between 1928 and 1933, the construction of residential property fell by 95 percent, and expenditures on home

⁷⁶ Rome, Adam, *The Bulldozer in the Countryside: Suburban Sprawl and the Rise of American Environmentalism*, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2001, 22.

⁷⁷ Rome, 23.

⁷⁸ Doan, Mason C. *American Housing Production 1880-2000: A Concise History*, University Press of America: Maryland, 1997, 32.

⁷⁹ Doan, 33.

improvements fell 90 percent.”⁸⁰ Another way to quantify this loss can be seen in the “virtually comatose”⁸¹ housing market. “For the year as a whole [1933] new construction sank to 93,000 units [nationally], the smallest output since 1879.”⁸² To combat this financial crisis, policy decisions were made at a national level, to encourage new construction growth, a decision that had huge implications after the end of the Depression.

With Franklin Roosevelt's election in 1932, and implementation of the New Deal in 1933, the government moved away from its policy of a laissez-faire economy. This change in policy marked a deep ideological shift in American political thought. For the first time in “the urban settlement in North America the provision of shelter was regarded as an appropriate responsibility of government.”⁸³ In order to stimulate the economy the government enacted a series of policies designed to encourage new construction and home ownership.

Two key policies emerged during the New Deal era, the Home Owners Loan Corporation (HOLC) and the Federal Housing Act (FHA). The Home Owners Loan Corporation was designed to remedy the crisis of foreclosures during the Great Depression, refinanced tens of thousands of mortgages in the process,⁸⁴ and extended

⁸⁰ Jackson, Kenneth, 187.

⁸¹ Doan, 37.

⁸² Doan, 37.

⁸³ Jackson, Kenneth, 191.

⁸⁴ Jackson, Kenneth, 197.

the standard mortgage repayment period to twenty years.⁸⁵ The HOLC dealt directly with the public. In an effort to salvage existing mortgages, the HOLC sold its own bonds, which were guaranteed by the United States government.⁸⁶ The program financed small-home construction, and repairs, through personal mortgages.⁸⁷ The HOLC also offered extensive opportunities “for stimulating capital industries and simultaneously assisting distressed home owners.”⁸⁸

In a second move, President Franklin Roosevelt enacted the Federal Housing Act (FHA) in 1934, hoping to alleviate unemployment, and to insure long-term mortgage loans.⁸⁹⁹⁰ The program had profound effects, which eventually helped to “reduce both the average monthly [mortgage] payment[s] and the national rate of mortgage foreclosures.”⁹¹ But the FHA program had other unintended consequences. It became cheaper to buy a new house than to continue renting,⁹² and it helped to

⁸⁵ Jackson, Kenneth, 197, Ames and McClelland, 31.

⁸⁶ McDonough, J.E. “The Federal Home Loan Bank System.” The American Economic Review, Vol. 24, No. 4, December 1934, 668.

⁸⁷ McDonough, 668.

⁸⁸ McDonough, 668.

⁸⁹ Rome, 28, Ames and McClelland, 31.

⁹⁰ Jackson, Kenneth, 203-204.

⁹¹ Jackson, Kenneth, 204.

⁹² Jackson, Kenneth, 205.

accelerate the destruction of cities by “stripping them of their middle class constituency.”⁹³ In short, the FHA promoted decentralization.

If the 1920s and 30s were characterized by depression, home-foreclosures, and failed mortgages, World War II shifted America in a new direction. The war served as an economic catalyst, and even produced housing shortages, first near military bases and then in areas near defense contract production.⁹⁴ Another federal law was passed in 1940 to target the issue of defense and wartime housing shortages, Title VI,⁹⁵ which helped to lessen military housing shortages.

The federal government’s early attention to housing shortages was a trend that continued during and after the war. The nation turned its attention to the war, and when it returned to a peacetime economy, it was met with a serious housing crisis. After World War II “both the marriage and the birth rates continued at a high level. In individual terms, this rise in family formation coupled with the decline in housing starts meant that there were virtually no homes for sale or apartments for rent at war’s end.”⁹⁶ The baby boom accelerated and exacerbated the federal policies of the generation, and an onslaught of suburban development ensued. In 1945, for the sixteenth year in a row, new housing production failed to keep pace with the

⁹³ Jackson, Kenneth, 206.

⁹⁴ Doan, 45.

⁹⁵ Title VI created a program of Defense Housing Insurance, specifically targeting the construction of new housing in defense and defense production areas.

⁹⁶ Jackson, Kenneth, 232.

demand.⁹⁷ “The way had been prepared...which would greatly facilitate the take-off in housing production following the fifteen-year trauma of depression and war.”⁹⁸

The Servicemen’s Readjustment Act of 1944, also known as the G.I. Bill, was another federal policy commonly cited as a spur to suburbanization. Brought about to help returning servicemen, it also helped the federal government retain a large role in the housing market. The act provided a guaranty of loans by the U.S. government for the purchase of homes, farms, and business properties.⁹⁹ This act established the Veterans Administration (VA) to oversee the loans, and the act was subdivided for specific land-uses. The G.I. Bill guaranteed loans for more than just new purchases; it also entitled veterans loans for new construction of homes, repairs, alterations, taxes of debts incurred on an existing property, purchase of farm equipment and livestock, construction and improvements of farm buildings, and also allowed for the purchase of supplies and machinery associated with the veteran’s business.¹⁰⁰ Through the GI Bill the federal government “liberalized terms of FHA-approved loans [and] enabled veterans to use their ‘GI’ benefit in place of cash, thereby eliminating the down payment on a new house altogether.”¹⁰¹

⁹⁷ Hayden, Dolores, *Building Suburbia: Green Fields and Urban Growth 1820-2000*, Pantheon Books: New York, 2003, 131.

⁹⁸ Doan, 36.

⁹⁹ Hines, Frank T., “Demobilization and the Federal Program of Veteran Aid,” Public Administration Review, Vol. 5, No. 1 (Winter, 1945), 75.

¹⁰⁰ Hines, 76.

¹⁰¹ Ames, and McClelland, 31.

With even more mortgage loans guaranteed, the housing market was still constrained, and took almost a full decade to recover. The increases in housing stock “from 1946 to 1950 barely kept pace with the increase in households...the increase in the housing stock of 17.2 million units during the period amounted to 51 percent of the standing stock in 1945.”¹⁰² But it was not until 1950 that the housing stock surpassed the number of households. By 1957, the baby boom and the housing boom had slowed, but the change in federal policies and how Americans built their landscapes had profoundly changed.

Beyond the relative ease of buying a home offered by the federal government, the potential impact of these federal policies on Delaware’s landscape would have been profound. Not only did the GI Bill offer a chance to improve a largely rural landscape, through building improvements and appropriation of new farm machinery, it also offered a way off the farm, and into the suburbs. Beyond the increase in natural births, there was a heavy migration from farm areas, which is estimated that as much as 31 percent of the total increase in demand for housing came from this demographic.¹⁰³ Delaware experienced an explosion of growth after the war.

Between each census year in the twentieth century, Delaware’s population grew significantly. The highest growth period occurred from 1950 to 1960, right in line with the baby boom, and suburbanization. This influx of people can be seen on

¹⁰² Doan, 58-59.

¹⁰³ Doan, 57.

the landscape as well, demonstrated by the dramatic increase in new buildings shown in figures 3.18-3.23. Each of the small towns in Delaware added at least one subdivision in the period between 1937 and 1961. In no other range of previous years was the amount and frequency of growth so uniform between the towns in the case study. The shift to subdivisions as a landscape pattern is a trend that continues into the 2000s in Delaware, popularized in the years immediately following World War II, and it has yet to fall out of fashion (Figures 3.24-3.29).

Table 3.1 Population Change in the 20th Century

Census Year	Delaware's Population	Change in Population (between Census Years)
1910	202,322	
1920	223,003	+20,681
1930	238,380	+15,377
1940	266,505	+28,125
1950	318,085	+51,580
1960	446,292	+128,207

DECENTRALIZATION

It is difficult to pinpoint the cultural shift away from the city; there were several factors that contributed to decentralization and suburbanization. The social

and political climate of post-World War II America did not create the current structural landscape, but exacerbated and accelerated trends emerging before the war.

As early as 1939, the unintended consequence, decentralization, of governmental programs like the FHA and HOLC was already emerging. One senior FHA official reported at a convention for American Planners, “decentralization is taking place. It is not a policy, it is a reality—and it is as impossible for us to change this trend as it is to change the desire of birds to migrate to a more suitable location.”¹⁰⁴ Decentralization, or the “movement away from the areas near principal office, commercial, and financial centers,”¹⁰⁵ is tied to the idea of suburbanization because it is a result of the population shift. Decentralization and suburbanization describe the same phenomenon, viewed from the perspective of the city or the countryside respectively. The urban cores were decentralizing, while the rural landscapes were suburbanizing.

At first the trends of decentralization and suburbanization may have applied only to residential trends, they but quickly expanded to other aspects of urban life as well. “The deconcentration of post-World War II American cities was not simply a matter of split-level homes and neighborhood schools. It involved almost every facet of national life, from manufacturing to shopping to professional services.”¹⁰⁶ No longer were the cities beacons of industry, or employment; when the

¹⁰⁴ Jackson, Kenneth, 190

¹⁰⁵ Hoyt, Homer. “Urban Decentralization,” The Journal of Land & Public Utility Economics, Vol. 16, No. 3 (August 1940), 270.

¹⁰⁶ Jackson, Kenneth, 266.

residents left the city, so too did everything else. Despite Delaware's small size it was not immune to this restructuring of urban life. "In Wilmington, Delaware, 66 percent of area jobs in 1940 were in the core city; by 1970; the figure had fallen below one quarter."¹⁰⁷

AUTOMOBILES AND ROADWAYS

The suburbanization of the American countryside was a complex phenomenon, and much of the literature on decentralization has attributed it to the automobile. The rise in automobiles, assembly lines, and roadway construction and expansion are a few of the nation-wide trends aiding rampant residential growth.

Before large automobile ownership, the desire for better roadways was an emerging issue in American discourse. The first public outcry for better roads can be attributed to the Good Roads Movement of the 1880s. However the vehicle of choice was not yet the automobile, but the bicycle.¹⁰⁸ The bicycle required smoother road surfaces than previous modes of transportation, and with bicycle rider-ship as high as approximately 4 million in 1896,¹⁰⁹ the need was almost overwhelming. The League of American Wheelman (LAW) formed in 1880 with the aims of "improvement of public-roads and highways."¹¹⁰ LAW allied themselves with Farmers' Alliances and

¹⁰⁷ Jackson, Kenneth, 191.

¹⁰⁸ Hugill, Peter J., "Good Roads and the Automobile in the United States 1880-1929," Geographical Review, Vol. 72, No. 3 (July, 1982), 327.

¹⁰⁹ Hugill, 327.

¹¹⁰ Flink, James J., *The Automobile Age*, MIT Press: Cambridge, 1988, 4.

the Populist movements, who were interested in breaking up the farm-to-market monopoly of the railroad systems, and secured a forum for their concerns at a national level.¹¹¹ The bicycle was the perfect predecessor to the automobile. It required smooth road surfaces, created pneumatic tires,¹¹² and created a desire and a way for the elite classes to escape the masses of the city, and their dependence on railway lines and schedules.¹¹³ For the first time people could travel when and where they wanted to.

Contemporary to the establishment of the LAW and the Good Roads Movement in the United States was the creation of the automobile in Europe. The wealthy minority in America began to import French automobiles at the end of the nineteenth century, and began to manufacture their own models to avoid heavy taxes.¹¹⁴ Eventually Americans switched from the French model of automobiles to that of the German Mercedes, which required smooth surfaces, and could reach the awesome speed of 15 miles per hour, fast enough to rival railroad transportation.¹¹⁵

While the problem of how to pay for public road improvements was being sorted out, Americans focused on creating their own automobiles. The first American

¹¹¹ Flink, 5, and Hugill 328.

¹¹² Pneumatic tires consist of a fitted rubber based ring that is used as an inflatable cushion and generally filled with compressed air.

¹¹³ Hugill, 328.

¹¹⁴ Hugill, 330.

¹¹⁵ Hugill, 330.

attempts at automobile creation were nothing better than motorized buggies.¹¹⁶ But the true genius in the American automotive model was the shift away from an elite plaything to something attainable by all man.¹¹⁷

No idea or man better illustrates this shift in marketing, than Henry Ford, his Model T, and the assembly line. Through Ford's innovative use of high-volume production utilizing low-skill workers, he was able to revolutionize the car industry, by creating a higher volume of automobiles at a lower price. The Model T was the first mass-produced gasoline automobile. The sales figures reflect how popular the car, and the assembly technique was. "In 1916 the runabout Model T cost \$345, while the touring car cost \$360. Production of the Model T in 1916 was 738,811 units, giving Ford about half the market for new cars in the United States."¹¹⁸ By 1920, Americans owned 9,211,295 motor vehicles, roughly one in eleven people.¹¹⁹ Approximately 50 percent of the automobiles were manufactured by Ford, and farmers owned one-third of the vehicles.¹²⁰ By 1930 the number of cars owned by farmers had increased to 58 percent.¹²¹

¹¹⁶ Flink, 22, and Hugill, 335.

¹¹⁷ Flink, 26, and Hugill, 336.

¹¹⁸ Flink, 37.

¹¹⁹ Horgan, John J., "Henry Ford: Captain of Industry," *Irish Quarterly*, Vol. 10, No. 29 (Sept., 1921), 442.

¹²⁰ Horgan, 442.

¹²¹ Hugill, 340.

An important fact to keep in mind during this rapid period of change is that it was not only the automobile and the improvement of roads that helped the rural population of the United States, but the mechanization of farm equipment. Ford Motor Companies also manufactured a tractor, known as the Fordson (Ford and Son); initially marketed in 1914, it was the smallest and cheapest tractor designed for farm use.¹²² It was also a mass produced commodity, like the Model T. Ford produced 50,000 Fordson tractors in the first half of 1921 alone.¹²³

Another aspect revolutionizing the field of automobiles and tractors was Ford's use of fixed parts. It was easy for the farm community, who regularly interacted with machinery to fix the Model T. Ford also ensured easy purchasing methods for his standard parts. He utilized mail-order catalogues, thus guaranteeing that most of rural America would make their own repairs.¹²⁴

During Ford's heyday in the 1910s, the federal government made initial attempts to keep up with the rapid and increased production of the automobile. While there had been previous attempts, such as those by LAW, to establish better and smoother road systems, it was not until the Federal Aid Road Act of 1916, that there was a nation-wide policy regarding roads. The Federal Aid Road Act of 1916 "moved the government toward a transportation policy emphasizing and benefiting the road...and the private motor car."¹²⁵ The act stipulated that the construction,

¹²² Horgan, 443.

¹²³ Horgan, 443.

¹²⁴ Hugill, 337.

¹²⁵ Jackson, Kenneth, 191.

reconstruction, and improvement of highways was to be paid in part with federal funds, but the upkeep of the roads, was the primary responsibility of the state governments.¹²⁶ The act appropriated \$75 million to be spent over a five-year period for the improvement of post roads.¹²⁷ Prior to this period road construction was a state and local activity.

Five years later, the Federal Highway Act of 1921 changed federal participation to a cost-per-miles program, which fixed expenses at \$15,000 per mile in 1924.¹²⁸ The emphasis was on creating an interstate road-system, and strengthened the role of state government in highway planning. Almost \$75 million dollars was appropriated for the year 1922 alone, and 10,247 miles of federally funded highways were built, a dramatic increase of 3.5 times as many built under the 1916 Act.¹²⁹

As the government continued to spend more money on roads, the American public continued their consumption of them. A statistic that underscores the importance placed on cars was that 70 percent of non-farm households owned a private automobile during the Great Depression.¹³⁰ Despite economic hardships associated with the era, Americans continued to buy automobiles, a trend which facilitated decentralization.

¹²⁶ Sanders, Paul H., "Federal Aid for State Law Enforcement," Law and Contemporary Problems, Vol. 1, No. 4, (Oct., 1934), 475.

¹²⁷ Flink, 170.

¹²⁸ Hugill, 342.

¹²⁹ Flink, 171, and Hugill, 343.

¹³⁰ Doan, 36.

The next and last major piece of legislation to impact suburban growth was the Interstate Highway Act of 1956. This act established a non-divertable Highway Trust Fund, paying for 90 percent of the construction fees of a 41,000-mile toll-free expressway all across the country.¹³¹ Conversely, during this time period of mega-road expansion between 1947, and 1970, only 1 percent of all local, state, and federal transportation funding (totaling \$249 billion) was spent on public transportation options.¹³² The government approved of the automobile, and pushed it as an appropriate mode of transportation, much as they did with the single-family detached home.

Beyond the government's endorsement of the automobile, the United States was the perfect location to adopt this method of primary transportation. With its vast land area, scattered pockets of settlements, and low population densities the United States needed the automobile, unlike any other country.¹³³

One of the most important factors to facilitate suburban growth in Delaware was the automobile, and the statewide road building campaign it inspired. Before the car's heyday in the twentieth century, Delaware did have previously established north-south roads that were critical to the state's economic growth and

¹³¹ Flink, 176.

¹³² Flink, 176, and Ames and McClelland, 24.

¹³³ Flink, 43.

settlement patterns. The automobile became an agent of change for the lower counties.¹³⁴

Due to the geographical and man-made boundaries of the state, the most necessary roadways, historically and currently, are roadways orientated in a north-south direction. East-west navigation across the state was made possible by water-navigation through rivers, and canals. The location of Wilmington in the northern portion of the state only increased the need for statewide north-south roads. Most of the spatial landscape change through suburbanization is attributed to this linking of space in the northern and southern parts of Delaware.

The first of the north-south roads established in Delaware was the Kings Highway. Dating to the eighteenth century, the road ran from Lewes up the coast to Dover, then to Wilmington. The road created and connected several small towns along the way.¹³⁵ The Kings Highway was located very near the coast, east of present day U.S. route 113 and created an initial pattern of neglect for the interior of the state. From the very beginning the northern part of the state received the most traffic, and was rewarded with the most extensive and well-established road and ferry system.¹³⁶

¹³⁴ For information on Delaware's roadways and motoring history, I relied on the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT) website, and published materials. As well as Susan Mulchahey Chase's dissertation "The Process of Suburbanization and the Use of Restrictive Deed Covenants as Private Zoning, Wilmington, Delaware, 1900-1941."

¹³⁵ John Milner Associates, Inc. *Historic Context for the DuPont Highway U.S. Route 113, Kent and Sussex County, Delaware* (July 2005), 4.

¹³⁶ *Historic Context for the DuPont Highway*, 4.

The area south of Dover was more sparsely populated, and as a result of the more rural setting had fewer roadways and transportation options.¹³⁷

While some roadway building and expansion continued in the state during the eighteenth century, it was not until the end of the nineteenth century that the idea of road improvement began to emerge. With the Good Roads Movement, increased accessibility to the automobile, and the NHA, improved roadways were coming to Delaware. At the helm of roadway improvement was Thomas Coleman du Pont.¹³⁸ In 1917 he wrote a letter to the State Highway Department,

With the advent of the automobile, I realized the wonderful development of which our little state is susceptible and that the first essential for this development is a well laid out system of highways traversing all the sections of the State. It was obvious from the beginning that the backbone of such a system must be a main North and South highway.¹³⁹

In 1911, du Pont founded the Coleman DuPont Road Inc. and began construction of a highway to run the entire state of Delaware, almost 100 miles in

¹³⁷ *Historic Context for the DuPont Highway*, 4.

¹³⁸ Chase, Susan Mulchahey, Ph.D. Dissertation, “The Process of Suburbanization and the Use of Restrictive Deed Covenants as Private Zoning, Wilmington, Delaware, 1900-1941,” approved in Spring 1995, by the University of Delaware, Newark, Delaware, 81. and *Historic Context for the DuPont Highway*, 5-6.

¹³⁹ *Historic Context for the DuPont Highway*, 6.

length.¹⁴⁰ In 1917 du Pont made an offer to turn over the highway development to the state and agreed to continue to finance construction costs.¹⁴¹

The building of this highway aided the popularity of the automobile in Delaware. While the assembly line lowered the cost of a car, the new du Pont highway allowed southern Delawareans better access to improved roads. Before the roadway construction in 1910, only 1,000 vehicles were registered in the state,¹⁴² but by 1925 40,000 vehicles were registered in Delaware, 44 percent of them in Kent and Sussex counties combined.¹⁴³¹⁴⁴

The DuPont Highway continued to be the great linkage between the northern and southern parts of the state through most of the twentieth century. During the course of the twentieth century different sections of the highway were improved, but the building of Delaware Route 1 eventually eclipsed the roadway. Construction was completed in 1995 for Route 1, making the DuPont Highway obsolete north of Milford to I-95.¹⁴⁵ This improvement of roadways, coupled with the rise in

¹⁴⁰ *Historic Context for the DuPont Highway*, 8.

¹⁴¹ Chase, 82, and *Historic Context for the DuPont Highway*, 12.

¹⁴² *Historic Context for the DuPont Highway*, 5.

¹⁴³ Chase reports different figures for different years all characterizing an increase in automobile ownership in the state of Delaware. She states on page 76, “In 1900 there were 30 motor vehicles...by 1915...the number had increased to over five thousands...[and] by the start of the 1920s automobile registrations stood at 18,300.”

¹⁴⁴ *Historic Context for the DuPont Highway*, 16.

¹⁴⁵ *Historic Context for the DuPont Highway*, 29.

automobile ownership, helped propel suburban growth in all parts of Delaware, especially in Kent and Sussex counties. Coupled with the private automobile, Americans were freed for the first time from the dependency on public transportation or transportation that required physical exertion, since “automobile families had neither to wait nor to walk.”¹⁴⁶ As small towns populations grew, new residential patterns and neighborhoods were established, most commonly utilizing large-scale suburban development.¹⁴⁷

CHARACTERISTICS OF SUBURBANIZATION

Increased involvement of the federal government led to the standardization of housing stock and conditions in post-World War II America. The traits that emerged during this time period developed devoid of place, material, or historic characteristics. What materialized was a new any-town architectural and planning aesthetic, the suburb and subdivision.

Scholars on the topic of suburbanization, including Dolores Hayden, Kenneth T. Jackson, David L. Ames, and Linda McClelland, have identified the characteristics of these new building types. Commonalities identified for suburbs include new housing starts located on the periphery, on cheaper readily available land. New construction consisted of relatively low-density housing, detached, single-family homes, in large pre-planned neighborhoods. These neighborhoods were characterized

¹⁴⁶ Jackson, Kenneth, 172.

¹⁴⁷ Ames, Callahan, Herman, and Siders, *Delaware Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan*, 51.

by architectural similarity, easy automobile accessibility, reduced suggestion of wealth, and racial and economic homogeneity.¹⁴⁸ In an attempt to recreate a semi-pastoral environment, somewhere between city and country, the suburb with its large rolling lawn was the symbol of the ideological shift. The idea of these new pre-planned neighborhoods reshaped the housing market. Before World War II, “one-third of all houses were built by their owners... By the late 1950s, about two-thirds of the new houses in the United States were produced by large builders.”¹⁴⁹ Homeowners had little choice other than to comply with these new building types, but most were happy to do so.

The federal government has transformed a nation of cities and small towns into a nation of sprawling metropolitan regions. Delawareans were no exception to the trends of suburbanization, and the ramifications of federal policies dot the current landscape in Delaware, creating an environment of decentralized sprawl.¹⁵⁰

As previously discussed, most of Delaware’s planned small towns utilized the gridiron plat as a basis, but this form was attacked and criticized during the twentieth century for its uniformity and narrow lots.¹⁵¹ Many different types of suburban landscape patterns emerged, most of which incorporated FHA principles for neighborhood planning. Typical features included the elimination of sharp corners,

¹⁴⁸ Jackson, Kenneth, 238-241, and Hayden, *Field Guide*, 8.

¹⁴⁹ Hayden, *Building Suburbia*, 132.

¹⁵⁰ Hayden, *A Field Guide to Sprawl*, W.W. Norton & Company: New York, 2004, 11.

¹⁵¹ Ames, and McClelland, 37.

lengthening of blocks to eliminate unnecessary streets, generous lot sizes, and curvilinear road layouts.¹⁵²

In the next section, the case studies will be used to identify how suburban patterns manifest themselves on the Delaware landscape. The post-World War II growth identified through the GIS analysis, illustrates the shift away from local land use patterns. By examining the case studies, suburban patterns through current aerial imagery, patterns can be identified. These landscapes patterns later become beneficial to identifying and defining character for the proposed character districts.

New Castle

Visible on a current aerial photograph of the Town of New Castle is a subdivision built prior to 1961. This subdivision incorporates elements of FHA design. Of note are the longer block sizes than the historic downtown roads. Also the lot sizes are larger. The last feature which occurs in the new suburban growth is the curvilinear roads, set in a clustered development.

The subdivision is located at the corner of Route 141 and Route 273, the major historic roadway into New Castle. The success of suburban development is also tied to the importance of the automobile. It is located too far to the east of the older historic core to walk; the residents of this subdivision were undoubtedly auto-dependent. This development in New Castle contains typical landscapes patterns from the period, and stands out from the old growth identified in the historic district (Figures 3.1-3.3).

¹⁵² Ames, and McClelland, 49.



Figure 3.1 Aerial Image of a Subdivision in New Castle (Source: Google Earth)



Figure 3.2 Aerial Photograph of Old New Castle (Source: Google Earth)



Figure 3.3 Aerial Image with New Castle's Historic and Suburban Growth (Source: Google Earth)

The roadways in the historic district are noticeably shorter and straighter than those in the subdivision, joining at right angles. The lots in old New Castle are significantly smaller than the subdivision on the periphery of town. In the historic core of New Castle, along selected roads like Market Street and Delaware Street, the parcel sizes range from 0.03 acres to as many as 1.15, with the most frequent lot size being closer to 0.06 acres. While in the 1960s subdivisions, the new lot sizes are a consistent 0.15 acres, double what the previous average had been. The growth is more clustered here, making the identification of individual properties much harder than in the

subdivision, where the boundaries of home-ownership are easily conveyed and understood.

Delaware City

Delaware City also has a big subdivision development on the periphery of town, much like New Castle. The scale and shape of the newer development almost overpowers the small town, and does little to mimic the earlier building trends. The historic plat of the town is north of Route 9, while the Post World War II suburb is south of it. The scale of the new suburb rivals the older historic portion of the town, and does little to emulate road-scapes or lot sizes.

The residential growth occurred between 1937 and 1961. This subdivision also has the characteristics of post-War World II suburbs described by the FHA. This subdivision adheres to the natural features present in Delaware City, namely the water and canals. The subdivision also eliminated sharp corners in favor of longer streets, with curvilinear roadways. Again the lot sizes are more homogeneous, and consistently bigger than they were historically in this maritime town (Figure 3.4-3.6). The average parcel size from the post-World War II period was, like New Castle, 0.15 acres. The smallest parcel size in the subdivision is .014 acres, while the largest from the 1960s is 0.16 acres.

In the older areas of Delaware City, unlike in the subdivision growth, the lot sizes are smaller, the roads are rectilinear, and all growth conforms to the grid plan. On Clinton Street, an area built up in 1868, the lot sizes vary a great degree. The smallest parcel is .02 acres, with the largest lot, a commercial space, is 0.34 acres.

Some of what has occurred in this area was infill to the previously established grid-system; the infill is more appropriate to the small-town history than the subdivision growth.



Figure 3.4 Current Aerial Image of Delaware City showing Historic and Suburban Growth (Source: Google Earth)



Figure 3.5 Aerial Image of a Subdivision in New Castle (Source: Google Earth)



Figure 3.6 Aerial Image of the Historic Downtown of Delaware City (Source: Google Earth)

Camden

Despite the fact that Camden was not a planned town, it was not immune to the decentralizing forces of suburbanization. The subdivision south of the original town settlement (Figures 3.7-3.9), located at the intersection of Route 10 and Main Street, was constructed between 1937 and 1961. While there is very little room in the original settlement of Camden, the new subdivision is again located on the periphery

of the town. This subdivision has no spatial relationship to the town, and does not mimic any previously established landscape patterns from the crossroad town. The new suburban growth is characterized by larger lot sizes than in the original town, and detached homes. Within this subdivision there are a few curvilinear roadways, but the curves are not as severe as in other subdivisions.



Figure 3.7 Current Aerial Image of Camden showing Historic and Suburban Growth (Source: Google Earth)

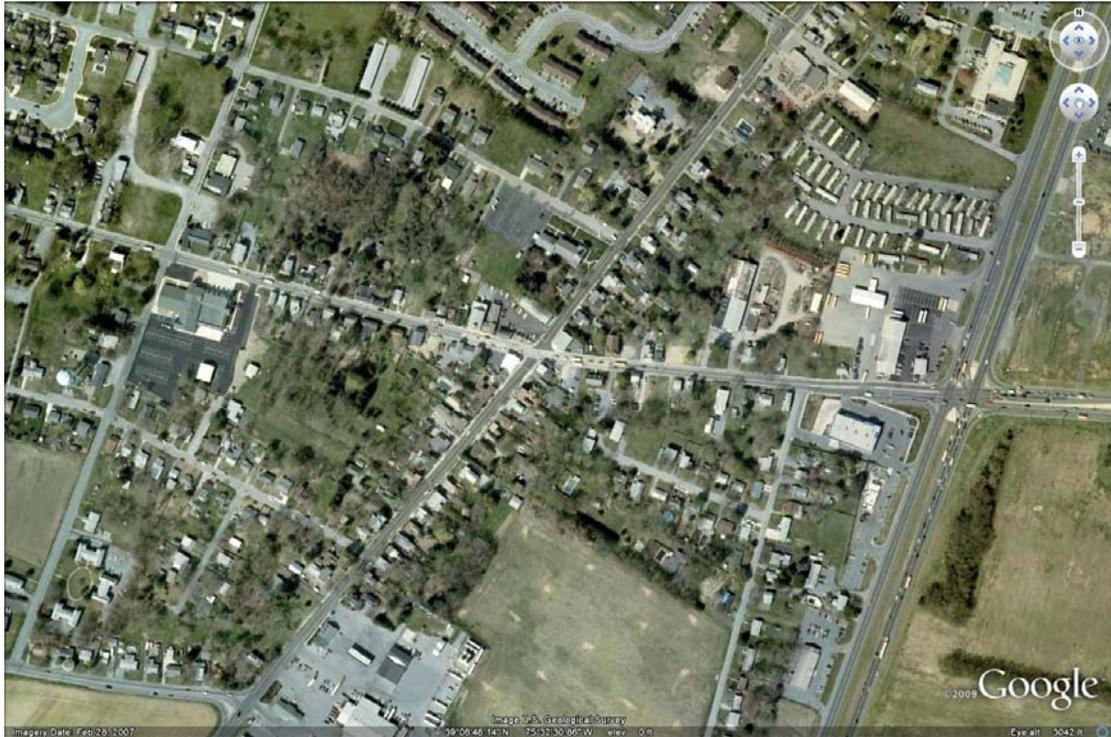


Figure 3.8 Aerial Image of the Historic Downtown of Camden (Source: Google Earth)

Another important factor regarding the location of this subdivision, the historic part of Camden is not located on a major roadway, but the post World War II subdivision is located right off of the DuPont highway. The location was likely to have been very important to the placement of the suburb. It gave suburbanites quick access to the

main north-south roadway of the time period, linking the location of suburbs to the popularity of automobiles.



Figure 3.9 Aerial Image of a Subdivision in Camden (Source: Google Earth)

Milford

The town of Milford historically was never formally platted out. Its growth was organic, and as a result of its lack of planning, the town has become one of the largest areas in this study. Another factor aiding to its growth is its advantageous location to major roadways within the state. The junction between Route 1 and U.S. Route 113 (DuPont Highway) is located just to the north of Milford, with Route 113 located to the west, and Route 1 to the east. It was a propitious location for the automobile age (Figure 3.10).



Figure 3.10 Map of Milford, showing the location of the two major roadways (in red), Route 113 and Route 1. (Source Delaware DataMIL)

Due to Milford's favorable location, it too experienced suburban growth. Figure 3.11 shows one of Milford's subdivisions. Unlike the other small towns, which only had one major suburban residential development, Milford developed multiple subdivisions. This particular example is located to the east of Route 113, and provides the subdivision with direct access to the major roadway. The construction of the houses in this suburb dates it to post-1961, but the road network for the subdivision had been laid out in 1961 (Figure 3.12). Even though this suburb postdates 1961, it still incorporates the features of the earlier post-World War II suburbs, typified by larger lot sizes, detached homes, and curvilinear roadways.



Figure 3.11 Aerial Image of a Subdivision in Milford, Delaware. (Source: Google Earth)

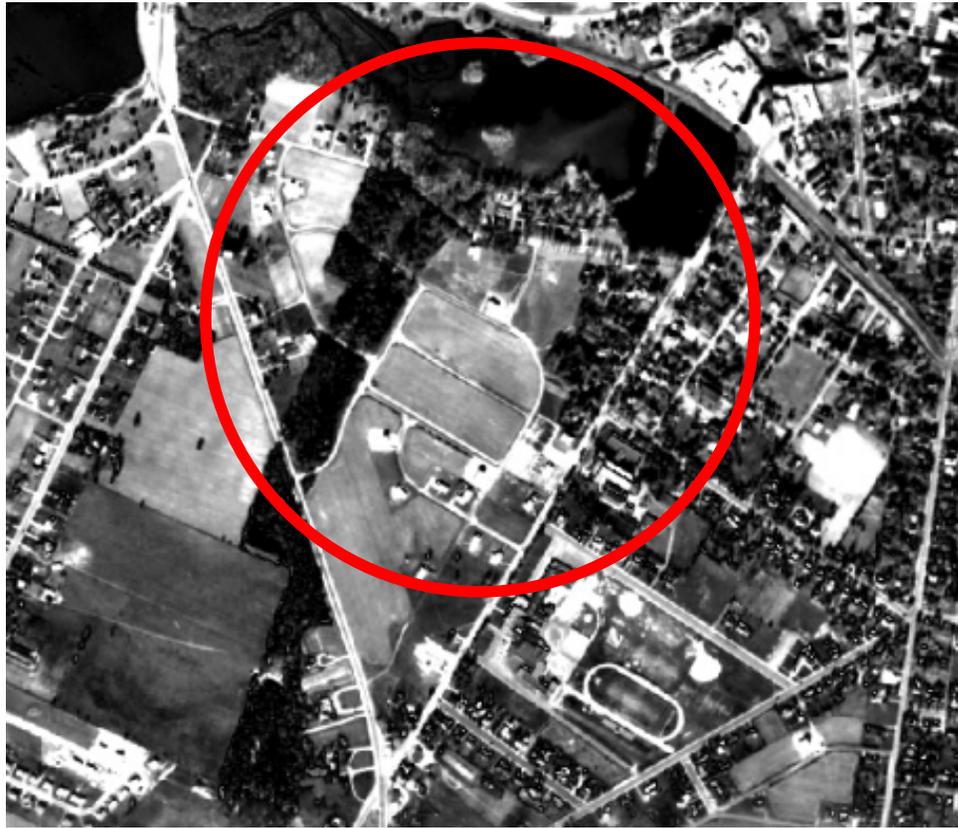


Figure 3.12 Showing the same area as the photo above, in the 1961 aerial photograph while there is no residential development yet, the roadways had been laid out to accommodate this new suburb.

Georgetown

The proximity to major roadways has always been an integral factor to the location of Georgetown. Two major roadways, Route 9 and Route 18, intersect at the center of town. Some of the first decentralized suburban growth to appear in Georgetown between 1937 and 1961 is located off of these major roadways, Route 9 and North Bedford Street (figure 3.13).



Figure 3.13 Aerial Image of One of Georgetown's Residential Enclaves
(Source: Google)



Figure 3.14 Current Aerial Image of Georgetown showing Historic and Suburban Growth (Source: Google Earth)

This tiny subdivision lacks most of the features seen in the other suburbs, but it is set apart from the center of the town, and it has larger lot sizes than those in the town, with single-family detached dwellings.

Another post-1997 example of suburban design in Georgetown is more representative of typical design patterns (Figure 3.15). The recognizable features from the FHA guidelines have become even more exaggerated by the end of the twentieth century. The lot sizes and houses are bigger than the initial suburban development in Georgetown. The majority of the roadways terminate in cul-de-sacs, allowing no through access for travelers, or residents of the subdivision. This model is increasingly automobile-dependent. What is clear from this late twentieth century model is that the suburb and the subdivision building method was still in use in the small towns of Delaware. If anything they were perfected, and continue to fill the landscape.



Figure 3.15 Late Twentieth Century Example of Suburban Development in Georgetown. (Source: Google Earth)

Bridgeville

Unlike the other small towns in this study, Bridgeville did not have any large suburban growth occur within its municipal boundaries in the twentieth century. All of the growth that occurred in the century continued to follow Bridgeville's grid system. However, in the twenty-first century, a large subdivision occurs south of the

town, along Wilson-Farm Road. While the development was platted out within the last ten-years, it emphasizes the fact that Delawareans are continuing to employ this method of home building. Visible in Figure 3.17, is an example of the continuation of suburban growth. This large subdivision is disproportionate and discordant with the original historic town. The roadways are no longer orthogonal, and in this example not a single roadway is straight. Instead all of the roadways, and houses are clustered along curvilinear roadways, interspersed with man-made lakes.



Figure 3.16 Aerial photograph of Twentieth Century Suburban Growth on Bridgeville's periphery. (Source: Google Earth)



Figure 3.17 Current Aerial Photograph of Bridgeville, and the new Suburban Development South of the Historic Town (Source: Google Earth)

CONCLUSION

The 1960s marked a sharp change in Delaware's landscape patterns. No longer was town typology dictating and defining town growth. The involvement by the Federal government marked the end of local growth patterns, and facilitated a sprawling landscape of residential developments. This change is visible in the case studies. It is no longer relevant to talk about the initial town footprint. Regardless of history, or location, all six towns added remarkably similar residential growth.

Camden's 1961 Growth

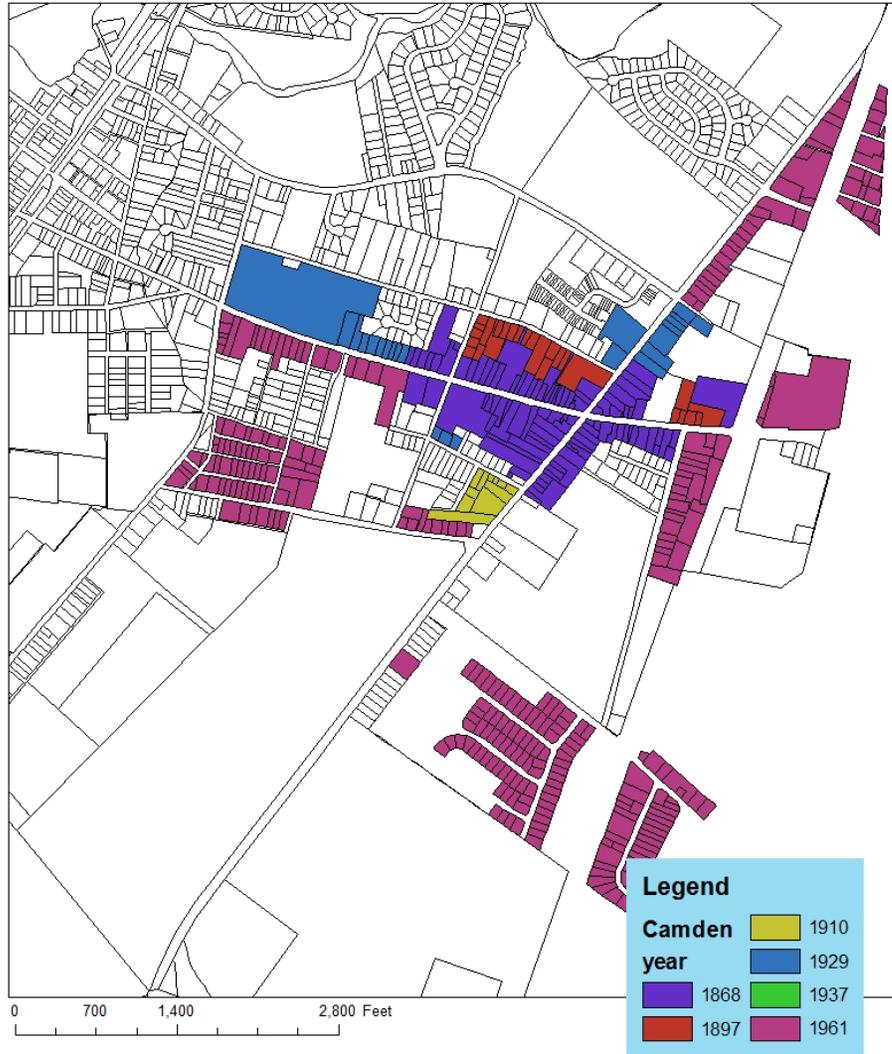


Figure 3.18 GIS Image illustrating Camden's growth to 1961

Bridgeville's 1961 Growth

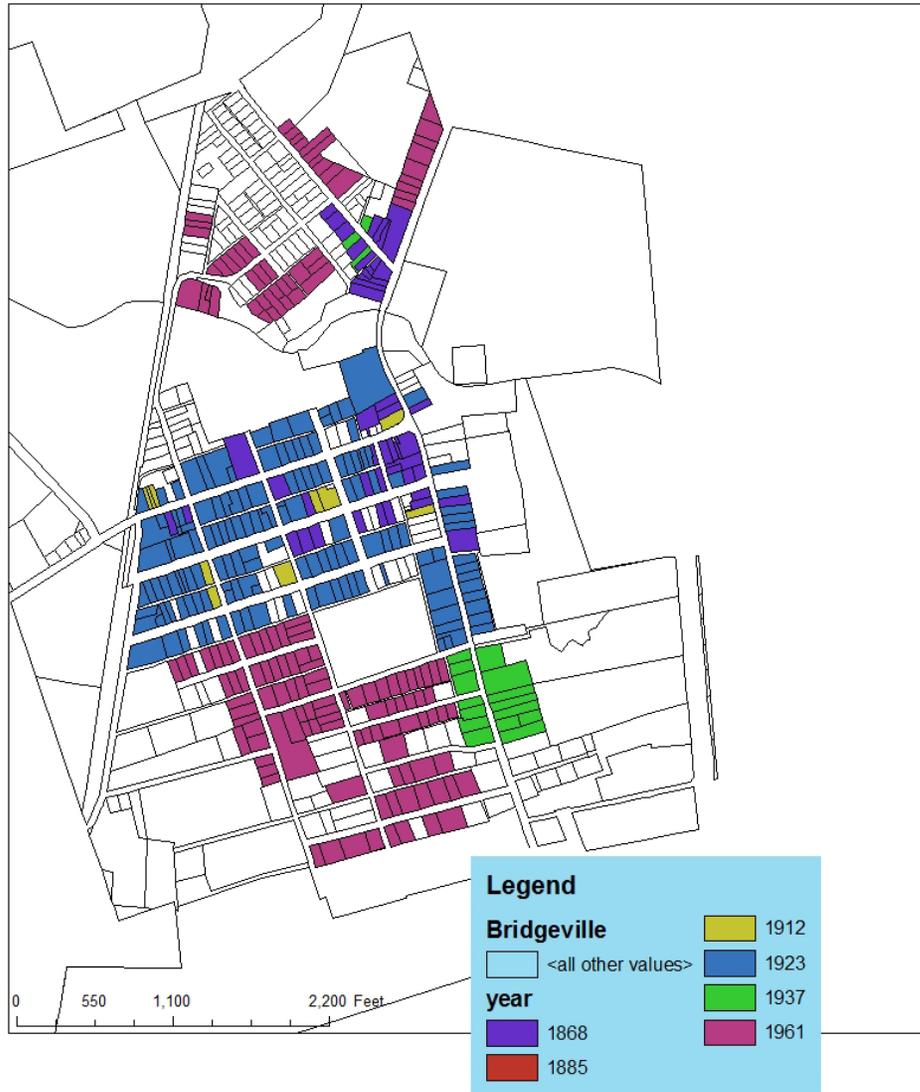


Figure 3.19 GIS Image illustrating Bridgeville's growth to 1961

Delaware City's 1961 Growth

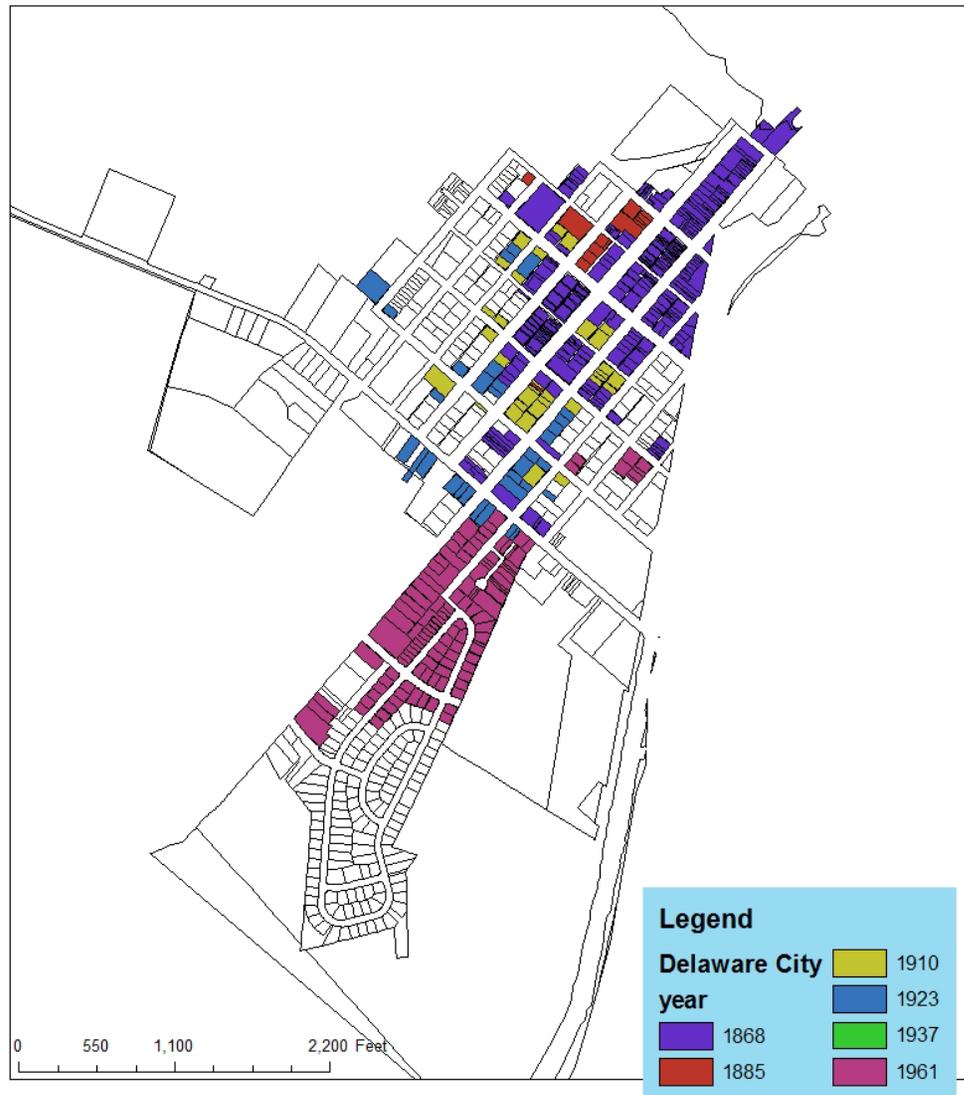


Figure 3.20 GIS Image illustrating Delaware City's growth to 1961

New Castle's 1961 Growth

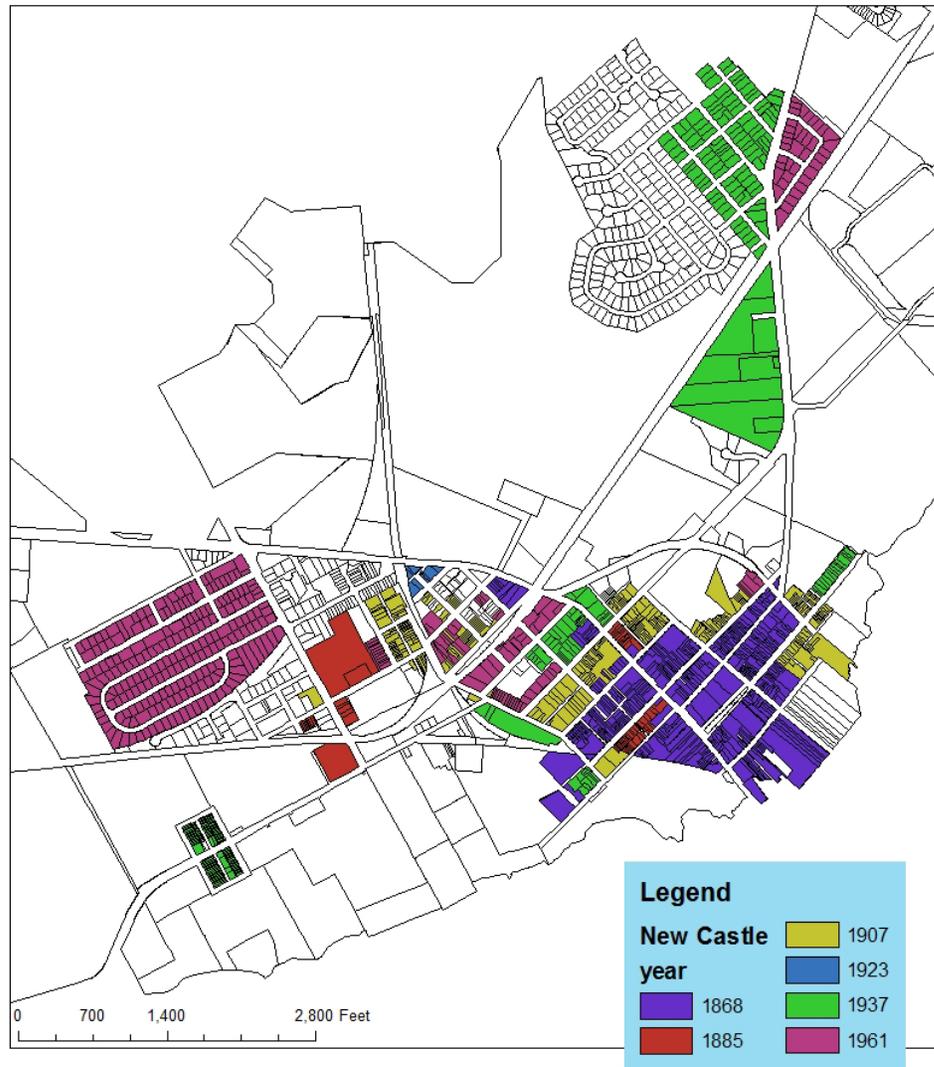


Figure 3.21 GIS Image illustrating New Castle's growth to 1961

Georgetown's 1961 Growth

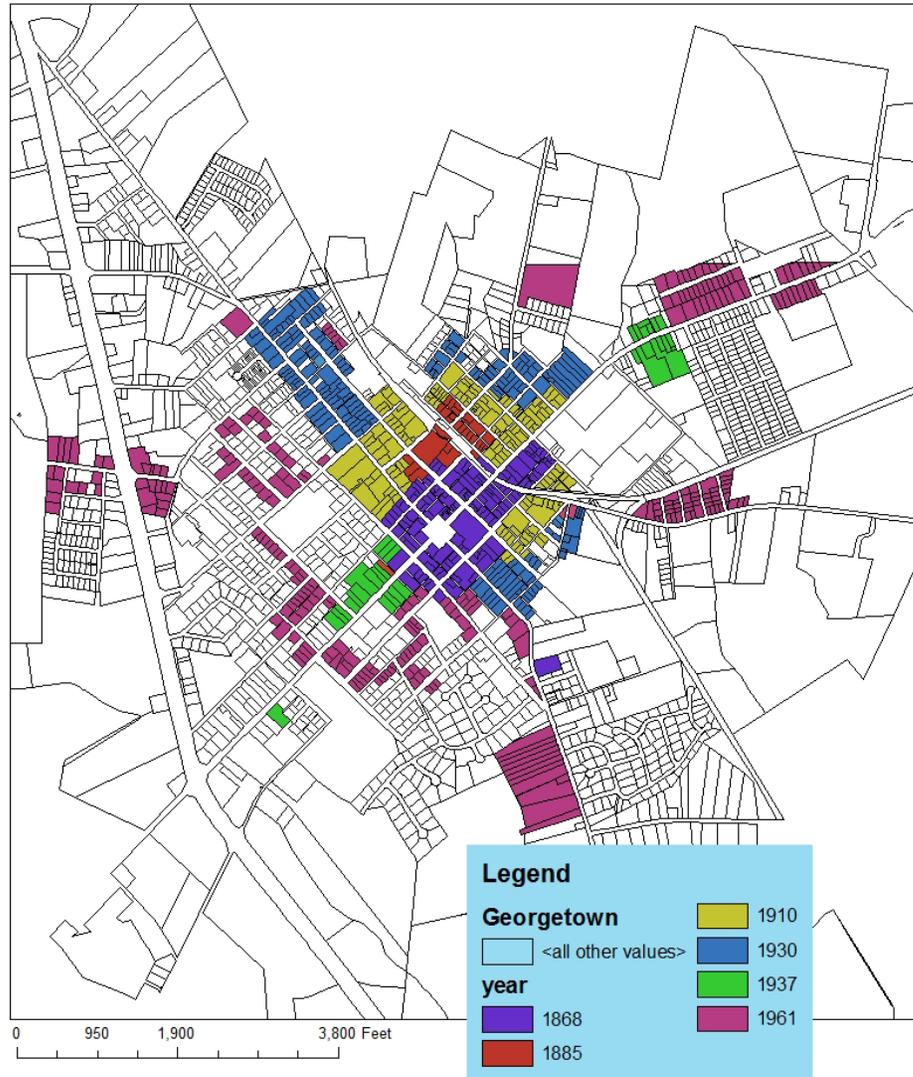


Figure 3.22 GIS Image illustrating Georgetown's growth to 1961

Milford's 1961 Growth

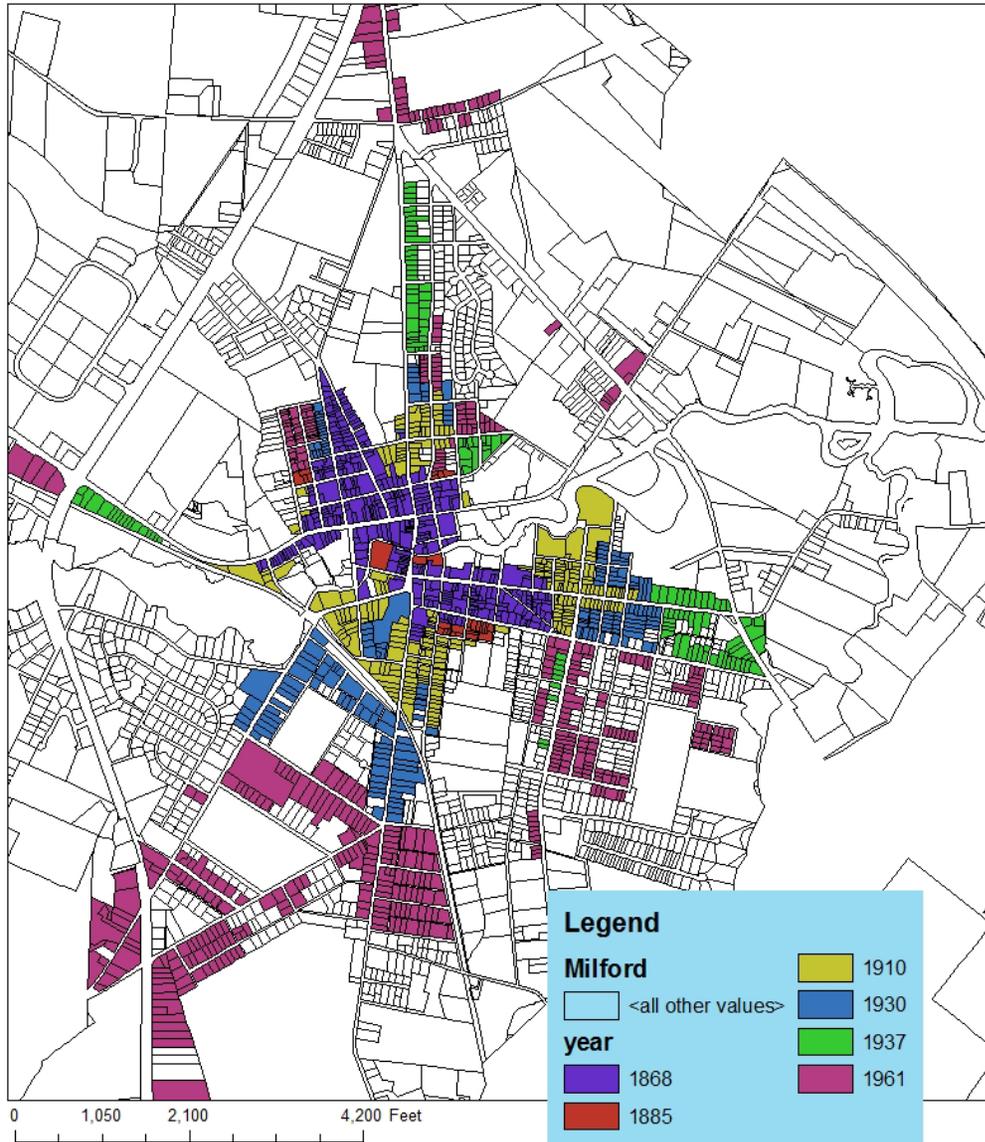


Figure 3.23 GIS Image illustrating Milford's growth to 1961

Camden's 1997 Growth

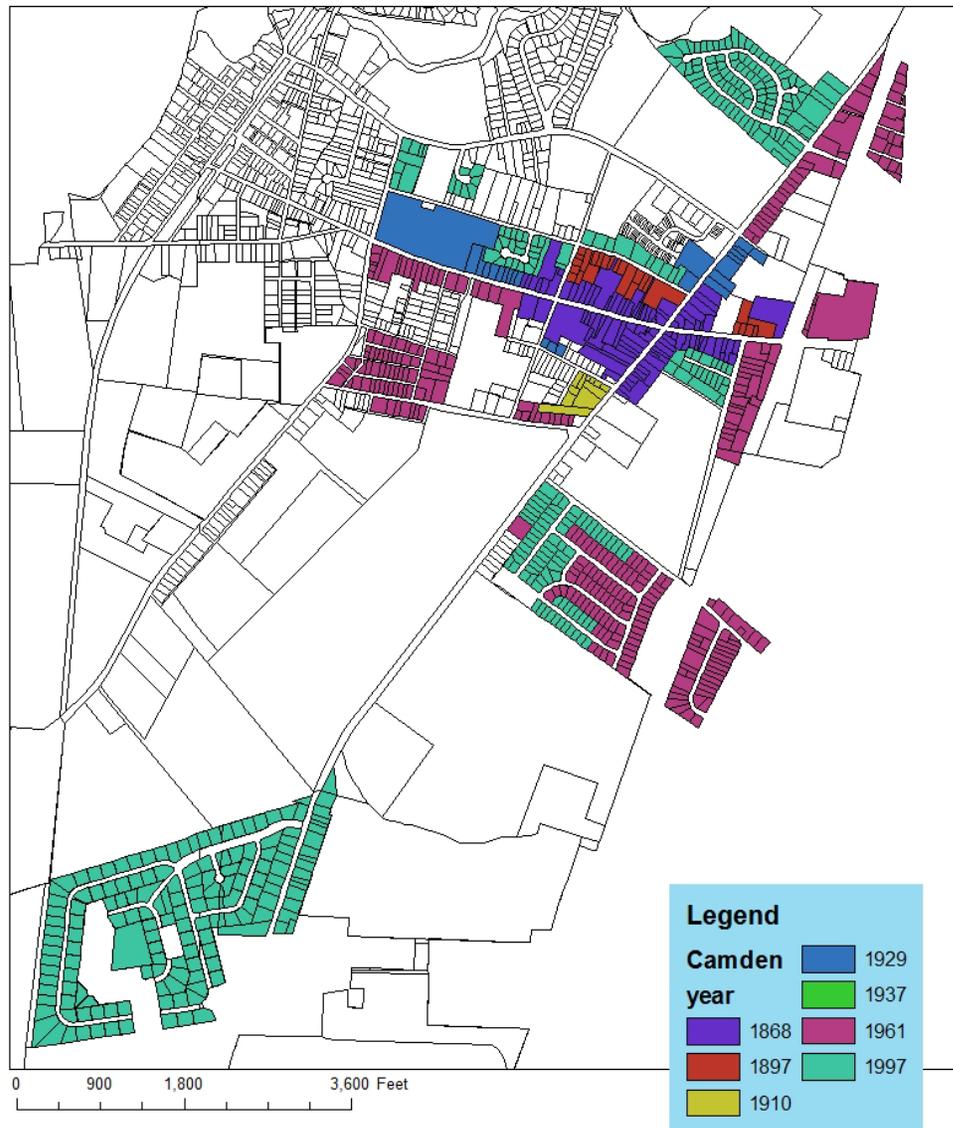


Figure 3.24 GIS Image illustrating Camden's growth to 1997

Bridgeville's 1997 Growth

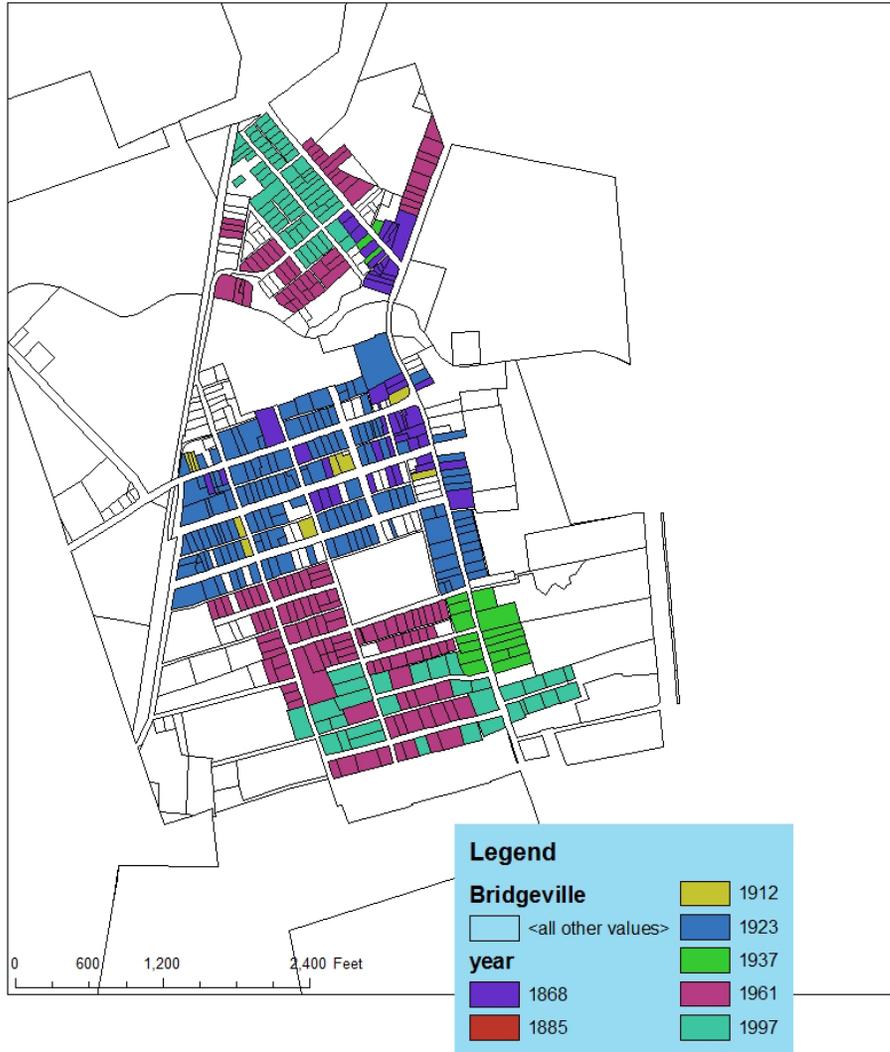


Figure 3.25 GIS Image illustrating Bridgeville's growth to 1997

Delaware City's 1997 Growth



Figure 3.26 GIS Image illustrating Delaware City's growth to 1997

New Castle's 1997 Growth

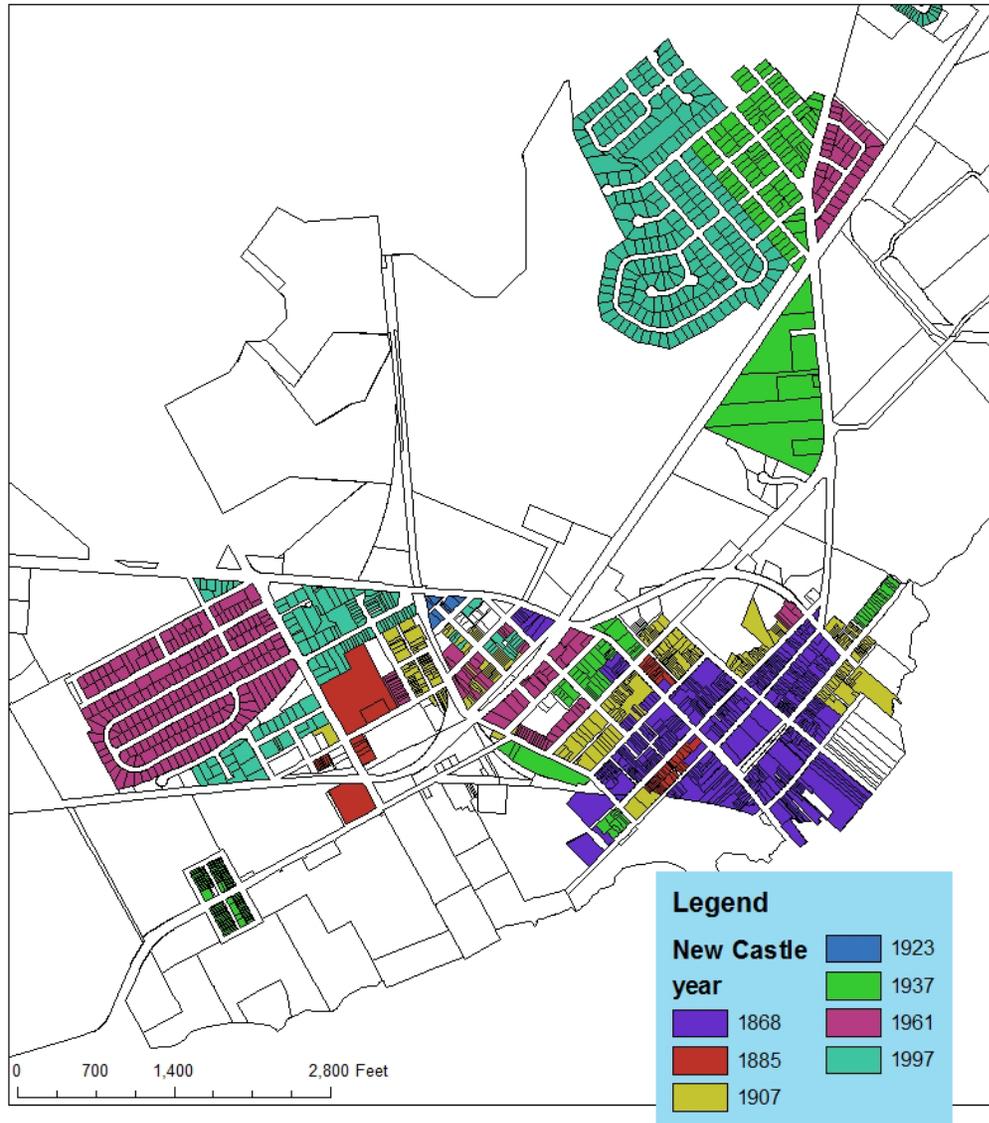


Figure 3.27 GIS Image illustrating New Castle's growth to 1997

Georgetown's 1997 Growth

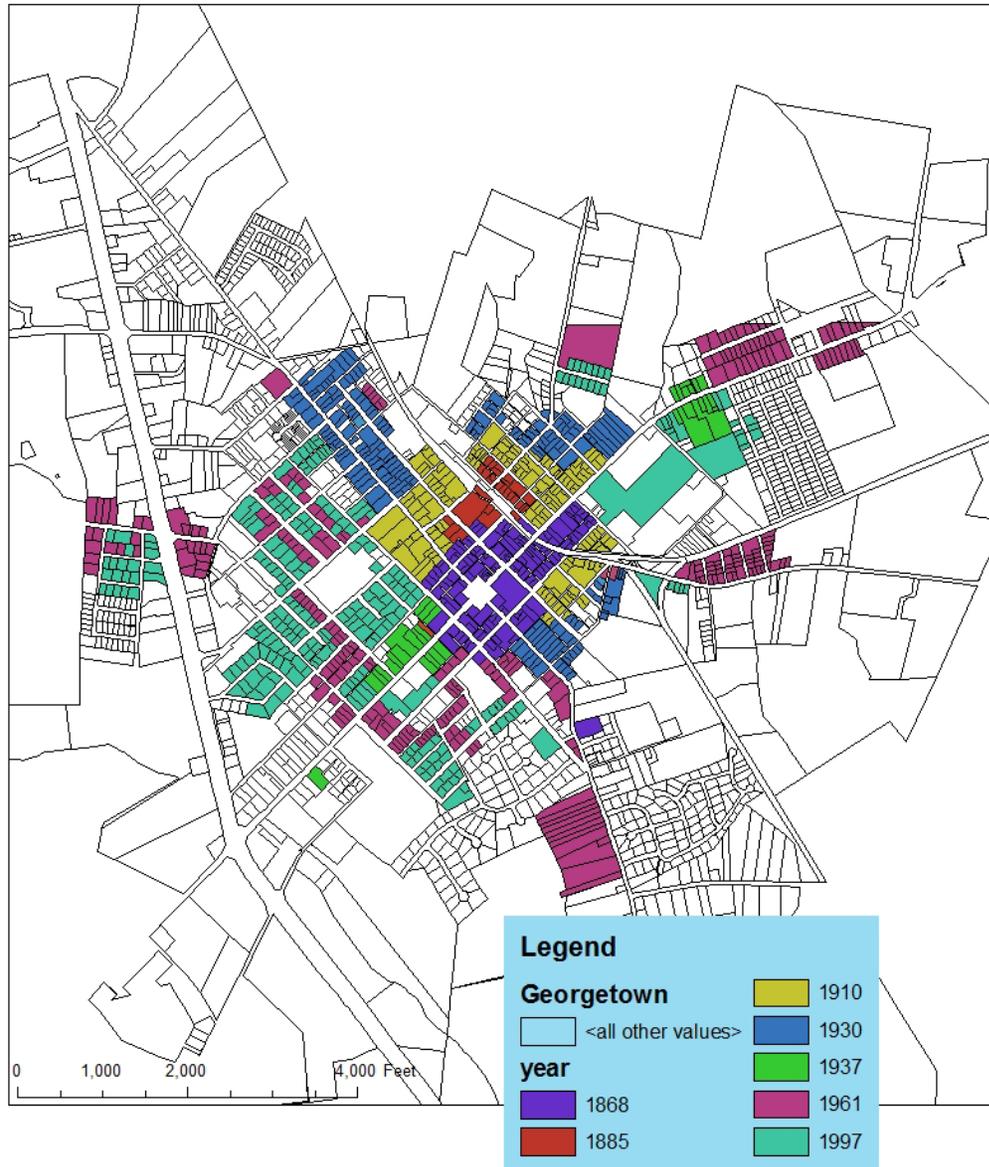


Figure 3.28 GIS Image illustrating Georgetown's growth to 1997

Milford's 1997 Growth

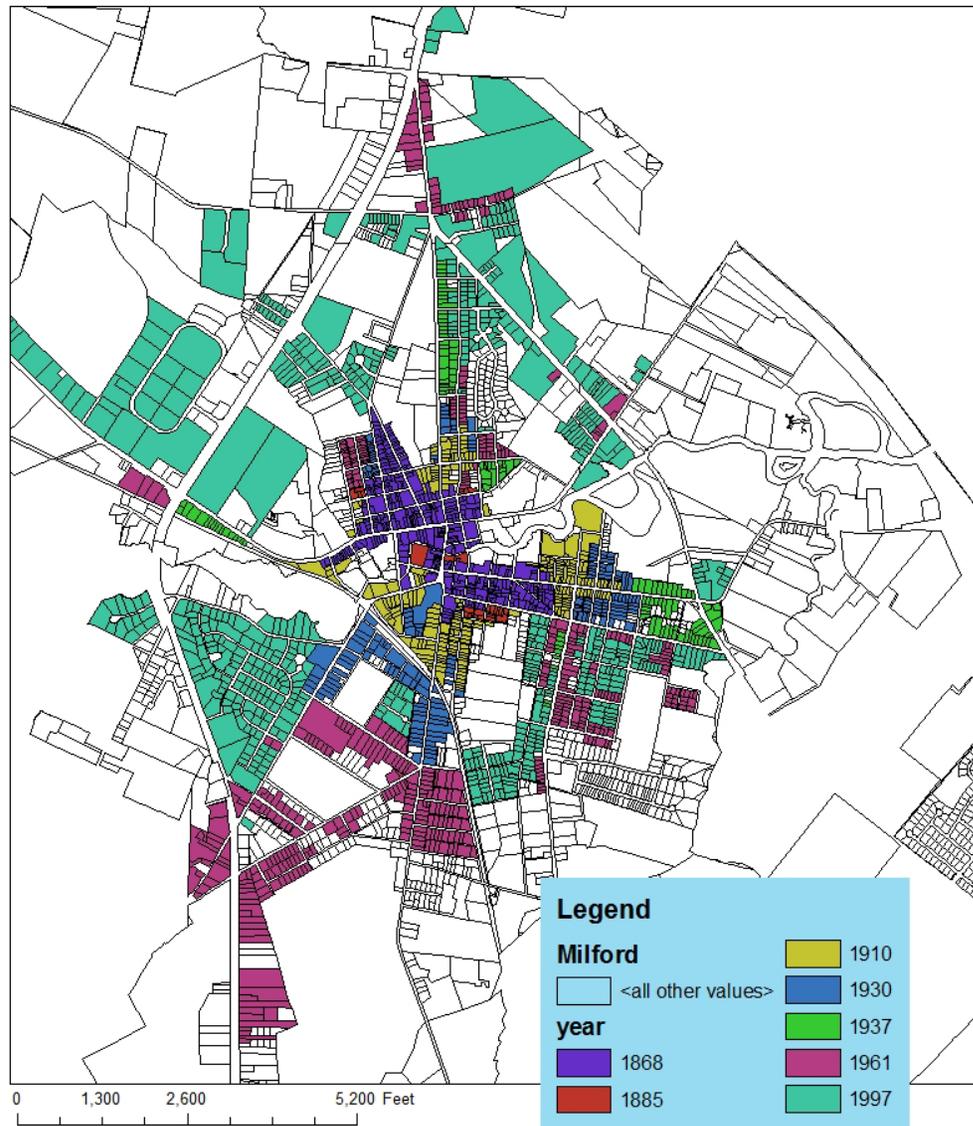


Figure 3.29 GIS Image illustrating Milford's growth to 1997

Chapter 4

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

This chapter returns to Delaware's historic districts and proposes two types of recommendations for updating, expanding, and preserving the contents of the districts. The first type of recommendation focuses on updating the current historic districts in Delaware to include resources dating from 1930 through the mid-1940s. The second type of recommendation proposes the implementation of "character districts" as a strategy for protecting areas of suburban growth outside the historic centers of Delaware's small towns. The character districts would be a potential series of Character Overlay Zoning districts, designed to preserve and maintain the integrity and intent of the suburbs, at a less invasive policy level.

RECOMMENDATIONS: 1930S AND 1940S

Only 8 of the 82 historic districts in the state have periods of significance past 1940. With 90 percent of Delaware's National Register Historic Districts focusing on periods of significance dating before 1930, the first recommendation is to update all of the districts to include resources built through the mid-1940s. Since it is clear that the growth in Delaware before World War II continued to follow previous building patterns and trends, expanding the historic district boundaries to encompass

these additional resources would not require a major rethinking of the characteristics important to the town's history.

In order to update these districts, a few aspects of the current nominations need to be modified and amended. National Register Bulletin 16A, published by the National Parks Service, explains the process for amending existing nominations.

One of the first things to be done is to redraw the boundary lines to include this later town growth. The methodology used in this thesis could be employed to identify this historic growth and to propose new boundary lines. A revised count and identification of the contributing and non-contributing buildings in the redrawn boundaries must be carried out. These components need to be amended in sections 5 and 7 of the original nomination (Figure 4.1-4.2).

Secondly, the period of significance needs to be expanded to include growth through 1945, which occurs outside of the period currently discussed in the nominations. A revised statement of significance, section 8 of the nomination, should address the new periods of significance and establish the historic context for those periods.

Finally, the visual components of the nomination need to be revised as well. This includes new photographs of the contributing properties, as well as a new map showing the expanded boundaries.¹⁵³

¹⁵³ United States, National Park Service, "Guidelines for Completing National Register of Historic Places Forms," National Register Bulletin 16A, U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places, Originally Published 1977, revised, 1986; 1991; 1997, 71.

RECOMMENDATIONS: 1945 AND BEYOND

The post-World War II building period was significant to the nation. It represents the largest building boom in America.¹⁵⁴ One potential way to retain significance and character on a large-scale throughout entire subdivisions is to create character districts. Based on a proposed plan for the city of Ann Arbor, Michigan,¹⁵⁵ Character Districts present the opportunity to protect a larger body of historic resources, at a reduced level of control. Due to the large volume of suburbs, subdivisions, and suburban housing stock, the question of significance and importance arises. They are neither a threatened building type, nor particularly rare, so the question of what to do with such a large stock of buildings becomes important to address.

Character districts seek to preserve a certain set of physical characteristics deemed significant. On a local level, they could function as a series of overlay zones, which supplement the zoning enforced through the historic districts. The zoning present in the character districts addresses differences in building designs that occurred after World War II. Because the visual representation on the landscape looks dramatically different after 1945, it is important to identify this change of character

¹⁵⁴ United States, National Park Service, "Guidelines for Completing National Register of Historic Places Forms," National Register Bulletin 16A, U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places, Originally Published 1977, revised, 1986; 1991; 1997, 71.

¹⁵⁵ "Downtown Ann Arbor Guidelines," http://www.a2gov.org/a2d2/designguidelines/Documents/A2_Downtown_DGs_9-30-09B_WebRes.pdf (Accessed January 11th, 2009).

from the downtowns. The historic districts already protect the downtowns. Some of the important characteristics to identify in this post-war period are: street patterns, density, scale, housing setbacks, building design features, and peripheral locations. More than one character district could occur in the towns, especially if it is identified that earlier subdivisions differ in character than later post-1990s residential developments.

The type of zoning that would be appropriate for character districts would be historic zoning overlays. These designations are used to modify land use regulations in order to preserve them. These overlays are common at the county and municipal level of government, and provide an alternative to the entire National Register nomination process. Changing the zoning to reflect character districts would be an achievable way to protect this wealth of resources. The desire to change local zoning codes is also a way to encourage preservation at the local level. The implementation of character districts could be a way to build public awareness about the importance of preservation. One way to bolster interest could be through the implementation of honorary recognition or an incentive program, for maintaining the character of their districts.¹⁵⁶

Through zoning, the implementation of character districts would allow the municipalities more control of a larger portion of their communities. This zoning strategy would aim to preserve the integrity of the post World War II suburbs, and the

¹⁵⁶ Puleo, Kevin, Master's Thesis "More than just a Pair of Red Pumps: Preserving Historic Gas Stations," approved in Summer 2001, by the University of Delaware, Newark, Delaware, 175-176.

features that made them so distinguishable and desirable. Another important issue that could be addressed is the idea of context sensitive infill. This could be a way to encourage context-sensitive, proportional, and attractive growth, in the identified areas. These districts would promote the values of the original development, while maintaining the need for appropriate scale and architectural detail. Overall, the character districts would uphold the need for compatible development.

As with National Register nominations, differences will occur in character district needs. Delaware has a diverse group of small towns, with different histories and town evolutions, all equating to different needs for a character district. If the potential site of a character district, i.e. one of the earlier suburban developments, is adjacent to the small town commercial core, which needs to be accounted for in the new district. If the reason that the development was originally located within walking distance from the commercial or restaurant space, the preservation aims might be different than a purely residential community. Things to be considered in this character district might included: increased building mass, non-residential fenestration patterns (store-front windows), or increased building heights. In this example, it is worth noting, that with the implementation of character districts, it is important not to lose the residential feel. It might be important to maintain the traditional scale of residential homes over new commercial development. Another element that might be significant in this example is to maintain the pedestrian experience. This can be true for entirely residential developments as well. If part of the history or experience of this landscape was meant to accommodate multi-modal forms of transportation, this is something that must be preserved. Especially today, with the current push for

sustainability, the enhancement of non-auto infrastructure might be important to the community.

This approach will allow the process to be less subjective by covering the entire subdivision. The process would also give small towns more freedom than the current nomination process. Not all growth or homes are significant at the national level, but this would afford small towns the opportunity to preserve the character of their historic growth. By employing character districts, and targeting historic growth, towns could apply more than one type of zoning overlay, and allow for differences in statements of significance.

Below in figure 4.1-4.2 is an example of potential locations for character districts in one of the small towns chosen in this study. While they are not all contiguous with the original historic districts, they are contained to areas where suburban growth appeared.

IMPLEMENTATION OF CHARACTER DISTRICTS

The utilization of character districts is key to mitigating the suburban landscape. The next step would be the creation of guidelines, and surveys, for the specific character district. Before any fieldwork can be carried out, the character of what you are preserving must be identified.

For example, in the case of post-World War II suburbs the National Register Bulletin on “Historic Residential Suburbs: Guidelines for Evaluation and Documentation for the National Register of Historic Places” must be consulted. The bulletin describes in great detail the characteristics of many different types of suburbs,

including post-World War II suburbs. On pages 48 and 49 of the bulletin, the FHA standards for suburbs, published between 1936 and 1940, are explained. The most important set of standards for the creation of a survey are the “desirable standards.”

These desirable standards are:

- Careful adaptation of subdivision layout to topography and to natural features
- Adjustment of street plan and street widths and grades to best meet traffic needs
- Elimination of sharp corners and dangerous intersections
- Long blocks that eliminated unnecessary streets
- Carefully studied lot plan with generous and well-shaped house sites
- Parks and playgrounds
- Establishment of community organizations of property owners
- Incorporation of features that add to the privacy and attractiveness of the community.¹⁵⁷

It is possible that not all of the above elements will apply to all of the post-World War II suburbs; however, it is a starting point, to help identify important aspects of these suburbs.

With the FHA standards in mind, and with the help of the Identification, Evaluation, and Documentation process outlined on page 76 of the “Historic Residential Suburbs” bulletin, a basic process can be outlined. In the identification

¹⁵⁷ Ames, and McClelland, 48-49.

process, features such as the character, boundaries, and chronological period must be compiled. After this step field surveys can be carried out.

In order to complete field work, it is important to create survey forms tailored to your character districts. This is where the FHA guidelines play an important role. Table 4.1 provides a sample table. After the survey process is complete, it is important to analyze the information. It is possible that the proposed site no longer maintains enough character to necessitate the zoning change.

With the zoning overlay, it is not as essential to carry out the Evaluation process, as defined in the bulletin as it pertains to the National Register nomination itself, but it does raise important questions which should be answered. It is important to assess character integrity of the neighborhood. It is also important to select and justify the boundaries of these new character districts. The next step will differ from municipality to municipality, but it is important to carry out all the necessary requirements for zoning changes in the specified area.

Even more important is the support of the community. This is where section 5 of the questionnaire becomes important. If these proposed subdivisions already have a governing board, or organized public interest group, it is important for them to be involved. If there is local support among the residents of the community, it often times makes policy changes more effective. It is important in the preservation community, to garner local preservation, and interest.

Table 4.1 Sample Character District Survey

Survey Questions			
	Guideline Met	Not Applicable	Description/Explanation
1.0 Streetscapes			
1.1 Adjustment of street plains to meet automobile traffic needs			
1.2 Elimination of sharp corners and dangerous intersections			
1.3 Curvilinear road designs			
1.4 Long blocks that eliminate the need for extra streets			
1.5 Pedestrian friendly linkages			
2.0 Natural Features and Open Space			
2.1 Careful layout to reflect topography and vegetation			
2.2 Incorporation of parks and open space			
2.3 Retention of open space to promote a sense of community			
3.0 Architecture, Siting, and Driveways			
3.1 Architecture harmonious and			

contemporary to the post-World War II period (Detached, single family houses)			
3.2 Carefully studied lot plan (specifically larger lot sizes)			
3.3 Well-shaped house sites			
3.4 Private driveways, and household entryways			
3.5 Context sensitive privacy features, specifically fences			
3.6 Context sensitive housing features, including building height, and massing			
4.0 Materials			
4.1 Context sensitive use of architectural, and landscape materials			
5.0 Community Involvement			
5.1 Active community involvement, including civic organizations, home-owners association, or neighborhood watch organizations			

Historic District and Character District Overlays for New Castle City

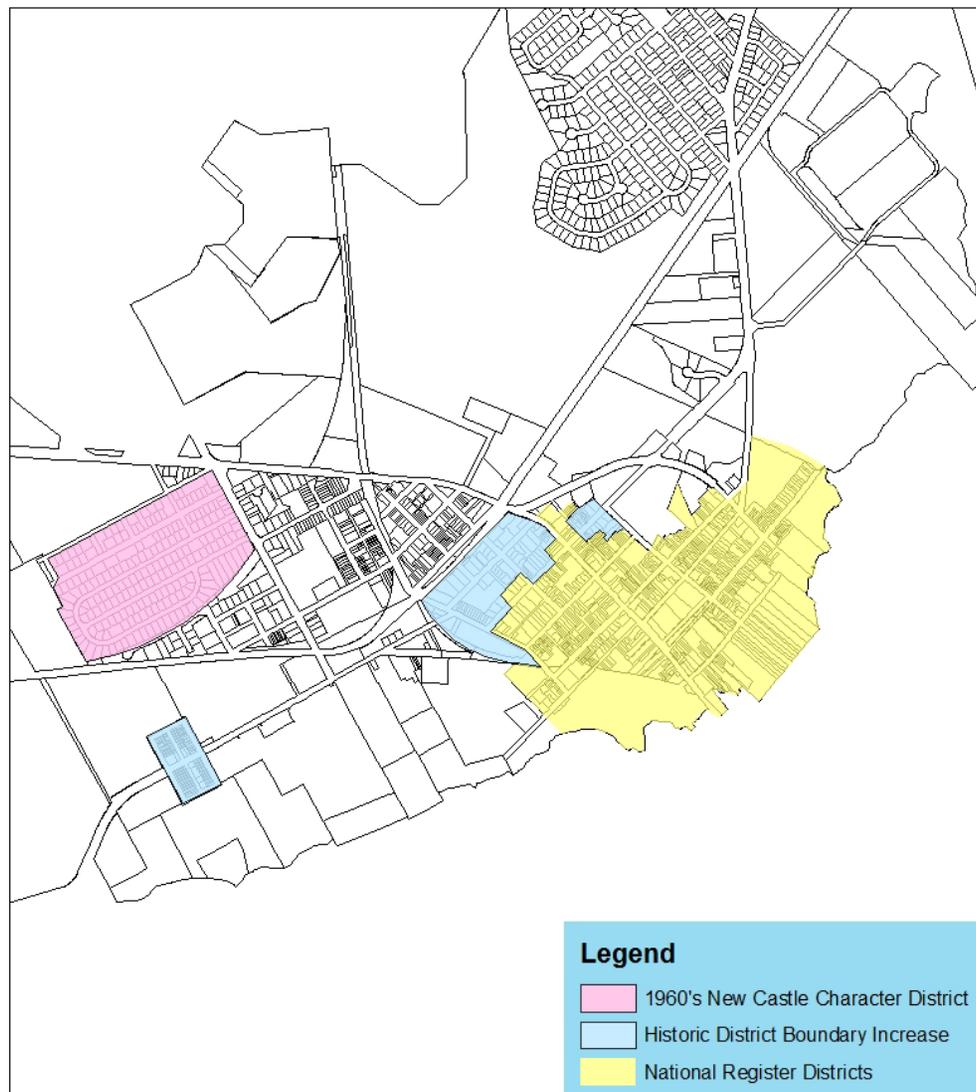


Figure 4.1 Example of Character Districts, and Extended National Register Boundaries for New Castle



Figure 4.2 2007 Aerial Image with Character and Historic Districts Overlays (source Google Earth)

Conclusions

The methodological approach in Delaware revealed that the spatial organization can be classified into two categories: pre-1940's and post-1940's growth. While Delawareans once had distinct land usages to reflect the needs of the small towns, the patterns eventually all became indistinguishable. While the influence of suburbia has not always been seen in a positive light, it is important to preserve these landscapes they reflect changes in society. It is important to not lose sight of the fact that subsequent spatial changes continued to reshape town life-changes on the landscape indicated a change in social and technical phenomena, including the desire to live in subdivisions.

These two periods represent distinct building trends in small town Delaware, which emerged through visual analysis. They are both integral to small town history. In order to protect the entire history of Delaware's small towns, new policies must be enacted. By expanding current historic districts, and utilizing character districts, the hope is to protect more historic resources.

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