



POSSIBLE GREATER LEWES FOUNDATION INITIATIVES

May 19, 2010

INTRODUCTION

The recent Greater Lewes Foundation's "Future Scan" visioning effort, undertaken with the help of local leaders and citizens, identified three elements as the top priorities to be addressed by the community in order to maintain and improve the quality of life in the greater Lewes region. These are Mobility, Neighborhoods and the Green Framework. In order to ensure that Lewes continues to be the "jewel" of Delaware and one of the most attractive locations on the East Coast, the most important issues that Greater Lewes Foundation (GLF) can tackle in the next few years are those that help maintain and improve these three elements.

The "Future Scan" vision plan suggested many ways to tackle these elements independent from the recommendation for a coordinated sub-area plan for the Greater Lewes region. A number of these recommendations are appropriate tasks for the Foundation to undertake or support. Using the "Future Scan" findings as a springboard, the following report offers for consideration a series of large and small initiatives that are targeted to improve Mobility, Neighborhoods and the Green Framework. We recommend that the GLF Board consider these programs and projects. Any of these initiatives could be done independently of the recommended, overall Sub-Area Plan and all of them would help to achieve the three key elements of the Greater Lewes Vision. As the 400th anniversary of Lewes will be celebrated in 20 years GLF might wish to select at least one significant project to mark that occasion.

Mobility Initiatives

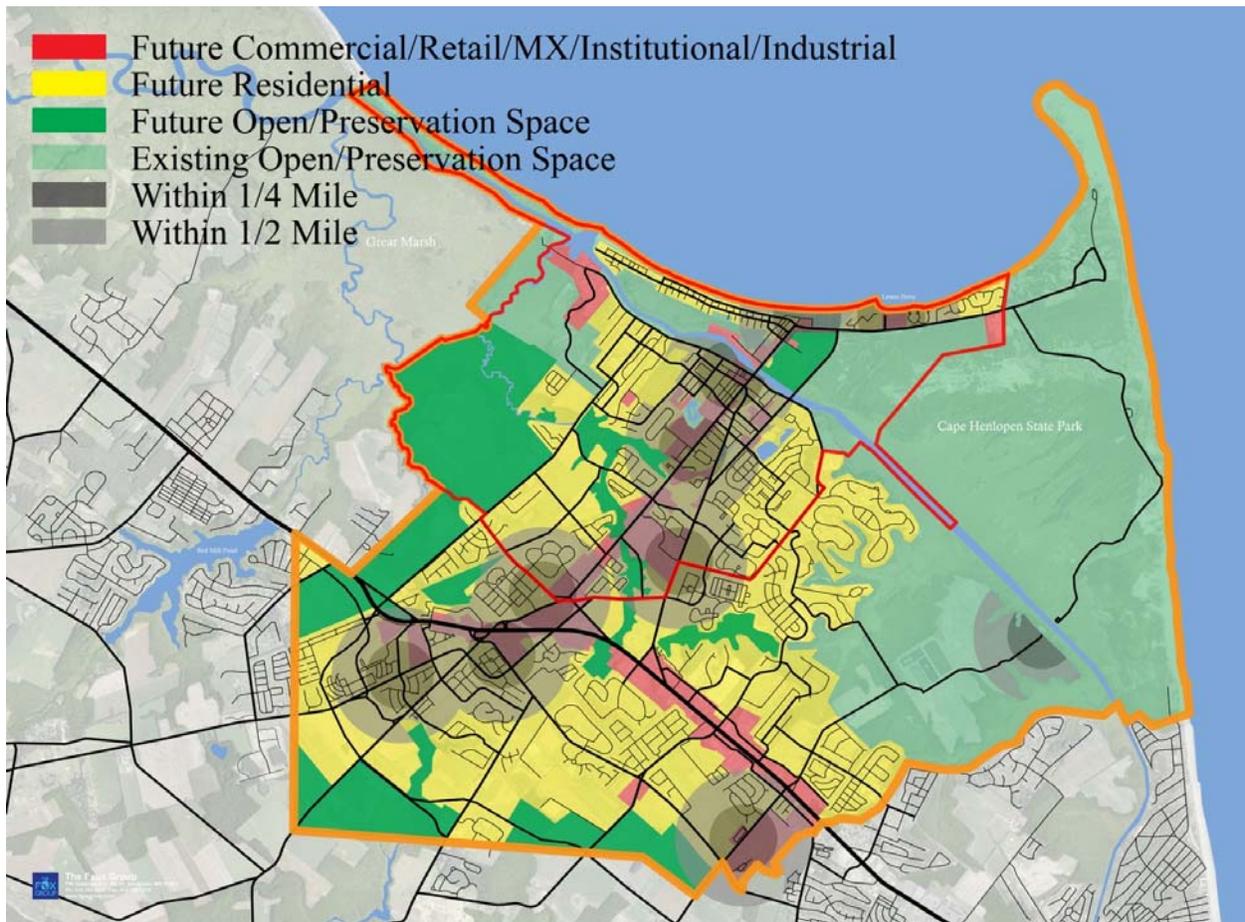
1. Lewes-Rehoboth Canal Boat Water Taxi Project
2. Lewes-Henlopen Summer Transit Project
3. Downtown Parking Projects
4. Trail Network/New Rail Trail Projects (5 possible segments)
5. 100 Points of Connection Program
6. Greater Lewes Mobility Guide

Neighborhood Initiatives

7. Canary Creek Park Project
8. Cape Henlopen State Park South Expansion Project
9. Lewes Canalfront Park Building Enhancement Project
10. Beebe Community Garden Project

Green Framework Initiatives

11. Greater Lewes Open Space Program
12. Voluntary Open Space Fund Program
13. Greater Lewes Community TDR and Mitigation Bank Program
14. On-call Strategic Planning Assistance Service Program
15. Targeted Preservation Site Seed Money & Negotiation Program
16. Greater Lewes Park District Formation



Future Scan Community Vision

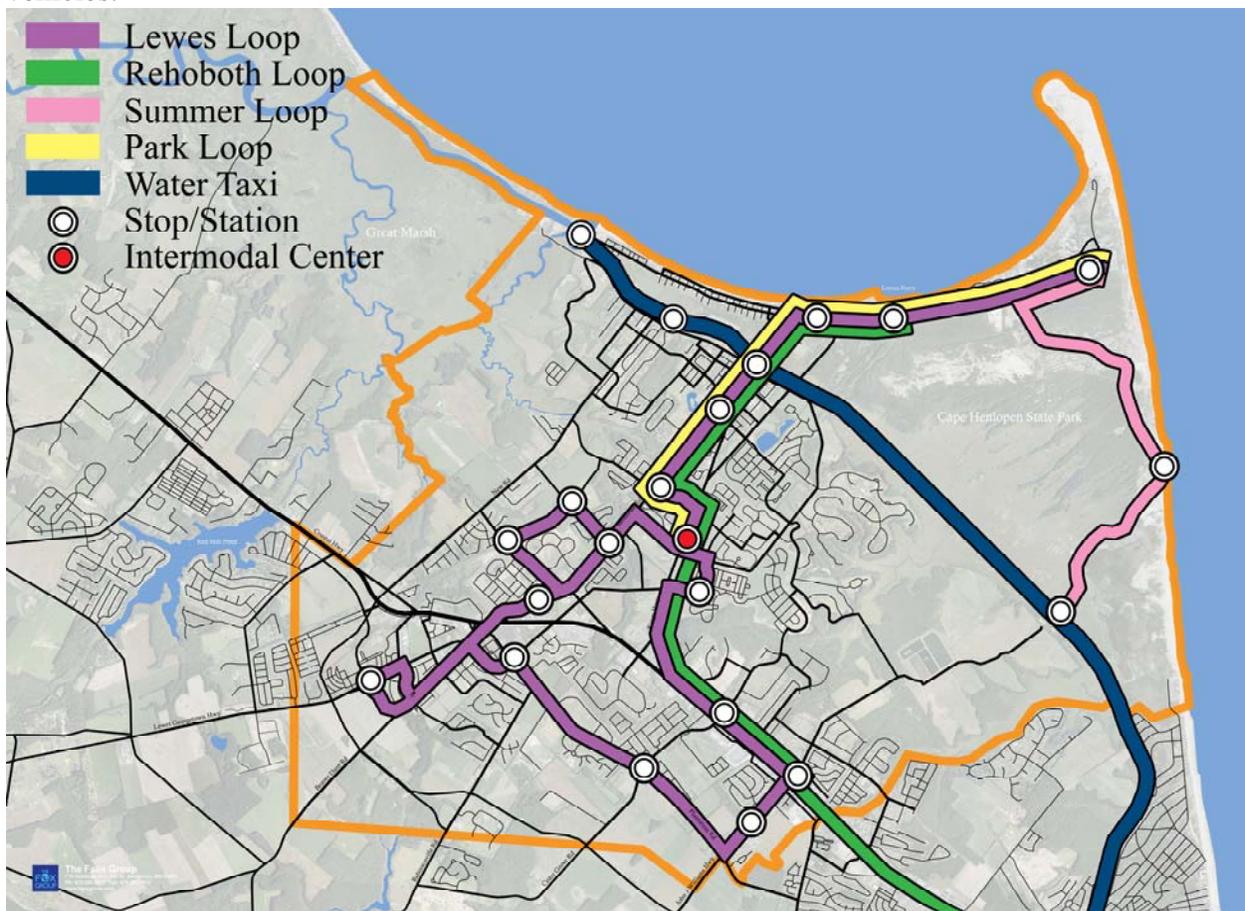
MOBILITY INITIATIVES

1. Lewes-Rehoboth Canal Boat Water Taxi Project

The Foundation could fund a detailed feasibility study and business plan for a water taxi service between Lewes and Rehoboth with a future stop south of Cape Henlopen State Park. This effort should be done with input from both towns and in partnership with those prepared to create the stops, purchase boats and operate the service. It should identify target user groups and their needs. Depending on the study results, further support might be considered for the next summer season.

2. Lewes-Henlopen Summer Transit Project

The Foundation could help fund a pilot summer season jitney service project. A loop route should be selected in collaboration with the City of Lewes and key points of origin and destination such as hotels and bed & breakfasts. The project could lease or purchase a few festive branded vehicles to circulate people from a remote lot, downtown, and back and forth to the beaches and ferry. Funding might cover the vehicles, stop signage/benches, and a route map/brochure. Depending on the results of the first season, further support could be considered. A jitney/trolley style vehicle that allows easy on/off with bags and beach equipment would be ideal. A successful example currently operates in Annapolis with 4 to 8 passenger electric vehicles.



Transit Network Concept Map

3. Downtown Parking Projects

The Foundation could identify, plan, design, and construct four or five small, attractive parking projects in the downtown area to add to the downtown parking supply. We recommend that these sites incorporate sustainable design features and be carefully fitted into the character of the town. A feasibility study should be done to select projects. If a mixed use parking structure behind Wilmington Trust is determined to be the desired solution, an appropriate role for GLF in facilitating that site could be explored.

4. Trail Network/New Rail Trail Projects

The Foundation might help to plan and implement one or more of the key trails projects being considered around Greater Lewes:

4.1. The Greater Lewes/Georgetown Rail Trail on the LR railroad. This trail would interconnect the entire Greater Lewes area. It would extend from the Vineyards area in the outer limits of Greater Lewes through the City and out to Cape Henlopen State Park. In addition to internally connecting the entire Greater Lewes area, it will become part of a larger County and regional trail network as funding becomes available from other parties. Together with the trail in the proposed Canary Creek Park Project, this system will form a great pedestrian “X” through Greater Lewes.

4.2 Kings Highway Greenway. A buffer zone or narrow greenway could be created along one side of Kings Highway starting at Gills Neck Road across from the high school to create a better connection and sense of arrival for the town. The greenway might be an access easement within the current farmland easement and include other lands as is feasible. The design should include a hiker/biker path that is set back from the street by an ample grassy lawn and shaded by a double row of flowering or shade trees. The distinctive tree plantings and walk should extend as far as possible along the Highway.

4.3 Lewes to Ferry Link: A project with a trail, streetscape and town gateway plantings might be done to overcome the “open wasteland” appearance near the Ferry and leading into town along Cape Henlopen Drive & King Highway. This design should provide an attractive arrival Lewes image to ferry users, a coherent street character from the Ferry to the Canal and a pedestrian and bike friendly environment.

4.4 Lewes Beach Link: This reach-the-beach project would improve and complete pedestrian and bike ways from both the Savannah Rd. and Freeman Hwy. bridges out to the Lewes Beach. A safe well defined path should be added on the right side of Savannah.

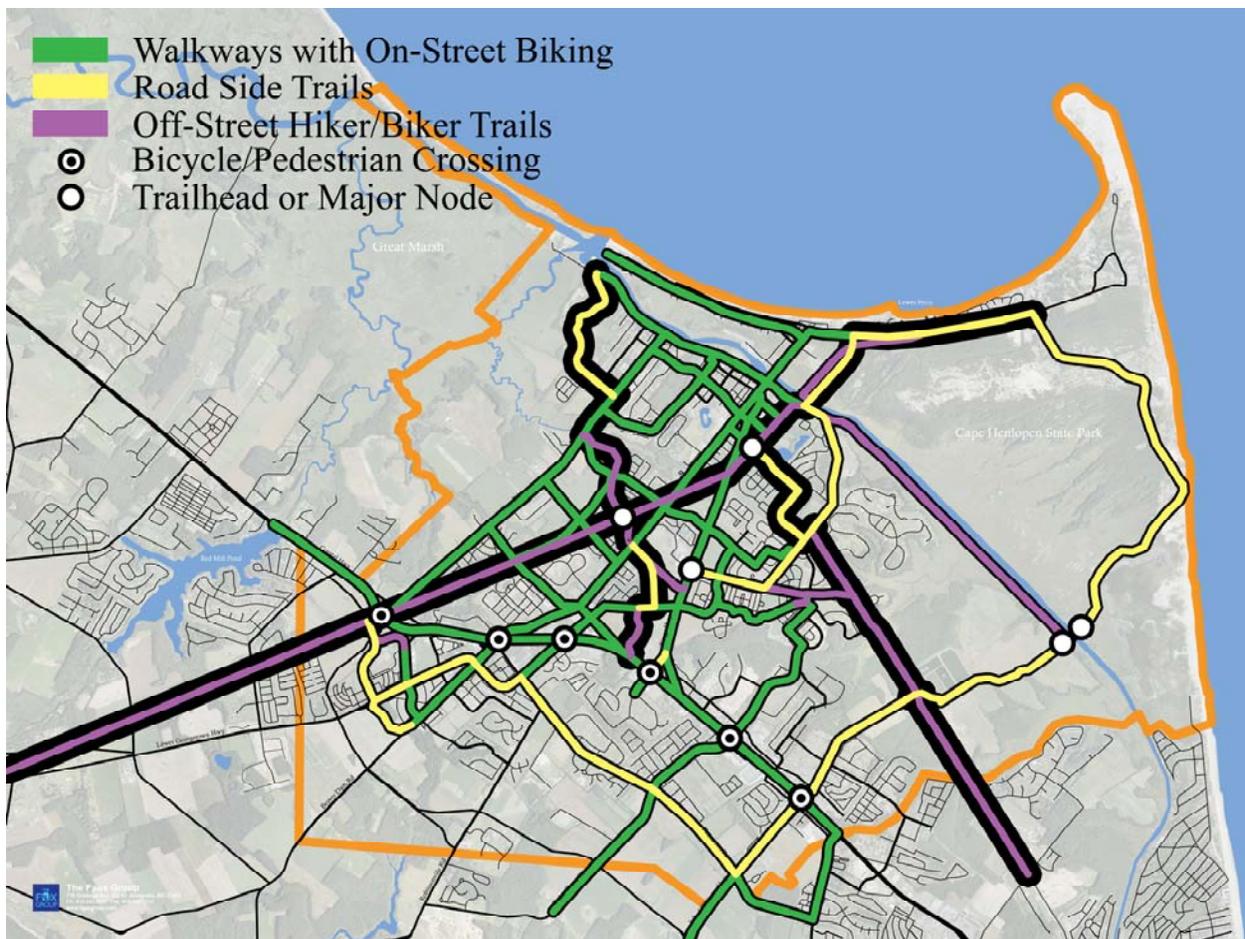
4.5 Gills Neck Greenway Link: An offer of matching funds might be made to Del-DOT to catalyze the construction of the planned Bike Greenway along Gills Neck Road. This needed project would remove the gap in the current network and create a safe connection between the Town and the Junction & Breakwater Trail.

5. 100 Points of Connection Program

The Foundation could establish a “micro grant fund” to help local groups retrofit existing neighborhoods for greater connectivity. A brief brochure could be prepared explaining the program and identifying possible project types and sizes. A map and list of possible connections among or within neighborhoods could be included to help people initially identify projects. An annual competitive application process could follow. Applicants might ask for a grant to supplement neighborhood funds, provide supplies for volunteer efforts, or match other grants. Projects that might be selected include trail extensions or sidewalk additions that correct gaps in the network, green space creation, and local street connections.

6. Greater Lewes Mobility Guide

The Foundation could fund the design, printing, and distribution of a Mobility Guide with walking routes, trails, transit, and other features described to help Greater Lewes residents and visitors understand how to get out and about without their cars. The guide should also publicize new and upcoming trail projects.



Trail Network Concept Map

NEIGHBORHOOD INITIATIVES

7. Canary Creek Park Project (1A & 3 on the Open Space Concept Map)

The Foundation could plan, design, and build a public park in the Canary Creek stream valley in partnership with the City or others. This greenway park could extend three miles from Route 1 through the Great Marsh to the Canal and create several distinctive green gateways for Lewes proper. The park should include a trail along its length that connects to abutting neighborhoods and intersects with the planned railroad trail to create a large loop or “X” in Greater Lewes. The Canary Creek trail could link to a future intermodal transit center near the high school and the Kings Highway Greenway Project. The park could also include small activity areas along its length, some stream front drive segments, and ecological enhancements, stream and habitat protection elements. Special attention must be given to tidal conditions, potential wetlands flooding, and other sensitive conditions. Either as part of this project or as a separate item, GLF could work with the State to create attractive solutions to storm water management, flooding and storm surge issues in the New Road corridor as it crosses Canary Creek.



Open Space Concept Map

8. Cape Henlopen State Park South Expansion Project (2 on the Open Space Concept Map)

The Foundation could work with the State, the local sewer service groups, the Lewes Board of Public Works, the Fort Miles Historic Association, and the Friends of Cape Henlopen State Park to plan, design, and build an expansion of the State Park on the west side of Canal. This park expansion could provide peak season park access via a walking trail and/or a jitney. With new access and a remote parking lot here this project could reduce the beach traffic coming through Lewes proper.

The park should include a parking lot trail head and seasonal State Park entrance by the Canal, a foot/jitney bridge over the Canal, a water taxi stop, and a seasonal jitney trail from the parking lot to the beach. The new trail should extend back to the existing Breakwater Trail and out to the neighborhoods along Route 1. A canal front trail loop might also be added.

A second, no less important function of the expanded park, might be leveraged environmental benefits in the form of newly-created or conserved habitats and wetlands. In cooperation with the Board of Public Works, the park might also be considered for sustainable renewable energy elements and such community benefits as grey water reuse via a purple pipe distribution system.

9. Lewes Canalfront Park Building Enhancement Project

The Foundation might elect to do improvements to the Park building at Lewes Canalfront Park to dress-up its appearance and convert it to an energy-efficient green building.

10. Beebe Community Garden Project

The Foundation might elect to provide design services and assist in the funding of the Community Garden being planned by the Hospital on their large plot of land between Kings Highway and Savannah Road. Given its location, this garden project could be treated as an expansion of Project #4.2, the Kingsway Greenway, to create a more significant landmark, gateway, & town amenity that is readily accessible on foot or bicycle.

GREEN FRAMEWORK INITIATIVES

The Foundation could partner with others to plan, fund, and conserve open space and key conservation properties in several ways:

11. Greater Lewes Open Space Program

Establish a “drive” to save open space. Set a defined goal for the number of new preservation acres to be gained by 2020. Set a second goal that every Lewes and Greater Lewes home should be within a 5-minute walk of a public or private community green space. An oversight committee of the entities capable of contributing to new open space should be formed or identified. This group should monitor progress, keep the community informed, and provide help through the use of conservation techniques such as the following items below.

12. Voluntary Open Space Fund Program

Set up a voluntary open space fund drive to collect funds for acquisition of land and conversation easements. Perhaps local land developers would be willing to make a small voluntary donation to the fund for each house they sell. The collected funds might be used either for direct purchase or as matching money to obtain grants.

13. Greater Lewes Community TDR and Mitigation Bank Program

Set up a non-profit entity to buy, hold, and sell development rights and environmental mitigation credits. Landowners wishing to conserve their sites might sell these rights to this entity who could then sell them to developers and other entities who wish to use them.

14. On-call Strategic Planning Assistance Service Program

GLF could engage a specialist team to provide help to targeted farmers and property owners considering conservation of some of their land holdings. This service would help owners assess and design plans to create value and revenues without development. This could involve a combination of low impact activities, easements, mitigation credits, wetland banks, etc. One focus of this program might be to target the undeveloped properties that are identified for annexation into the town per their comprehensive plan.

15. Targeted Preservation Site Seed Money & Negotiations Program

Target prime sites for conservation and protection, publicize them, and meet with owners to craft a mutually agreed upon conservation plan. Ensure that the offsite impacts of creating open space or leaving land fallow are considered and understood by the “neighbors.” Sites in the New Road-Black Hog area and the Canary Creek stream valley could be starting points. (3, 4, & 5 on the Open Space Concept Map)

16. Greater Lewes Park District Formation

As a means to begin implementation of the Greater Lewes Vision, the GLF might task their consultants with creating the language and agreements needed to form a Greater Lewes Park District entity as permitted by current State legislation.