



# City of Harrington Downtown Development District Plan *Adopted - May 9, 2016*



*It's good to be in the Hub...*



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## Acknowledgments

This Plan would not have been possible without the cooperative efforts of a number of dedicated citizens, stakeholders, City staff, and elected and appointed officials. The City of Harrington selected consultant KCI Technologies, Inc. (KCI) for this project, as the Project Manager has been the City Planning Consultant for over ten years and is intimately familiar with the community.

The Downtown Development District planning process officially began in March 2015 with the submission of a Neighborhood Building Blocks Fund Grant application. Since then, community members have contributed numerous hours toward the preparation of this Plan. City Planning Consultants and City staff facilitated four Task Force meetings, two open houses, one public presentation, and one public hearing before the City Council, in addition to facilitating an online downtown survey as well as several community outreach notifications.

Community input and public participation is the foundation of the Downtown Development District Plan. Without the ongoing participation and support, this Plan would not have been possible.

### *City Council*

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Fonda Coleman, District 3  
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A special thanks is given to the Delaware Public Archives for the provision of numerous historical images of Downtown Harrington.



# Chapter One.

## *Downtown Harrington - The Introduction*





## Downtown Description

For the purposes of this Plan, Harrington's Downtown Development District shall be referred to as the Downtown and identified as the area shown on *Map 1. Downtown Boundary*. The Downtown, comprised mostly of the traditional central business district (Commerce Street, Railroad Avenue, and Mechanic Street), encompasses some of the adjacent residential streets where homes have been converted to businesses and other non-residential uses (Fleming Street, Dorman Street, and Delaware Avenue) and also extends eastward along Clark Street to incorporate commercial properties that cross the north-south running railroad tracks. The City has a population of approximately 3,500 and so chose a boundary of approximately 33 acres and 108 parcels, representing an area most in need of revitalization in which to concentrate their initial efforts.

The City used relevant data to support the need for the creation of their Downtown Development District Plan (Downtown Plan). With Census and other local data, the City was able to provide evidence that the Downtown has low homeownership, vacant buildings and storefronts, and a number of structures with existing code violations.

The City was able to identify a variety of potential positive impacts, including economic development potential, increased homeownership, positive marketing and identity creation, formation of a downtown organization, and a greater feeling of Downtown ownership. By attracting a greater number of owner-occupied residences, the City hopes that there will be increased residential property maintenance and general activity within the Downtown. They also feel that Downtown redevelopment will increase community pride, in turn encouraging additional investment, and reinvigorating the City as a whole.

## Purpose & Need

In 2014, the Downtown Development Districts Act was enacted by the Delaware General Assembly in order to:

- spur private capital investment in commercial business districts and other neighborhoods;
- stimulate job growth and improve the commercial vitality of such districts and neighborhoods;

- help build a stable community of long-term residents by improving housing opportunities; and
- assist local governments in strengthening neighborhoods while harnessing the attraction that vibrant downtowns hold for talented people, innovative small businesses, and residents from all walks of life.

In the first round of Downtown Development District (DDD) applications in 2014, three communities were awarded designation: Dover, Seaford, and Wilmington. Governor Markell announced the opening of a second round of DDD applications on March 16, 2016. Communities throughout the State would have the opportunity to apply to have their downtown areas designated as Districts and take advantage of the program.

Local governments wishing to take advantage of the program must identify a downtown district in their community and apply for designation through the Office of State Planning Coordination. Completed applications are considered by the Cabinet Committee on State Planning Issues, which makes recommendations to the Governor, who then designates Downtown Development Districts. Selection as a Downtown Development District entitles private construction projects within the identified District to receive grants to offset 20% of their capital construction costs.

Unlike similar incentives in other states that are often limited to commercial and industrial projects, Downtown Development District grants are available for a broad range of projects including residential, mixed-use, commercial, and industrial projects within the boundaries of a DDD. Grants are available to virtually anyone who makes qualified real estate improvements in a DDD. This includes for-profit builders and investors, nonprofit organizations, businesses, and even homeowners. For eligibility purposes, qualified real property investments are capital expenditures, incurred after DDD designation, necessary for rehabilitation, expansion, or new construction, sometimes referred to as "hard costs". Examples include exterior, interior, structural, mechanical, or electrical improvements; excavations; grading and paving; landscaping or land improvements; and demolition. In addition to the DDD grant administered by the Delaware State Housing Authority, several State agencies are offering enhancement to existing programs for those



communities that achieve DDD designation including the Department of Agriculture; Department of Children, Youth and Their Families; Department of Health and Social Services; State Housing Authority; Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control; Department of State; and the Sustainable Energy Utility. Many State agencies also have existing programs that will further DDD initiatives.

Harrington received a Neighborhood Building Blocks Fund Grant in 2015 to develop a Downtown Development District Plan, in order to apply for State designation under this program. This grant, funded by the JP Morgan Chase settlement agreement, awarded \$40,000 to the City of Harrington to engage a planning consultant and prepare a District Plan (including stakeholder and public outreach process) and accompanying maps for submittal to the Office of State Planning Coordination for application for designation as a Downtown Development District. Harrington intends to submit their application for Downtown Development District designation in the June 1, 2016 designation application round.

The City of Harrington has long been an important commercial, agricultural, and entertainment hub in Delaware. In more recent history, the majority of the regional draws and attractions are located outside of the City's core downtown. A major challenge for the City is to redevelop the Downtown with the right mix of uses, promote day and night economic activity as well as year-round activity, and compete with the abundant commercial and entertainment options outside of the Downtown. The Downtown still has a variety of small-scale businesses including retail, banks, and professional and general services, but currently has a number of vacant and underutilized properties.

Harrington is starting to see a redevelopment trend occur in the Downtown, which has experienced some infill and also several redevelopment projects that have made improvements such as exterior renovations and signage upgrades. In 2007, the City changed its development review process, making many processes subject to only administrative review, thereby expediting the project review and resulting in a process that was less expensive in terms of time and cost. This process has been very successful and encourages redevelopment through onsite guidance and building improvements. Unfortunately, most of the successful redevelopment projects that have

taken advantage of this new, expedited process have been located on DuPont Highway; however, some were located in the Downtown area, such as Spartan Station, Downtown Junction, and a local farmers' market.

The City desires to continue stimulating development in the Downtown and build off of these recent successes. One major goal is to revitalize the Downtown, improve existing businesses, and attract new businesses. Toward this goal, the City supports additional infill development on vacant parcels for mixed uses, as well as the adaptive reuse of existing structures. While the majority of the empty structures are older and may not be up to current building code regulations, they still hold great development potential. Several of the buildings are large and the building footprint takes up the majority of the property. As such, some development requirements such as on-site parking may be difficult to meet.

The City also desires to create a more vibrant live-work-play community with a mix of residential, retail, service, and entertainment uses. Currently, the City wishes to attract additional retail and professional office type uses. The Downtown would benefit from more daily amenities such as groceries, nighttime restaurants, a movie or play theater, and housing options for all ages and income groups. Retail, entertainment, and lodging uses in the City could dovetail and benefit from the many regional attractions such as the Harrington Casino and Raceway and other uses on DuPont Highway, as well as annual attractions such as the Harrington State Fair. In addition, the City would like to increase its resident population working within City limits. Apartments above retail or offices in the Downtown would offer additional housing options for a wider range of ages and income levels, and additional retail and office uses in the Downtown would offer more job opportunities for residents.

The City further wishes to encourage foot traffic and make the streets more pedestrian friendly, beautify the public realm, and promote public safety through street activity. The City has been advancing placemaking principles that promote pedestrian activity and retaining and attracting neighborhood scale businesses. For instance, the City received funding to reconstruct the sidewalks in the Downtown. This is a major enhancement project to enhance character, as well as bring the Downtown into Americans with Disabilities Act compliance.



Marketing, promotion, and additional branding efforts are also needed to encourage local residents, employees, and visitors to regularly visit downtown businesses and community events. Businesses need to be organized and set forth joint marketing and special events. The City would also like to focus on business recruitment, including maintaining an inventory of available business space and publicizing commercial opportunities.

## Downtown Planning Process

### *Downtown Reconnaissance Survey*

At the beginning of the Downtown planning process, City Planning Consultants visited the City of Harrington and walked the streets that would eventually comprise the Downtown boundary in order to best observe, document, and photograph its existing conditions. This survey included documentation of uses and businesses, urban form, contributing features to community identity and character, property maintenance and upkeep, redevelopment opportunities, streetscape conditions, and overall walkability. One of the Consultants has served as Harrington's City Planner for over ten years and is very familiar with the City and was able to give even deeper insight to this process than would a casual observer who did not have nearly the same depth and breadth of knowledge.

### *Stakeholders & Partnerships*

Stakeholders and partners play significant roles in achieving the goals stated within this Plan. It is important that everyone work together to implement the Plan as well as work toward improving the overall Downtown. When forming a Downtown Merchants' Organization, it is important to strive for diversity, dedication, and positive promotion within leadership positions. The City should encompass a supportive role and not a leadership role other than the initial coordination. The local stakeholders identified within the Downtown include, but are not limited to:

- Business Owners
- Property Owners
- City of Harrington City Hall

- City of Harrington Police Department
- Residents/Consumers
- Harrington Senior Center
- U.S. Post Office - Harrington
- Norfolk Southern Railroad
- Religious Institutions
- Financial Institutions
- Harrington Historical Society

Partners play a significant role within the Downtown. While these partners may not reside in the City limits, the resources, knowledge, and overall support to the Downtown can be significant. The potential partners identified within the Downtown include, but are not limited to:

- Harrington-Greenwood-Felton Centennial Rotary Club
- Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce
- Kent Economic Development
- Delaware Economic Development Office
- Kent County & Greater Dover Tourism
- Delaware Department of Transportation
- Delaware Department of Natural Resources & Environmental Control
- Small Business Association - Delaware District Office
- United States Department of Agriculture - Business and Cooperative Rural Development

### *Community Outreach*

Community outreach is an important component in the planning process. The opinions of residents, business owners and operators, property owners, and visitors help to identify what they think the important issues are that need to be addressed and how they think the Downtown can be improved in the future. The following outreach methods were completed during the process of creating this Plan:

- Task Force Meetings (4);
- Downtown Survey;
- Community Outreach Events (2);
- Public Presentation (draft Plan); and
- Public Hearing.

### **Task Force Meetings**

The Downtown Task Force was appointed by the City Manager and was comprised of a number of

Harrington citizens, business owners, and nonprofit organization members who are active in the community. Members donated numerous hours to attend meetings, provided their input on a variety of topics, decorated their businesses and organizations for Downtown open houses, encouraged friends and family members to participate in online surveys, attended public presentations, and most importantly, gave invaluable input into the Downtown Plan that could not have been written without their support and encouragement.

The Task Force met on four separate occasions:

#### *Task Force Meeting No. 1 | Kick-Off*

The Task Force kick-off meeting was held on December 1, 2015 at the Price Community Center. Task Force members were present to hear the City Planning Consultants discuss background on the 2014 Downtown Development Districts Act, Neighborhood Building Blocks Fund (NBBF) Grant, and Harrington's successful NBBF grant application.



The overall project scope and schedule was discussed, as well as project roles and responsibilities. A brief overview of recent projects and investments was given that led into a discussion of the Downtown's demographics and existing conditions. Members were introduced to their homework assignment – a SWOT analysis – where they were asked to walk the Downtown and think about its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Members were also asked to review and comment on draft survey questions that would be finalized and made public in January 2016. A proposal for a community outreach event was also discussed – *Love Your Downtown*. Members were also asked to consider whether they would like to see any changes to the proposed Downtown boundary.

#### *Task Force Meeting No. 2 | Visioning*

The second Task Force meeting focused on visioning activities and was held on January 12, 2016, also at the Price Community Center. Task



Force members heard the City Planning Consultants review five model projects: Winchester, VA; Apex, NC; Milford, DE; Keswick Village, PA; and a mixed-use Habitat for Humanity project located in Albany, NY. Consultants also discussed lessons learned in interviewing staff from these and other “model” towns, as well as their own past experiences. Members were asked their opinions on the proposed Downtown boundaries. The SWOT analysis that was assigned as homework during the first meeting was discussed in depth (information can be found in Chapter Two under Economic & Market Analysis). Members were introduced to their homework assignment – consideration of possible goals and objectives. They were also asked to attend the upcoming community outreach event – *Love Your Downtown* – and were reminded to participate in the downtown survey and ask others to as well.

#### *Task Force Meeting No. 3 | Goals & Objectives*

The third Task Force meeting focused on goals and objectives and was held on March 10, 2016, again at the Price Community Center. Task Force members heard the City Planning Consultants present an overview of the downtown survey results. A follow-up to the previous Task Force meeting's SWOT analysis was held, based on results of the survey. Members began a discussion of goals and objectives that would be completed at the following meeting.

#### *Task Force Meeting No. 4 | Incentives*

The fourth Task Force meeting centered on a discussion of possible incentives to be offered within the Downtown. It was held on March 23, 2016 in the Harrington City Hall Council Chambers. Goals and objectives for the Downtown were finalized and the ultimate vision was determined. Direction was determined for incentives and the Task Force gave 100% buy-in to the process to-date.

#### **Downtown Survey**

In January 2016, an online survey was opened to all residents, business owners and operators, property owners, renters,



employees, and visitors to the City of Harrington. The online survey ran from January 11, 2016 through February 19, 2016. Paper copies of the survey were also made available to those without internet access. Postcards describing the Downtown project, as well as requesting completion of the survey, were distributed at the Love Your Downtown Open House, throughout the Downtown, and emailed to various stakeholders. The survey was also available for those who chose to complete it in a paper format. These were returned to the City Hall and were manually entered into the online survey for data analysis. A total of 88 responses were collected. Surveys were differentiated for residents/visitors and merchants. The purpose of the survey was to collect information on the frequency and purpose of consumer activity in the Harrington area, the demand for new and expanded commercial offerings, the factors that influence local consumer shopping decisions, and the needs of local business owners and operators.

The survey focused on the following areas:

- when and where visitors shopped in the Downtown;
- features that attract respondents to a shopping/business area;
- advantages and disadvantages of Harrington's Downtown;
- safety;
- preferred future scenarios;
- businesses respondents would like to see in the Downtown;
- changes that would improve the Downtown;
- needs for Downtown business expansion;
- potentially useful services for local merchants;
- importance of various consumer segments;
- barriers and obstacles facing Downtown businesses; and
- forms of advertising currently utilized by Downtown businesses.

Forty percent of survey respondents were Harrington residents. Nearly 65% of those responding to the survey were women. Over 93% of the respondents were white and over 97% indicated they were not Hispanic or Latino. Slightly over 45% of respondents indicated their age to be between 45 and 64. The following list briefly summarizes

responses to the survey:

- The most common frequencies for visiting Downtown Harrington was “once every few months” (31% of respondents) and “once a month” (23% of respondents).
- Respondents indicated that the places they most frequently visited in the Downtown were the “Post Office or Bank” and “Retail”.
- The most commonly identified time to visit the Downtown was Monday-Friday, before 5:00pm.
- When questioned about safety, 100% of respondents indicated they felt safe in the Downtown during the day and 61% indicated they felt safe during the night.
- The factors “friendly local service,” “supporting local businesses,” and “convenient location” were most commonly cited as major advantages of the Downtown.
- “Lack in variety of goods and services” was most commonly cited as a major disadvantage of the Downtown.
- When questioned about the types of businesses respondents would like to see come to the Downtown, the most common requests were for personal service uses, public and civic uses, and commercial retail uses, with specific requests such as a small grocery store and hair salon. Locally-owned restaurants, coffee shops, and specialty food shops were the most requested food-related businesses, with specific requests such as an ice cream shop, bistro, and sports bar.
- When asked if respondents “strongly agree” that certain traits attract them to a shopping/business area, “friendly customer service,” “quality of products and services,” and “variety of products and services” were most commonly rated as influencing factors.
- 40% of respondents to the merchant survey indicated they had a need to expand. In a separate question, only 40% of respondents indicated that they were committed to keeping their business Downtown.

Additional information gleaned from the survey can be found throughout this Plan. The survey forms and more detailed results can be found in the Appendix.

**Community Outreach - Love Your Downtown Open House**

On February 5, 2016, the Harrington Downtown Development District Partnership (comprised of the City of Harrington, City Planning Consultants, and Downtown businesses and nonprofits) held an event, Love Your Downtown, in conjunction with the City Council's proclamation of February as City Goes Red Month and February 5th as Wear Red Day. In addition to working with the City to promote City Goes Red Month and Wear Red Day to urge all citizens to show their support for women and the fight against heart disease, the Love Your Downtown Open House encouraged businesses to create red window displays and decorations. This outreach event encouraged area residents to visit Downtown businesses, nonprofits, and government agencies to learn what they sell or services they provide, and hopefully to encourage these same people to patron a new business or entity. Each participating business/nonprofit was provided an event card that encouraged each person to visit all the businesses/nonprofits shown on the Downtown map and obtain a signature of each business to be eligible for a gift basket upon completion. An educational project booth was displayed within the City Hall Council Chambers to wrap up the end of the day by drawing event cards to win the two gift baskets. The purpose of this booth was to display information on the Downtown project, gain feedback on the proposed boundary and SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis (see Chapter Two), and to encourage attendees to fill out the downtown survey. There was a proposed boundary map and SWOT analysis, as well as information on the 2014 Downtown Development District Act for community members to review and ask questions.



Nine stakeholders participated in the open house:



*Happy Tails Dog Grooming*



*The Harrington Florist & Cakery*



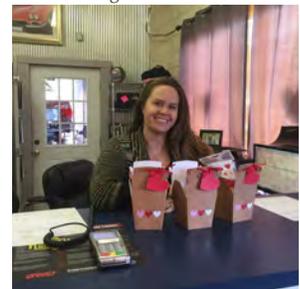
*The Clutter Box*



*City Manager Teresa Tieman with  
OMG Collage owner Marie Gannon*



*Power in Praise Ministries*



*Cook's Tire Center*



*Harrington Police Department*



*Harrington City Hall*



*City of Harrington Staff members Joyce Wix, Beverley Ireland, and City Manager Teresa Tieman join City Planning Consultants Lauren Good and Debbie Pfeil of KCI Technologies at the Love Your Downtown project booth displayed in City Hall.*



*Harrington Historical Society (HHS)  
Mayor Anthony Moyer, HHS President Jean Miller, HHS Treasurer Viva Poore, and City Manager Teresa Tieman*

### Community Outreach - Senior Center Birthday Celebration

Gene Price, Director of Harrington Senior Center, Inc., invited the City Planning Consultants to attend their February 16, 2016 birthday celebration to discuss the Downtown project. Keeping the “Love Your Downtown” theme of the open house event, display tables were set up and the two Consultants gave brief presentations on the Plan and eventual goals of Downtown Development District designation with the State. They also assisted numerous celebration participants in filling out their downtown surveys (more information above). Celebrants who filled out surveys were entered into a raffle for gift baskets provided by the City Planning Consultants.



### Public Presentation

On April 14, 2016, a joint meeting of the Harrington City Council, Planning Commission, and Downtown Task Force was held at the Price Community Center, and was open to the public. All stakeholders with physical addresses located within the Downtown were hand-delivered a flyer inviting them to attend. Information about the presentation was also advertised in the newspaper and posted on the City’s website. At this meeting, City Planning Consultants gave a presentation on the Plan’s development, the outreach process, the Downtown vision, the Plan’s goals and objectives, implementation strategies and timelines, incentives, and an overview of the Downtown Development District Designation application process. All attendees were invited to ask questions. This presentation served as the public release of the Plan document and the following day (April 15th) marked the beginning of the public comment period, which would end on May 9th at the close of the Public Hearing.



### Public Hearing

The Public Hearing on Harrington’s Downtown Development District Plan was held on May 9, 2016 and public comments were received from April 15th through the close of the Public Hearing. A legal notice advertising the Public Hearing was published in the Delaware State News on April 24, 2016 and in The Journal on April 27, 2016. All public comments received during this period are provided in the Appendix.

### Local Press Coverage

The City thanks The Journal for their coverage and support of this project with news articles published on the following dates: February 3, 2016; February 10, 2016; April 6, 2016; and April 20, 2016. Copies of these articles can be found in the Appendix.

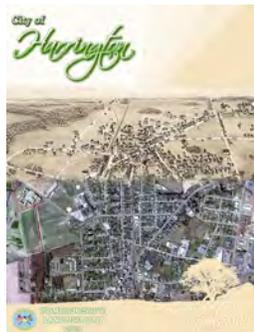
### Agency Coordination

A draft of this Downtown Plan was submitted to the Office of State Planning Coordination (OSPC) on April 15, 2016, the same time the draft was released to the public, in accordance with the Neighborhood Building Blocks Grant Agreement.

## Existing Documents, Activities & Organizations

### Comprehensive Land Use Plan

The City of Harrington's Comprehensive Land Use Plan was adopted on December 16, 2013 and certified by the Governor. Its primary vision is to maintain the quality of life and rural character of the community while protecting the health, safety, economic health, and welfare of its citizens. Harrington recognizes that responsible and sustainable use of land and natural resources is critical to the economic growth of the community.



The function of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan is to provide direction relating to growth management, redevelopment, transportation, environmental protection, and City services based on past and present data and trends. The Comprehensive Plan identified areas of improvement and implementation items for future consideration.

While applicable to the entire City, the Comprehensive Plan holds a number of themes that can be used to further inform the Downtown planning process. It indicates that the downtown in every small town reflects the heart and soul of the community. Harrington's Downtown should reflect the City's small town character with seasonal window displays that encourage the community to shop locally. It should be the location of events and gatherings for neighbors and businesses. The community should be able to park their vehicles, walk, or ride their bicycles to the Downtown to shop, eat, and socialize. The Comprehensive Plan's

themes and goals that are relevant to the Downtown have been incorporated throughout this Plan and, most specifically, into Chapter Four.

Upon adoption of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan, the City prepared a comprehensive rezoning to ensure the proposed zoning changes complement the approved future land use classifications. During this process, all parcels were compared to the existing zoning to determine proposed zoning changes. Notifications were sent to the affected property owners allowing an opportunity to meet with the City to discuss the changes and to determine if property owners wished to oppose the proposed zoning. Based on requested meetings by the property owners, only eight parcels were in opposition to the proposed zoning changes. These eight parcels were reviewed and a recommendation was made to allow the current zoning classification to stand. One hundred and sixty-seven parcels (excluding the eight opposed parcels) were presented for zoning changes and adopted as presented in Ordinance 15-07 on July 20, 2015. Ordinance 15-16 was presented to amend the recently adopted Comprehensive Land Use Plan, Exhibit 17 - Future Land Use to change the eight parcels to complement the existing land use classification. This Ordinance was adopted on December 7, 2015. The City submitted the Comprehensive Land Use Plan Amendment to the Office of State Planning Coordination on February 1, 2016 and presented at the Preliminary Land Use Service (PLUS) meeting on February 24, 2016. Correspondence was received regarding the PLUS application with no State objections.

### Zoning Regulations & Design Standards

The 2013 Comprehensive Land Use Plan identified certain needs as they pertain to aesthetic appearance and the function of the Downtown. During this process, it was discovered that the Downtown area had several spot zoning classifications and the neighboring uses were not complementary in nature. The identified needs included, but were not limited to, the following:

- lack of character and maintenance;
- structure and curb appeal improvements;
- new street lighting for remaining downtown area; and

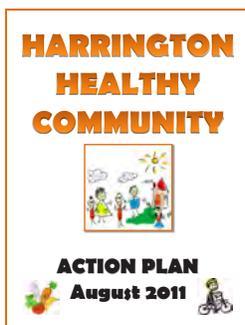
- window displays and maintenance of vacant buildings.

The City's Zoning Ordinance (Chapter 440 of the City Code) recently underwent a comprehensive update, which was adopted on July 20, 2015 and ensured the neighborhood uses were allowed throughout the area. The majority of the Downtown is in the C-2 Central Commercial Zone, which was completely updated to be a major component in the City's redevelopment efforts. The intent of this zoning district is to create a lively, safe, human-scaled downtown area in which people will want to live, visit, shop, and work. The C-2 Zone regulations permit a variety of uses that one finds in a traditional downtown. In addition, the design standards focus on creating a pedestrian-oriented space through form-based site, building design, and placemaking standards.

The Downtown also includes a smaller portion of C-3 Service Commercial Zone, which permits uses and has zoning requirements that are more typical of a higher commercial highway environment than a traditional, walkable downtown. A more detailed description and assessment of the zoning districts within the Downtown are provided in Chapter Two.

### *Healthy Community Action Plan*

The Harrington Healthy Community Action Plan (HCAP) provides a tool containing strategies based on community assessment data and input from a partnership team comprised of positive, active, diverse, committed, and community-driven individuals that brought several different viewpoints to the project. A community assessment was completed using the Community Health Assessment and Group Evaluation (CHANGE) tool developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Project goals were to develop and/or strengthen the capacity of the Harrington community to reduce obesity and other chronic diseases and improve the health of residents by implementing policies, systems, environmental strategies, and programmatic



supports to increase healthy eating and opportunities for active living and healthy behaviors.

The HCAP, while applicable to the entire City, includes some goals that have and can be used to further inform strategies for the Downtown:

- develop a mixed use zoning classification (this goal was achieved through the adoption of new C-2 Zone regulations in Chapter 440, Zoning in 2015);
- develop a bicycle and pedestrian plan;
- conduct annual Harrington Healthy Community Day;
- continue the Farmers' Market; and
- encourage medical and dental services to locate in Harrington.

### *Strategies for State Policies & Spending*

On April 14, 2016, Governor Markell signed Executive Order 59 adopting the 2015 Delaware Strategies for State Policies and Spending. Originally approved in 1999 and updated in 2004 and 2010, the 2015 document is the third iteration and is now available online. A link has been provided in the Appendix.

The purpose of this document, as with previous Strategies for State Policies and Spending documents, is to coordinate land use decision making with the provision of infrastructure and services in a manner that makes the best use of natural and fiscal resources. The importance of such coordination lies in the fact that land use decisions are made at the local level, while the bulk of infrastructure and services that support land use decisions are funded by the State. The development of the State Strategies document with local governments and citizens helps to create a unified view toward growth and preservation priorities that all levels of government can use to allocate resources.

The document uses the following area designations:

- Levels 1 and 2 identify areas of the State that are most prepared for growth and where the State can make the most cost-effective infrastructure investment for schools, roads, and public safety.
- Level 3 areas reflect areas where growth is anticipated by local, county, and State

plans in the longer term, or areas that may have environmental or other constraints to development. State investments will support growth in these areas; however, the State may have other priorities in the near term, especially for Levels 1 and 2.

- In Level 4 areas, the State will make investments that will help preserve a rural character, such as investments to promote open space and agriculture. The State is also looking to enhance agricultural activities by encouraging the location of complementary businesses in these areas.
- Out-of-Play lands are those that cannot be developed for reasons including designation as federally- or state-owned protected lands, parkland, the development rights have been purchased, or State and local regulations prohibit development.

The entirety of Harrington’s Downtown has been designated as Level 1. A link to the Office of State Planning’s website with more information and official maps can be found in the Appendix. According to the 2015 document, in investment Level 1 areas, State investments and policies should support and encourage a wide range of uses and densities, promote a variety of transportation options, foster efficient use of existing public and private investments, and enhance community identity and integrity. Overall, it is the State’s intent to use its spending and management tools to maintain and enhance community character, to promote well-designed and efficient new growth, and to facilitate redevelopment within these areas.

### Public Investments

Since fiscal year 2010, significant public investments have been made to the Downtown. The investments made were between fiscal years 2010-2013:

- Clark Street - \$33,354 DelDOT funded with no City match
- Streetscape Phase 1 - \$24,000 Transportation Enhancement Program with no City match
- Streetscape Phase 1 - \$302,032 (\$248,600 DelDOT funded and \$53,432 City funded)
- Clark Street Curbing - \$6,010 City funded
- Freedom Park - \$49,987 (\$20,000 Delaware Land Trust funded and \$29,987 matching funds)

### Downtown Streetscape Improvements

The City of Harrington received funding for several improvements within the Downtown. This project not only served to enhance the Downtown character, but achieved Americans with Disabilities Act compliance. The DelDOT Transportation Enhancement and Community Transportation Fund provided monies for construction of the Downtown Streetscape Project.



Phase one consisted of the enhancement of the sidewalks and intersections on Commerce Street from Dorman Street to Fleming Street and on Clark Street from Fleming Street to Hanley Street. The extent of work at each location included:

- removal and disposal of 620 linear feet of curbing
- removal and disposal of 11,400 square feet of existing concrete sidewalk and asphalt paving

- installation of 622 linear feet of concrete curbing
- installation of 11,000 square feet of concrete sidewalk and driveway apron
- installation of 50 tons of hot mix paving
- installation of 15 landscaped islands
- installation of electric conduit and lighting for 18 street lights
- installation of 5 aluminum drain outlets



Resolution 13-R-11 on July 15, 2013, applied for a Delaware Land Trust Fund (DTF) grant in the amount of \$20,000 for landscaping, signage, and sidewalks. A 50% match was required from the City; therefore, monies from seized funds and donations accounted for the match. With the vision of the Harrington Police Department and support of the Mayor and City Council, the new park was designed to include a gazebo, benches, sign, Christmas tree, flag pole, irrigation, fence, and landscaping so that it could be a multi-purpose open space area. Freedom Park is the site of many Downtown events throughout the year. More information about these events can be found below in the Downtown Events section.



### Freedom Park

Freedom Park, located on the corner of Fleming Street and Mechanic Street, was once a vacant lot with broken pieces of concrete and weeds used as an overflow parking lot. The Police Department, with approval from the City Council approving

### Designations

The City of Harrington is one of ten “Commercial District Affiliate” (CDA) designations by the State of Delaware Department of Economic Development

Office (DED0). This designation is for communities that choose to implement downtown revitalization strategies similar to designated Main Street programs, but on a smaller scale. Some of these towns are “testing the waters” as they consider future Main Street designation. DED0 works with these communities to build strategies that will encourage partnership development, new funding opportunities, and increased opportunities for small businesses. The CDA municipalities can participate in Downtown Delaware’s group training activities led by state and national downtown development experts. Affiliates are in the “network” to learn about best practices in the field of revitalization, to work with a downtown business development expert, and to trade best practices with peers from around the state, particularly in the area of business development. Many of Delaware’s CDAs are direct beneficiaries of USDA grant-related activities. Ultimately, CDAs are offered an opportunity to plan proactively for a vibrant, synergistic downtown commercial business district based on the Four Point Main Street model.

On June 3, 2008, representatives from the Delaware Economic Development Office presented the “Main Street Program and Next Step for Downtown” to the City identifying the Main Street Four-Point Approach. The four point approach presented included:

**Organization** | Develop a budget, gauge community interest, have a speakers bureau, gauge volunteer level, ascertain pledges, and prepare the Delaware Main Street application to DED0.

**Design** | Streetscape design, design incentives, and review zoning to include project buildings.

**Promotion** | Coordinate a calendar of events.

**Economic & Restructuring** | Work with a DED0 business development specialist, make use of free energy audits, and develop a building/business inventory.

The next steps were preparing a Main Street work plan to move forward in applying for the Main Street designation. The official Main Street application was never submitted by the City of Harrington

based on the lack of Downtown stakeholders and partners.

### Downtown Events

Several large events take place in the Downtown throughout the year that bring the community together.



*Heritage Day is an annual celebration of the City's history, featuring a parade (above, far), food, games (above, low), entertainment, and crafts, as well as an annual watermelon-eating contest.*



*Police National Night Out is an annual community-building campaign that promotes police-community partnerships and neighborhood camaraderie to make neighborhoods safer, better places to live.*



Lake Forest High School also rotates its annual Homecoming Parade, which takes place in Harrington's Downtown every few years. In addition to these events, there are also a number of popular community services, including Parks and Recreation programs, Police Department community events, school outreach events, Library community programs, local church and nonprofit organization events, and supportive local business' events that occur either within or very close to the Downtown area.



*Freedom Park is the site of many Downtown Events including Movies in the Park (top) and Music in the Park (logo, bottom). These events draw many participants from throughout the community.*



*Freedom Park is also the site of the City's annual Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony, as well as a spot where many people congregate for the Christmas Parade. As you can see above, the site is well-decorated for all of the City's holiday festivities.*



# Chapter Two.

## *Downtown Harrington - The Data*





Through the many assets, opportunities, and challenges identified through this Downtown Plan, it is clear that Harrington’s Downtown is well-positioned for growth and infill development. This Plan builds from these strengths, carries out the City’s vision, and puts the placemaking recommendations in the Comprehensive Plan and recent zoning updates to work. Redevelopment is a top priority and Harrington wishes to address several critical issues that may be hindering the Downtown from meeting its economic potential and capitalize on its many strengths and opportunities.

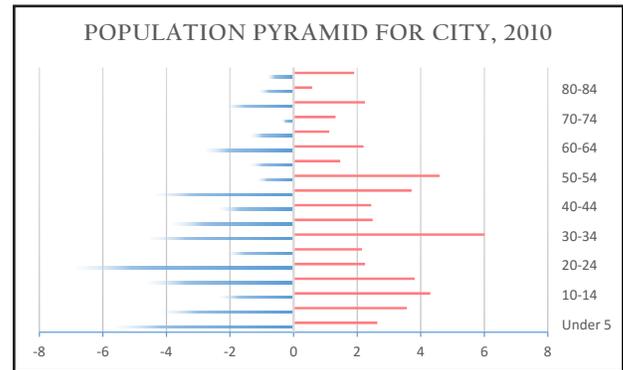
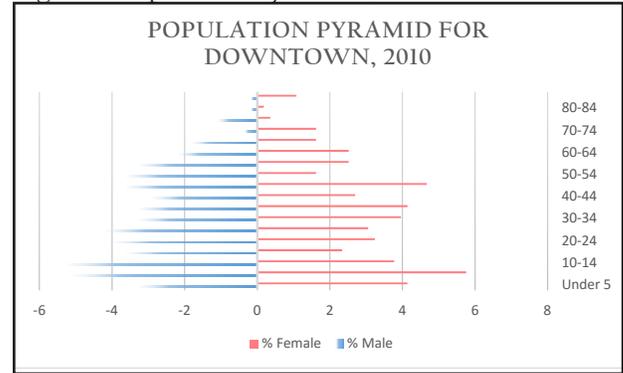
## Demographics & Housing

### Population

Harrington’s estimated population in 2013 was 3,616, a very slight increase over the 2010 U.S. Census count of 3,562 and only a 14% increase to the 2000 population of 3,174. While Harrington’s population growth during this 2000-2013 time period is more in line with that of the State’s 18% growth, it should be noted that Kent County’s population growth is more than double that of the City’s at 30% during the same 13-year time period. Population figures are not available for the Downtown due to the way the Census collects data at this smaller area level, but the Census Blocks that most closely correspond to the Downtown exhibited a population growth of 20% from 2000 to 2010, growing from a population of 460 to 554.

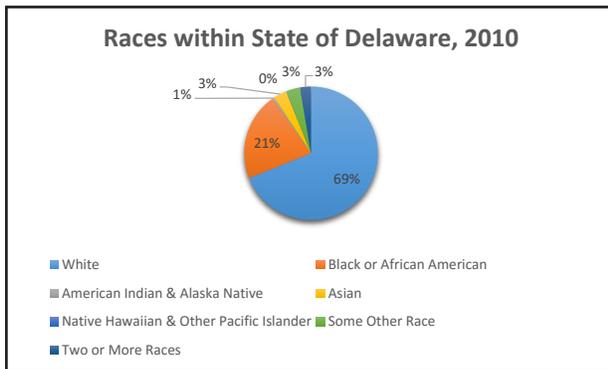
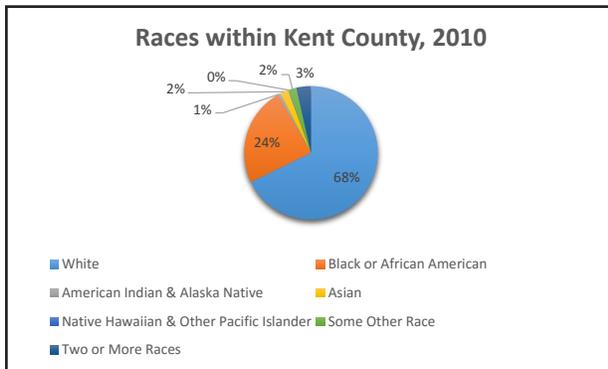
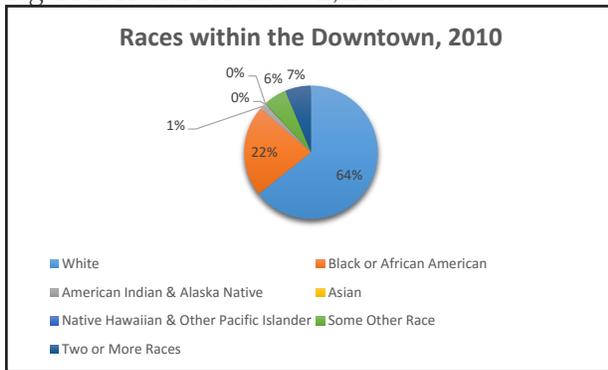
Almost 60% of the Downtown is comprised mostly of working aged individuals (aged 20-65). The next largest group in the Downtown is comprised of school-aged individuals, with almost 26% between the ages 5-19. Seniors make up 8.5% of the population and preschoolers (less than 5 years old) make up less than 8%. As you can see from the population pyramids shown in Figure 1, the population of the Downtown is skewed slightly to the younger age groups, while the City as a whole has higher senior and elderly populations. The median age of the City of Harrington was 33 years according to the 2010 Census.

Figure 1. Population Pyramids, 2010



According to the 2010 Census, over 66% of the Downtown’s population was white, 19% was black, 6% was two or more races, and 8% was other. The category “other” encompasses American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, and other races not specifically listed. Persons of Hispanic or Latino origin accounted for 8% of the Downtown’s population. These numbers vary slightly from what can be seen in the City as a whole, where 68% of the population was white, 23% was black, and 8% was other. Five percent of the Downtown population was of Hispanic or Latino origin. This comparison shows that the Downtown is *slightly* more diverse than the City as a whole. The percentages shown for the City very closely mirror those shown for Kent County and the State of Delaware as well. See Figure 2 for a breakdown of races within the Downtown, City, County, and State.

Figure 2. Racial Breakdown, 2010



### Income & Poverty

Harrington’s 2013 median household income was estimated to be \$38,182, more than \$15,000 below the Kent County median of \$55,000 and more than \$20,000 below the State median of \$60,000. Median per capita income was \$17,891, compared to the County’s \$24,851 and the State’s \$29,819. The City’s poverty rate of 19.7%, according to the 2009-2013 American Community Survey, was almost 60% greater than the State’s 11.7% rate. Unfortunately, this information is not available at the Census Block level and, thus, cannot be determined for the Downtown area.

### Housing & Homeownership

The City’s 2013 homeownership rate of just over 50% greatly falls behind the County (72.3%), State (72.5%), and national (64.9%) rates. According to the 2013 Comprehensive Land Use Plan, the percentage of owner-occupied units throughout the City has been decreasing over the past 25 years, although the actual number of units is still the largest segment of housing stock that can be found. This is due to a dramatic increase in the number of mobile homes and trailers within City limits as part of the annexation of a mobile home park between 1990 and 2000 and the construction of several multi-family structures in the 2000s. Within the Downtown, the homeownership rate is even lower, at only 45%. The Downtown also has a residential vacancy rate that is nearing 15%.

The 2000 Census identified 674 owner-occupied housing units within the City. Seventy percent of those were valued between \$50,000 and \$99,999. Less than 1% were valued above \$150,000, while almost 7% were valued below \$50,000. The median value was \$83,800. The largest market segment for renter-occupied units was for the \$500-\$749 price range, with one-third of renters falling in that category. Just over 8% of renters paid over \$750 per month, while almost one-third paid less than \$300. The median monthly rental price paid in 2000 was \$434.

The 2010 Census saw a 20% increase in the number of owner-occupied housing units. The values of those units also rose considerably, with almost 70%

of units ranging in value from \$100,000 to \$299,999. There were still 27% of owner-occupied units that had values of less than \$100,000, while just over 3% had values over \$300,000. The median value for owner-occupied units was \$151,600. The number of renter-occupied units increased by almost 30% during the same time period. The largest market segment for renter-occupied units was for the \$1,000-\$1,499 price range, doubling since 2000, with 28% of renters falling in that category. Almost half of renters paid over \$750, while almost one-quarter still paid less than \$300. The median rental price paid in 2010 was \$1,103 per month.

2010 Census, the majority of homes in the City are between 11 and 20 years old. Homes built before 1940 (75 years old or older) make up about 20% of the housing stock. Houses built between the 1940s and 1960s account for another 20% of the housing stock. About 15% of the housing stock was built in the 1970s and 1980s.

### Employment

The 2009-2013 American Community Survey estimates indicated there were 1,830 residents in Harrington that were in the labor force (16 years and over and employable). Out of those residents in the civilian labor force, there were a total of 331 residents that were unemployed. The City’s unemployment rate was 18%. This rate is three times the County’s and two times the State’s unemployment rates, at 6.1% and 8.9%, respectively.

Workers were employed in the following occupations: management, business, science, and arts occupations (28.6%); sales and office occupations (23.1%); service occupations (22.0%); natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations (13.2%); and production, transportation, and material moving occupations (13.2%). Based on comparisons to the State, Harrington’s residents have relative specializations in the community and social services, health technologists and technicians, and healthcare support occupations, meaning that residents have more of these occupations than the State average. The top ten industries represented by City residents include those listed in Table 2.

Table 1. City Housing Values & Renter Costs

		2010		2000	
		No.	%	No.	%
Owner-Occupied	Total Units	812	-	672	1
	<\$50,000	150	18.5%	45	6.7%
	\$50,000-\$99,999	75	9.2%	472	70.0%
	\$100,000-\$149,999	178	21.9%	154	22.8%
	\$150,000-\$199,999	207	25.5%	3	0.4%
	\$200,000-\$299,999	174	21.4%	0	0.0%
	\$300,000-\$499,999	28	3.4%	0	0.0%
	\$500,000-\$999,999	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	\$1,000,000+	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	With Mortgage	506	62.3%	364	54.0%
	Without Mortgage	306	37.7%	310	46.0%
Renter-Occupied	Total Units	528	-	418	-
	<\$200	10	1.9%	78	18.7%
	\$200-\$299	117	22.2%	57	13.6%
	\$300-\$499	73	13.8%	88	21.1%
	\$500-\$749	81	15.3%	139	33.3%
	\$750-\$999	99	18.8%	35	18.4%
	\$1,000-\$1,499	148	28.0%	0	0.0%
	\$1,500+	0	0.0%	0	0.0%

Harrington offers a variety of architectural features and character in single-family homes throughout its neighborhoods and a number of multi-family housing units available for rental options, including state-assisted housing. Both single- and multi-family housing options are available within the Downtown.

In Harrington, the greatest segment of the housing stock (28%) was built from 1990 to 1999. As of the

Table 2. Industries Represented by City Residents

Industry	%
Educational Services, Health Care & Social Assistance	24.7%
Retail Trade	17.8%
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation, Accommodation & Food Services	11.6%
Manufacturing	10.6%
Public Administration	10.4%
Other Services, except Public Administration	8.0%
Construction	7.8%
Transportation & Warehousing, Utilities	3.0%
Wholesale Trade	2.6%
Information	1.6%



## Land Use & Zoning

### Land Use

There is a well-balanced mix of commercial, residential, and institutional land uses within the Downtown. The most prevalent land uses in terms of land area are commercial and residential uses. Commercial uses total 6.4 acres, making up almost a quarter of the Downtown, excluding right-of-way. Single-family residential land totals 5.7 acres and 22% of the Downtown. Mixed-use, which contains both non-residential and residential uses, comprises 4.4 acres of land and 17% of the total area. Institutional land uses such as government, religious, and civic uses total 4.1 acres and 16%. There are 12 vacant parcels totaling 2.1 acres and 8% of the Downtown. These parcels are entirely vacant and do not contain a building, whether occupied or unoccupied. There are six multi-family residential lots on 1.2 acres and 4% of the total land area. Two acres, or 7%, of the land in the Downtown are used for the railroad. There is one park, Freedom Park, on a site of slightly more than 1/8th of an acre that comprises 0.5% of the Downtown's total area. See *Map 3. Existing Land Use* and *Table 3. Existing Land Use* for the distribution of each land use type within the Downtown's boundaries. *Please note that the figures in the table below do not exactly match the figures in this paragraph as the table accounts for the acreage within the right-of-way.*

Table 3. Existing Land Use, 2016

Land Use	No. Parcels	No. Acres	% of Downtown
Right-of-Way	n/a	6.3	19.3%
Commercial	22	6.2	19.0%
Single-Family Residential	26	5.7	17.4%
Mixed Use	16	4.3	13.1%
Institutional	22	4.1	12.5%
Railroad	2	2.0	6.1%
Vacant	11	1.9	5.8%
Multi-Family Residential	5	1.2	3.7%
Park/Open Space	5*	1.0	3.1%
	<b>109*</b>	<b>32.7</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*Note: Freedom Park and the Police Department share a parcel and are counted twice in the Parcel column.

Although the uses are generally dispersed throughout the Downtown, there is an evident clustering of uses. There is a concentration of institutional uses near Mechanic Street, between Dorman Street and Railroad Avenue. The majority of the single-family homes are grouped west of Dorman Street as well as on the south side of Clark Street, between Ward Street and the former Spartan Station. Commerce Street, from Railroad Avenue to Dorman Street, exemplifies traditional 'Main Street' character as it contains a variety of neighborhood-scale commercial retail uses, such as antiques, a general store, and a combined florist and bakery. It also includes service-oriented uses such as a post office, banks, and City Hall, as well as mixed-use buildings with apartments on the second floor.

The City wishes to create a more vibrant live-work-play community with a mix of residential, retail, service, and entertainment uses. A major challenge and opportunity for the Downtown is to evolve with the right mix of uses that would promote day and night economic activity, as well as year-round activity. The Downtown would benefit from more daily amenities such as groceries, nighttime restaurants, a movie or play theater, and housing options for all age and income groups. Retail, entertainment, and lodging uses in the City could dovetail and capitalize on the abundant commercial and entertainment attractions and events outside of the Downtown, such as the Harrington Casino and Raceway and the Delaware State Fair.

Additional retail, office, and entertainment uses in the Downtown would offer more job opportunities for residents. As Harrington would also like to increase and diversify its resident population that works within City limits, apartments above retail or offices in the Downtown would offer even more housing options that could appeal to a broader range of ages and income groups.

### Zoning

The Downtown is located in the central area of the City where moderate and high-density mixed-use development patterns are established and desired and where building reuse and infill to create higher densities is encouraged. The C-2 Central Commercial Zone advances a centrally located mixed-use area, as



it encourages the establishment and continuation of small commercial retail, professional business, arts and culture, restaurant, and entertainment uses in conjunction with supportive residential uses. The C-2 Zone consists of 95 parcels on 21 acres, making up the majority (80%) of the Downtown, excluding rights-of-way.

The C-2 Zone gives developers flexibility in design, while maintaining and enhancing the character of the City. The design and development standards focus on creating a pedestrian-oriented traditional downtown through form-based site and building design and placemaking standards. It permits a wide range of uses that help create an environment where most daily needs can be met. The C-2 Zone also allows small lot sizes and minimal front and side yard setbacks, which allow buildings closer to each other and to the street and sidewalk that create a more compact, pedestrian-scale environment. The streetscape standards require street trees, lights, and sidewalks and the architectural standards aim to create a sense of place and promote sidewalks and storefronts as public spaces.

The Downtown also includes the C-3 Service Commercial Zone, which consists of twelve parcels on over 4 acres, making up 17% of the District. There are two groupings of C-3 zoned parcels: on the north side of Clark Street between Delaware Street and the Volunteer Fire Department site entrance and at the southern end of the Downtown boundary between O Alley and the Norfolk Southern Railroad. The intent of the C-3 Zone is to provide for highway-oriented retail and automotive and heavier service-type business activities, which ordinarily require main-highway locations and cater to transient as well as to local customers. The C-3 Zone permits all of the uses in the C-2 Zone, as well as drive-through facilities, motor vehicle services, sales and repair shops, supermarkets, shopping centers, storage and warehouses, funeral homes, commercial greenhouses, and agricultural supply stores. The lot area, yard, and dimension requirements, as well as parking and sign standards, are more typical of a suburban commercial highway environment than a traditional, walkable downtown.

Table 4. Zoning, 2016

Zoning	Parcels	Acres	
	No.	No.	%
C-2 Central Commercial	95	21.0	80%
C-3 Service Commercial	12	4.4	17%
R-1 Single Family Res.	1	0.9	3%
	<b>108</b>	<b>26.3</b>	<b>100%*</b>

\*The remaining 6.4 acres and 20% of the Downtown is comprised of right-of-way.

### Economic Development

The City desires to continue to stimulate development in the Downtown and build off these recent successes. The City supports additional infill development on vacant parcels for mixed uses, as well as the adaptive reuse of existing structures. While the majority of the empty structures are older and may not be up to current building code regulations, they still hold great development potential. The City should continue to assist in the regulatory process with these issues to improve existing businesses, attract new businesses, and facilitate infill development.

In 2007, the City authorized the City Planning Consultant to review the current development application procedures and create methods to streamline and clarify the process. A two tier review process was presented and adopted by the City Council that created a Category A Site Plan Review and a Category B Administrative Plan Review. This tier system allowed specific development applications to be completed without any public meeting, if the project was Code compliant. These procedures can be found in the City of Harrington Code, Chapter 440-287, Uses Requiring Site Plans. The resulting process was less expensive in terms of time and cost. This process has been very successful and encourages redevelopment through onsite guidance and building improvements, and is believed to have initiated a downtown resurgence.

This section has been broken down into three Economic Development sections to assist in identifying the importance of each area: existing structure redevelopment, vacant land development, and priority redevelopment areas.

### Existing Structure Redevelopment

The City previously had several vacant buildings prior to 2007. Since then, many of those have been occupied with new businesses. Vacant buildings with storefronts can contribute to increasing the curb appeal by providing seasonal window displays as well as promoting upcoming citywide events. This will allow pedestrian traffic an opportunity to view the storefront information and perhaps entice a potential stakeholder to occupy the vacant building.

There were several redevelopment projects where current property and business owners have made improvements to existing buildings. These improvements included exterior renovations and signage upgrades, among other things. The successful recent redevelopment projects that have been completed in the Downtown include:



*The Harrington Florist & Cakery, before (left) and after (right), with a new facade. Changes include new signage, paint, and awnings.*

*A once vacant lot in a prominent Downtown location (left) is now used as the local Farmers' Market (right). The site has been updated with landscaping and signage appropriate for the use.*



*A vacant, boarded up building (left), became Downtown Junction (right). The building was painted with contrasting colors and received new signage. Due to the interior set-up, side and rear window displays were not feasible, so the owner decided to fill these spaces with historical photos of Downtown Harrington, received from the Delaware Public Archives.*

OMG Collage, before (left) and after (right), with an updated facade. Changed include updated paint and new signage.



The Calloway Building recently received a facelift (right) consisting of paint, new awnings, and new signage. This building is currently occupied by The Clutter Box, Happy Tails Dog Grooming, and Anchors Aweigh, a new restaurant to be opening spring 2016.

Once known as Spartan Station, a mostly-vacant strip mall (left), this space has been occupied by Connections Community Support Programs (right), an organization that provides care to those suffering from substance abuse issues.



Harrington's City Hall, located at 106 Dorman Street, has recently undergone renovations, both to its interior and its exterior.



Power in Praise Ministries, a church located at 14 Clark Street, was once a building that sat vacant in the Downtown's gateway for a period of many years.

Many of the stores and nonprofits Downtown have updated their signage recently. The signage adds to the visual appeal of both the business/organization and the Downtown.



Two new businesses have recently occupied existing vacant structures in the Downtown:  
 Anchors Aweigh (left) and  
 Blue Hen Construction (right).



Most recently, two vacant structures were redeveloped and the tenants are now open for business. Both business owners are very friendly, eager to expand the business, and will be an asset to the community. These businesses provide additional services to the Downtown area and are listed below:

- **Anchors Aweigh** is a full service carry out or sit down restaurant located at 29 Commerce Street. Harry Marker, a Navy Veteran, is the owner and has over 25 years of experience in the restaurant business. He found the new location while reading *The Guide* and thought the Downtown location to be ideal. He is known for his cheesesteaks, Italian subs, and large breakfast sandwiches. Mr. Marker would like to support the church community on Sundays and is looking forward to moving his BBQ and smoker outside on the patio during the warm weather. They are open Tuesday-Sunday for breakfast and lunch.
- **Blue Hen Construction** provides services for residential and light commercial construction, located at 1 Dorman Street. Darrin and Laura Simpson are the owners and started the business in 2007. Mr. Simpson is a Lake Forest graduate and a Harrington native, never living more than 5 miles away from his hometown. They have designed and built several single-family homes throughout Delaware, including within Harrington. Mr. and Mrs. Simpson wanted an office centrally located and saw an opportunity to be in Downtown Harrington.

In addition to the completed redevelopment projects listed above, a large multi-use structure known as “Stones Tavern & Package” is under renovation with a new owner. This structure has remained vacant since fire damages in February 2015. The new owner intends to keep the Stone’s name and reopen a sports bar and grill to include a package store.



These improvements clearly show a strong private investment and interest in the Downtown, as shown on *Map 5. Downtown Redevelopment*.

### Vacant Land Development

The City prefers vacant land to be developed to stimulate the Downtown growth; however, this land can also be utilized in many other ways. Vacant lots can be developed as a gateway, sitting area, courtyard, event location, or be kept as green open space. This promotes visual curb appeal rather than an underdeveloped vacant lot with no sense of belonging or contribution to the vitality of the Downtown.

As shown on *Map 6. Priority Redevelopment Projects*, there are 27 parcels totaling just over 5 acres that are classified as vacant or underutilized property. These parcels offer opportunities for compatible infill development. Nine of these parcels currently contain a building, which are either vacant or the yard area is large enough to be subdivided and developed under the current Zoning Regulations. There are seven parcels with vacant buildings. Two properties are currently used as open space with amenities, but are classified as infill potential as they are privately owned. Potential infill could include additional park amenities or improvements.



*On the corner of Clark Street and East Street, the City took possess of an unsafe structure, known as the “Old Mission”. Based on the condition of the structure as well as health and safety concerns, the City demolished the structure and graded the lot. This location is identified as one of the Downtown gateways and the property is currently for sale.*

### Priority Redevelopment Areas

It is a priority for Harrington to reduce the number of vacant structures as well as vacant lots. The curb appeal and occupancy rate plays a vital role in sustaining the Downtown as an economic development engine for the City.

The City strives to ensure all structures are being maintained in a safe, Code compliant manner.

Harrington took possession of a structure, known as the “Old Mission” property located on the corner of Clark and East Streets. This structure was not maintained or safe for occupancy; therefore, the City demolished the structure and graded the site. This property is now being offered for sale.



Single-family two story residential structure located at 19 Dorman Street.

Another structure that lacks property maintenance and Code compliance is located on the west side of Commerce Street next to the WSFS Bank. It has been condemned by the City and is awaiting advertisement of demolition.



## 2. Vacant Lots

There are some highly visible and notable vacant lots at prominent locations in the Downtown. These vacant lands are considered to be an asset as they offer prime opportunities for infill development that fit within the context of the Downtown vision and goals. For this reason, these lots are identified as priority redevelopment areas located on *Map 6. Priority Redevelopment Projects*.

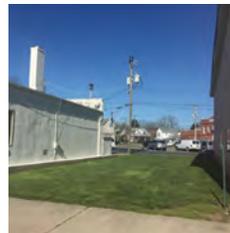


Gateway parcels located on south side of Clark Street and east side of East Street.



Gateway parcels located on the east side of Delaware Avenue.

These areas have been defined as priorities for redevelopment based on existing infrastructure, walkability, key locations with high visibility, and needed curb appeal improvements. The priority for redevelopment areas ranks the vacant structures first and foremost, followed by vacant lots as stated below:



Parcel located on Commerce Street.

### 1. Vacant Structures



Parcel located on Hanley Street.



North end of the Connections Complex located on the corner of Clark Street & Reed Street, formerly Kottage Kafe.



Clark Street two-story vacant building next to Bowers Group, formerly an antique retail store.

## Natural & Cultural Resources

### Floodplains

Special flood hazard areas, or the floodplain, are a graphic representation of the base flood on the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM). The base flood is the flood expected to have a 1% chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year. In a 30-

year period (the standard length of a conventional residential mortgage), there is a 26% chance that a structure in the regulated floodplain will be flooded by a 1% chance flood, also known as the 100-year flood event. The City has adopted and enforces Floodplain Regulations, found in Chapter 212 of the City Code, and also participates in the National Flood Insurance Program.

The Downtown is in an area of minimal flood hazard, with no special flood hazard areas mapped as of the latest FIRM publication of July 7, 2014. Although there are no special flood hazard areas mapped as of the writing of this Plan, current FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps should be consulted prior to the purchase of real estate and development-related activities.

### Wetlands

Wetlands are defined by wetland hydrology, hydric soils, and hydrophytic vegetation and are important to reduce or mitigate flooding impacts, maintain and improve water quality, and provide habitat for various plant and animal species. The United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) regulates tidal and nontidal wetlands under Section 404 provisions of the Federal Clean Water Act. The State more stringently regulates tidal and some nontidal wetlands (e.g., perennial and intermittent streams/ditches and ponds containing a surface water connection to other wetlands) under the Subaqueous Lands Act (7 Del.C. Chapter 72) and the Regulations Governing the Use of Subaqueous Lands.

There are no mapped wetlands located within the Downtown's boundaries. Although there are no wetlands mapped within the Downtown as of the writing of this Plan, it is always important to consult reputable sources to verify this information prior to the purchase of real estate or any development-related activities.

### Sourcewater Protection

Approximately 27% of the Downtown lies within the City's Excellent Recharge Area, designated by the State's Department of Natural Resources and

Environmental Control (DNREC). A portion of the southernmost parcel in the Downtown also contains Wellhead Protection Area. The areas affected can be seen on *Map 7. Environmental Features*. Harrington adopted a Source Water Protection Ordinance, Chapter 350 of the City Code, in 2008 in order to meet requirements of the State Source Water Protection Act of 2001. The purpose of Harrington's Source Water Protection Ordinance is to ensure that land use activities are conducted in such a way as to minimize the impact on, and reduce the risk of contamination to, excellent groundwater recharge areas and wellhead protection areas, which are the source for public drinking water in the City.

Per the City's Source Water Protection Ordinance, underground and aboveground storage tanks would be prohibited in these areas, as well as junk yards, scrap yards, salvage yards, mines and gravel pits; however, these latter uses are not ones that would be conducive to a traditional downtown environment regardless. New development in these areas is limited in the amount of gross impervious cover that is created; however, this threshold may be exceeded if stormwater is treated according to green technology best management practices to remove contaminants and if roof drains are discharged into underground recharge systems or onto permeable surfaces. This is not a complete list of requirements for development within Source Water Protection Areas and, thus, Chapter 350 of the City Code should be consulted accordingly.

### Historic Preservation

The 2013 Comprehensive Land Use Plan entertained the notion of creating three historic districts, one of which could include a large portion of the Downtown. Although the City did not intend to impose historic preservation by ordinance under that Comprehensive Plan, the City Council noted its willingness to work with property owners or private groups to recognize properties that are of significance to the community, the State, and the Nation. If requested to assist private preservation efforts, the City will support property owners' requests for federal funding for historic preservation or designation of the potential districts.

One potential district called out in the Comprehensive Plan, the largest of the three proposed in that Plan, could extend along Delaware Avenue and Railroad Avenue. Potential boundaries are described as North Street and Simmons Road on the north, Delaware Avenue on the east, Reese Avenue on the south, and West Street on the west. Areas of interest include Calvin, Dorman, and Commerce Streets. The area is representative of urbanization and early suburbanization from 1880 to 1940. The potential historic district retains its physical integrity as the density remains the same as when it was first built.

One property in Harrington is currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places, St. Stephen's Protestant Episcopal Church, and can be found within the Downtown on Fleming Street. Today, the former church is now part of the Harrington Historical Society complex and is home to the Society's library as well as many museum displays.



St. Stephens Protestant Episcopal Church. Source: Delaware Public Archives



St. Stephen's Church, as it now looks, is used as part of the Harrington Historical Society complex. As of April 2016, it is the only property in the City of Harrington that is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.



Many other symbols of Harrington's history existing throughout the Downtown:



A sign, located at the corner of Commerce Street, Mechanic Street, Hanley Street, and Railroad Avenue, marks the location of historic "Clark's Corner".

A sign, located at the Harrington Post Office, commemorates the "First Rural Free Delivery Route," beginning in Delaware on October 3, 1898 with the establishment of a route originating in Harrington. Joseph G. Peckham was appointed to serve as carrier. The route was 17.25 miles long and approximately 600 families were served.



## Physical, Public Realm & Walkability

### Connectivity & Walkability

The City is located at the intersection of two major arterial roads - U.S. Route 13 and State Route 14. Route 13 connects commuters to Dover and Seaford and Route 14 to neighboring Milford. This location and proximity to major access routes provides convenient access to surrounding communities, which is a key asset and offers an opportunity for bringing additional people into the Downtown.

Harrington's Downtown has not experienced major traffic problems, unlike other nearby towns, since the majority of the regional traffic travels on Route 13; however, it is important that the Downtown continues to attract a segment of highway travelers and not only local residents in order to remain prosperous. One problem the Downtown does experience is the local railroad stopping the flow of traffic daily as the train crosses the street and/or stops at the station. *Map 8. Transportation* shows the road, sidewalk, and bike route network within and surrounding the Downtown.

The Downtown has existing pedestrian-friendly

characteristics, such as being small and compact, having an extensive sidewalk network, and motorists generally having high visibility at intersections and pedestrian crossings. In addition, while not a traditional gridded street pattern, the Downtown's streets were laid out at nearly 90- and 45-degree angles, making them fairly easy to navigate. The Downtown streets also connect very well to the adjacent residential neighborhoods with their abundant sidewalk network.

The largest block is approximately 500' by 350', making them easily traversable; however, the addition of crosswalks at intersections and/or mid-block crosswalks could be considered in more highly trafficked areas. One feature that does distract from the Downtown's connectivity are two one-way streets, Dorman Street and Fleming Street. These are relatively narrow streets that do allow parallel parking, but are not wide enough to allow for two-way traffic. These streets do closely parallel one another and do not offer so much of an inconvenience to the Downtown as to be detrimental.

Although the Downtown does exhibit positive connectivity and walkability in general, there is a lack of streetscape amenities (e.g., street trees, greenery, benches) that can contribute to the streets feeling wider and ultimately make pedestrians less comfortable.



Curb bump-outs and on-street parking are effective traffic calming measures. A Downtown business has chosen to decorate this particular bump-out with a colorful display of furniture, further adding to the appeal of the adjacent store, while still maintaining a free-flowing pedestrian walkway.



The wide turning radius and "right turn keep moving" sign at the Downtown's main intersection is designed for vehicles to maintain speed. The wide radius also creates a long pedestrian crossing. Intersections such as these can be confusing for visitors who are not familiar with the area.

### Sidewalks & Biking

The City wishes to encourage foot traffic by making the streets more pedestrian-friendly, beautifying the public realm, and promoting public safety through street activity. The City has been advancing placemaking strategies that promote pedestrian activity and retaining and attracting neighborhood scale businesses. Examples of this include upgrading street lighting and crosswalk, sidewalk, and curbing improvements (information about these improvements can be found in Chapter One under *Public Investments*).



Downtown sidewalk in a predominantly residential area in need of repair.



Sidewalk in a predominantly commercial area that has been improved as part of the Downtown Streetscape Improvement project.

Map 8. Transportation displays the locations of sidewalks within and connecting to the Downtown. In general, the sidewalks in the Downtown are in good condition and are well-maintained. The 2013 Comprehensive Land Use Plan (discussed in Chapter One) includes the results of a sidewalk inventory and study prepared by the Dover/Kent County Metropolitan Planning Organization, which shows missing sidewalks and needed repairs, and makes recommendations for construction or improvement based on priority levels. The highest priorities were streets in the City that lacked a sidewalk on either side of the street and streets that were closer to the Downtown. There were no sidewalks in the Downtown that were categorized as a high priority. A mid-priority area existed on Hanley Street from Mispillion Street to Clark Street. The City received funding to reconstruct some of the sidewalks in the Downtown (information about these improvements can be found in Chapter One under *Public Investments*). The project enhanced the Downtown character as well as included Americans with Disabilities Act compliance.

The Transportation Map (Map 8) shows that the State of Delaware has identified Clark Street, Commerce Street, and West Street as bicycling routes; however, Clark Street is the only street that has been designated as having a “bikeway”. A bikeway, in these terms, means that the street includes shoulders and wide outside lanes, which may or may not be marked and signed as bike routes and, as such, cyclists should be alert for occasional turn lanes in these areas. Clark Street has not been marked and signed as a bike route within the City

of Harrington. As Figure 3 shows, Clark Street also experiences high traffic volume, with over 5,000 vehicles daily and so cyclists should take care when traveling on this roadway.

As the downtown provides a greater regional draw, it will be important to continue to maintain sidewalks and enhance traffic calming measures that offer cyclists and pedestrians comfort, safety, and convenience.



Delaware Avenue, near the Downtown boundary. A “Share the Road” sign has good intentions; however, a designated bike lane or shared lane markings would be more beneficial. Delaware Avenue is a State-maintained and regulated roadway.

Figure 3. Bicycle Map



Source: Delaware Bicycle Maps, Delaware Bicycle Council

### Bus Route

The DART Harrington-Dover Bus Route 117 currently runs Monday-Friday connecting the Delaware State Fairgrounds and Dover. There is one bus stop located within the Downtown at Delaware Avenue just north of Clark Street. There are two other bus stop locations within the City: Clark's Corner and US 13 at Delaware State Fairgrounds. Current buses operate leaving Downtown Harrington to Dover from 5:38 a.m. until 8:37 p.m. at this location. Routes leave Dover and arrive at the Downtown location from 8:11 a.m. until 10:11 p.m. Route 117 stops can easily connect with other bus services to New Castle and Sussex County locations. The route and times should be verified before relying on this information to secure public transportation, as the bus route is subject to change. The U.S. Census indicates that the majority of Harrington residents commute using private vehicles rather than alternative forms of transportation.



Harrington's Downtown bus stop is located on Delaware Avenue. Its location is marked by the sign posted on the electric pole, shown on the right side of this photo.

### Railroad

A railroad operated by the Norfolk Southern Railroad divides the Downtown, impeding connectivity and limiting movement. There is only one crossing in the Downtown at Clark Street. Since it is difficult to obtain approval for new at-grade crossings of a main railroad line, any additional crossing, vehicular or pedestrian, will not be likely. While the railroad limits mobility in the Downtown, it is also a significant part of the City's heritage. The Railroad Museum and the rail lands south of Clark Street offer a historical context and character to the Downtown. The 2013 Comprehensive Land Use Plan recommends improvements to the tracks in order to better blend in with the Downtown character. The Comprehensive Plan also states that the City strongly supports and encourages commuter rail service with a stop in Harrington.

The railroad station recently underwent exterior renovations, which improved the aesthetic quality of the building. As the building is located in the Downtown's northern gateway, this renovation was a needed and appreciated improvement to the site; however, the City would still like to work with Norfolk Southern to devise a plan for improving the entire site.

Figure 4. DART Route 117



Source: DART First State



A DART bus passing through the Downtown.



The Norfolk Railroad Station - before renovations (above) and after (below).



The railroad station is located in the middle of the Downtown and is in need of improvements, specifically around the pedestrian areas to include Railroad Avenue and the Delaware Avenue gateway. These improvements could range from planter boxes, designated parking improvement areas, as well as green open areas. This area is currently looked upon more as a manufacturing and/or storage yard than a Downtown gateway, something the City is hoping to change.



The Norfolk Southern Railroad runs north-south through the Downtown. While the railroad at times limits both vehicular and pedestrian/cyclist mobility in the Downtown, it also offers historical context and character to the District. In the first photo to the left, a train passes by the station. In the upper photo, a caboose sits outside of the Train Museum, located on Hanley Street, adjacent to the working rail line. In the lower photo, a railroad crossing sign and arm is located at the only crossing on Clark Street.

### Gateways & Streetscapes

It is a goal of the City to reinforce the Downtown's identity with attractive gateways at its edges. Improved gateways are an important aspect of downtowns, as they help to define identity, signify

to travelers that they have entered an historic area, and instill a sense of place and civic pride. Potential strategic gateways for Harrington’s Downtown include Commerce Street, Clark Street, and Delaware Avenue.

### Commerce Street Gateway

The intersection at Commerce Street and Mispillion Street offers a prominent gateway. Here, the City transitions from residential to non-residential uses, includes the architecturally prominent Trinity United Methodist Church, and is the location where ‘Main Street’ streetscape improvements begin such as crosswalks, curb ramps, and street lighting. An area of concern is the appearance of the other Downtown entrances.

a historic and revitalizing Downtown; however, just past the railroad, the well-maintained intersection at Commerce Street and the historic bank become an appealing focal point.



### Clark Street Gateway

The intersection of Clark Street and East Street also offers a prominent gateway. This gateway begins with a residential area, then transitions to vacant lots and a mix of residential and neighborhood uses such as the Connections complex.



### Delaware Avenue Gateway

Travelers entering the Downtown on Delaware Avenue and Clark Street first see vacant areas and an under-maintained railroad station with “no trespassing” signs. There is no sense of arrival into

### Downtown Streetscapes

The Downtown, particularly Commerce Street, has a distinct streetscape and architectural features that help create a unique identity and character, and that exemplify a traditional historic downtown. The key streetscape features in the Downtown include the historic brick strip in the sidewalks, pedestrian scale street lighting, red brick buildings, and other distinguishable architecture. Interesting signage, attractive window displays, and sidewalk furnishings placed by business owners also add character and charm. Buildings in the commercial core are generally built up to the sidewalk, anchor the intersection corners, and are within close proximity to one another. All of these factors contribute in defining the streetscape as a public realm and create a more interesting and pedestrian-friendly environment.



Window displays, street furniture, and plantings help soften a building's mass and bulk, and help to create a more inviting public streetscape.



Creative signage and detail adds visual appeal to an otherwise blank brick wall.

Further south on Commerce Street, between Dorman Street and the Downtown boundary at Mispillion Street, there are mixed-use and single-family residential homes that further add to the Downtown's unique architecture and small town historic character, contributing to an attractive gateway.



The McKnalt Carpenter & Baker Funeral Home, located on Commerce Street, reflects the traditional residential architecture found in the Downtown, which has been preserved and enhanced through adaptive reuse. This preservation and reuse helps to characterize the Downtown.

### Open Space

There are four open space and recreational areas totaling just under one acre and 3% of the total Downtown area: Freedom Park on Mechanic Street; privately owned lands on Commerce Street; the Farmers' Market on Commerce Street; and a privately owned playground that was once part of a daycare located in Spartan Station at the corner of Mill Street and East Street. When available to the public, these amenities are key assets and opportunities as they offer residents and visitors a gathering space for community events and programs and another place to visit while in the Downtown.



What could have been a large parking area is being used as a public space. This small shed is also the site of Santa's House when he comes to visit Harrington's Downtown each December. During other times of the year, it is used as a small picnic area adjacent to the Harrington Florist & Cakery.



The Downtown Harrington Farmers' Market, located in a once-vacant lot on Commerce Street, is open on Saturdays May through September. The sign posted onsite will have opening and closing days listed, as well as times of operation.



Located on the corner of Fleming Street and Mechanic Street, Freedom Park was once a vacant lot filled with broken pieces of concrete and weeds, used as an overflow parking lot for the area. It is now used as a centrally located Downtown park that can provide a location for multiple community events.

## Parking

There are large expanses of parking covering a significant portion of the Downtown. The total parking area, including the driveways and driving aisles, is approximately 5 acres and comprises 15% of the total Downtown area.

Off-street parking for existing structures are provided for several parcels; however, many structures cover the majority of their associated lots and cannot meet the parking requirements. In addition, many of the streets in the Downtown have available on-street parking on at least one side. The majority of Downtown customers park in the two bank parking areas and walk to multiple locations; however, these lots are not designated as shared or

satellite parking areas. The parking supply appears to exceed demand, as there is often on-street and off-street parking spaces available during the day and night. In fact, most parking areas are predominantly vacant in the Downtown during daytime and evening hours unless an organized event is taking place.



While this is a privately-owned parking lot located between Commerce Street and Hanley Street, it is often underutilized.

Some parking areas in the Downtown are not improved with pavement, striping, or curbing. Some of these private, undesignated, and unimproved parking areas are along the public street, creating visual blight and use valuable land that could have higher and more beneficial uses. Since there does not appear to be an imminent issue with parking supply, there is an opportunity to redevelop the underutilized lots.

The City's parking regulations require parking lots to be located behind or to the side of the primary structure, require connections from public sidewalks to parking lots, and in some cases require vehicular connections between adjacent lots. Commercial parking lots are also required to have screening, landscaping, and adequate circulation and dimensions. Non-residential uses are required to have one off-street parking space for a prescribed amount of building square footage. In order to eliminate the potential undue burden of complying with the parking requirements for property owners and developers, alternatives and credits are offered toward complying with the regulations. Since many private lots and on-street spaces are under capacity, there is an opportunity to allow off-site parking lots, on-street parking, and shared parking

arrangements to be counted toward the required amount of spaces. Property owners and prospective developers should be made aware of these parking alternatives and credits.

Map 9. *Downtown Parking* shows off-street parking lots, both private and public, that contain five or more spaces. This map clearly shows an abundance of off-street parking for customers and employees, some on parking areas that have not enforced private use only. It is necessary for dwelling units to provide off-street parking so the tenants and/or property owners can have guaranteed on-site parking.

The City is fortunate in the fact that they have areas that can be improved along Hanley Street and Railroad Avenue to provide on-street parking within the Downtown area and in close walking proximity to so many of the Downtown businesses. This is a high priority redevelopment area that could include Norfolk Southern Railroad as a partner. Improvements can be made in these areas for pedestrian connectivity, lighting, benches, walking tours, and on-street parking. The City Planning Consultant also recommended walking tour signs within these two areas demonstrating the railroad’s history within the City. It could be further designed where the benches, bike racks, and signs are in the form of a train or represent the train theme on the amenities. The installed light poles could include banners along the areas extending the railroad branding theme. This should be master planned in order to maximize the potential design and funding opportunities.



## Economic & Market Analysis

### *Downtown Jobs*

According to the U.S. Census Bureau’s Center for Economic Studies, there were 17 people living in the Downtown who held primary jobs in 2013. Sixty-five percent (65%) of these were aged 30 to 54. Downtown citizens held jobs in the industries listed in Table 5.

Table 5. Industries Represented by Downtown Residents

Industry	%
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	23.5%
Manufacturing	23.5%
Public Administration	17.6%
Retail Trade	11.8%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	5.9%
Educational Services	5.9%
Health Care & Social Assistance	5.9%
Transportation & Warehousing	5.9%

None of these residents actually worked within the Downtown, although 65% worked less than 10 miles from their home. Figure 5 shows the distance and direction residents travel to work. Table 6 accounts for the top locations where residents work. In contrast, 26 people held jobs in the Downtown who commuted from outside the area. 38.5% of these workers traveled less than 10 miles to arrive at their jobs. The same percentage traveled 10 to 24 miles to arrive. One person traveled more than 50 miles.

Figure 5. Downtown Resident Jobs by Distance & Direction, 2013

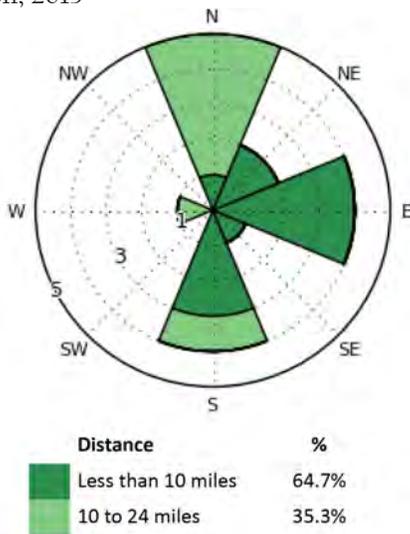


Table 6. Downtown Resident Top Job Locations

Place	%
Dover, DE	11.8%
Milford, DE	11.8%
Camden, DE	5.9%
Harrington, DE	5.9%
Highland Acres, DE	5.9%

Figure 6 shows the distance and direction workers travel to get to the Downtown for their job. Table 7 accounts for the top locations from where workers originate.

Figure 6. Downtown Workers' Origins by Distance & Direction, 2013

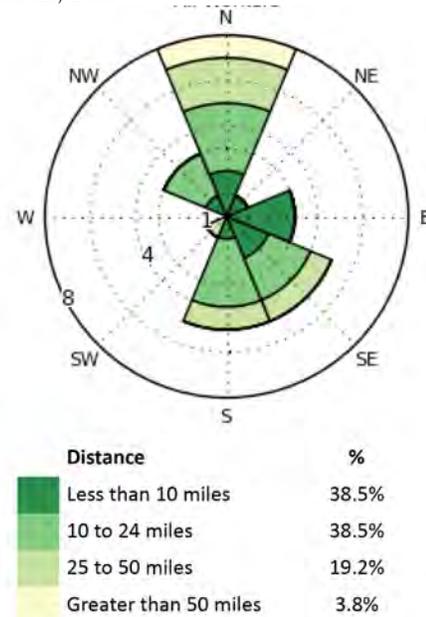


Table 7. Downtown Workers' Top Origin Locations

Place	%
Harrington, DE	11.5%
Dover, DE	3.8%
Laurel, DE	3.8%
Carneys Point, NJ	3.8%

As shown in Figure 7, there is an imbalance between the number of people who are employed within the Downtown who live outside the area and the number of people who live within the Downtown who work outside the area. This is important to be aware of for the Downtown to become a successful live-work-play community. Since this is indeed one of the goals, the City and its partners should aim to have a more balanced inflow/outflow count in the future - or at least try to capture some of the downtown employees in the Downtown.

Figure 7. Downtown Job Inflow/Outflow, 2013



### SWOT Analysis

The SWOT analysis is a strategic balance sheet that includes lists of the Downtown’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. The purpose of outlining this information is to help the City understand the Downtown from an unbiased perspective. The benefits of a SWOT analysis are that it provides learning and knowledge critical to the Downtown’s vitality and prosperity. This information was gathered over the course of several Task Force meetings, the downtown survey, public outreach, and background research.

Items from the Downtown SWOT analysis can be found on the next page. This information was used to help create the goals, objectives, and strategies found in Chapter Four. The SWOT Analysis form shown below was a homework assignment for the Downtown Task Force, reviewed and updated at each Task Force meeting.



**DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT PLAN: SWOT ANALYSIS**

<b>STRENGTHS</b>	<b>WEAKNESSES</b>
<b>OPPORTUNITIES</b>	<b>THREATS</b>



Figure 8. SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● ADA compliant sidewalks are required for all new residential construction and development</li> <li>● 2013 Comprehensive Land Use Plan was adopted</li> <li>● Farmers' Market has been in operation in the Downtown since the summer of 2011</li> <li>● The Senior Center, located within the Downtown, provides healthy meals, physical activity classes, transportation, health screenings, and educational/awareness programs</li> <li>● Caring business owners and tenants</li> <li>● Seasonal window and sidewalk displays</li> <li>● Ongoing streetscape improvements</li> <li>● Neighborhood community presence</li> <li>● Ongoing curb appeal improvements</li> <li>● Freedom Park location</li> <li>● Central location</li> <li>● Low taxes</li> <li>● Truck bypass</li> <li>● Space availability</li> <li>● Rail system</li> <li>● Public utilities</li> <li>● DART bus stop location</li> <li>● Walkability</li> <li>● Public library nearby</li> <li>● Museums open to the public</li> <li>● Availability of parking</li> <li>● Emergency services (Police, EMS, Paramedics, Fire)</li> <li>● Easy planning process</li> <li>● Friendly City staff</li> <li>● Parks &amp; Rec</li> <li>● Only railroad tower in Delaware</li> <li>● Great housing stock</li> <li>● Variety of businesses</li> <li>● "Main Street" program</li> <li>● Council desire to see City grow</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● There is not a comprehensive Downtown bicycle and pedestrian plan in place</li> <li>● Railroad tracks and station - improvements needed to blend with the Downtown character</li> <li>● Lack of overall character and maintenance</li> <li>● Overall structure and curb appeal improvements lacking</li> <li>● Lack of signage for Downtown directory/map of merchants</li> <li>● Lack of signage for truck bypass</li> <li>● Signage needed to direct people to available parking</li> <li>● Lack of public involvement</li> <li>● Lack of employment</li> <li>● Lack of promotion</li> <li>● Lack of community events</li> <li>● Lack of stakeholder organizations</li> <li>● Lack of positivity - looking to the next person</li> <li>● Lack of unity - positive message</li> <li>● Communication - difficult to find information, especially if one does not use social media/internet</li> <li>● Rental vs. homeownership rate</li> <li>● City Council divided on how and where City should grow</li> <li>● Aesthetics</li> <li>● Railroad Avenue appearance</li> <li>● Signage at Commerce &amp; Clark Street intersection</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Harrington Healthy Community Partnership Team has been in place since 2010</li> <li>● Farmers' Market promotion and expansion</li> <li>● Neighborhood community presence</li> <li>● Central community event location</li> <li>● Ongoing streetscape improvements</li> <li>● Ongoing curb appeal improvements</li> <li>● Vacant buildings within the Downtown area could provide window displays</li> <li>● Downtown business organization with local business officers and oversight</li> <li>● Downtown merchant involvement for community events and seasonal decorations</li> <li>● Ability to reroute traffic to truck bypass for Downtown events</li> <li>● Railroad/historic train</li> <li>● Provision of kiosk/map for Downtown information</li> <li>● Harrington's history (e.g., 100th ____)</li> <li>● Expand business offerings</li> <li>● Learning from each other - making connections (stakeholder outreach program)</li> <li>● Willing to work together to support Downtown advertisement</li> <li>● Aesthetic issues are easy to fix</li> <li>● Vacant buildings/storefronts do not have to look vacant</li> <li>● Design standards/accountability</li> <li>● "Good/Nice letters" -&gt; City of Salisbury example</li> <li>● Beautification Committee</li> <li>● "Enterprise Club" -&gt; mini Shark Tank</li> <li>● Need something to make people want to get out of their vehicle</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Vacant buildings within the Downtown area are not provided with ongoing maintenance</li> <li>● Crumbling infrastructure</li> <li>● Future demand for infrastructure</li> <li>● Lack of unity</li> <li>● U.S. Route 13</li> <li>● Aesthetics can make some areas look scary</li> </ul>



# Chapter Three.

## *Downtown Harrington - The Vision*





In order for the Downtown Plan to properly create a vision for the future, research was conducted to see what the past held, learned the needs of the present, and created changes for the future. John F. Kennedy presented two great quotes that pertain to the visions of the Plan:

*“CHANGE is the law of life and those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future.”*

*“Those who look only to the past or the present are certain to miss the future.”*

As show below, older Harrington images were found thanks to the Delaware Public Archives, along with photos near the relevant location taken by KCI. They clearly show the path from past to the present.



*Commerce Street and Clark Street intersection looking south.*



*Corner of Clark Street and Commerce Street - U.S. Post Office*



*Clark Street and Mechanic Street intersection - formerly the First National Bank, now Community Christian Church.*



Clark Street view looking north - Norfolk Southern Railroad Train Station



Corner of Commerce Street and West Mispillion Street - Trinity United Methodist Church

Fleming Street - St. Stephen's Protestant Church (recently placed on the National Register of Historic Places)





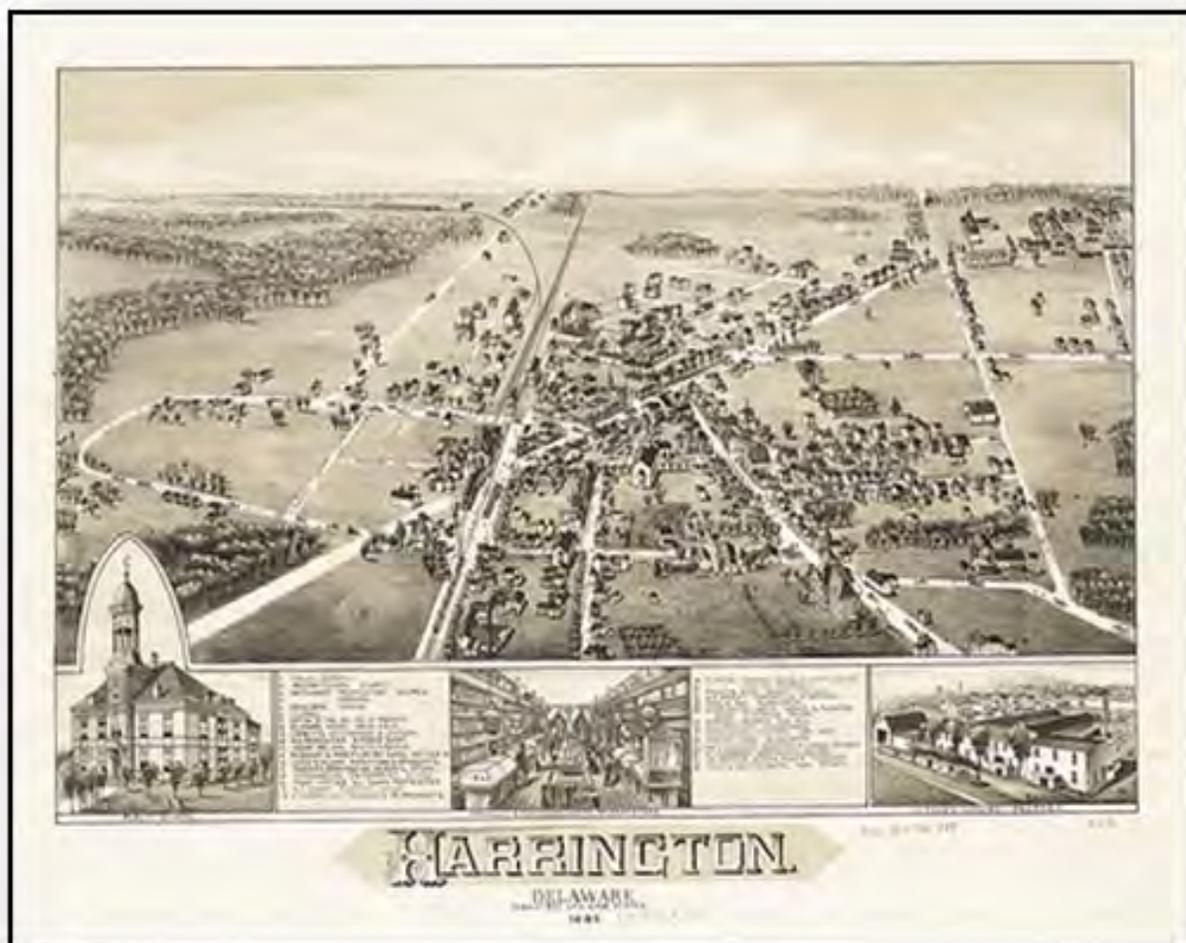
Corner of Clark Street and East Street - Formerly the Acme Super Market (above) and Spartan Station; now, Connections Community Support Programs, Inc. (below)



Commerce Street and Dorman Street intersection. View looking north on Commerce Street.



Commerce Street looking north toward Downtown



As seen on the map above,  
Harrington was and still is

*“The Hub of Delaware”*



After almost a year of studying, planning, and gathering ideas and input from the community in the Downtown planning process, eight core visions emerged for Downtown Harrington:

*One.*

Downtown is a place where **people come to play, work, shop, and live** – a vibrant and important community gathering place.

*Two.*

Downtown is **safe and friendly** for people of all ages, income levels, and cultures.

*Three.*

Downtown is an **economic engine for the City**, promoting a diverse economic environment that supports local entrepreneurial ventures.

*Four.*

Downtown is a **successful and desirable neighborhood** with a variety of housing choices and a mix of uses.

*Five.*

Downtown **values its historic buildings** and encourages **compatible, high-quality new construction**.

*Six.*

Downtown's streets safely accommodate **many modes of travel**: pedestrians, bicycles, automobiles, transit, and freight.

*Seven.*

Downtown's **streetscape is active and comfortable day and night**, with pedestrian-scale lighting, landscaping, seating, and other coordinated amenities that establish a distinct identity.

*Eight.*

Downtown has **thriving public events** that are local and regional destinations.



# Chapter Four.

## *Downtown Harrington - The Goals, Objectives & Strategies*





This chapter lays out an integrated, holistic plan for improving the Downtown by addressing ten key issues. In many cases, these issues overlap - for example, the lack of activity in the Downtown is partially the result of the limited number of businesses. Similarly, many of the strategies proposed address more than one issue - for example, a strategy that generates additional activity in the Downtown may also involve youth and students as well as bringing potential customers for businesses.

The chapter is organized around the ten issues. Each topic is established around a broad goal - a statement of what the community wants to achieve in the long term with respect to the Downtown. The goals reflect the Vision for Downtown, found in Chapter Three. The chapter also sets out objectives related to each of the ten goals. These objectives are statements of what needs to be done for the community to move forward toward achieving the goal. For each objective, the chapter then sets out specific **strategies** - projects or activities - that contribute to accomplishing the stated objective.

This Plan describes many of the proposed actions in detail to ensure that various groups or organizations that may carry out the different strategies in the future understand the thinking that went into the Plan. This should enable them to carry out the intent of the Plan even if the actual strategy is modified to better reflect the situation when the strategy is implemented or to capitalize on new opportunities.

## Goal No. 1

Strengthen **residential** neighborhoods, with an emphasis on encouraging homeownership, rehabilitating older buildings, maintaining the existing character, and avoiding incompatible development.

**Background** | A strong and robust Downtown residential population is critical to the overall health and vitality of the area. Downtown residents provide a steady and consistent clientele for the retail, service, dining, and entertainment uses found Downtown and create around-the-clock vibrancy for the area.

Downtown is home to a dynamic population that spans a wide range of ages and incomes. Each segment of the population has a diverse set of housing needs and preferences that should be reflected in the types of housing provided. There are various types of housing

options that can meet a diverse Downtown housing market. General categories include upper floor rental units, apartment buildings, townhouses, live/work spaces, and single-family residences. These options typically involve re-using existing buildings as well as infill construction on vacant or underutilized properties.

Placing residents within close proximity to jobs and amenities increases street level activity and creates a vibrant environment throughout the Downtown. Public and private entities should work together to identify housing needs and preferences and foster partnerships to meet these needs.

### Objective

Improve and expand the overall housing stock to provide for and attract both older and younger household populations, thereby supporting all household incomes in the Downtown.

### Strategy

Continually evaluate zoning and land use regulations to ensure policies allow for and encourage Downtown housing in the form of rehabilitation and preservation of existing buildings, infill development, and new construction.

### Strategy

Actively monitor the condition of existing housing and enforce the City's Property Maintenance Code.

### Strategy

Create a clearinghouse, database, and/or promotional brochure of existing residential financing options and incentives.

## Goal No. 2

Create a **Downtown** where shops, banks, and other traditional businesses flourish alongside creative enterprises in a friendly, lively, and successful atmosphere.

**Background** | To achieve our vision of the Downtown, existing businesses need to be more successful and additional businesses that build on the Downtown's strengths need to be attracted to the area. This will require a focused effort to attract new customers to



Downtown and to promote Downtown as a desirable place to do business. The City must think in terms of marketing Downtown as well as its individual businesses to both consumers and to business people.

Downtown functions in a regional economy - it competes with other commercial centers for customers' spending. It also competes with other locations to attract and retain businesses. As the regional economy has evolved over the last few decades, customers for downtown businesses have been siphoned off, first by big box retailers and then by new retail centers. For Downtown to prosper, it has to reestablish a niche in the larger regional economy. Downtown Harrington offers a unique set of opportunities including its small-town historic character, convenient access, and the availability of moderate cost space - successful revitalization must build on those opportunities.

*Objective*

Identify and support an organization to lead and champion Downtown revitalization.

**Strategy**

Establish a formal Downtown Merchants' Association within the City of Harrington to foster new development and redevelopment Downtown and to help implement the goals, objectives, and strategies identified in this Plan.

**Strategy**

Develop a comprehensive marketing and branding strategy for Downtown revitalization.

Downtown Harrington lacks a clear identity in the minds of the public. While the City has a logo - the Hub of Delaware - Downtown is simply downtown. A program should be undertaken to develop a "brand" for the Downtown that creates a clear identity for the area while reflecting the core values of the community. This "brand" should then be used in a comprehensive marketing program.

**Strategy**

Establish an ongoing program of retail promotions to encourage consumers to use Downtown businesses.

Businesses within Downtown Harrington

periodically conduct retail promotion activities to attract customers to Downtown and increase sales. An ongoing program of retail promotions should be undertaken including consideration of the following types of activities:

- Develop targeted retail promotions aimed at specific consumer groups such as Downtown workers or people who live in Downtown or other specific area
- Develop cluster cross-business referral discount programs where customers who make purchases at Downtown businesses receive discounts on other purchases made at participating businesses in the Downtown
- Assist local businesses to participate in existing internet discount coupon programs such as Living Social or Groupon

**Strategy**

Establish a system for connecting potential businesses with property owners.

*Objective*

Improve the economic vitality of existing Downtown businesses.

The economic vitality of Downtown is dependent on people spending money in Downtown businesses and on activities located there.

**Strategy**

Increase the awareness of Downtown businesses by creating an internet business directory and map.

To provide people with up-to-date information about what is available in the Downtown, a web-based business directory should be established and regularly updated. This directory should categorize businesses by the goods and services they provide. For each business, the site should provide information about the business, provide a link to a map showing the location of the business, and a link to the business' website if they have one.

**Strategy**

Support the Buy Local program.

Most Downtown businesses are, and likely will continue to be, locally-owned independent businesses. The State of Delaware has a Buy Local program. Downtown businesses and improvement activities should support the Buy Local program and encourage area residents and visitors to think about buying “locally” when they make purchases.

### Objective

Increase the number and diversity/variety of businesses and other uses in the Downtown.

As the Downtown has struggled in recent years, both the number and diversity of retail businesses and services has decreased. A key component of this Plan involves increasing the number and diversity of businesses in the Downtown.

### Strategy

Undertake a targeted business recruitment program.

Attracting new businesses and uses to the Downtown should be a shared responsibility. On one hand, the primary responsibility rests with the property owners who have space to rent or sell, but the Downtown Merchants’ Association and City can also play a role in identifying and recruiting potential tenants. Typically, business recruitment involves advertising and responding to inquiries. A proactive targeted business recruitment program should be undertaken to interest businesses and other organizations to move to Downtown. This program could include the following types of activities:

- Develop recruiting materials and a welcome packet that provide information about the current business mix, the market, space costs and availability, and the sources of assistance
- Develop a “How to Start a Business in Harrington Guide”
- Establish a group of “business ambassadors” consisting of Downtown business and property owners and others who are involved in Downtown who will agree to be involved in the actual recruiting process and meet with people who are interested in

Downtown

- Identify potential targets - individuals, businesses, or organizations - focusing on the following groups:
  - independent, locally-owned enterprises
  - businesses that are not located in Harrington and might be potentially interested in relocating from another location
  - businesses that are located outside of Harrington that may have the potential to open an additional location in Harrington
  - home-based entrepreneurs/businesses in the Harrington area that may be ready to open a full-time business
  - potential business owners who are interested in the Downtown
- Do background research about each identified target to learn about their business and space situation in preparation for an informed contact
- Personally contact each target to talk about Downtown Harrington, explain what it has to offer as a location, and provide targets with a welcome packet and other information about the community and Downtown
- Maintain ongoing contact with people who may be interested in Downtown in the future but who are not yet ready to make a space commitment

### Strategy

Establish a system for connecting potential businesses with property owners.

A number of different people own buildings in Downtown and various people handle the rental of space in those buildings. When people are identified who have an interest in Downtown, making the connection to the property owners is a key step. A central listing of available space in Downtown should be created and maintained, and a system for connecting potential tenants with property owners established.

### Strategy

Gradually add retail space that capitalizes on new, higher income residents and employees, as

their numbers increase.

**Strategy**

Encourage the development of niche businesses.

There is an opportunity for Downtown businesses that provide shopping experiences and goods or services that are unique. Niche retail establishments that offer high quality products that are locally produced or have qualities that are “uniquely Harrington” can appeal to both tourists and the local community. Also, providing interesting, enjoyable, and unique shopping experiences can have great appeal.

**Strategy**

Encourage sit down restaurants with outdoor seating areas.

The City should provide opportunities for outdoor dining and gathering spaces that promote active and lively streetscape environments. Appropriate sidewalk widths will have to be provided in order to accommodate small dining tables without restricting pedestrian flow. Revisions may be required to allow restaurants to operate outdoor dining within the public right-of-way. Temporary, low-level decorative barriers that also incorporate planter boxes should be used to separate dining from pedestrian through-traffic on the sidewalk.

**Strategy**

Encourage personal service businesses to locate within the Downtown.

**Objective**

Attract new private and public investment.

**Strategy**

Evaluate existing incentive programs and create additional incentive programs, as appropriate.

**Strategy**

Strengthen the relationship with supportive economic development based organizations with extended resources to ensure the Downtown’s vacant structures and lots are

being marketed and occupied with investments.

**Objective**

Encourage and support businesses, nonprofits, government, and citizens working together to attain common goals and fully capitalize on the Downtown’s resources.

**Strategy**

Market the Downtown for customers and businesses, including joint marketing and promotions among businesses and special events.

**Strategy**

Assist in marketing walkability and community events with local merchants.

**Strategy**

Encourage businesses of similar types to standardize hours of operation to provide a more coordinated and cohesive Downtown and a more consistent and predictable environment for visitors and patrons.

**Strategy**

Focus on enhancing the characteristics that set Downtown apart from other places in the City.

The U.S. Route 13 highway commercial corridor is more auto-oriented and occupied by businesses that need to attract and accommodate vehicle traffic. Downtown can also accommodate and attract vehicle traffic, but what makes it unique is that it is also a good place to get out of the car and walk around. Economic activity can be enhanced by improving pedestrian infrastructure and providing interesting experiences through public art, architecture, and urban design throughout the Downtown. Rather than view Downtown as being in competition with the highway commercial corridor, it should be seen as an opportunity to have complementary and unique commercial neighborhoods.

**Objective**

Promote a balanced mix of service, restaurant, retail, public, and residential uses.

*Objective*

Encourage infill while preserving and strengthening the existing Downtown character.

**Goal No. 3**

Preserve **natural and cultural resources** by encouraging the appropriate preservation and/or reuse of older buildings and sites and the protection of environmentally sensitive resources.

**Background** | The Downtown has an opportunity to become a leader in transitioning to a greener economy. This includes opportunities to increase the rate of recycling among Downtown residents and businesses as well as to reduce overall energy use. In its past, Downtown Harrington was a walkable community where people shopped Downtown and lived in the surrounding residential neighborhoods. Over the years, some of these things have changed; however, the Downtown has the potential to recapture more of a mixed-use character with employment, shopping, services, and housing all available in a compact area.

*Objective*

Encourage the appropriate reuse of older buildings, particularly including the rehabilitation of historically or architecturally significant buildings.

*Objective*

Protect the amounts and quality of groundwater and promote groundwater recharge.

Sustainability and best management practices (BMPs) should play a larger role in future development, redevelopment, and improvements to reduce stormwater runoff. The following are sustainable practices and applications that should be considered for future development, redevelopment and improvements in the Downtown.

**Strategy**

Investigate the use of permeable pavers and porous asphalt in new parking lot construction to reduce stormwater runoff, especially in designated Source Water Protection Areas.

**Strategy**

Encourage the use of native plant material.

**Strategy**

Increase the urban tree canopy.

**Strategy**

Encourage biodiversity.

**Strategy**

Use bioswales, bioretention, and rain gardens in new development, parking lots, and the public right-of-way to reduce stormwater runoff.

*Objective*

Encourage the Downtown to be a model green community that fosters environmentally sound practices.

**Strategy**

Promote recycling among Downtown businesses and residents.

An informational program should be conducted to inform property owners, businesses, and residents about the benefit of recycling and to encourage them to utilize the substation.

**Strategy**

Encourage the Downtown to be a model for City recycling efforts by increasing the share of the wastes generated by Downtown businesses and residents that are recycled.

**Strategy**

Promote programs to improve the energy efficiency of Downtown buildings and infrastructure.

The Sustainable Energy Utility (and other State agencies) offers a number of loan, grant, and technical assistance programs to assist both residential and non-residential property owners and businesses reduce their energy use. A program should be developed to make people in the Downtown aware of these programs and to help them participate in these programs. This could include making program information available, holding workshops, and providing one-on-one assistance.

## Goal No. 4

Improve the **appearance** of the Downtown's public and private realm.

**Background** | The appearance of an area influences how people feel about it. If the area is attractive, clean, and well-maintained, it creates a positive, inviting feeling. Conversely, if the area is rundown and poorly maintained, it is a deterrent to people coming to the area. The basic infrastructure of Downtown Harrington (or the bones) is quite attractive. Commerce Street is lined with older buildings that in large measure have retained their basic character. The location of buildings at the back of the sidewalk is consistent, and reasonably intact, with a few exceptions. The City recently undertook streetscape improvements that upgraded portions of the Downtown with improved sidewalks and new ornamental street lighting. A number of storefronts have also been improved.

In spite of its “good bones” and prior improvement efforts, the appearance of the Downtown is not as inviting and welcoming as it could be. Both the public infrastructure and private buildings need to be “spruced up” to make the Downtown more attractive. While the historic character of buildings should be maintained and enhanced, Downtown should be “brightened up” with the addition of more color to buildings.

### Objective

Provide and support streetscapes that foster a sense of place, civic pride, belonging, and accessibility for all members of the community.

#### Strategy

Establish a volunteer-based Downtown clean-up/beautification day and/or program.

#### Strategy

Coordinate existing efforts to provide greenery and flowers in the Downtown.

Efforts should be made to regularly provide greenery and flowers throughout the Downtown. The use of planters and appropriate species of street trees should be investigated.

#### Strategy

Develop a public art program for Downtown

improvements.

Public art can enhance the Downtown environment and highlight a creative economy. The City should include public art in downtown improvement projects at appropriate locations. A focus of this program could be to tap into a local Harrington artist.

#### Strategy

Extend streetscape improvements and street lighting throughout the Downtown.

#### Strategy

Continue to support the improvements and events at Freedom Park.

#### Strategy

Increase property maintenance and zoning enforcement throughout the Downtown.

### Objective

Enhance the visual appearance of the City-maintained buildings in the Downtown.

### Objective

Integrate the railroad station and tracks into the Downtown's character.

### Objective

Seek to extend the best features of existing development into newer development and promote compatible infill development into the Downtown. Promote new construction that extends the community's character and promotes a pedestrian-friendly environment.

### Objective

Enhance the visual appearance of privately-owned buildings within the Downtown.

#### Strategy

Work with property owners to upgrade the appearance of buildings.

While most buildings in the Downtown are attractive, historic structures, the overall visual environment can be somewhat drab and uninviting. A number of tenants and property

owners have invested in their buildings and some have used bright colors or interesting signage as part of their improvement. A short term improvement program should be undertaken to work with property owners to clean and brighten-up buildings throughout the Downtown. This effort should include the following components:

- A cooperative program should be undertaken to help property owners clean up the exterior of their buildings by identifying areas where a coordinated effort might reduce the costs for individual owners. This might include power washing of buildings, window cleaning and repair, and similar activities that have significant mobilization or equipment costs that can be shared.
- A program or design project to encourage property owners to “brighten up” the facade of their buildings by painting doors, trim, or building accents with bright colors. One possibility would be to create a “Doors of Downtown” concept in which property owners and/or businesses are encouraged to paint their front door or the trim around the front door in a bright color. This could then be used as part of the marketing identity for Downtown.

#### Strategy

Work with property owners/businesses to light up storefronts/store windows including spaces that are currently vacant.

Some Downtown businesses light their display windows in the evening while others do not. In addition, many of the storefronts of vacant spaces are unlit. This creates dark spots in the nighttime environment in the Downtown. A program should be developed to work with existing businesses and the owners of building spaces to install attractive displays in storefronts and to light them in the evening. This program could use high school students and other volunteers to develop and maintain the window displays for participating businesses and property owners. This program could also include seasonal window painting and seasonal activities.

## Goal No. 5

Proactively plan for improved **infrastructure** (e.g., structures, roads, utilities, pedestrian connectivity, routine maintenance).

**Background** | There is a set of core facilities that supports the Downtown including its streets, sidewalks, park, street lighting, traffic signals, water and sewer systems, telecommunication networks, power systems, and similar infrastructure. This infrastructure also includes public parking facilities both on street and in parking lots, facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists, and bus service. This group of infrastructure is additionally discussed under Goals No. 6 and 7. For Downtown to be an economically viable and attractive place, these basic systems must work, be well maintained, and be attractive.

#### Strategy

Implement improvements such as bicycle racks, transit bus shelter, benches, planters, downtown directory, and common area outdoor sitting areas.

#### Strategy

Identify, prioritize, and correct accessibility barriers to sidewalks, curbs, pedestrian signals, and other pedestrian facilities.

#### Strategy

Investigate the provision of a broadband ring around the City or free WiFi services within the Downtown.

Making wireless access to the internet a universal service has the capacity to enhance City management and public safety, especially when used by City employees, police officers, and firefighters out in the field. It can also be viewed as a social service to visitors and tourists as well as residents who many not have access to private high-speed service. The most compelling benefit of offering free internet access Downtown is its ability to attract and improve economic development.



**Strategy**

Use high efficiency lighting such as LEDs when street lighting and other lighting is replaced or upgraded.

The City should adopt a policy to use high efficiency lighting when feasible for street lighting and other outdoor and indoor lighting of public facilities. The City should also encourage private property owners and developers to consider the use of high efficiency lighting when new lighting is installed.

**Strategy**

Ensure underground utilities are evaluated for replacement or repair when road reconstruction projects are being addressed.

All road restoration projects within the Downtown create an opportunity to evaluate existing conditions to ensure services are being provided without disruption to their maximum ability.

**Goal No. 6**

Enhance the Downtown's **transportation and circulation** system to connect and integrate amenities and destinations.

*Objective*

Create an environment that promotes the use of alternative transportation including walking, biking, and transit to move around and come to the Downtown.

**Strategy**

Improve traffic flow.

**Strategy**

Promote the use of alternative transportation.

A program should be undertaken to promote the use of mass transit and other non-automobile forms of transportation to come to the Downtown. This might include programs to offer incentives to people who use the bus to come to Downtown, such as a Bus 'n Buy program in which people who make a purchase in the Downtown are provided a voucher for a free

or discounted ride or special transit promotion days to encourage use of the bus system. These programs would need to be coordinated with DART to ensure their viability.

**Strategy**

Develop a bicycle and pedestrian plan.

**Strategy**

Improve bicycle facilities and lanes. There are currently limited facilities for bicycles in the Downtown. As part of the program to improve pedestrian facilities, additional places for parking and locking bicycles should be installed. Although the State has designated Clark and Commerce Streets as part of the State's regional bicycle route, they have also noted that these roads routinely experience traffic in excess of 5,000 vehicles daily. While Clark Street includes shoulders and wide outside lanes, Commerce Street does not. Consideration should be given to encouraging recreational cyclists to use alternative streets unless their destination is on a main street in the Downtown.

*Objective*

Develop a comprehensive Downtown wayfinding system.

Wayfinding should be a coordinated effort with the goal of directing pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists by providing directions to popular destinations, events, and information relevant to the Downtown. The City should implement a coordinated wayfinding program that can better guide travelers to the Downtown and more effectively direct movement within and around Downtown.

**Strategy**

Pursue funding options to develop a comprehensive wayfinding program.

**Strategy**

Establish a high quality wayfinding program to better direct motorists to and from the Downtown from the surrounding community and the regional highway system. This entails the placement of signs along roadways well outside the boundaries of the Downtown.

**Strategy**

Supplement the proposed wayfinding program with printed maps and brochures, digital and audio tours, a freestanding kiosk(s), and/or website and apps to guide visitors throughout the Downtown.

areas. The lot is not clearly marked to designate it as public parking. The City should undertake a program to install signs directing people to the public parking lot at City Hall and other public parking areas as may be available in the future, and clearly designate which spaces are for public use in those lots where there are also reserved spaces.

**Goal No. 7**

Provide a sufficient amount of **parking** within the Downtown and ensure its use is properly managed.

*Objective*

Optimize Downtown parking for all stakeholders and visitors.

**Strategy**

Conduct a comprehensive parking study to guide the Downtown parking program.

The City should conduct a comprehensive Downtown parking study to quantify and qualify existing parking assets, obtain detailed parking demand data by location, time period, and day of week, including event days, to quantify future parking need, refine potential public parking locations/feasibility, and evaluate cost implications of parking operations/management efficiencies. Railroad Avenue and Hanley Street are a priority redevelopment area located Downtown for improvements such as additional on-street parking, sidewalks, bicycle racks, and pedestrian amenities.

**Strategy**

Improve bicycle parking facilities within the Downtown.

*Objective*

Ensure that there is adequate and appropriately located parking to meet the needs of residents, employees, and patrons.

**Strategy**

Improve parking signage.

There is one public parking lot currently in the Downtown, but ample on-street parking; however, there are limited signs directing people to either the lot or on-street parking

**Goal No. 8**

Create a Downtown that is alive night and day with **events and activities**.

**Background** | Events and activities can attract visitors to Downtown Harrington, generating activity, creating a greater sense of community, showcasing the Downtown area, and reinforcing Downtown as a community focal point, and social and entertainment center. During the public outreach process, Harrington residents, employees, visitors, and business owners discussed numerous events and festivals they enjoyed, both past and present, including Heritage Day, the Strawberry Festival, and Concerts in the Park, among others. While not all of these events are active, they are well-known and many hope to see current ones continued and/or expanded, and past ones revived.

In addition, the simple request of “more events downtown” has been frequently heard throughout the process. Unfortunately, Downtown may currently lack sufficient space to host or expand regular large-scale events. By creating new spaces for improved community events, including new open space or utilizing parking areas or rights-of-way, the City can better position Downtown to become a stronger and more vibrant center for art and entertainment.

*Objective*

Increase the number and diversity of cultural, entertainment, and recreational activities and events in the Downtown that attract a wide range of people to the Downtown.

**Strategy**

Continue current activities and events designed to bring people to the Downtown, with a focus on increasing participation in these activities and expanding the potential for integrating business enhancement actions during events.

Many of the current activities and events are designed to bring people Downtown. In some cases, these are people who come for the specific events but are not regular customers of Downtown businesses. Current activities should be reviewed and new activities designed to include tie-ins with Downtown businesses such as retail promotions to convert event attendees into customers. This can include having concurrent activities involving the businesses during the events or activities, promotions that encourage event participants to return to shop at Downtown businesses such as discount coupons for future purchases, or information about what is available in Downtown in the way of goods and services. As part of this effort, a media and marketing plan should be developed to capitalize on events that are already occurring in the Downtown.

#### Strategy

Review past and historical events and festivals that could be revived or incorporated with other events (e.g., Strawberry Festival, Harrington Healthy Community Day). Encourage new Downtown volunteers to get involved in the planning and organization of the events to ensure they are maximizing the amount of visitor business during the events.

#### Strategy

Continue the Downtown Farmers' Market.

Look at opportunities to partner with and take advantage of the state's Buy Local and other Department of Agriculture programs to expand the existing Downtown Farmers' Market.

#### Strategy

Develop and maintain a coordinated calendar of community events and activities with a focus on Downtown activities.

The City of Harrington maintains a calendar of community activities on its website, but it is not a complete list. An implementation item should be the development of a consolidated calendar of community events and activities. This should include a system to collect and disseminate information about all public and community

activities and events that occur in or involve Downtown Harrington.

## Goal No. 9

Create a Downtown where residents, workers, visitors, and patrons feel **safe** both day and night.

**Background** | To achieve Harrington's vision for the Downtown, visitors must feel safe when they think about coming to Downtown, business owners have to know that Downtown is safe - for their own business and for their customers, and residents have to be safe to live in Downtown. Creating an environment in which people feel safe in Downtown is absolutely essential to improving the area, to attracting new customers and businesses, and to making Downtown a desirable place to live. Unless Downtown is safe, and is also perceived to be safe, other efforts to improve the Downtown will struggle.

A perception of safety emerges from a variety of factors. There needs to be a visible police presence and involvement with the Downtown community to make people feel safe, as well as to deter inappropriate activity. But safety is not just about having more police. It also involves having more "eyes on the street" and more positive activity in the Downtown. It requires creating a cooperative environment in which property owners, business people, and residents work with the police and each other to address issues and concerns. It requires having more people in the Downtown - think about the difference in how you feel walking along an empty street versus one that is alive with people. It requires having a physical environment that feels safe - that is well lit and that is comfortable to be in. The following describes a program for increasing the perception, as well as the reality, of safety in the Downtown.

#### Objective

Ensure that the environment in the Downtown promotes a feeling of safety.

The physical environment contributes to a person's perception of safety. A well-lit, clean, and nicely maintained space creates one perception while a dimly or unevenly lit space that is littered and poorly maintained conveys a different feeling. The Task Force meetings and downtown survey identified a number of concerns about the lighting and overall

physical environment in Downtown,

**Strategy**

Increase street level vitality by encouraging the active use of ground floor space in the Downtown core.

**Strategy**

Conduct a lighting inventory study of the Downtown to determine areas of poor lighting, especially for pedestrians.

**Strategy**

Improve pedestrian facilities and street lighting.

**Objective**

Ensure that people feel safe in Downtown by minimizing activities that contribute to concerns about safety.

The behavior of a few people can greatly influence the overall perception of public safety in Downtown Harrington. This includes motorists speeding through the Downtown and patrons congregating on the sidewalk outside of businesses, potentially creating disturbances. The Police Department is working to reduce these behaviors but it requires an ongoing effort. The following actions are designed to reduce the amount of problems or anti-social behavior in the Downtown.

**Strategy**

Support Police Department efforts to reduce anti-social behavior in the Downtown.

The efforts of the Police Department to reduce the incidence of anti-social behavior in Downtown should be endorsed and supported by the community-at-large and people should be encouraged to help the Department by helping to “make the case” against offending businesses and their patrons. This should include encouraging Downtown residents to report incidents of inappropriate behavior, to participate in public meetings, and to support directing police services and resources to these activities including budget hearings and similar events. Ongoing efforts should be made to locate and secure outside funding to support the Police Department’s work in these areas.

**Strategy**

Publicize and enforce the State’s “Yield to Pedestrians in the Crosswalk” law.

The agency responsible for the jurisdiction of the street should regularly upgrade the marking of crosswalks in the Downtown and install clear “yield to pedestrian” signs and indicators. Several of the streets in the Downtown are maintained by the Delaware Department of Transportation. An informational campaign should be undertaken to inform the public and motorists to yield to pedestrians in a crosswalk.

**Objective**

Enhance community policing to increase citizen awareness of the police presence in the Downtown.

The Harrington Police Department plays a critical role in creating a safe downtown. The Department recognizes this and supports the concept of community policing. Many people are unaware of what the Department is doing to ensure that the Downtown is a safe place. The following actions are designed to increase the awareness of the Police Department’s ongoing community policing activities in the Downtown.

**Strategy**

Publicize Police Department community policing activities in the Downtown.

An ongoing program should be undertaken in conjunction with the Police Department to make both Downtown interests and the greater community more aware of what the Department is doing to improve public safety in the Downtown and how people can assist them in this effort. This program will need to evolve over time, but should include articles in The Harrington Journal, City Chatter Newsletter, and Chief’s Corner about the activities of the Police Department, activities to make people aware of Downtown patrols and patrol officers, publicity for successful efforts to reduce problem behavior, and a mechanism to provide support for Police Department funding and activities that relate to the Downtown.

**Strategy**

Create a community event procedure to establish a clearinghouse to ensure an appropriate police presence at Downtown activities as well as any additional services such as trash, traffic control, public works, and City personnel.

A system should be established that informs the City and all departments of planned activities in the Downtown - even those not requiring event permits. This should provide the City with sufficient lead time to allow them to assess the need for a City service and to schedule additional coverage if appropriate. This system should function as the clearinghouse where various groups can notify and work with the City to ensure that an appropriate police presence is provided during special events and activities.

**Goal No. 10**

Create an environment in which **young people** feel welcome in the Downtown and contribute to making it a friendly, lively, and successful atmosphere.

**Background** | Our youth are the future of Downtown. If they develop an interest in and a habit of doing things in the Downtown, this will pay long term dividends to the community. It is key that young people be involved in deciding how they can help and what roles they should play in both implementing this Downtown Plan and being involved in the City in general. This section looks at some possible approaches for involving them in the implementation process.

*Objective*

Foster more involvement by local school students and other young people in Downtown activities.

**Strategy**

Establish a City of Harrington student liaison position.

The City of Harrington should designate a person to act as a student liaison to work with young people and to involve them in Downtown revitalization activities.

**Strategy**

Add student representatives to existing

and future City committees, as appropriate, especially in regard to the Downtown.

Young people should have a seat at the table and participate in the decisions about the future of the Downtown and help determine how students can be involved in the implementation of the Downtown Plan. Student board member positions should be created and solicited. This effort should include a commitment to ensure that these student board members will be able to get to and from meetings.

**Strategy**

Consider the creation of a program for Downtown businesses to mentor young adults and involve them as interns.

Involving high school students in Downtown businesses will increase their interest in the Downtown while allowing them to develop important job and life skills. A program should be established to place young people as “student interns” in Downtown businesses. This effort should include a commitment on the part of the businesses to provide the student with ongoing mentoring during the internship period.

**Strategy**

Involve students in projects to improve the Downtown.

The City of Harrington student liaison should work with student representatives to identify ways that young people can be involved in the implementation of the Downtown Plan and to help organize those activities.

*Objective*

Expand the range of businesses and activities in the Downtown that appeal to younger customers.

**Strategy**

Create a home base for teens.

Young people care about the future of their community and its Downtown. A recurring theme is that there is not much to attract young adults to Downtown and little for them to do if they do come to Downtown. Students and other

young people should be invited to participate in a program to plan and develop an appropriate “home base” for teens in Downtown. The nature and size of this facility will need to evolve during the planning process to ensure that it meets the needs of the City’s youth and is sustainable over the long term.

**Strategy**

Keep youth informed about the Downtown. The City of Harrington’s student liaison should provide information about Downtown activities and programs to area schools as well as the Harrington Public Library for publication and dissemination among students. The liaison should also work with interested faculty and staff to ensure that students are kept involved in Downtown activities.

**Strategy**

Develop a directory of youth activities.

A number of groups and organizations conduct activities that involve young people and students. Typically each organization or program promotes its own activities. In conjunction with the coordinated calendar of community events and activities, a system should be put in place to establish a comprehensive directory and calendar of youth-oriented programs.



The following is a restatement of the ten goals developed for Downtown Harrington:

*Goal No. 1*

Strengthen older **residential** neighborhoods, with an emphasis on encouraging homeownership, rehabilitating older buildings, maintaining the existing character, and avoiding incompatible development.

*Goal No. 2*

Create a **Downtown** where shops, banks, and other traditional businesses flourish alongside creative enterprises in a friendly, lively, and successful atmosphere.

*Goal No. 3*

Preserve **natural and cultural resources** by encouraging the appropriate preservation and/or reuse of older buildings and sites and the protection of environmentally sensitive resources.

*Goal No. 4*

Improve the **appearance** of the Downtown's public and private realm.

*Goal No. 5*

Proactively plan for improved **infrastructure** (e.g., structures, roads, utilities, pedestrian connectivity, routine maintenance).

*Goal No. 6*

Enhance the Downtown's **transportation and circulation** system to connect and integrate amenities and destinations.

*Goal No. 7*

Provide a sufficient amount of **parking** within the Downtown and ensure its use is properly managed.

*Goal No. 8*

Create a Downtown that is alive night and day with **events and activities**.

*Goal No. 9*

Create a Downtown where residents, workers, visitors, and patrons feel **safe** both day and night.

*Goal No. 10*

Create an environment in which **young people** feel welcome in the Downtown and contribute to making it a friendly, lively, and successful atmosphere.



# Chapter Five.

## *Downtown Harrington - The Implementation*





## Key Priority Projects

While several private and public investments have been made Downtown, it is crucial moving forward that focus be given to a few key priority projects. Based on the SWOT analysis, downtown survey, development activity, and collected data, the priority projects were defined as the Railroad Area Improvements and Redevelopment Areas.

### *Railroad Area Improvements*

Railroad area improvements would take place along Delaware Avenue and Railroad Avenue to Hanley Street. This area is located in the middle of the Downtown and is an opportunity to create a walking train tourism destination. Each street has different improvement needs within the area.

#### **Delaware Avenue**

Delaware Avenue has been identified as a Downtown gateway from Delaware Avenue to Clark Street. The western side of the street accesses a rail storage yard as well as the Train Station and is predominantly a gravel surface with no landscaping or identified parking spaces. This area could easily be improved by adding landscaping components, marked parking spaces, and a buffer between the storage yard and Delaware Avenue. The eastern side of the street provides a mix of vacant lots between a few neighborhood businesses. This area could be improved by new structures being built on the vacant lots or landscaped green open spaces.

#### **Railroad Avenue & Hanley Street**

The Railroad Avenue and Hanley Street location is a great opportunity for improvements to be designed in a master plan that would allow visitors to walk from the northern portion of Railroad Avenue past the Train Museum on Hanley Street. During this walking tour, visitors can read educational and historical signs regarding the railroad service to Harrington and the State of Delaware. The train theme could include the “Hub of Delaware” slogan, benches, safe pedestrian connectivity, low level lighting, trash receptacles, and bicycle racks. This design theme could be used throughout the project, ensuring train shapes are used in all of the design features. The master plan should include amenities, additional on-street parking, lighting, drainage,

sidewalks, as well as fence relocation.

The initial identified stakeholders could include Norfolk Southern Railroad, the Harrington Historical Society, Delaware Department of Transportation, Kent County Tourism, train enthusiast organizations, and the Delaware Economic Development Office Downtown Delaware Main Street Program, along with the Downtown stakeholders.

### *Redevelopment Areas*

Redevelopment areas are identified as vacant structures and vacant lots located in the Downtown area. Some of them are further identified as a potential gateway. *Map 6. Priority Redevelopment Projects*, shows the two areas for redevelopment. These areas have been defined as priorities for redevelopment based on existing infrastructure, walkability, key locations with high visibility, and needed curb appeal improvements. The curb appeal and occupancy rate plays a vital role in sustaining the Downtown as an economic development engine for the City. Each type of redevelopment has different improvement needs within this area:

#### **Vacant Structures**

The number of vacant structures have drastically fallen since 2007; however, those few that are currently vacant play a critical role when stakeholders are looking to invest in this area. It is important that filling existing structures be the first priority for the Downtown. Structures can remain vacant for several reasons such as rent being too high, selectivity with specific tenants, structure not being up to building code requirements, lack of investment to bring the property to the current market needs, difficulty in finding tenants, location, etc. To actively market the vacant structures and provide a presence Downtown, it is recommended that any vacant structure with windows provide seasonal displays and promote City events as well as post the property and owner contact information for potential occupancy. It is further recommended that the City work with all existing structures that have boarded windows to recommended window replacement or encourage the installation of older Downtown images such as those located on Downtown Junction’s exterior walls.

### Vacant Lots

The Downtown area has quite a few vacant lots; however, several of them are very small in size and it would be difficult to meet all of the development requirements if they were to be developed separately. Some of the challenges to the small vacant lots, if required, include stormwater management, off-street parking, entrance and exit locations, trash services, fire lanes, and loading spaces. These vacant lots are strongly encouraged to provide landscaping and amenities while they remain undeveloped. The gateway parcels located along Delaware Avenue, Clark Street, and Commerce Street offer prime opportunities for infill development that fits within the context of the Downtown vision and goals.

## Implementation

The implementation items are based on the downtown survey, collected data, existing conditions, Task Force member input, as well as City staff and City Planning Consulting input.

### *Upon Plan Adoption*

**State of Delaware Downtown Development District Designation Application** | The City Planning Consultant will prepare the application and City Resolution based on the recently adopted Downtown Development District Plan. This application and supportive materials will be submitted no later than June 1, 2016, as required for this year's application cycle.

### *Completion within One Month of Plan Adoption*

**City Website Page** | The City will create a separate page for the Downtown Development District Plan and all information pertaining to the Downtown.

**Private/Public Investment Tracking** | The City Finance Clerk will be responsible for tracking all the private and public investments within the Downtown. This includes all permits, development applications, City improvement projects, as well as any additional City expenses for services.

**City Vacant Lot & Structure Website** | The City currently provides a map with detailed information

regarding each Commercial vacant lot and structure within the City limits. This will be expanded to include all vacant lots located within the City limits.

**Downtown Revitalization Area Tax Incentive Program** | The City will update Chapter 378 of its Code to match the Downtown boundaries shown on *Map 1. Downtown Boundary*, clarify the Program process, and ensure it is user friendly. All improvements to the exterior of existing commercial structures located in the Downtown area facing Commerce Street and/or Clark Street are eligible to apply for a partial exemption from the City's real estate taxes.

**Development and Redevelopment Incentives** | The City will formalize the proposed incentives for Downtown and Citywide and present them to the City Council for consideration and approval. This can be used as a marketing tool to stimulate growth, which can be revisited annually during the budget process.

### *Completion within Three Months of Plan Adoption*

**Downtown Business Map** | This map would feature all Downtown businesses along with the physical location, pictures, and business profile information. The City Planning Consultant will arrange specific days to meet, take photographs, and obtain the profile information. They will then create the informational map and have it posted to the City website that houses the Downtown page.

**Downtown Marketing Brochure** | The City Planning Consultant will create a Downtown brochure with pertinent marketing information and available resources for distribution and posting on the City's website. The launch of the brochure and new planning tools will be sent to the County and State Economic Development agencies, local Chamber of Commerce, and tourism organizations as well as to real estate agencies.

**City Community Event Calendar** | The City will host, maintain, and update a Citywide community calendar with links and/or information to any event hosted in the area. It will be the responsibility of the organization to provide the information and notify the calendar contact person within the City

to update the calendar. A clear procedure will be developed prior to this service being provided live. This tool will assist everyone to schedule their event in advance and strive to avoid conflicts with other planned events.

**Community Event Notification Procedure** | Create an event procedure to ensure awareness of the event to include the need for any additional City services to be reviewed and approved by the City departments.

**Railroad Area Improvements** | Initial meeting with the City Manager, City Planning Consultant, and City Engineer to discuss the railroad area master plan and opportunities for project funding. The City Planning Consultant will prepare a rough conceptual aerial plan for discussion purposes, funding opportunities, and identify next steps in stakeholder outreach meetings.

**Railroad Area Improvements** | City Manager and City Consultant stakeholder meetings will be held with State agencies as well as Norfolk Southern Railroad to discuss the project partnership opportunities.

### *Completion within Six Months of Plan Adoption*

**Buy Local Program** | The State of Delaware hosts a Buy Local Program and this branding can be used throughout the Downtown area and even citywide.

**Downtown Merchants' Organization** | The City should coordinate and facilitate the first Downtown organizational meeting. All property owners, businesses, and identified Downtown stakeholders should be invited. The goal of the first meeting is to seek interest, discuss intent, define the City's supportive role, leadership positions, and next steps to include a meeting date.

### *Completion within One Year of Plan Adoption*

**City Spring Clean Up** | The City currently hosts a yearly clean-up program that allows Harrington residents the ability to remove large bulk items and bring them to the Public Works Yard. This program will be expanded to include a volunteer-

based Downtown or Citywide clean-up day during this week.

**Downtown Annual Report** | The Downtown Merchants' Organization and the City should prepare an annual report regarding specific accomplishments, investment and incentive tracking, implementation status, membership, and path moving forward within the Downtown. This should be presented to City Council as well as pertinent State agencies on a regular annual basis.

**Downtown Promotions & Event** | The Downtown Merchants' Association will create annual promotional events as well as participate in organized events located Downtown. This information will be promoted at a minimum on the City's Downtown website. This will also provide an opportunity to discuss the business and window display initiatives.

**Economic Development Organization** | The City should coordinate and facilitate the first Citywide Economic Development Organization meeting. Large employers, identified stakeholders, and a variety of business owners, realtors, and tenants should be invited. The goal of the first meeting is to seek interest, discuss intent, define the City's supportive role, leadership positions, and next steps to include a meeting date. Once the leadership has been established to include meeting formats, it is recommended additional advisory members be asked to assist from Kent County Economic Development Department and the State of Delaware Department of Economic Development.

**Infrastructure Improvements** | Identify improvement areas for items such as bicycle racks, Downtown information kiosk or structure, bus shelter, benches, outdoor sitting areas, lighting upgrades as well as new lighting, bicycle route designations, wayfinding signage, pedestrian linkage and ADA improvements, as well as opportunities for the removal of overhead wires.

**Landscaping and Tree Plan** | Identify the public and private areas for landscape and tree plantings as well as determine the most appropriate native species for the area. Further determine the associated time and maintenance costs.

**Parking Pavement Alternatives** | The City will investigate alternative paving methods such as permeable pavers, porous asphalt, etc. for parking areas located within the Downtown. A workshop with multiple vendors should be set up to determine options moving forward along with estimated costs and long term maintenance.

**Parking Study** | Research and prepare a parking study that focuses on off-street parking within the Downtown. This should include existing parking availability as well as areas for improvement such as along Railroad Avenue and Hanley Street. This should also include the wayfinding signage program.

**Vacant Lot Improvements** | The City will meet with the owners of the vacant lots to discuss improvement options and occupancy initiatives.

**Youth Organization Involvement** | Research the local youth organizations to include an understanding of their capabilities. Solicit involvement from the organizations and select a youth liaison to serve as part of the Merchants' Association.

### *Completion within Three Years of Plan Adoption*

**Beautification Program** | Identify existing structures and sites that are in need of curb appeal-type improvements. These can range from landscaping, paint, shutters, detrimental object removal, and power washing to name a few. The property owner from each identified site could be contacted by City Code Enforcement personnel to discuss the program as well as any incentives available for the improvements. The program would include recognition within the City newsletter, City website, certificate from the Mayor and Council, as well as a temporary sign on the property to be rotated for future winners. This program can be set up on a Ward-specific basis, Citywide, or Downtown specific.

**Business Recruitment Program** | The Downtown Merchants' Association and the City Manager will develop a recruitment program. The City Manager will continue to work closely with the County and State Economic Development and Tourism agencies to actively promote and recruit new businesses.

**Downtown Art Program** | The Downtown Merchants' Association will develop a Downtown public art program. A few ideas to being with may include local art organizations, sponsor a themed art contest, winners from the Delaware State Fair, etc. as these can be displayed in local business' windows and special showing locations Downtown.

**Marketing & Branding Strategy** | The City and Downtown Merchants' Association will create a comprehensive branding and marketing strategy for the Downtown.

**Recycling** | The City will promote all existing recycling programs and forward information for vendor recycling programs to all commercial, multi-family, and mixed-use businesses.

**Sustainability Workshop** | The City will host a free workshop with vendors to assist in the education of new sustainable initiatives and products. The public workshop will also provide information on potential funding opportunities. Examples of a few initiatives are recycling, solar, energy efficiency, etc.

**WiFi Service** | Investigate the opportunity to provide free WiFi services in the Downtown as this will attract customers and new businesses. Research the potential for a broadband ring that could also serve Harrington's multiple emergency organizations.

### *Ongoing Implementation*

**Code Evaluation** | The City will continue to evaluate zoning and land use regulations.

**Communication with Key Agencies & Organizations** | Continue ongoing communication and interaction with the State of Delaware Economic Development Office, Kent County Economic Partnership, and the Greater Kent Committee to ensure vacant structures and lots are marketed to attract new investments.

**Funding Opportunities** | The City will continue to research a variety of funding opportunities to support the Downtown Plan initiatives.

**Organization of Downtown Events** | Continue to support all events located Downtown as well as promote all events on a regional scale to optimize the number of visitors. Ensure each event has a Police presence where the level of involvement is determined by the Police Chief. Walking Police presence is encouraged in a small Downtown area where the officer can respond quickly to their respective vehicle, if needed.

**Police Department Presence** | Continue to increase the Police Department presence at all events as well as regular foot patrol Downtown.

**Property Maintenance & Code Enforcement** | Continue to increase property maintenance and zoning code enforcement.

**Redevelopment & Development Promotion** | The City will continue to work closely with the County and State Economic Development agencies, local Chamber of Commerce and Tourism organizations as well as the real estate agencies to actively promote and recruit new businesses to Harrington.

## Political Will & Implementation Ability

The City has invested time and money in relation to the growth and development in Harrington. Development resources, updated Codes, and tools have been a priority within the City starting in 2006 when a City Planning Consultant was hired to assist in managing several critical projects. The list of adopted projects demonstrates the history of political will and the large amount of investment made in relation to development and redevelopment:

**Downtown Revitalization Tax Incentive Program**  
On September 7, 2015, the City Council approved Ordinance 05-07 providing tax incentives for revitalization activities in the Downtown area.

**Board of Adjustment**  
On November 20, 2006, the City Council approved Ordinance 06-13 rewriting the Zoning Ordinance relating to the Board of Adjustment.

**Planning Commission**  
On January 16, 2007, the City Council approved Ordinance 07-01 rewriting the Zoning Ordinance

relating to the Planning Commission, Site Plans, and the Approval Process. This Ordinance created the two tier expedited review process throughout the City: Category A Site Plan and Category B (Administrative) Plan Review.

**Zoning Ordinance - Commercial Uses**  
On April 2, 2007, the City Council approved Ordinance 07-02 amending the regulations applicable to the C-3 Service Commercial Zone by permitting uses allowed in the C-1 Neighborhood Commercial or the C-2 Central Commercial Zones to be located in the C-3 Service Commercial Zone.

**Zoning Ordinance - Residential Uses**  
On April 16, 2007, the City Council approved Ordinance 07-04 amending the regulations applicable to permit any use permitted in the R-1 zoning district to be placed in the R-3 and R-4 districts.

**Subdivision Ordinance**  
On June 4, 2007, the City Council approved Ordinance 07-05 replacing the Land Subdivision Regulations of 2004 in its entirety.

**Municipal Fees**  
On June 18, 2007, the City Council approved Ordinance 07-07 consolidating the City of Harrington fee charges for the various municipal services and located them in one Code section. Chapter 180, Municipal Fees was created and is used frequently for all City applications.

**Zoning Ordinance - R-2 District**  
On September 4, 2007, the City Council approved Ordinance 07-10 by eliminating the requirement that lots on which multi-family dwellings are placed remain under single ownership for the life of the building. This amendment will permit, for example, individual ownership of each side of a duplex.

**Downtown Revitalization Tax Incentive Program**  
On April 7, 2008, the City Council approved Ordinance 08-01 to expand the area covered by the Downtown Revitalization Tax Incentive Program to include the area along Clark Street between East Street and southbound U.S. Route 13, to clarify the tax incentives are restricted to exterior improvements made to structures in commercial zones, and to cap the cumulative total of the tax exemptions at the total cost of the improvements.

### Source Water Protection Regulations

On August 4, 2008, the City Council approved Ordinance 08-03 adopting new Source Water Protection Regulations. The State of Delaware Source Water Protection Law of 2001 required the City to adopt regulations governing the use of land within wellhead protection and excellent groundwater recharge potential areas in order to protect these areas from activities and substances that may harm water quality and subtract from overall water quantity.

### Code Codification

On December 15, 2008, the City Council approved Ordinance 08-07, which consolidated all approved and adopted Ordinances in the City of Harrington into “The Code of the City of Harrington” with Chapters and Sections. This allowed the entire Code to be placed in a catalog format and be made available online as a development resource and tool. The City Code is maintained and hosted by General Code.

### City Zoning Map

On April 5, 2010, the City Council approved Ordinance 10-01 updating the “Zoning Map of the City of Harrington” by providing two exhibits that clearly indicate the zoning of the properties located within the City limits of Harrington. All City records were updated to reflect the correct zoning classification and are available on the City’s website.

### Sidewalk and Curbing - New Construction

On November 7, 2011, the City Council approved Ordinance 11-07 requiring all new construction to include the installation of sidewalks and curbing on street frontages, on corner lots, and the side exposed to traffic. All corners will be handicap accessible. Sidewalk and curbing must be installed before a certificate of occupancy is issued. This Ordinance increases the pedestrian connectivity within the City limits.

### Council District Map

On March 5, 2012, the City Council approved Ordinance 12-05 adopting a new district map that reflects the reapportioned districts that are nearly equal in population as shown by the most recent federal decennial census.

### Comprehensive Land Use Plan

On December 16, 2013, the City Council approved Ordinance 13-04, adopting the new Harrington

Comprehensive Land Use Plan.

### Chapter 440 Zoning Rewrite

On July 20, 2015, the City Council approved Ordinance 15-06, which replaced Chapter 440 Zoning to revise the Zoning Code in its entirety. This project included the modification to the C-2 Central Commercial Zone, which is the predominant zoning classification for the Downtown.

### Comprehensive Rezoning

On July 20, 2015, the City Council approved Ordinance 15-07, which is a Comprehensive Rezoning to align property zoning to the Future Land Use Map adopted as part of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan. It also amends the Zoning Map for the City of Harrington to reflect the zoning changes.

### Development Toolkit

The City Planning Consultant provided the City with a finalized Development Toolkit that included user-friendly guides for developers, engineers, and surveyors to use when completing development applications. These toolkits, created for concept, preliminary, final, and administrative site plans, as well as for zoning compliance certificate applications, include information on procedures, process flowcharts, and checklists for submittal requirements. The toolkits will help to ensure that the City receives all of the information required to review an application in the first submission, as well as ensures that applicants are fully aware of the application process and timeline.

### Downtown Development District Plan

On May 9, 2016, the City Council approved Ordinance 16-06, which adopted a Downtown Development District Plan. The City Planning Consultant was asked to write an application for a Neighborhood Building Blocks Fund grant, which funded this Plan. The Plan’s goals are to improve commercial vitality, stimulate job growth, build a diverse array of businesses, help build a stable community of long-term residents, increase home ownership for all income levels, and reduce the amount of vacant housing. The Plan has brought together numerous planning efforts and documents, united stakeholders with a shared vision for the Downtown, and is the key document for the Downtown to articulate common goals and strategies, coordinate economic development efforts, identify priority development and redevelopment opportunities, and assist in marketing

and community events.

The intent behind this Plan is to ensure steps are taken to move the Downtown in the direction of being the City's economic development engine to host several events by creating a sense of belonging and community pride. Harrington strives to become a successful place of interest for stakeholders, tourism, guests, new homebuyers relocating to the City, customers, and new businesses. For this to continue and increase additional awareness, the local Government leadership must continue to:

- always promote Harrington in a positive manner;
- educate the Public on all City initiatives;
- clarify rumors by obtaining and sharing factual information;
- lead by example;
- promote the Citywide activities;
- be actively involved in events; and
- support the administration and planning and engineering projects, initiatives, and funding applications.

City departments should participate in these events as they have two public facilities (City Hall and the Police Department) Downtown, as well. This Plan does not detract from the importance of other crucial areas within the City; however, this promotes a common event and activity location within the community while supporting local businesses within a safe walking distance. The political will and ability to implement the Plan is essential for the fate of Downtown for years to come as well as any potential funding opportunities in the future. This is a living document and should continually be looked upon frequently for implementation and guidance within the Downtown.

## Downtown Coordination

During the Task Force meetings and research for the Downtown Plan, it was determined that all successful Downtown Districts in Delaware, as well as other states, have a strong merchant organization, as well as other supportive organizations. It was further found that the local government administration and leadership held a stakeholder member role in the organization, rather than a leadership position. The member positions within the merchant organization should be the City Manager or his/her designee as well as a member of City Council. The role would be supportive in nature and ensure that

event coordination, promotion, and communication remain a priority with the City.

The Task Force discussed forming a Merchants' Association that would focus specifically on the Downtown as the needs are quite different from the commercial businesses located on the commercial corridor on U.S. Route 13. The organization could participate and promote the scheduled events in the Downtown and include newly formed events at Freedom Park as well as organize separate promotional events on a regular basis such as First Fridays, quarterly holiday events, frequent flyer programs, etc. The City should participate in these events as well as they have two public facilities (City Hall and the Police Department) Downtown. The Downtown stakeholders will need to come together and form the Merchants' Association to promote their investment and create a vibrant Downtown community.

## Downtown Branding Strategy

Branding is a tool that the City of Harrington can use to define the Downtown and develop a long-term vision for a place that is compelling to many residents and visitors. Ultimately, it can be used to influence and shape positive perceptions of a location, creating a foundation that helps make that place desirable as a destination for residents to call home, visitors to spend time, and businesses and investors to develop.

As a key implementation component of the Downtown Plan, initiating a successful Downtown branding strategy requires honest and thoughtful responses to the following questions:

- What does Downtown Harrington stand for today - what are its strengths and weaknesses?
- What can and should Downtown Harrington stand for in the future, and how do we articulate this?
- What will make Downtown Harrington unique, valued, and attractive to target businesses and consumer audiences?
- How will we make this new positioning become a reality?
- What role do key stakeholders and community groups have in bringing the Downtown Harrington brand to life?
- How will we measure the success of the branding strategy?

Although the Downtown Plan and process has provided answers and insight to some of these questions, there remains work to be done. Armed with the answers to all of these questions, the City of Harrington can work toward developing a brand for Downtown. While the process communities undertake to develop a unified brand for downtown may differ, the following steps are commonly considered:

- define clear objectives;
- understand the target audience;
- identify the current brand image;
- set the aspirational brand identity;
- develop the positioning;
- create value propositions; and
- execute the brand strategy.

### *Define Clear Objectives*

Prior to beginning the process, the City should identify what the Downtown Harrington branding strategy is trying to achieve. What specific results is the City of Harrington seeking from the development of a brand strategy? Is the primary objective to attract and retain residents? Drive commerce? Attract visitors? Change current perceptions? The answers to these questions, and the priorities among them, help define the scope of the project, and the key activities that form the approach to the initiative.

While the Downtown Plan focuses on improvements and projects to be undertaken within the Downtown, it also provides an initial understanding of objectives the City and community share for the Downtown's future. Reviewing community outreach and the Plan's vision for Downtown will help provide a foundation for branding objectives that best respond to community needs and desires.

### *Understand the Target Users*

Understanding all the Downtown users can be a difficult step in place branding, as it is tempting to put everyone into one group. Time should be taken to identify the types of people the City of Harrington wants to attract to the Downtown. These groups should be minimized in number, however, and prioritized based on importance to the objectives of the branding strategy. Focusing on a few, specific

audiences can uncover more detailed and specific insights rather than gathering a variety of general insights.

### *Identify the Current Brand Image*

What image does Downtown Harrington give people today? Is it simply Commerce Street? Is it City Hall? The train station? Has this image of Downtown Harrington changed over time? This step in the process is designed to gain insight to the benefits and associations that residents, employees, business owners, and visitors have with the Downtown and to assess the gap between the current state and the desired state.

Community outreach conducted throughout the planning process helps to establish an understanding of the current Downtown identity. Understanding that identity, or lack of identity, helps to determine the steps necessary to mend that image.

### *Set the Aspirational Brand Identity*

What image does Downtown Harrington want to give users? How does the City want the public to describe Downtown? An aspirational brand identity should be within reach and credible for the brand. It should craft the association you want residents, employees, business owners, and visitors to make when they think of Downtown Harrington.

Sometimes area branding is not about inventing something - it can be about discovering what is already there. The City of Harrington could examine the perceived strengths of the Downtown and build on these to create the aspirational brand identity. Whatever the result, the aspirational brand identity should influence future business and community decisions and should be an identity Downtown Harrington can sustain for a long period of time.

### *Develop the Positioning*

What are the benefits that Downtown Harrington wants to own or offer in the minds of the public? Brand positioning is the means for transitioning the Downtown's current brand image to the aspirational brand identity it desires. It is a promise or benefit

that Downtown Harrington wants to own in the minds of the user.

The aspirational brand identity and its associated positioning typically has a long horizon. Perceptions of the Downtown will not change overnight and could require significant changes over time to see the aspirational identity become a reality.

### *Create Value Propositions*

What does the positioning mean for each user and what are the messages that should be communicated to influence their perceptions? Once defined, it is important to make the propositions actionable. The key is to take a critical look at Downtown Harrington's characteristics and policies and to ensure that they are aligned to the aspirational brand identity.

### *Execute the Brand Strategy*

In developing the Downtown Harrington branding and promotional plan, it is critical to identify every point at which a potential user may come into contact with the brand. Every interaction with the public is an opportunity to enhance or diminish the Downtown Harrington brand. These points of contact may vary widely in form, including the physical environment, street signage, advertising, brochures, websites, events, and interaction with residents. Much of the execution relies on improving these points of contact, to lend credibility to the new brand.

## Consistency

This Downtown Development District Plan is consistent with the City of Harrington's certified Comprehensive Land Use Plan in that it furthers a number of goals and objectives related to downtown redevelopment, economic development, and housing. The Comprehensive Plan identified a number of needs and goals that have been more specifically addressed in this Plan, and which have been assigned specific strategies with associated implementation timelines in order to ensure their successful completion.

The Downtown, as depicted in *Map 1. Downtown Boundary*,

is entirely within a Level I Investment Area as shown in the Strategies for State Policies and Spending. This is the highest priority area for State investment; therefore, the Downtown and Downtown Plan are consistent with the goals and objectives of the Strategies for State Policies and Spending.

