

# 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.

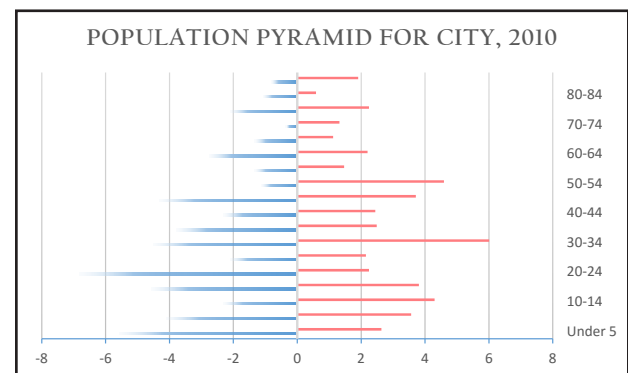
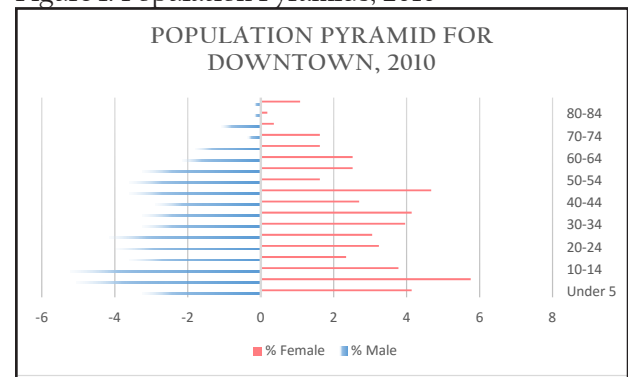
## Demographics & Housing

### 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.

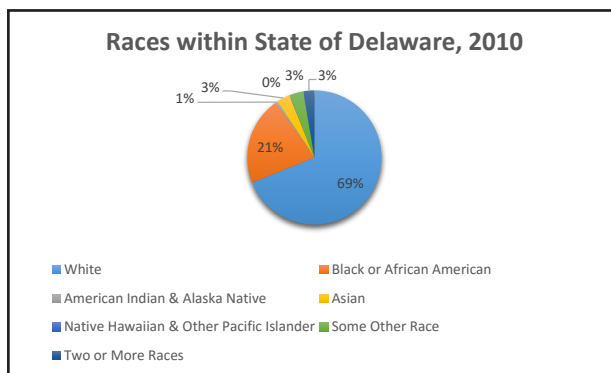
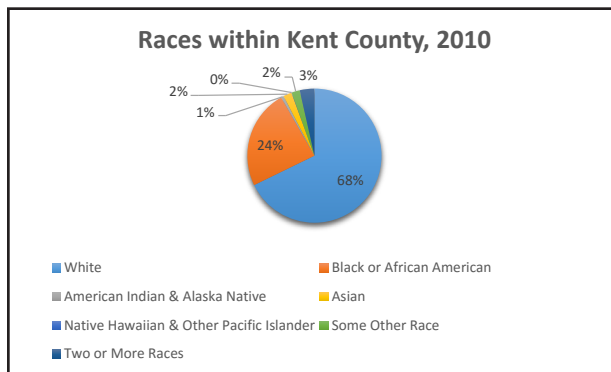
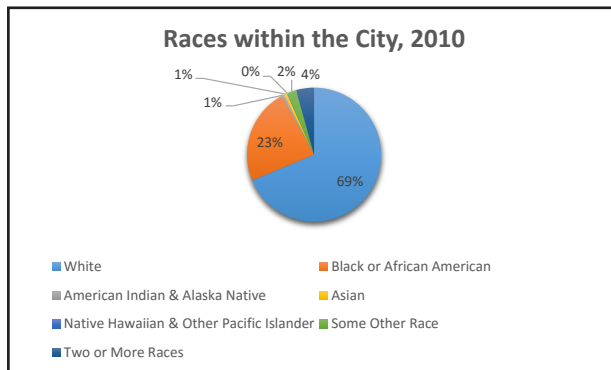
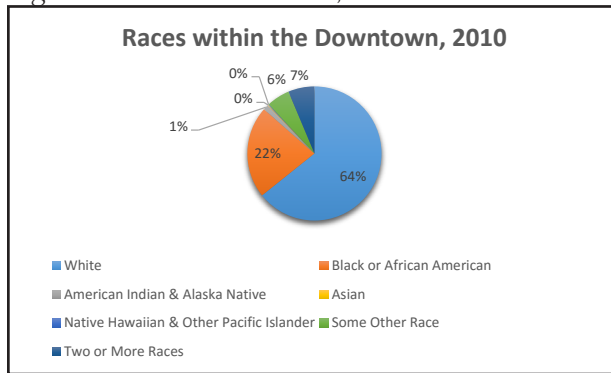
Almost 60% of the Downtown is comprised mostly of working aged individuals (aged 20-65). The next largest group in the Downtown is comprised of school-aged individuals, with almost 26% between the ages 5-19. Seniors make up 8.5% of the population and preschoolers (less than 5 years old) make up less 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.

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

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 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%          |
|                           | 109*        | 32.7      | 100%          |

\*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%    |
|                        | 108     | 26.3  | 100%* |

\*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 & Bakery, 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.

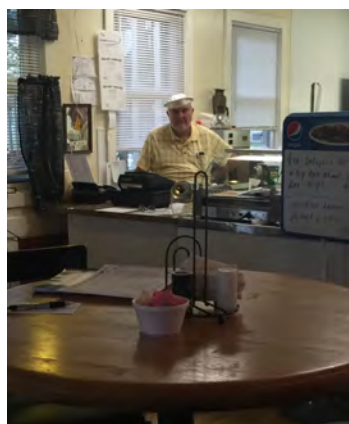


Harrington's City Hall, located at 106 Dorman Street, has recently undergone renovations, both to its interior and its exterior.



*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.



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*.

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:

#### 1. Vacant Structures



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.

#### 2. Vacant Lots



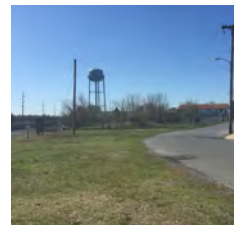
Gateway parcels located on south side of Clark Street and east side of East Street.



Gateway parcels located on the east side of Delaware Avenue.



Parcel located on Commerce Street.



Parcel located on Hanley Street.

## 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.

Figure 4. DART Route 117



Source: DART First State



A DART bus passing through the Downtown.



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.





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.



### 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

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.



### 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 & Bakery.





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

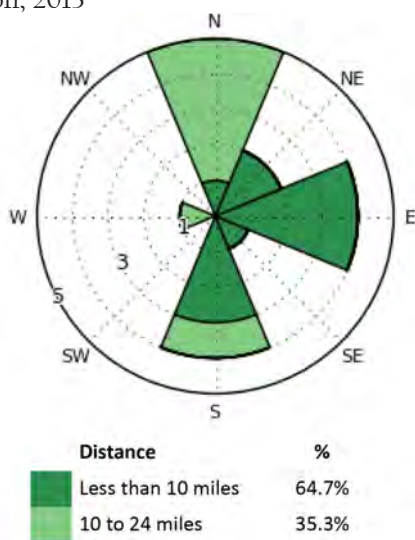


Table 6. Downtown Resident Top Job Locations

| 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

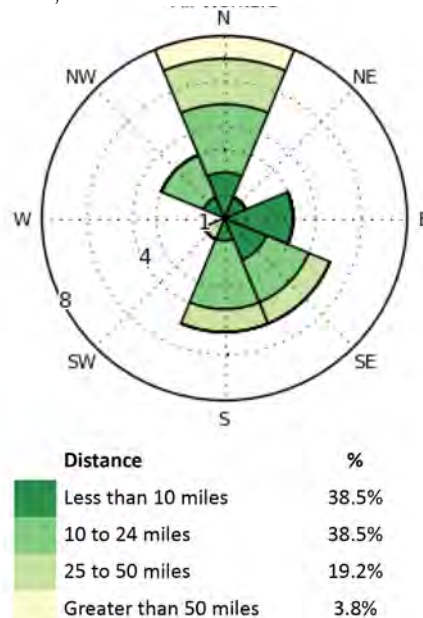


Table 7. Downtown Workers' Top Origin Locations

| 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>   |