

# Chapter Seven.

## *Downtown Harrington - The Evaluation*





The short term success of the Downtown Development District Plan should be measured in two ways. First, has the City in fact implemented, in a timely manner and with a reasonable commitment of resources, the actions set forth in this Plan. Second, have the conditions in the Downtown improved as a result of the implementation of the Downtown Development District Plan.

The evaluation should review each action in the Plan that should have been undertaken during the time period covered by the evaluation as well as the continuing/ongoing activities. For each of these actions, the evaluation should address the following:

- Was the action carried out as planned?
- If not, why not or how was it changed?
- How successful was the action from an operational perspective (number of participants or other indicators of involvement/participation)?
- How could the action be improved if it is a recurring or ongoing activity?
- Should the activity be continued? Be modified?
- Is there any evidence that the action has had a positive impact on the Downtown?

In addition to the status evaluation noted above, an evaluation of the effectiveness of implementing the Plan should be conducted. The effectiveness report should document at least the following:

- the nature and amount of all public improvements undertaken within the Downtown;
- the number, type, and value of investments made in private property within the Downtown including renovations, expansions, or new buildings;
- the number and type of new businesses that opened in or relocated to the Downtown including the number of new jobs created;
- the number and type of businesses that closed or relocated from the Downtown including the number of jobs lost;
- the number and type of business expansions within the Downtown including the number of new jobs created; and
- the percentage change in taxable property valuation of all private property in the Downtown.

As part of this review, the City Manager and City Planner should consider whether any amendments should be made to the Downtown Plan to improve its

effectiveness or to respond to changing conditions or opportunities. If they believe that an amendment of the Plan is warranted, they should prepare appropriate amendments and submit them for consideration and possible recommendation to the City Council as formal amendments. The objective of this process is that the Downtown Development District Plan will become a “living document” that is updated and refined on an ongoing basis to serve as a guide for the community’s downtown revitalization activities.

A key element of the evaluation process is keeping the Downtown community, volunteers, and the larger Harrington community aware of the progress being made to implement (and possibly revise and update) the Downtown Development District Plan. This reporting should take a number of forms including, but not limited to, the following:

- Following each periodic evaluation, the City Manager and City Planner should prepare a summary of the progress made during the past evaluation period and the key achievements in improving the Downtown. This should be done as a one or two page handout that can be posted on the City’s website and printed and distributed to the Downtown community and volunteers and used as a handout at Downtown events and activities.
- Following the presentation of the progress report to the City Council, a celebration should be held to note the progress made during the evaluation period, to recognize special accomplishments, and to thank the Downtown community and volunteers for their contributions to the success.
- The City should establish a regular process for reporting successes in implementing the Plan to the local media and encouraging them to provide coverage.