



# Downtown Development Districts

## Application for District Renewal

### Five Year Renewal Application for Expiring DDD Districts

Please note: Applicants are encouraged to consult with the Office of State Planning Coordination (OSPC) prior to submittal.

**Application Period and Deadlines:** The application period opens three years prior to expiration. Applications for extensions must be submitted within 6 months of the current DDD program expiration. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis and reviewed by the Cabinet Committee on State Planning Issues (CCSPI) at their next scheduled meeting. Application must be accompanied by a Resolution from the legislative body supporting the application for a DDD District Designation Extension, and an updated District Plan.

**Review and Approval:** Applications for five-year DDD District Renewal are reviewed by OSPC and agency partners. OSPC will prepare a report and recommendation which will be presented to the CCSPI which will in turn make a recommendation to the Governor. The Governor may renew Districts for up to two 5-year renewal periods. Completed applications should be sent to [OSPC@delaware.gov](mailto:OSPC@delaware.gov)

- Check list:  Application Form
- Legislative Body Resolution
- Updated District Plan

Municipality / County: City of Harrington

DDD Program expiration date: 8/31/2026

Contact Person for Application	
Name: <u>Amanda Marlow</u>	
Address: <u>106 Dorman St. Harrington DE 19952</u>	
Phone: <u>(302) 398-3530</u>	
Email: <u>amarlow@cityofharrington.com</u>	

District Administrator (if different)	
Name:	_____
Address:	_____
Phone:	_____
Email:	_____

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



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#### **Legislative Body Resolution:**

The resolution must affirmatively indicate that the legislative body supports the application for the extension of Downtown Development District designation and is willing to adhere to the District Plan and the Local Incentives for the extended duration.

Date of Resolution in support of DDD Extension Application: \_\_\_\_\_

Resolution number: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Program Administration:**

Describe any proposed changes in how the DDD program will be administered (such as new organizational structure or personnel to enhance implementation of the DDD program).

The current administration overseeing the implementation of the DDD program includes Amanda Marlow, Assistant City Manager, and Doug Poore, Economic Development & Community Engagement Coordinator. The City Planner position, previously a key role in managing the program, is currently vacant and in the process of being filled. Once this position is staffed, a more detailed structure for program administration, including specific responsibilities, will be established.



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#### **Need and Impact:**

Describe the impact the DDD program has had on your downtown thus far. In the response, please consider the program's effectiveness in creating capital investment, creating jobs, improving housing stock, increasing residents and visitors, providing enhanced retail and entertainment opportunities, and otherwise improving the quality of life within such district. Refer to the Key Priority Projects identified in the initial DDD program application; Was the District successful in implementing these projects?

Provide justification as to why the program should be extended.

Over the past decade, the Downtown Development District (DDD) has played a pivotal role in revitalizing the city's core. As described in detail in chapter one of the DDD renewal plan, the program has supported a mix of commercial, residential, and mixed-use projects. Through strategic use of public and private resources more than fifteen projects, representing over \$770,000 in property improvements, have refreshed key buildings, introduced new amenities, and complemented long-standing establishments. These projects include façade renovations, interior upgrades, and the addition of new destinations such as a sweet shop and other small businesses.

These efforts have been supported by growing marketing initiatives, successful community events, early accessibility improvements, and enhanced public safety measures including security cameras and upgraded lighting. Broader investments in parks, recreation, and community facilities, totaling over \$1.5 million, have further strengthened the area's livability and reinforced the DDD's mission of fostering an active, connected community. These projects include new outdoor pickleball and basketball courts, a community pavilion, walking trails, playground enhancements, and expanded cultural programming at the community center.

While the progress has been significant, continued investment is essential to sustain momentum and address remaining needs. Chapter two of the DDD renewal plan will discuss demographic data and community survey data, which will outline gaps in business variety, opportunities to enhance walkability and accessibility, and priorities for future programming and economic development. Vacant structures and lots continue to be of utmost priority in this renewal plan. Chapter four of the DDD renewal plan will highlight specific vacant sites that will be key priority projects. This information will guide the next five years of strategic planning, ensuring the DDD continues to attract new businesses, support existing ones, and strengthen the heart of the city through coordinated, data-driven decision-making.



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#### **District Plan:**

Revise the current District Plan to include the listed items below. The revised plan is intended to supersede the existing one and must be included with the Extension Application. The updated plan should assess progress made since program implementation, reflect relevant changes that may have occurred since plan adoption, and provide up-to-date guidance for redevelopment for the next 5 years and beyond.

District Plan update must include the following:

1. Rationale as to why the five-year extension is necessary and/or desirable to achieve redevelopment goals stated in the District Plan.
2. An evaluation and self-assessment of past program implementation and performance.
3. Updated demographic and redevelopment data, and analysis of that data in the current plan.
4. An evaluation, and revision if necessary, of the vision, goals and strategies for downtown redevelopment.
5. Updated maps that reflect current conditions. Note any changes (within the District) to zoning or to the Future Land Use Map in the adopted comprehensive plan.

Briefly summarize changes made to the plan here:

The updated district highlights the great successes over the last decade, that have supported the revitalization of the Downtown. Those highlights include more than 15 property enhancing projects totaling over \$770,000, as well as over \$1.5 million in community facilities investments. The local incentives utilized are valued at approximately \$97,580 in fees waived.

Despite meaningful progress, ongoing investment remains essential to sustain revitalization and address persistent challenges. Demographic and survey data, detailed in Chapter Two of the renewal plan, point to unmet needs in business variety, walkability, accessibility, and expanded community programming. Vacant lots and structures remain a significant concern and serve as a focal point for the next phase of redevelopment. Updated and more specific key priority projects have been identified in Chapter four of the renewal plan.

As demonstrated above, the DDD program has had a significant and positive impact on Downtown. The overarching ten goals outlined in this plan remain unchanged, continuing to emphasize a thriving business environment, improved infrastructure that preserves historic character, enhanced transportation options, strengthened public safety, and a vibrant day-and night-time atmosphere supported by events and activities. Only minor adjustments have been made to individual strategies, reflecting completed actions or items that are no longer applicable.



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The Downtown boundary is revised with the removal of 10 parcels to the south and the addition of 6 parcels to the North. The expansion is intended to extend incentive opportunities to additional properties, while the removed parcels no longer meet the current criteria or strategic objectives for inclusion within the DDD. Certified mailers have been sent to the property owners of the removed parcels with the opportunity to speak at the public hearing. Both the certified mail receipts and the meeting minutes are attached to this application.

### **Local Incentives:**

List the local incentive package currently in place and briefly assess the effectiveness of each using data from completed projects. Please note any changes proposed to these incentives and describe why the change is needed.

List any new incentive options being proposed and explain how these new incentives will address the goals of the District Plan for the next 5-year period.

No local incentives will be changed or proposed for the five-year renewal plan.

### Citywide local incentives:

1. Expedited Review Process
  - A streamlined two-tier review process that provides faster and more cost-effective reviews for code-compliant projects.
2. Sewer and Water Impact Fee Calculations
  - Since 2013, the City of Harrington has adopted Kent County Levy Court's impact fee calculations based on Equivalent Dwelling Units (EDUs)
3. Site Plan Extension
  - The Planning Commission may grant a site plan approval extension of up to 18 months.
4. Reduced Fee Adoption
  - The water impact fee is reduced from \$2,000 to \$1,170
5. Water Usage Fee Reduction
  - The water usage fee has been reduced from \$0.25/1,000 gallons of usage reduction for in-City users
6. First-Time Home Buyer Realty Transfer Tax Exemption
  - Allows first-time home buyers an exemption from the realty transfer tax
7. Direct Job Creation Impact Fee Waiver
  - A tiered system to waive water and sewer impact fees based on the number of full-time jobs created within the city



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#### Downtown local incentives:

1. Downtown Revitalization Area Tax Incentive Program
  - All improvements to the exterior of existing building located in downtown facing Commerce and/or Clark Street are eligible to apply for a partial exemption from the City's real estate taxes
2. New Business License Fee Waiver
  - New businesses in the Downtown will be eligible for a one-time waiver if its Business License fee for the first three years.
3. Development Application Fee Reduction
  - Category A or B plan review for Downtown Development applications are eligible for a one-time fee reduction of \$200 per parcel and/or application
4. Development Application Expedited Review Time
  - Site plan review application in the Downtown will receive review comments within 10 working days from the date of submission to the City.
5. First-Time Home Buyer Tax Abatement
  - First-time homebuyers for an owner-occupied single-family home may be eligible for a one-time abatement of the first full tax assessment billing.

In total, 26 projects benefited from the Downtown Development District incentives. Of these, one project received a review fee reduction, while the remaining 25 utilized waivers for review fees and City sewer and water impact fees. The waiver of impact and review fees emerged as the most frequently used incentive, underscoring its value to property owners and developers. Altogether, approximately \$97,580 in fees were waived, reflecting a significant investment by the City in supporting redevelopment and strengthening the economic vitality of the Downtown.



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### Key Priority Projects:

The DDD application was updated in 2019 to include discussion of Key Priority Projects. These projects were to be identified in the District Plan as potential catalysts for other redevelopment activity or as examples of superior urban design. Key Priority Projects are specific projects expected to provide significant impact to the District when implemented. See *DDD Program Guidelines* for more information.

With this definition in mind, please describe the Key Priority Projects that were implemented during the past 10-year period. Briefly assess their impact and/or describe any barriers to implementation. Moving forward, what are the Key Priority Projects for the 5-year extension?

In the original District Plan, Key Priority Projects were defined broadly, with a focus on eliminating vacant structures as the highest priority, followed by addressing vacant lots and improving the railroad-area corridor. Since that time, within the 2019 DDD boundary, 5 vacant lots have been developed.

Chapter four of the five-year renewal plan will focus on more specific sites and projects, which are summarized below.

#### **Delaware Avenue**

Delaware Avenue, a key downtown gateway, can be greatly improved through landscaping, defined parking, buffering along the rail yard, and activating vacant lots with new development or green space.

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

The Railroad Avenue–Hanley Street area offers a strong opportunity for a rail-themed master plan that adds pedestrian amenities, lighting, parking, and educational features connecting the corridor to the Train Museum.

#### **Harrington Meadows**

Harrington Meadows, a residential project started in 2020, has 20 remaining single-family and duplex lots whose completion would add needed housing and help reduce long-vacant parcels near Downtown.

#### **1–11 Spartan Station Shopping Center**

This partially vacant, multi-tenant shopping center at 1 East Street has strong visibility at a key corner, and its revitalization would reinforce nearby commercial priority sites.

#### **12 Commerce Street**

This 2,589-square-foot commercial building, built in 1998 and surrounded by active businesses, offers a solid opportunity for reinvestment within an established commercial corridor.



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#### **14 Commerce Street**

Adjacent to 12 Commerce Street, this 4,184-square-foot historic commercial building presents a reinvestment opportunity that could mutually reinforce improvements to its neighboring property.

#### **19 Dorman Street**

This 3,596-square-foot historic single-family home sits within a residential area and is walkable to Commerce Street, making it a strong candidate for rehabilitation or adaptive reuse.

#### **45 Clark Street**

This 8,449-square-foot corner lot at East and Clark Streets is well positioned for redevelopment that would directly support improvements to the adjacent Spartan Station Shopping Center.

#### **Parcel #6-09-17908-06-0200-000**

Located just south of 45 Clark Street, this 9,888-square-foot parcel near active commercial uses is a strong candidate for reinvestment alongside other targeted sites.

#### **108 Delaware Avenue**

This 3,596-square-foot Colonial-style building in the C-2 zoning district, presents a prime opportunity for commercial redevelopment. Its walkable location near Commerce Street supports ground-floor commercial uses and potential upper-story residential units. Bringing the structure up to code is essential to remove it from the vacancy list, after which it could serve as a key mixed-use anchor in Downtown Harrington.

#### **Parcel #6-09-17020-05-6500-000**

Positioned immediately south of 108 Delaware Avenue, this 5,227-square-foot parcel offers a reinvestment opportunity that would strengthen the adjacent priority site and nearby commercial activity.



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## APPENDIX 7

### LINKS TO ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Delaware Office of State Planning Coordination

<http://stateplanning.delaware.gov/>

Downtown Development Districts Program

[OSPC - Downtown Development Districts \(DDD\) - Office of State Planning Coordination \(OSPC\) - State of Delaware](#)

Delaware State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)

<http://history.delaware.gov/>

Tax Credit Program

<http://history.delaware.gov/preservation/taxcredit.shtml>

Delaware State Housing Authority

<http://www.destatehousing.com/>

District Rebate Program

[http://www.destatehousing.com/Developers/dv\\_ddd.php](http://www.destatehousing.com/Developers/dv_ddd.php)

Delaware Division of Small Business

<https://business.delaware.gov/>

Delaware Prosperity Partnership

<https://www.deprosperitypartnership.com/>