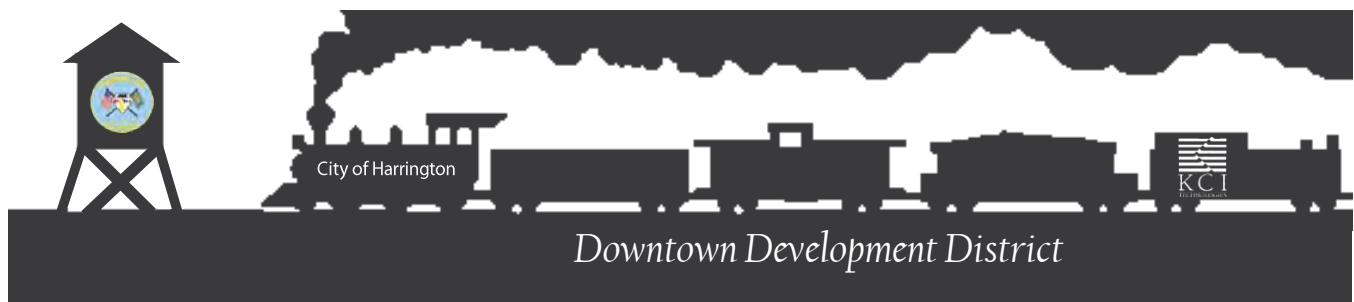


Chapter Two.

Downtown Harrington - The Data





Through the many assets, opportunities, and challenges identified through this Downtown Five Year Renewal 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 capitalizing on its many strengths and opportunities.

While some demographic and population data are available from the U.S. Census Bureau, the overall scope of information is limited due to funding constraints. The data below has been collected from the U.S. Census Bureau, the City of Harrington, and Harrington’s 2025 Comprehensive Plan and provides useful insights into population trends, community characteristics, and other key indicators, but gaps remain in coverage and detail.

Demographics & Housing

Population

According to the 2020 U.S. Census, Harrington’s total population is 3,774, an increase of just about 6% from 2010 with a total population of 3,562. Population figures are not available for the Downtown due to the way the Census collects data at this smaller area level, but the City of Harrington’s data exhibited a population growth of 6% from 2010 to 2020, growing from a population of 554 to 587.

Table 1 below is the approximate population breakdown comparison in age group from 2010 to 2020. Overall, the population distribution shifted during this time period. The share of working-age adults declined from 60% to 53%, while both seniors and preschool-aged children increased from about 8% to 11%. The proportion of school-aged children remained stable at 26%. This indicates an aging population along with a slight rise in the youngest age group and a shrinking working-age segment with the median age being 30.7 years.

Table 1: Approximate Population Breakdown

Age Group	2010	2020
Working age (20-65)	60%	53%
School age (5-19)	26%	26%
Seniors (65+)	8.5%	11%
Preschoolers (≤ 5)	8%	11%



According to the U.S. Census, Table 2 below is the approximate population breakdown comparison in race from 2010 to 2020. The category “other” encompasses American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, and other races not specifically listed. The data shows a modest demographic shift over the decade, with growth in the White and Other race categories, a decline in the Black population, and overall stability among multiracial residents.

Table 2: Approximate Race Breakdown

Race	2010	2020
White	66%	70.3%
Black	19%	14%
Two or More	6%	6%
Other	8%	9.7%

Income & Poverty

According to the U.S. Census, Table 3 below is the median household income breakdown by relevant areas. Harrington’s 2020 median household income has increased by 47% from 2013, 10% more than the 37% national increase. Median household income rose significantly across all areas in the table below from 2013 to 2020, with Harrington showing the largest gain. Kent County and Delaware also experienced steady growth, reflecting broader regional economic improvement. Overall, incomes improved at every level, with Harrington’s increase outpacing both county and state trends. A variety of factors seem to be involved. Minimum Wage laws, wealthier individuals moving into the area from out of state, and an increase in education levels for professionals.

Table 3: Median Household Income

Area	2013	2020
City of Harrington	\$38,182	\$72,606
Kent County	\$55,000	\$81,117
Delaware	\$60,000	\$87,534

Education Attainment

According to the U.S. Census, Table 4 below is the education attainment breakdown by education level. Overall, the data shows a clear upward trend in higher education attainment from 2010 to 2020. The share of people with education beyond high school increased at every level, while the percentage with only a high school diploma declined slightly. This indicates that the population became more highly educated over the decade.

Table 4: Education Attainment Breakdown

Education Level	2010	2020
High School or Equivalent	25.3%	24.3%
Some College	13.1%	16.9%
Associate’s degree	5.5%	6.6%
Bachelor’s degree	13.2%	15.6%
Master’s or Higher	8.3%	11.0%

Housing & Homeownership

According to the U.S. Census, The City’s 2020 homeownership rate of just over 62% has risen by slightly more than 12 percentage points since 2010, when the homeownership rate was 50%. According to Harrington’s 2025 Comprehensive Plan, in 2022 there were 1,458 total housing units in 2022. Table 5 below breaks down each housing type in comparison to Kent County and Delaware. Harrington’s housing stock is predominantly single-family detached homes, which make up a larger share of units compared to both Kent County and the state overall. The city has a relatively small proportion of attached homes and mobile or other housing types, while apartments account for a higher percentage of units than both the County and State average.

Table 5: 2022 Housing Stock Composition

HOUSING TYPE	HARRINGTON		KENT COUNTY		DELAWARE	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Single Family, Detached	1,036	71.06%	45,613	66.39%	235,374	60.51%
Single Family, Attached	13	0.89%	6,245	9.09%	60,864	15.65%
Apartments	400	27.43%	9,421	13.71%	67,698	17.40%
Mobile Home/Other	9	0.62%	7,426	10.81%	25,064	6.44%
Total	1,458		68,705		389,000	



Employment & Poverty Status

From 2010 to 2020 the employment rate in the Downtown has increased by nearly 0.5% from 93% to 93.4% respectively. Table 6 below breaks down Harrington’s poverty status in 2022 in comparison to Kent County, Delaware and the United States, according to Harrington’s 2025 Comprehensive Plan. The table depicts the number of families in each category as well as the percentage of those families that reported poverty status. Harrington reports a higher overall family poverty rate than Kent County, the state, and the nation, with the gap widening significantly for families with children under 18. Among racial and ethnic groups, both Black and Hispanic families in Harrington experience a lower poverty rate than their counterparts countywide and nationwide. Poverty among older adults and those without a high school diploma appears underreported in Harrington, suggesting data limitations. Overall, the figures indicate that families with children face the greatest economic challenges within the community.

Table 6: 2022 Family Poverty Status

	HARRINGTON		KENT COUNTY		DELAWARE		UNITED STATES	
	#	% Reported Poverty	#	% Reported Poverty	#	% Reported Poverty	#	% Reported Poverty
All Family	846	13.7%	46,594	9.4%	252,505	7.5%	81,432,908	8.8%
With kids aged 18 and below	526	22.1%	21,250	16.0%	105,452	13.2%	37,443,291	13.6%
Black	241	16.6%	111,212	18.6%	49,187	15.3%	9,135,434	17.5%
Hispanic	110	8.2%	3,027	13.1%	20,007	14.2%	13,141,075	14.7%
65 +	128	N/A	11,341	52.0%	67,991	3.4%	18,112,899	5.5%
No High School Diploma	37	N/A	4,135	23.1%	17,671	22.0%	7,423,233	23.0%



Downtown Public Survey

As part of the original DDD Plan established in 2016, the City of Harrington distributed a comprehensive community survey to inform the District’s priorities. The 2025 Downtown Survey is a shortened version of that original questionnaire, allowing for meaningful comparison of how community needs and perspectives have evolved over time. This year, the City mailed an invitation to Downtown residents and businesses to complete the updated survey, and their firsthand insights are especially valuable in identifying how Downtown serves them and where additional improvements are needed. The results will guide future investments and Key Priority Projects. The invitation, 2025 survey, and 2025 results are included in the appendix.

The following section presents selected highlights from the survey results. Not every question from the survey is included; instead, the analysis focuses on the responses that offered the most meaningful insight into community needs, priorities, and perceptions. It should be noted that the 2025 survey received 21 responses, compared with 90 responses in 2016. This difference in sample size presents challenges, including potential limitations in statistical reliability and representativeness. When interpreting the results, the focus will be on overall trends and patterns rather than on individual response differences, with these sample size considerations taken into account.

“How often do you shop at the following locations?”

Question two in both surveys asks respondents about shopping frequency at several local and popular areas, as illustrated in Figure 1 below. As a whole, similar patterns appear between 2016 and 2025, with most frequent shopping occurring in the Route 13 corridor and Milford, and the least frequent shopping occurring in Seaford. These results highlight the need for specific strategies that increase shopping trips to Harrington, helping to strengthen the local economy and bring the town’s activity levels closer to those seen in the Route 13 corridor and Milford.

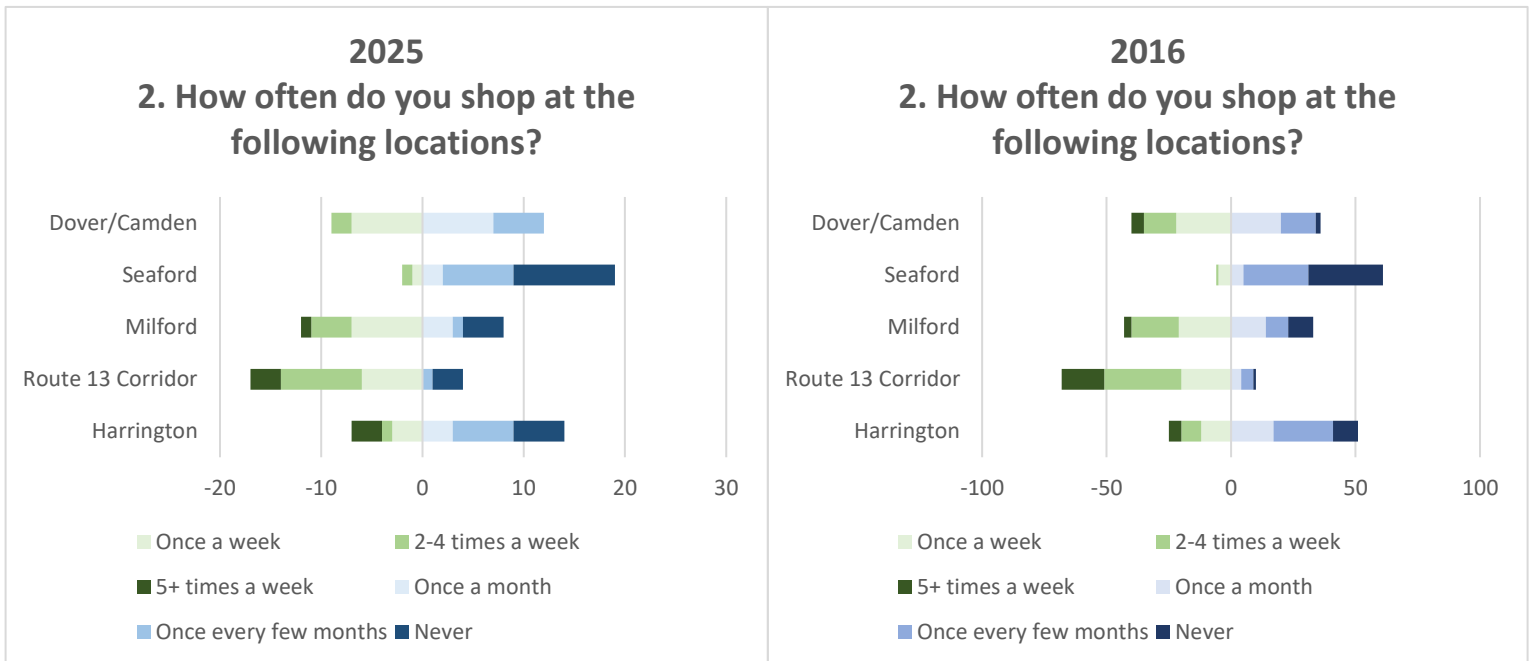


Figure 1: Question 2. How often do you shop at the following locations?

“What places/stores do you visit in Harrington's Downtown?”

Question three in both surveys asks respondents about what kind of places or stores are being visited within the Downtown, as shown in figure 2 below. The 2025 results mirror the trends seen in 2016, with the Post Office or Bank remaining the primary reason people come Downtown. Restaurants, service-oriented businesses, and retail shops continue to follow closely behind as common destinations. The write-in options include “Hockey game” and “senior center” (verbatim).

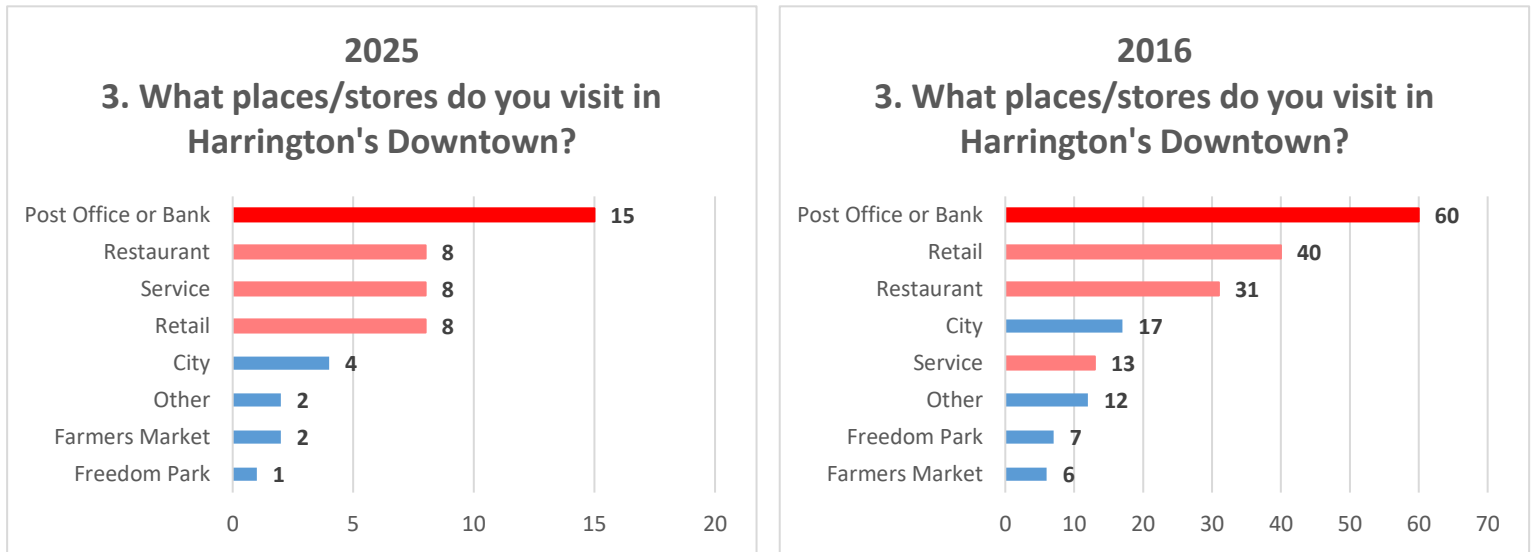


Figure 2: Question 3. What places/stores do you visit in Harrington’s Downtown?

“Have you attended any of the following events in the past 3 years?”

Question five in both surveys asks respondents about what kind of events are attended, as shown in figure 3 below. The two most popular events within the last decade are the Christmas Parade and Heritage Day. The police National Night Out has fallen in popularity from 2016 but that may be due to sample size. The 2025 survey write-in option mentions “Trick or Trunk” (verbatim).

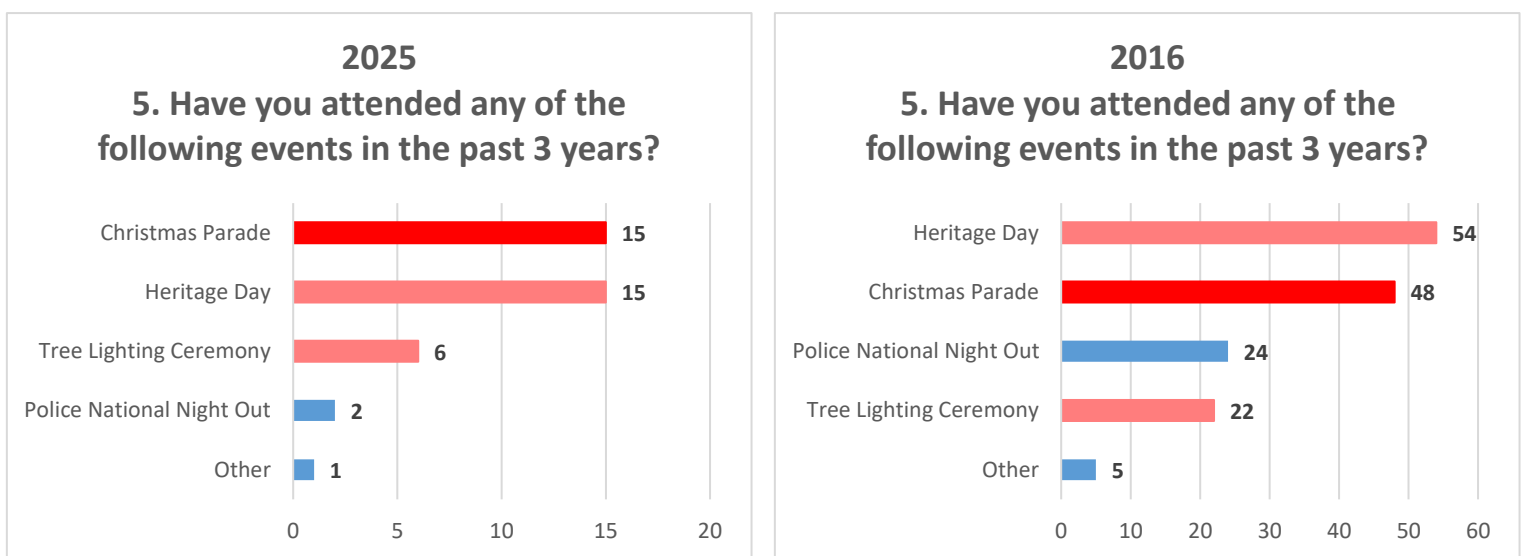


Figure 3: Question 5. Have you attended any of the following events in the past 3 years?

“How do you most often travel to establishments in the downtown?”

Question six in both surveys asks respondents about how they travel to and park within the Downtown, as shown in figure 4 below. The results show several notable differences, including a positive increase in walking. Although biking remains an uncommon mode of travel, a regional bike route runs along Commerce and Clark Streets (see Map 8. Transportation), suggesting that investment in shared roads or bike-friendly infrastructure could be a valuable improvement for the area.

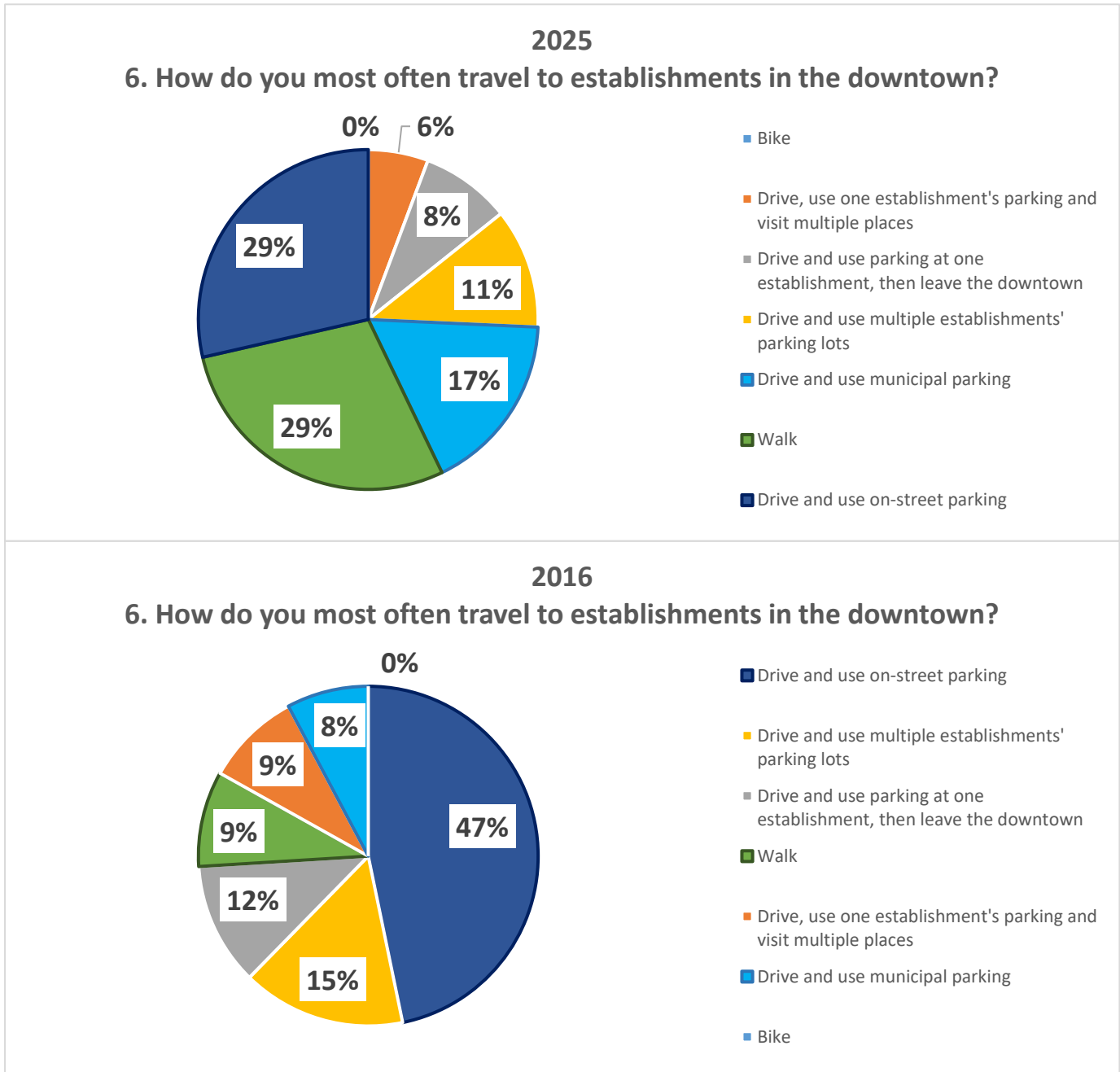


Figure 4: Question 6. How do you most often travel to establishments in the downtown?

“Do you feel safe in Harrington's downtown during the day and night and why?”

Question seven and eight in both surveys asks respondents whether they feel safe in the Downtown and why, as shown in figure 5 below. An increase in the percentage of the sample size from 2016 to 2025 feels safer during the night. Table 7 below shows question 8 responses from the 2025 survey on why they feel safe or unsafe. Overall, respondents generally feel safe in Downtown Harrington, citing strong police presence, proximity to the police station, and a friendly, quiet neighborhood. However, concerns emerge at night, when visibility decreases and groups of teens, loitering individuals, and people associated with the nearby recovery clinic contribute to a sense of unease. Responses on adequate lighting varies, some saying, areas are well lit and some saying there is not enough lighting.

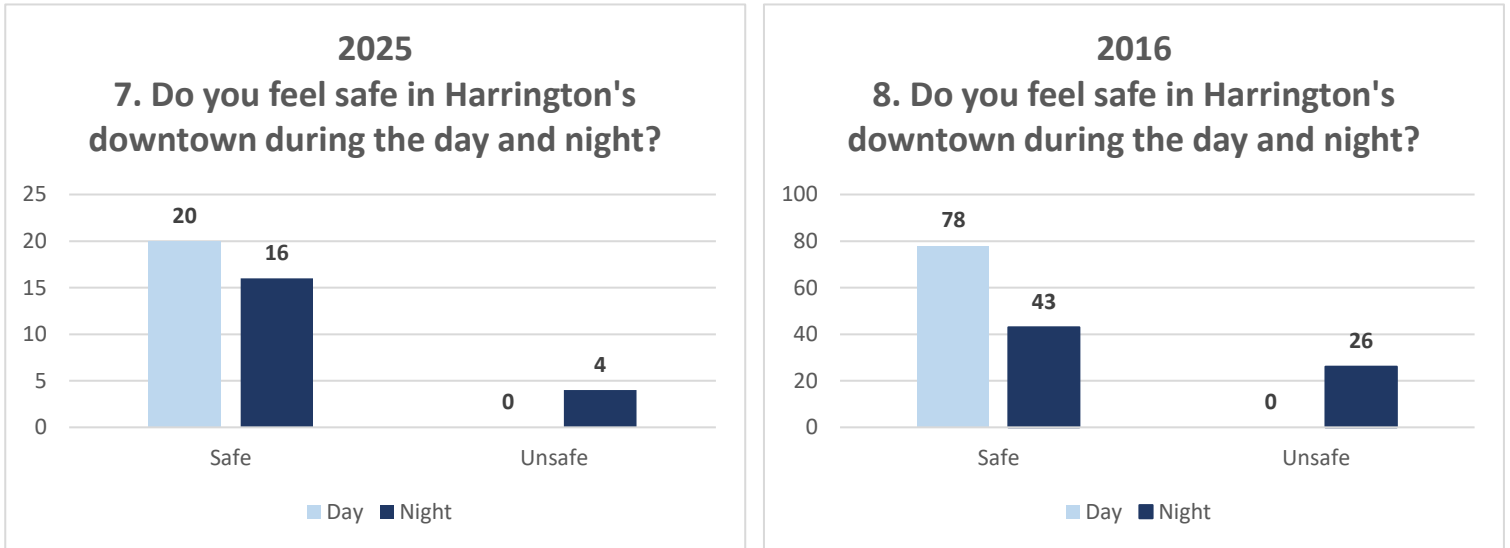


Figure 5: Question 7. Do you feel safe in Harrington’s downtown during the day and night?

Table 7: Question 8. Why do you feel safe or unsafe?

Police presence and DSP.
I live near the police station. Streets are well lit near my house.
The town is quiet and well policed
Feel unsafe at night because the teens that live around here create a lot of mischief at night.
Lots of weird some homeless people walking around. People from the drug rehab place are always walking around. Police don't ride through developments or side streets at night. Impossible to get a police officer especially at night even though they are sitting on the edge of town stopping speeders.
Police station right near by
It seems friendly and busy during the day. In the evening it is dark and regularly groups of teens roaming around.
Wholesome neighborhood with great people who care about each other. Street lights are on at night.
Police station close by
I have always felt safe in Harrington
I have had zero issues with safety.
I feel safe during the day because I can see my surroundings. I don't feel as safe at night and it's harder to see in some areas. Also, I don't feel safe with the recovery clinic being in town.
Police station is right there, my office is right there, Ive been living or working here my whole life



“Currently, what are the major advantages of Harrington's downtown?”

The next two questions in the 2025 survey include a slight update from the 2016 version: respondents were given a new option to select apartments or homes. This addition allows for a clearer understanding of how residential uses factor into Downtown activity. Question nine in both surveys asks respondents what they think the major advantages are in the Downtown, as shown in figure 6 below. Similar trends appear overall from the last decade. Supporting local businesses, friendly local service, and convenient location ranking as the top advantages, with selection of goods and services and selections of apartments/homes ranking one of the lowest. The 2025 survey write-in option states “Convenient and close but nothing there to draw people” (verbatim).

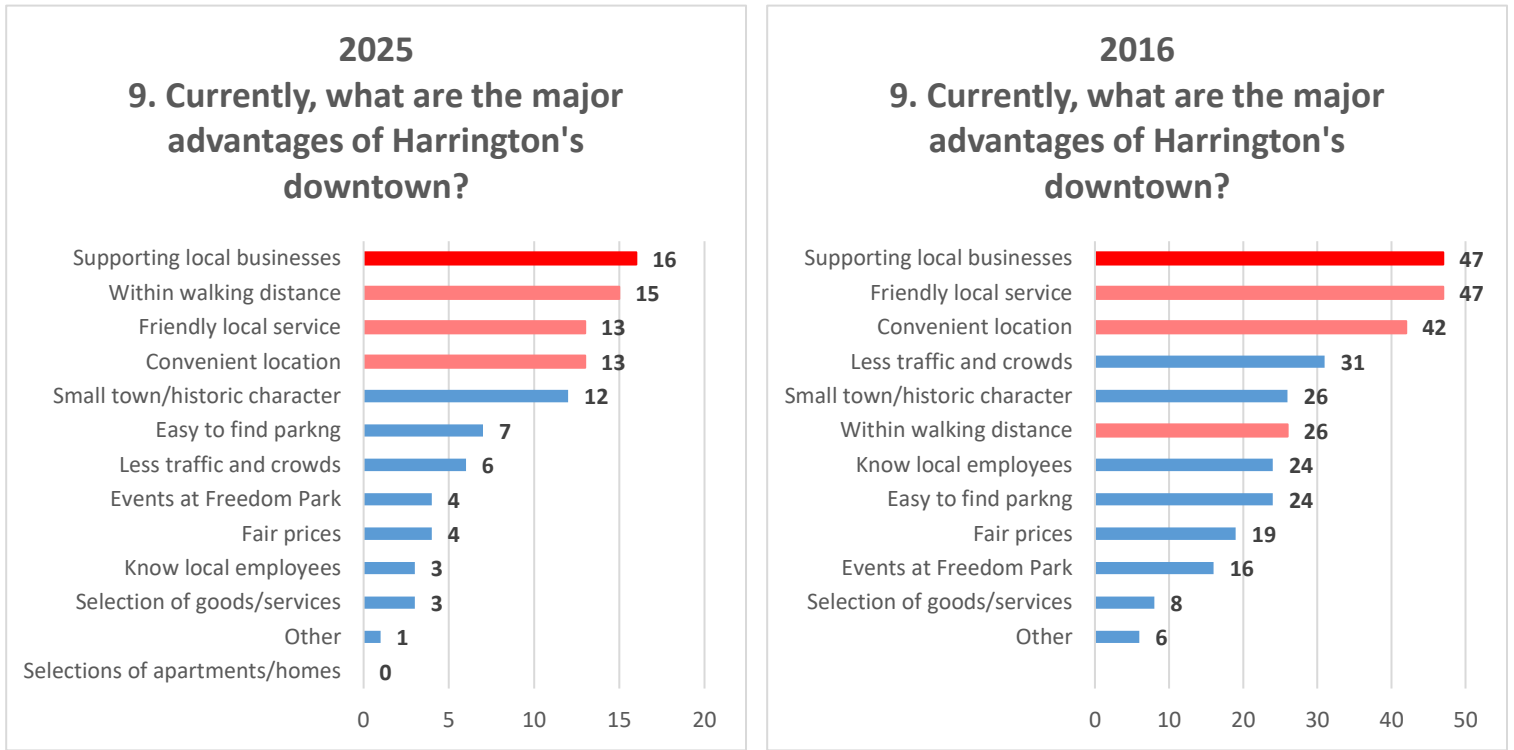


Figure 6: Question 9. Currently, what are the major advantages of Harrington’s downtown?

“Currently, what are the major disadvantages of Harrington's downtown?”

Question ten in both surveys asks respondents what they think the major disadvantages are in the Downtown, as shown in figure 7 below. Lack in variety of goods and services is the clear number one disadvantage since 2016. Lack of apartments and homes is ranked high in the 2025 survey, and as previously mentioned was not an option in the 2016 survey. 2025 write-in options include, “Lack of choices”, “Miss eating establishment”, “Too many complexes being built”, “Entertainment, eminities”, and “Over crowded” (verbatim).

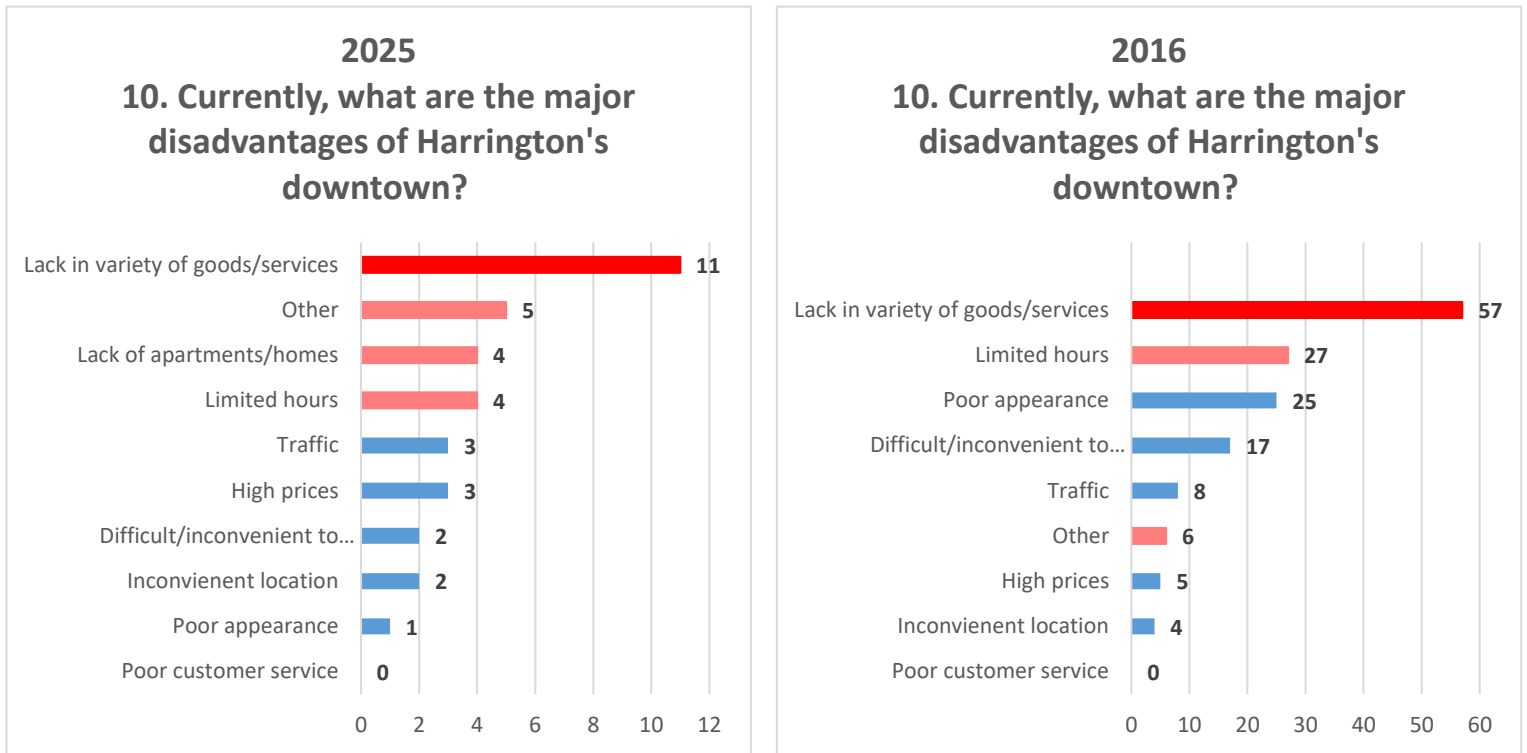


Figure 7: Question 10. Currently, what are the major disadvantages of Harrington’s downtown?

“Currently, what are the major disadvantages of Harrington's downtown?”

Question eleven in the 2025 survey and the combination of questions 12-14 in the 2016 survey asks respondents what businesses/events/activities should be in the Downtown, as shown in figure 8 below. In 2025, dining options dominate the top preferences, including locally owned restaurants, coffee shops, and breakfast or lunch establishments, with Commercial retail ranking second in preferences. The 2025 survey write-in options describe “Nite life like the Milton theater provides” (verbatim). In contrast, the 2016 results highlight a stronger interest in community events and personal service businesses as the leading priorities.

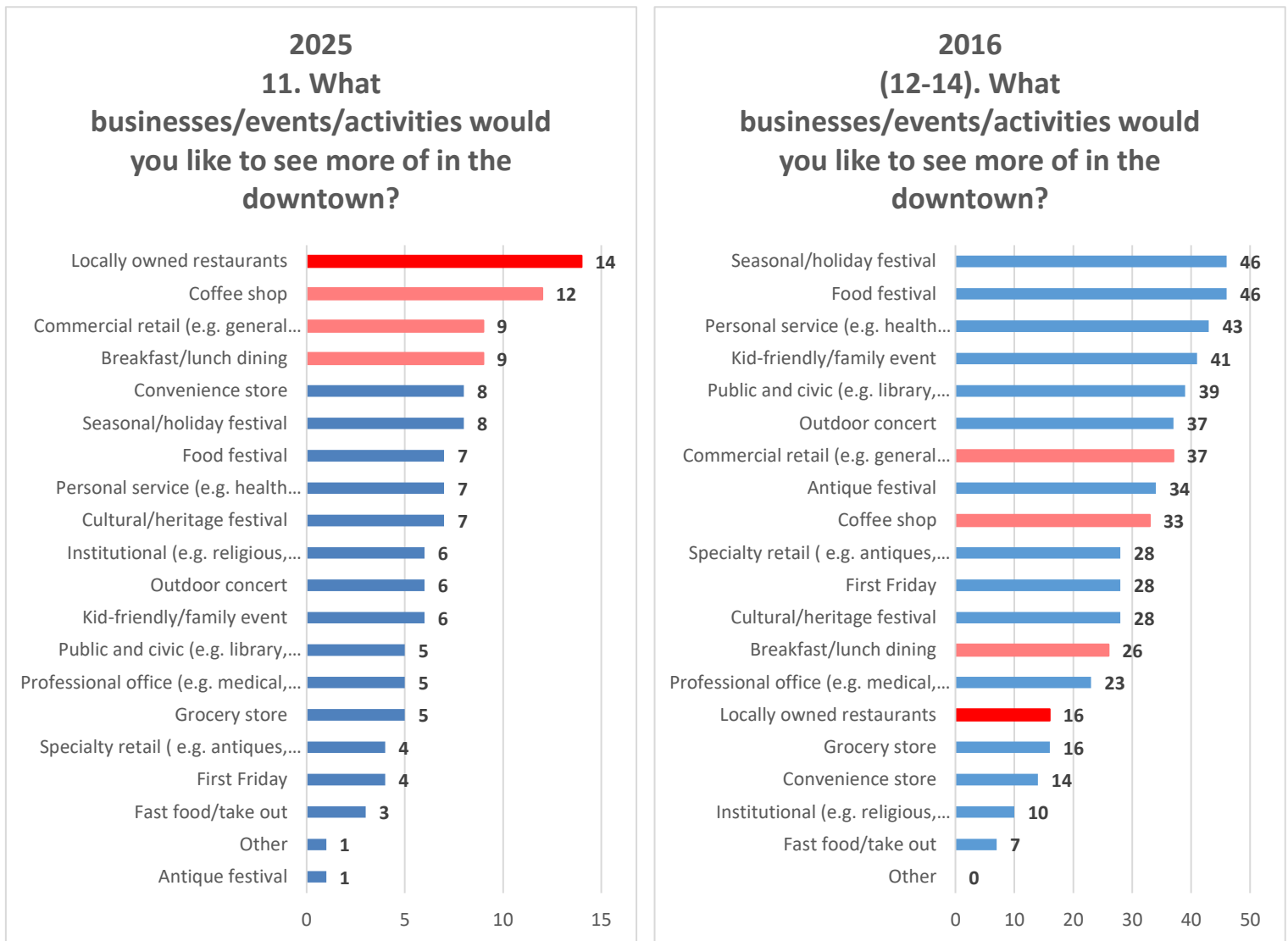


Figure 8: Question 11. What businesses/events/activities would you like to see more of in the downtown?



In summary, the data and survey insights presented in this chapter demonstrate that Downtown Harrington is well-positioned for continued revitalization, supported by steady population growth, rising household incomes, improving educational attainment, and a strong base of single-family housing. While challenges remain, particularly related to limited retail variety, housing options, and nighttime safety concerns, the community continues to express pride in Harrington’s friendly character, convenient location, and local businesses. Comparisons between the 2016 and 2025 survey results show consistent trends in how residents use and experience the Downtown, alongside emerging needs such as expanded dining options, more diverse goods and services, and improved multimodal accessibility. These findings, together with the City’s ongoing planning efforts, provide a clear framework for future investment and redevelopment initiatives that strengthen the Downtown’s role as the heart of the community.