

CITY OF  
**HARRINGTON**  
*2025 Comprehensive Plan*  
Kent County, Delaware

Adopted by the Mayor and Council on July 30, 2025; Ordinance 2025-05

Certified by the Governor on June 1, 2026

Prepared by

Institute for Public Administration

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University of Delaware



UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE  
**BIDEN SCHOOL OF PUBLIC  
POLICY & ADMINISTRATION**

# Placeholder for Adoption Ordinance

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# Institute for Public Administration

This plan was prepared by members of the City of Harrington’s Planning Committee and Town Council with assistance from the Institute for Public Administration (IPA), a unit within the Joseph R. Biden, Jr. School of Public Policy & Administration at the University of Delaware. IPA links the research and resources of the University of Delaware with the management and information needs of local, state, and regional governments in the Delaware Valley. IPA assists agencies and local governments through direct staff assistance and research projects as well as training programs and policy forums.

Comprehensive plans produced by IPA are a true team effort. IPA Associate Director Troy Mix manages IPA’s planning efforts. William DeCoursey served as project manager for the City of Harrington’s Comprehensive Plan Project. Mapping and geo-spatial analysis was performed by Nicole Minni.

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- Vice Mayor Micah Parker
- Councilman Darrin Simpson
- Councilman Jack Stewart
- Councilman Eugene White
- Councilman Robert Farmer
- Councilman Michael Kimmey
- Treasurer Amanda Marlow
- Secretary Emma Werner

## City of Harrington Planning Commission

- Chair Kenneth Shinn
- Member Dudley Clough
- Member Emeridge Williams
- Member Stacey Sizemore
- Member William Rogers

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- |                                 |                                  |
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- |                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
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# CHAPTER 1. BACKGROUND

## 1-1. AUTHORITY TO PLAN

According to the provisions of Title 22, Chapter 7 and Title 29, Chapter 92 of the Delaware Code, a Comprehensive Plan is a document prepared and adopted by a municipality, coordinated with its County, and reviewed and certified by the State of Delaware. A Comprehensive Plan contains a long-term community vision; goals and objectives; and policies and projects for the physical growth, revitalization, conservation, preservation, and development of the community. The Plan respects tradition and upholds individual property rights. The plan is by nature of general interest. It is based on community participation and open communication. It contains text, data analysis, maps, and graphics. A Plan defines a municipal development strategy, setting forth the jurisdiction's position on population and housing growth within the municipality. It also details existing and future land use, often making general recommendations on potential zoning and regulatory approaches. Community economic development; community design; expansion of boundaries through potential annexation; development in adjacent areas; redevelopment of existing deteriorated and blighted areas; existing and enhanced community character; community facilities; public utilities; historic preservation; town center revitalization; conservation of natural resources; hydrology; open space; transportation; and critical community development and infrastructure issues are also commonly addressed.

The comprehensive planning process must demonstrate consideration of and coordination with adjacent areas, with the county of jurisdiction and with the State of Delaware. The Plan is subject to the state review and certification process set forth in §9103 of Title 29 of the Delaware Code. All annexations by the municipality must be consistent with its most recently adopted and certified Comprehensive Plan meeting the requirements of Title 22, Chapter 7 of the Delaware Code. An area being considered for annexation must be depicted as an area for potential annexation in the adopted and certified plan. The Comprehensive Plan must be reviewed every 5 years and updated every 10 years. Comprehensive Plans are prepared and updated under the direction of the municipal Planning Commission, if there is one, adopted by Ordinance of the City Council after public hearing, and certified by the State of Delaware. The Comprehensive Plan guides the Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision and Land Development Regulations, other codes and ordinances as applicable, annexation policy and procedure, planning and zoning review fees, development impact fees, and capital improvements projects for the municipality.

## 1-2. PLANNING PROCESS

Delaware law requires that municipalities engage in comprehensive planning activities for the purpose of encouraging "the most appropriate uses of the physical and fiscal resources of the municipality and the coordination of municipal growth, development, and infrastructure investment actions with those of other municipalities, counties and the State..." This Plan was written to fulfill the requirements of a municipal development strategy as described in the Delaware Code for towns with a population of 2,000 or more persons.

The municipal development strategy for a community such as the City of Harrington is to be a "development strategy setting forth the jurisdiction's position on population and housing growth within the jurisdiction, expansion of its boundaries, development of adjacent areas, redevelopment potential, community character, and the general uses of land within the community, and critical community development and infrastructure issues." In addition, the town's comprehensive planning process must demonstrate coordination with other municipalities, Kent County, and the State of Delaware during plan preparation (22 Del. C. 1953, § 702; 49 Del. Laws, c. 415, § 1).

The City of Harrington's Planning and Zoning Commission (the Commission), with regular input and participation from members of City Council, and a subset of volunteers from each, served as the guiding agency for the preparation of this Comprehensive Plan. This collaboration has been invaluable. The Comprehensive Plan project has enabled the Commission to work closely with Council and to engage the citizenry in a united fashion.

## 1-2a. Reason for Plan Update

The most recent planning document developed for the City of Harrington was its 2013 Comprehensive Plan. This document was reviewed and determined to still be applicable and sufficient at the scheduled five year interval for review in 2019. Minor amendments to that document were pursued in late 2023/early 2024 to incorporate limited annexations.

To comply with Delaware code, Harrington is due for a comprehensive re-write of its plan at a ten-year interval. Required or not, the City needs an updated plan and vision. For at least the past decade, the City has consistently and conscientiously labored to upgrade its water and wastewater infrastructure. It has successfully applied for Downtown Development District designation. It has explored the feasibility of renewed rail freight service, in partnership with the Dover/Kent MPO, and the establishment of a multi-modal freight terminal to rejuvenate its industrial park and affect economic development in the region.

Moreover, the City is bursting with private and public investment. Millions are, or have been, invested in water and wastewater, highlighted by a new water tower. The City's community center, senior center, library, and parks and rec spaces have all been (or are in the process of) significant expansion, remodeling, and renovation.

Clearly, the City has had an enduring and consistent vision towards improving its capacity to provide services, enhancing its governance, providing appropriate incentives, and fostering growth and private investment. This is an ideal time to document these successes and lay the framework for another decade of progress.

## 1-2b. Comprehensive Planning Approach

Planning is a continuous process. It involves establishing goals for the future of a municipal government, analyzing current and projected conditions, and laying out steps that may help a municipality reach its goals. Harrington staff, elected officials, and volunteers thoroughly reviewed the existing comprehensive plan, updated critical information and policy statements, and contracted for professional planning and design assistance in completing the drafting, mapping, public participation, and intergovernmental coordination steps.

## 1-3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The City of Harrington strives for transparency, public participation, and consideration of public comments in the planning process. Aside from numerous open Planning and Zoning Commission meetings held since early 2024, the City conducted an open public meeting on Wednesday, January 24, 2024, for orientation to the planning process and a planning training session. Representatives of the City Council, planning department, Planning Commission, and City staff held regular, duly advertised, public meetings to facilitate broad participation in the plan's development. These were January 24, 2024, March 21, 2024, April 24, 2024, May 23, 2024, July 1, 2024, August 22, 2024, October 15, 2024, December 18, 2024, and March 19, 2025. The plan draft was recommended to proceed to PLUS review, with edits, at a March 26, 2025 Planning Commission meeting.

The plan went through the PLUS review on April 23, 2025 and the City received a written summary in late May. The reviewers requested the City detail its intergovernmental and planning correspondence with Kent County. They also requested a revision to the Annexation map to clarify the City's annexation versus its areas of concern. OSPC and various other agencies also offered numerous edits and suggestions, many of which have been included.

After addressing the certification concerns, as well as other recommendations, the City of Harrington City Council adopted the plan, pending certification, on July XXXX..

## 1-4. OVERALL COMMUNITY VISION

### Community Character Statement

*Harrington is fortunate to have a strong sense of community. It cherishes its rich traditions and strong civic engagement. Harrington is a small city where families and community members can thrive in a small-town atmosphere. It is somewhat of a bedroom community to its larger neighbors, but it's a bedroom community with homes families can afford to live in that also offers opportunities for entrepreneurs and entertainment and civic opportunities for its residents to enjoy. Harrington is, and aspires to continue, as a safe, clean, engaged, small-town City.*

### Position on Housing Growth

*Harrington feels it is ideally located and economically positioned to responsibly absorb a portion of the significant growth envisioned to occur in Kent County. Therefore, it is supportive of housing growth within the City's current boundaries and in identified areas of potential annexation.*

### Position on Population Growth

*Harrington welcomes population growth and development in general. The City sits astride Rt. 13, south of Dover, representing the western portion of Kent County's identified growth zone. At its present size, the City already serves as a commercial and employment center for many of the smaller communities surrounding it. The adjoining casino and the City's own industrial park provide a sound foundation for growth.*

### Position on Commercial Growth

*The City of Harrington welcomes economic growth of all stripes. Much of the City's economic base is comprised of commercial enterprises astride SR 13, while the neighborhood-scale commercial uses remain the heart of Harrington. Many of the City's commercial structures have been refreshed, owing partly to the City's participation in the Downtown Development District program. The City wishes to continue to encourage commercial development and redevelopment while maintaining the flexibility to adapt to a quickly changing commercial/retail environment.*

### Position on Development of Adjacent Areas

*Harrington has periodically annexed or updated its plan to allow for the annexation of interested property owners. Consistent with the State Strategies for Policies and Spending, the*

*City generally favors the development and annexation of adjoining parcels and tracts of land when sufficient municipal services and capacity can be demonstrated. The City is generally less supportive of adjacent development when annexation is not considered.*

### Position on Expansion of Boundaries

*The City is amenable to expansion, the extent of which is depicted in the growth and annexation map. Generally, the City would prioritize enclaves and contiguous parcels. The City is also mindful of demonstrating sufficient capacity to provide services. However, in keeping with the City's position on the development of adjacent areas, it would prefer that nearby development occur within the City's boundaries at the outset, instead of being developed in Kent County and then annexed in.*

### Position on the General Use of Land

*The City's position on the use of land is depicted in the Future Land Use map. Generally, the city strives for a balance in its land uses, compatible with its stated community character.*

### Position on Redevelopment Potential

*The City feels that it has significant redevelopment potential and has lead the way with public/private investments into virtually all of the City's key municipal and community services. These infrastructure upgrades facilitate new development and redevelopment. The City wishes to continue the incremental rehabilitation of its commercial and industrial uses and has a particular interest in realizing a vision for its industrial park.*

### Position on Key Infrastructure Issues

*Despite sustained progress, the City's key infrastructure issue remains inflow and infiltration of stormwater into the sanitary sewer collection system. Sidewalks and curbing also rank as a concern that has been well-studied and documented with the Dover/Kent MPO.*

### Position on Critical Development Issues

*With an affordable cost of living and a central, accessible location along the Kent County growth axis, Harrington expects to face continued development pressures within (and beyond) the envisioned planning period. Balancing this desired growth, development, and redevelopment against the City's capacity to provide services and its desire to preserve its existing community character are the key issues.*

## 1-5. INTERPRETING PLAN GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Because of the importance of the Comprehensive Plan as a planning guide, and because of the sometimes-challenging task of interpreting and harmonizing the various goals and recommendations, the document has been carefully crafted to identify those provisions in the Plan that the City is legally required to pursue because of the Plan's force of law. All other provisions not specifically directing affirmative and mandatory action by the City are

expressly intended to be aspirational. The full list of plan goals and objectives can be found in the implementation section of chapter eleven. Goals can also be found at the end of the relevant chapters.

# CHAPTER 2. COMMUNITY CHARACTER

## Community Character Statement

*Harrington is fortunate to have a strong sense of community. It cherishes its rich traditions and strong civic engagement. Harrington is a small city where families and community members can thrive in a small-town atmosphere. It is somewhat of a bedroom community to its larger neighbors, but it's a bedroom community with homes families can afford to live in that also offers opportunities for entrepreneurs and entertainment and civic opportunities for its residents to enjoy. Harrington is, and aspires to continue, as a safe, clean, engaged, small-town City.*

### 2-1. LOCATION

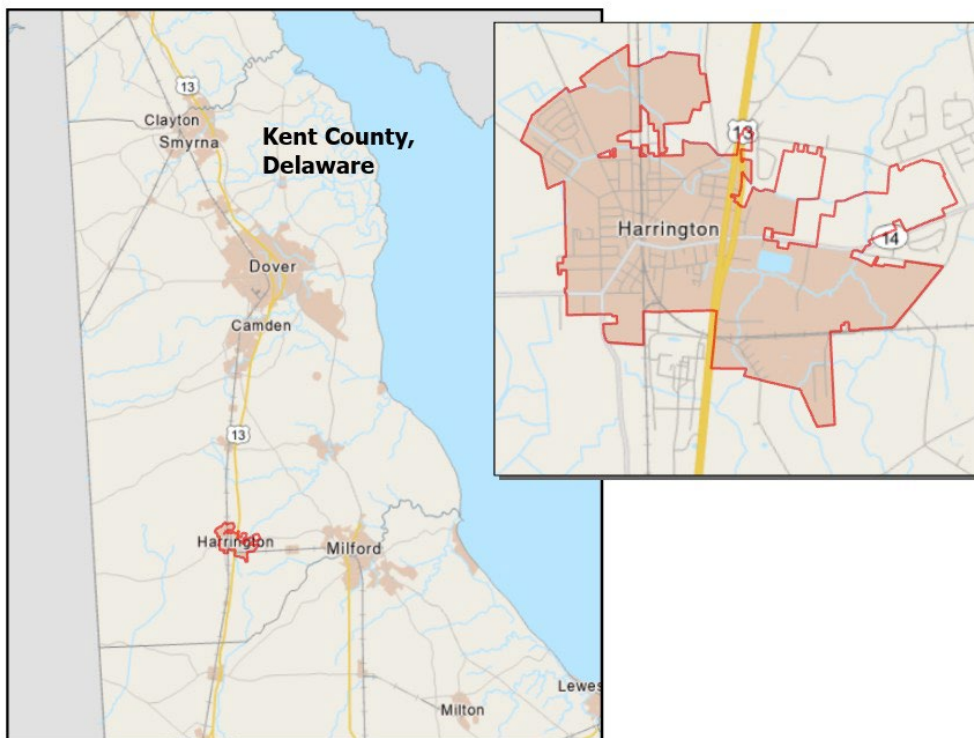


Figure 1 - Location

The City of Harrington has long been an important commercial and agricultural center and is known as the Hub of Delaware. The map above provides an aerial view of the Harrington area. The areas surrounding Harrington are mostly a mix of farms and subdivisions.

The City of Harrington is centrally located in Delaware, in Kent County along the route of the historic Delaware Railroad. Harrington is situated astride US Route 13 in southwestern Kent County. Just 17 miles south of the State Capitol, Harrington is also extremely central in regards to the region's major urban areas. It sits 75 miles from Philadelphia, 75 miles from Baltimore, and 80 miles from Washington, D.C.

## 2-2. HISTORIC & CULTURAL ASSETS

### 2-2a. History

The City of Harrington can trace its roots back to the 1730's when the Clark family first settled in an area developed out of 6,000 acres of Mispillion forest. In 1780 Benjamin Clark, a descendent of the first settlers, built a home and tavern at the corner of what is today the intersection of Commerce Street and Railroad Avenue. This area became known as Clark's Corner. The tavern was a stop for stagecoaches, as well as, a place for farmers to barter goods and converse. More homes were built around the Clark's home and tavern and a community was formed.



*Figure 2 - Historic Harrington*

With Clark's Corner being such a focal point of the community, it was an ideal place for a railroad stop. In 1856 the Delaware Railroad was constructed from Dover to Seaford by way of Clark's Corner. The Delaware Railroad was the southern extension of the Philadelphia, Wilmington & Baltimore Railroad, which in turn was a division of the Pennsylvania Railroad. During this time the City saw a population and industrial growth which was a direct effect of the new railroad. With the addition of the railroad, Matthew J. Clark subdivided a part of his property in town lots which helped the community develop. Clark's Corner was renamed Harrington in 1859 in honor of Samuel Maxwell Harrington, the chancellor of the Court of Chancery and the President of the Delaware Railroad. Ten years later on March 23, 1869, the City became incorporated by the General Assembly with town limits defined. In between that time, a post office serving farming residences, stores and small businesses was built in 1862 and later a library was added in the 1880s.

In 1900, there were four canning factories to process farm products and several clothing manufacturers. Other manufacturing included a sawmill, fruit evaporator, basket factory and fertilizer plant. By the 1930's there were about a dozen clothing manufacturers that received textiles from the north and south. The manufacturers would then send their products to major brands by rail. Despite success, the majority of manufacturers were closed by the mid 1970's. Industrial work remained through the 1980's when the city linked water and sewer services to the industrial park which attracted a lumber company and a box factory. One part of Harrington that has remained an important part of the community since the 1920's is the fairgrounds and harness racing. In 1920 a group of entrepreneurs started the Kent and Sussex County Fair, which would later become the Delaware State Fair in 1962. The annual fair continues to this day and has provided jobs for local residents and a prime site for other community events. Harness racing started in 1946 when a group of people met at the fairgrounds for a 60 day meet. The following year the group became The Harrington Raceway and they built the track that is still there today. The track remains the oldest continuously operating harness racing track in the country. After several slow years, the raceway activities increased due to the addition of a casino in 1996. In recent years the track has been improved, as well as an added paddock for the horses, an administration building, and improved roads and parking.

In 2019, the Harrington Historic District was listed to the National Register. The City has discussed two other potential districts that could possibly be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. They are the, Clark Street Historic District, and the African-American Settlement Historic District. Although the City does not intend to enact regulatory restrictions, it is willing to work with property owners or private groups to recognize properties of significance to the City, state, or nation. Harrington stands ready to assist private preservation efforts by supporting property owners' requests for historic preservation funding or designation. The most recent statewide historic preservation plan is available at <https://history.delaware.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/179/2019/02/2018-2022DelawareSHPOPlan.pdf>

## 2-2b. Historical Society and Museums

The Greater Harrington Historical Society is dedicated to preserving the knowledge of the City's history and culture. The Society is made of volunteer members and docents. Their office is located on Fleming Street in the historic city center. The City is fortunate to have a group dedicated to preserving the history of the community.

Harrington has three museums that all reflect the significant parts of the community as well as the growth of the City. The Harrington Museum is located on Fleming Street and is housed in two buildings, one of which is an 18<sup>th</sup> century Episcopal Church. Exhibits display the artifacts of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, such as a glass hearse carriage, circa 1800, with a display of funeral attire. They also share facts about harness racing, the local fire company, military veterans, traveling salesmen and rural home life.

Within walking distance of the Harrington Museum is the Harrington Railroad Museum, which is located on Clark Street. The museum gives a glimpse into how train crews lived and the tools that they used when the Delaware Railroad was a focal point to the City. Sites at the museum also include a watchman's tower with equipment to switch the tracks, lanterns, old phones and a "message stick" used to grab messages off poles as trains moved through the depot. The tower is one of few that still remain in Delmarva. One of the main attractions is the 1926 Pennsylvania Railroad caboose that is open for visitors. There are also working freight trains that still pass by the museum.

The third museum is the Messick Agricultural Museum which showcases Harrington's rich farmland with a private collection of antique John Deere tractors and farm equipment. The museum is free of charge for a self tour and is located at Taylor and Messick, Inc. at 325 Walt Messick Road in

## 2-2c. Delaware State Fair

The Delaware State Fair is a community event and brings those close and far together for ten days every year in July. The Delaware State Fair, as it is known today, began as an idea quietly conceived around a potbelly stove in the Harrington railroad station in 1919. The number of community-focused residents interested in

starting this enterprise grew quickly as word of the plan leaked out. As the number who showed up for meetings grew, it became obvious that the railroad station could no longer serve as the meeting spot, and the group began to meet at the fire hall. The drive of these ambitious men helped formulate the Kent and Sussex County Fair which was incorporated in January 1920.

The original purpose of the corporation was "to have or manage a fair or exposition for the purpose of promoting and encouraging Agriculture and of giving pleasures and diversions to the inhabitants of rural communities within the State of Delaware." The profit and the patrons' indication of having had a wonderful time prompted plans for the next year's Fair with plans to make it "Bigger and Better Than Ever."

Today, the Kent and Sussex County Fair is now known as the Delaware State Fair and boasts attendance of over 300,000. As it exists today, the nearly 300 acre fairground encompasses several businesses including The Centre Ice Rink and the Harrington Raceway and Casino. Despite the trend of bringing dynamic entertainers and a thrilling carnival, the Fair maintains its roots in agriculture and every year the Fair continues its tradition of being "Bigger and Better Than Ever."

## 2-2d. Places of Worship

Currently, Harrington currently has seventeen (17) places of worship located within the City limits. The churches play an important role in the community and the majority of them are very active. Listed below are the locations:

Asbury United Methodist Church – 209 Weiner Avenue  
Calvary Wesleyan Church – 240 Delaware Avenue  
Dover Miracle Revival Center, Inc. – 105 West Liberty Street  
Harrington Baptist Church – 111 East Liberty Street  
Independent Bible Fellowship Church – 6797 Milford Harrington Highway  
Metropolitan United Methodist Church – 109 West Street  
Mt. Carmel Seventh Day Adventist Church – 103 Mechanic Street  
Power In Praise Ministries – 14 Clark Street  
Saint Paul AME Church – 103 West Mispillion Street  
Seventh Day Adventist Church – 57 Clark Street  
St. Bernadette's Catholic Church – 109 Dixon Street  
Trinity United Methodist Church – 63 Commerce Street  
Word Alive Ministries – 15510 South DuPont Highway

## 2-3. COMMUNITY DESIGN

Harrington is a fairly typical example of a railroad-era municipality that initially favored one side of the tracks. To the west of the rail line, areas closest to it were built on a somewhat gridded street pattern, though in Harrington's case, the street angles all skew towards the central crossing at Clark Street. Civic uses aside, structures sit on modestly sized lots without large front setbacks. Periodic redevelopment has resulted in a variety of styles and designs. Subsequent generations of development tended to sit upon somewhat larger blocks with more generous yards. East of the tracks, the City is less densely developed and stretches to meet Route 13. Even so, it has very few cul-de-sacs and maintains a connected street network.

### Goals and Objectives

- Continue economic development, housing, land use, and annexation policies that will support continued growth and vitality of the Harrington area

- Update the City's zoning and subdivision ordinance to reflect the vision put forth in the plan maps.
- Value the City's socio-economic, racial, and ethnic diversity throughout the growth process
- Grow from within by continuing to serve as a destination for families to form, grow, and thrive
- Continue to provide sound and affordable options for home ownership and rentals
- Support private historic preservation initiatives
  - Consider mapping and delineating historic districts if and when private entities petition for preservation or recognition
- Encourage home ownership and citizen investment in the community
  - Consider opportunities to obtain Community Development Block Grants that may assist homeowners with property maintenance or repair needs.
- Maintain and improve the City's cultural and community resources, particularly its robust culture of civic and community engagement.

# CHAPTER 3. COMMUNITY PROFILE

## 3-1. POPULATION TRENDS

Table 1 summarizes the City’s population and housing units between 1990 and 2020, alongside those of Kent County and Delaware as a whole.

*Table 1. Population and Housing Units, 1990–2020*

Year	Population			Housing Units		
	Harrington	Kent County	Delaware	Harrington	Kent County	Delaware
1990	2,311	110,993	666,168	968		289,919
2000	3,174	126,697	783,600	1,341	50,481	343,072
2010	3,562	162,310	897,934	1,527	65,338	405,885
2020	3,774	181,851	989,948	1,661	72,708	448,735

Source: 1990 through 2020 Decennial Censuses and 2010 & 2020 American Community Survey (ACS) Estimates

Harrington’s population has grown considerably since 1990, with the largest jump between 1990 and 2000 and steady growth every decade since. Overall, the city’s population grew by 63 percent, almost exactly on par with the county’s figure of 64 percent. The city and county outpaced the state’s total increase of nearly 49 percent.

Likewise, housing growth has followed a very similar pattern; spiking between 1990 and 2000, then continuing with solid gains each decade since. A fuller discussion of housing growth and needs may be found in the housing chapter of this document.

### 3-1a. Population Projections

For the purposes of this demographic section, population projections will rely upon the established methodology used by the Delaware Population Consortium (DPC) and estimates derived from the U.S. Census. Table 2, below, shows the projected population for Harrington by year 2050.

*Table 2. Harrington Growth Projections*

	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020	2030	2040	2050
Population	2,405	2,311	3,174	3,562	3,774			
40-year Annual Rate = 1.42%						4,347	5,007	5,766
20-year Annual Rate = .95%						4,146	4,555	5,005
Paces Kent County* = .99%						4,659	5,751	7,100
DPC Projection						3,970	4,091	4,175

Notes: \*"Paces Kent County" represents the county’s annual growth rate since 1990.  
Source: Delaware Population Consortium 2023 Estimates and U.S. Census 2020

Population projections for smaller communities like Harrington are difficult. With limited data points to draw from, even small errors in projected growth rates can equal wild swings in potential population levels over 20 or 30 years. Moreover, recent history has shown that growth and population are indeed often influenced by political events, market forces, or other factors beyond the purview of traditional demography.

This analysis calculated the City's 20- and 40-year average annual growth rates and, in turn, projected each over a 30-year span. The third option was to mirror the proposed average annual growth rate for Kent County, derived from the DPC 2023 estimates for Kent and assume Harrington would grow at the same annual rate.

The 40- and 20-year projections produced somewhat varied results. This is due to the 40-year projection including the boom in full-time residents recorded between 1990 and 2000. However, the "high" projection would be for Harrington to simply keep pace (as it thus far has) with the growth in Kent County.

Interestingly, the official Delaware Population Consortium (DPC) estimate establishes the "low" in this scenario. Given Harrington's generally youthful population compared to the county and state, it is not immediately apparent why the official projection leans conservative. In any event, the actual future population of Harrington is likely to be much more considerably influenced by the city's posture towards annexation and development, and its appeal as a place to live and work than morbidity and birth rates.

### Position on Population Growth

*Harrington welcomes population growth and development in general. The City sits astride Rt. 13, south of Dover, representing the western portion of Kent County's identified growth zone. At its present size, the City already serves as a commercial and employment center for many of the smaller communities surrounding it. The adjoining casino and the City's own industrial park provide a sound foundation for growth.*

## 3-2. DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

The U.S. Census Bureau has changed the method by which it now collects and disseminates much of its information. The Bureau no longer distributes the old long-form survey that historically provided data on a number of demographic factors that were published as "Summary Files 3 & 4." These included indicators on social statistics such as education, poverty, income, and commuting patterns. These summary files were replaced by the American Community Survey (ACS) data, available in one-, three-, and five-year estimates.

The difference in the ACS (survey) and the old long-form (count) data is analogous to polls versus elections. A poll extrapolates likely data based on a sampling of respondents. Whereas a full-on counting of all respondents is akin to tallying votes. Obviously, a full count is much more accurate, but is also more costly. Surveys can be conducted more often. Unfortunately, in the case of municipalities or geographic areas below a threshold population of 50,000, the margin of error for the survey data can be very significant.

### Household and Families

Table 3 summarizes household and family characteristics for Harrington, Kent County, and the State of Delaware. A household is any occupied housing unit comprising all of those people living in the unit. A family is a household with a householder and at least one other related person, whether it is by marriage, birth, or adoption. Families are also households, but households can sometimes consist of unrelated persons.

Harrington's average family and household sizes were both somewhat greater than those of the state and Kent County. The difference is most notable in family size where Harrington's typical family is reported as .3 to nearly half a person larger.

Table 3. Harrington’s Household and Family Characteristics, 2021

Population Characteristics	Harrington	Kent County	Delaware
Total Population	3,774	181,851	989,948
Total Households	1,338	66,720	381,097
Average Household Size	2.79	2.63	2.51
Average Family Size	3.49	3.13	3.08

Source: 2021 ACS 5-year estimates

### Racial Composition, Hispanic or Latino Origin

Table 4. Racial Composition and Hispanic/Latino origin in Harrington, Kent County, and State, 2022

	Harrington		Kent County		Delaware	
	% 2010	% 2022	% 2010	% 2022	% 2010	% 2022
White	72.6	62.9	69.7	61.4	71.1	63.8
Black	21.6	25.9	23	26.0	21	22
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0.7	0	0.5	0.5	0.3	0.3
Asian	0.8	2	2.2	2.3	3.2	4.1
Some other race	1.4	0.3	1.5	1.7	2.3	3.3
Two or more races	2.9	8.9	2.8	7.9	2.1	6.5
Hispanic or Latino origin (of any race)	6.5	8.2	5.4	7.8	7.6	9.9
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino	67.9	60.7	66.5	58.6	66.5	60.1

Source, ACS S0601, 2010, 2022

As would be expected, Harrington’s racial diversity has increased over the past dozen years. Also, note that the “two or more races” convention now used by the ACS is relatively new. Such respondents were likely included in “other” or chose one of the existing categories as recently as 2000. In many cases, this would appear to account for a significant portion of the observed differences.

All in all, there are no outliers or obvious differences between the City, Kent County, and the state. All have seen a very modest increase in “Black/African American,” and a perceptibly larger increase in “Hispanic or Latino Origin.” These aside, the increase in multi-racial identification and a notable decrease in “white” are the apparent trends.

Table 5. Harrington’s Age Distribution Compared to Kent County and Delaware, 2022

Age	Harrington		Kent County		Delaware	
	2022	2010	2022	2010	2022	2010
Under 5	12.5%	8.2%	6.0%	7.0%	5.4%	<b>6.40%</b>
5 to 19	22.7%	22.6%	19.8%	21.6%	18.1%	20.0%
20 to 24	5.8%	9.1%	6.9%	<b>7.6%</b>	6.0%	<b>6.9%</b>
25 to 64	49.2%	47.2%	49.7%	50.7%	50.9%	52.7%
65 to 79	7.8%	8.5%	13.6%	10.0%	15.5%	<b>10.3%</b>
80+	2.0%	4.4%	4.1%	3.0%	4.1%	4.7%
Median age	28.7	31.6	38.5	36.1	41.4	<b>38.3</b>

source, 2010 & 2022 ACS 5-year estimate S0101

There is a significant margin of error in the sample data reported for Harrington when breaking down the population into numerous categories. This is less of an issue for the larger populations of the county and state. Even so, it would appear Harrington is getting younger. The most obvious increase was seen in young children. The figures for those in their prime working years was also slightly higher than 2010. Also, the reported percentage of senior citizens was down slightly, as was the overall median age. The only “youthful” category to decline from 2010 levels was the 20-24 year-old cohort.

Compared to the county and state, Harrington has a significantly lower median age and far smaller percentage of senior citizens. It’s percentage of young children is also notably higher than the figures for the county and state.

### Education

Table 6 compares Harrington’s educational attainment for the population age 25 years or more with that of Kent County and the state. As the table shows, Harrington compares favorably against the county and state. As reported by the 2022 ACS, Harrington has a lower percentage of individuals reporting not having completed high school.

The City outpaces the State and County in regard to high school graduates, has similar figures for “some college,” and leads in Associate degrees. The City also paces the state and exceeds the county in the percentage of graduate and professional degrees. Comparatively fewer Harrington residents reported pursuing bachelor’s degrees than their peers in the county, and particularly compared to the state-wide figures.

Table 6. Harrington’s Educational Attainment, 2022

Educational Level	Harrington	Kent County	Delaware
	%	%	%
Not HS Graduates	7.80%	11.1%	8.70%
HS Grad	36.50%	33.1%	29.70%
Some College	19.30%	21.0%	18.70%
Associate Degree	11.50%	8.5%	8.40%
Bachelor’s Degree	10.50%	15.9%	19.90%
Graduate or Prof. Degree	14.40%	10.4%	14.60%

Source, 2022 ACS 5-year estimate, S1501

### Economic Characteristics

Tables 7 summarizes the 2022 ACS income data for Harrington, Kent County, Delaware, and the nation.

Table 7. Household and Family Annual Income, 2022

Income	Harrington	Kent County	Delaware	United States
Median Household Income	\$63,814	\$69,278	\$79,325	\$75,149
Median Family Income	\$85,267	\$82,307	\$97,743	\$92,646

source: 2022 ACS 5-year estimate S1901

According to the survey data, Harrington households and families reported earning slightly less per year than their peers across the state or nation. The most notable difference was observed in household income, where Harrington trailed the county by a little over \$5,000, and the state by roughly \$15,500. Interestingly, families in Harrington compared more favorably, exceeding the figure for Kent County and trailing the state by roughly \$12,000 (instead of the \$15.5k reported by households).

Table 8 summarizes the 2022 ACS on income distribution and poverty data comparing Harrington, Kent County, Delaware, and the United States. The table shows the reported number of families of various types and characteristics as well as the percentage of that sub-group reporting poverty status. Again, this sample data for Harrington has a significant margin of error. This is evidenced in the fact that zero senior citizens or persons without a high-school diploma reported poverty status. The data show this in the survey’s full count and, obviously, the percentage as well. Even so, there may be some observable trends.

Poverty may be an issue for some Harrington families. The City’s reported figure of 13.7 percent of families is fully four percentage points higher than the figure for Kent County and nearly doubles the state’s figure. However, the reported rates of poverty among “black” families and those of Hispanic or Latino origin compare favorably, very favorably, to the county, state, and nation. The one category that appears to stand out is “with kids 18 and below.”

If there is a conclusion to be drawn from the sample data, it may be that Harrington families have a lot of kids and kids are expensive.

*Table 8. Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months for Families*

	Harrington		Kent County		Delaware		United States	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
All Family	864	13.7	46594	9.4	252,505	7.5	81,432,908	8.8
With kids aged 18 and below	526	22.4	21,250	16	105,452	13.2	37,443,291	13.6
Black	241	16.6	11,212	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	0	11,341	5.2	67,991	3.4	18,112,899	5.5
No High School Diploma	37	0	4,135	23.1	17,671	22	7,423,233	23

Source - 2022 ACS 5-year summary, S1702

### 3-3. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

Harrington has been growing for decades and desires to continue to do so. Total population and housing stock has continued to grow steadily. The City boasts a slightly larger than average family and household size, which may have implications for the type and style of housing it will need.

The City, like the county and state, has continued to diversify racially and ethnically, but not at an astounding rate. Fortunately, the data does not show a correlation between poverty status and racial or ethnic identity. The City’s age breakdown is also interesting. Harrington has many young children and comparatively fewer senior citizens. The only meaningful way in which it is not “younger” than the county and state is in the population of young (college aged and early professional) adults.

Retaining the youth and talent it works so hard to rear may be an issue the City could address via economic development, cultural offerings, or housing strategy. In discussing the apparent statistics, City representatives felt that Harrington’s central location and relative affordability were key assets and indicated a desire to, “stay in that lane.” There was some skepticism that the reported decrease in senior citizens was accurate.

#### Goals and Objectives

- Continue economic development, housing, land use, and annexation policies that will support continued growth and vitality of the Harrington area.
  - Update the City’s zoning and subdivision ordinance to reflect the vision put forth in the plan maps
- Value the City’s socio-economic, racial, and ethnic diversity throughout the growth process.
- Grow from within by continuing to serve as a destination for families to form, grow, and thrive
  - Continue to allow for a variety of housing styles, densities, and rental opportunities
  - Continue to diversify and grow the Harrington economy to provide opportunities for the City’s youth.

# CHAPTER 4. GOVERNMENT, COMMUNITY SERVICES, AND INFRASTRUCTURE

## 4-1. GOVERNMENT

Harrington’s governing body consists of six City Council members elected from within their respective districts. The City’s Mayor presides at council meetings and may take on additional duties during emergencies. The City’s charter grants the municipality the authority to own and operate public property (i.e. water, sewer, roads, buildings) and to enforce standards that provide for the general public safety and benefit. The City also is empowered to oversee intergovernmental coordination for the public good, typically joint financing or joint operation of facilities. These would also include mutual aid agreements for fire, public safety, and EMS services.

A Planning Commission has been established in accordance with Title 22, Section 701 of the Delaware Code. Section 702(a) charges municipal planning commissions with the task of preparing comprehensive plans. The Planning Commission also has the responsibility to review zoning changes, propose amendments to the zoning and subdivision ordinances, and make recommendations to the Council on planning and development matters. The commission meets the third Thursday of each month (as needed).

The City also maintains a number of appointed positions and is professionally staffed with two managers, a Chief of Police, and a Director of Public Works. Other departments include Libraries, Parks & Rec, Wastewater, code enforcement, planning, and City Hall.

Services available to City residents include:

### 4-1a. Police Service

The City’s Police Department is centrally located on Mechanic Street. Its mission is to, “maintain and improve the community livability by working with all community members to preserve life, maintain human rights, protect property, promote individual responsibility and community commitment through professional, accountable, and ethical services.

The department is led by Chief Adam Gillespie and supported by two administrative staff and seven officers. The department engages in general community policing, as well as a school resource officer function. Specialized units include highway patrol and criminal investigation. The department annually holds a “Youth Police Academy” in the summer months.



Figure 3 - Harrington PD Youth Academy

#### 4-1b. Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Services (EMS)

Fire protection is provided by the Harrington Fire Company out of Station 50 at 20 Clark street. The department has a rich history, dating back to 1902. At the time, the department’s equipment was comprised of a hose reel, buckets and ladders. Its mission, then, as it is today, “to protect and safeguard the lives and property of all persons in and around the Harrington vicinity from any and all hazards.”

Presently, the department is led by Chief Roberet Brode and has roughly 40 members. It is largely a volunteer force, though it does employ full and part time paramedics that may also assist in firefighting duties.

Equipment-wise, it boasts two engines, a rescue truck, a tower/ladder truck, a pumper, a tanker, a brush truck, a command vehicle, three ambulances, and varied utility vehicles.

Since 1950, the City has offered ambulance services and responds to calls north, nearly to Dover, east, close to Milford, south to Bridgeville and west to the state line. The City’s paid EMTs are stationed at the firehouse, which doubles as the Kent County Paramedic Station-South. Additional advanced life support services are available from the County paramedics, from Medic Station 7 on Public Safety Boulevard in Dover.



*Figure 4 - Old Harrington Fire Department*

#### 4-1c. Solid-Waste Disposal

The City contracts with a local provider for weekly trash collection and recycling services. The City recycles paper, glass, plastic, metal recyclables, and aerosol cans. Yard waste is collected at the public works yard on designated days (typically Wednesday morning to afternoon during the spring and summer) at no charge to residents. The City also holds periodic bulk collection dates, “Spring Clean Up,” where residents may dispose of bulky items at the public works yard as well. **Solid waste and recycling services meet, and are predicted to continue to meet, anticipated demands.**

#### 4-1d. Libraries

The Harrington Public Library, at 101 Little Masten Corner Road, offers residents and members the traditional library experience, as well as a number of modern and utilitarian services. Aside from the collection of books, periodicals, digital media, and reference materials, users may also enjoy complementary internet access, the loan of a Chromebook or similar tablet-style device, e-books, streaming services, even genealogical research. The location also provides basic copy-store services at reasonable prices. These include faxes, copies, and printing.

Kent County operates a public library at 497 South Red Haven Lane in Dover, Delaware. The library houses a growing collection of fiction, non-fiction, and audio books. Residents with a library card and PIN also have free access to the Internet and a workstation for word processing. Additional library services for Harrington residents are

available at the Dover Public Library, which in addition to books offers videos, audiocassettes, newspapers, and magazines. It also provides computer and internet access and use of popular computer programs. Library staff annually conduct more than 100 programs for children and adults. Kent County Public Library also offers a bookmobile service.

Other libraries near Harrington are the Milford Public Library and the Smyrna Public Library. All of these libraries are in the Kent County library system and are available to Harrington residents free of charge.



*Figure 5 - Harrington's New Rec Center 1/2*

#### **4-1e. Parks and Recreation Department**

A full discussion of recreational activities, programs, trails, and regional recreation destinations is located in the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space chapter of this document. The Harrington Parks and Recreation Department employs two full-time employees and benefits greatly from the dedication of a number of volunteers and the Friends of Harrington Parks and Recreation 501©3 group that also supports its mission. Staple recreational opportunities include adult fitness, youth cheer, youth field hockey, tennis, pickleball, youth soccer and youth and adult basketball. The Recreation Center is located at 114 East Liberty Street.



*Figure 6 - Harrington's New Rec Center 2/2*

In the Spring of 2024, Harrington celebrated the opening of a second indoor rec center.

The Department also operates the Price Community Center. Comprehensively remodeled in 2023, it is available to rent for a variety of functions.

#### **4-1f. Postal Service**

The City of Harrington is served by a United States Post Office located at 2 Commerce Street in Harrington. Its retail hours are, generally, 8:30a.m. to 5p.m., Monday through Friday. The location closes at 12:30p.m. on Saturdays and is closed Sundays. The zip code is 19952.

#### **4-1g. Health Care**

Harrington hosts several private businesses providing primary health care, either directly in, or closely bordering, the city. There is a physical therapist. There are also a number of providers along S.R. 13, including the Coastal Medicine Primary and Walk In center, Bay Health Primary Care – Harrington, and a specialty clinic adjacent to the Food Lion.

Harrington's close neighbor, Milford, hosts the area's nearest hospital, the Bayhealth Hospital Sussex Campus. In fact, Milford has become something of a health care hub in the past decade, offering a variety of services at a convenient distance. Another walk-in/urgent care facility is located in Camden, with the City of Dover anchoring the region's services with the Dover Bay Health Hospital and several skilled nursing and intermediate care facilities.

#### **4-1h. State Service Center**

Harrington is served by the James W. Williams State Service Center at 805 River Road in Dover. The center offers a wide variety of public services to help people with their health and human needs. The center can assist the public in obtaining services provided through the state Department of Health and Social Services, the state Department of Services for Children, Youth, and their Families, and the Delaware Department of State, as well as many nonprofit community service groups.

#### **4-1i. Veterans Services**

Established in 2007, the Delaware Veterans Home provides long-term care to Delaware veterans with the mission of upholding dignity and respect while sustaining and improving quality of life. The 150-bed facility is located very near Harrington in Milford's Independence Commons Business Park and provides skilled nursing care.

#### 4-1j. Senior Services

The Harrington Senior Center is the City's primary provider of Senior Services located at 102 Fleming Street. The center is dedicated to enriching the lives of the area's seniors through educational programs, outings, member activities, and through the creation of a sense of family and community. Service offerings include, but are by no means limited to: transportation, meal delivery, exercise programs, bingo, talks and lectures, outings, outreach and referral services, and participation in a bevy of community events.

### 4-2. EDUCATION

#### 4-2a. Primary Education

Harrington is served by the Lake Forest School District. The district operates seven locations, four elementary schools, one middle, and one high school, as well as an early learning center. The district's offices are located in Felton Delaware. The W.T. Chipman Middle School and the Lake Forest South Elementary School are located in Harrington.

According to the Department of Education's Unit and Allotment report, in 2023 the district's enrollment was 2,972 students. W.T. Chipman reported 742 middle schoolers. Lake Forest South Elementary reported 335 K-3 children. Ten years ago, the district reported 3,208 total enrollment with 816 students at W.T. Chipman and 400 at Lake Forest South.

Most Lake Forest district students generally attend the closest K-3 elementary school before going on to complete fourth and fifth grades at Lake Forest Central Elementary. Sixth, seventh, and eighth grade occur at W.T. Chipman, with students' primary studies completing at Lake Forest High in Felton.

#### 4-2b. Higher Education

The City of Harrington has a number of institutions of higher learning within an hour's drive.

Wesley College is a private college offering associate and baccalaureate degrees, as well as a Master of Science in nursing. It was acquired by Delaware State University in 2021. Delaware State University is a fully accredited, land-grant, four-year college that offers Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science and master's degrees in a variety of disciplines.

Delaware Technical and community College offers associate degrees, diplomas, and certificates in a variety of specialized areas at campuses in Kent and Sussex County. The Terry Campus of the Delaware Technical and Community College is located in northern Dover and serves Kent County. Over 4,500 full- and part-time students enroll each year in diversified technical associate-degree programs, diploma programs, and certificate and special-interest offerings. Campus programs are primarily designed to be a resource for students to enhance employment skills, abilities, and knowledge to meet the needs of area businesses, industries, and government agencies.

Wilmington University is geared towards those going to school but who also work and have family responsibilities. The college provides flexible, non-residential courses with undergraduate and graduate degrees. They have an open admission policy with classes at various locations and times. Their location in Dover has classes held at the Wilmington University facility on US Route 13 or at Dover Air Force Base. The Georgetown location has classes held at the Delaware Tech campus.

The University of Delaware offers all manner of bachelors, masters, and doctoral studies with select parallel programs in partnership with Del-Tech in Kent County. There is also a marine studies campus in Lewes.

## 4-3. WATER SUPPLY, WASTEWATER DISPOSAL, AND STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

### 4-3a. Water Supply

The City of Harrington provides drinking water to its residents. The City’s water supply comes from the Frederica aquifer formation. This is a deep, confined, sandy, sort of underground river that naturally protects from surface contamination. Harrington’s water is supplied from four wells drilled in this aquifer. The water is then treated with chlorine for disinfection.

*Table 9 - Harrington's Wells*

Well ID	Permit No.	Aquifer	Depth below Ground Surface (ft)	Capacity (gpm)
Well No. 2	10197	Frederica	240	150
Well No. 3	10196	Frederica	240	310
Well No. 4	156225	Frederica	240	450
Well No. 5	278161	Frederica	317	500

Well number one is no longer in service and is not included in the City’s allocation permit. It is capable of producing 210 GPM (gallons-per-minute) and is only used on an emergency basis.

The total current water production capacity from all wells is approximately 1,900,800 GPD (gallons-per-day). This is well in excess of the City’s observed average daily and peak demands of 261,197 and 326,355 gpd respectively. Well five came online in 2023 as part of the water tower package. Its addition substantively increased the City’s capacity. As of the Spring of 2024, residents paid a base rate of \$35 and a price per 1,000 gallons of \$3.25

The City appears to be in a solid position in regards to water capacity and the potential to service growth. According to the City, its current DNREC approved pumping allocation is 576,000 gpd. This figure is less than a third of the wells’ stated capacity. Moreover, it is more than double the City’s 2024 average daily demand and still considerably higher than the City’s peak demand of 326,355 gpd (May 2024).

Water quality was acceptable for all potential contaminants tested for. The City’s 2022 Water Quality Report is available at <https://harrington.delaware.gov/water-report> as well as on the City’s website. The most recent Delaware Sourcewater Assessment does conclude that the City’s water supply has a “high” susceptibility to: nutrients, pathogens, petroleum hydrocarbons, and pesticides. It also has a “moderate” susceptibility to PCBs, other organic compounds, metals, and inorganic compounds. These vulnerabilities do bear scrutiny and careful monitoring, but are not at all uncommon for most aquifers throughout the state.

### 4-3b. Excellent Groundwater Recharge Potential Areas

A groundwater recharge potential area is land on top of an aquifer. Precipitation falling on the land surface provides the water that recharges aquifers. Groundwater recharge potential areas are classified as excellent, good, fair, and poor according to how rapidly rainwater filters through the ground to the underlying aquifer. Aquifers are layers of gravel and sand, within which, water is stored and moves underground. Maintaining good water quality in local aquifers is especially important because Harrington obtains drinking water exclusively from wells. Care must be

taken when developing within groundwater recharge potential areas to ensure that precipitation is not contaminated with surface pollutants that could potentially carry these contaminants into the aquifers. It is also vital that excellent groundwater recharge potential areas remain permeable and allow sufficient infiltration to recharge the aquifer below. Impervious surfaces such as rooftops, roads, parking lots, and soils compacted through construction or landscaping generally cause runoff, not infiltration. The ability of soils to recharge groundwater resources has been approximated and mapped by the Delaware Geological Survey. Areas of excellent groundwater recharge potential are shown on the Environmental Features Map.

Within the presently incorporated areas of Harrington, there are a number of areas classified as excellent groundwater recharge potential areas. Pockets of excellent recharge surround the City on all sides. In addition large tracts of the City's historic core (as well as S.R. 13) bisect these areas.

Excellent groundwater recharge potential areas consist of predominantly sandy soils that allow precipitation to rapidly infiltrate to the underlying aquifer. Good, fair, and poor groundwater potential recharge areas have respectively slower infiltration rates. Delaware Code (7 Del. Laws, c. 6082(c)) requires municipalities with populations of 2,000 or above to protect excellent groundwater recharge potential areas through limitations on the percent of impervious area permitted by new development. Harrington meets this regulatory threshold. The City incorporated wellhead and excellent groundwater recharge protection areas into its land use development code. These protections can be found in Section 350-3 to 350-7 of the municipal code.

#### **4-3c. Water Distribution and Storage**

The City's water distribution system consists of pipes of various materials and diameters, ranging from 2-inches to 12-inches in diameter. Fire hydrants are located throughout the system for fire protection. Older portions of the City's water distribution system are often piped with galvanized steel pipe with diameters of 2- and 4-inches. These pipes are part of the original system and do not meet current State of Delaware Fire Marshal requirements for new construction. New water mains, when installed, are a minimum 6-inch diameter. The majority of the under-sized network is located on the west side of the City's original center. The small-diameter water mains have served their purpose for over 50 years and are now of questionable structural integrity. Old galvanized services, steel and ductile mains are susceptible to leaks due to corrosion and pitting. Water mains are upgraded as funding becomes available.

The City added a new 500,000 gallon water tower to its storage inventory late in 2023, complementing the existing 200,000 tower. This was part of a significant program of work, leveraging a municipal bond secured in 2016 against principal forgiveness available through the state. Associated projects include the new library, as well as substantively upgraded water lines, hydrants, connections, valves, and meters primarily along Liberty Street, South DuPont Highway, and Clark Street, along with an additional well.



*Figure 7 - Harrington Water Upgrades*

#### 4-3d. Wastewater Disposal

The City of Harrington wastewater service area includes residences and businesses within the city's municipal boundary as well as the Town of Farmington, the Delaware State Fairgrounds, and select parcels just outside of the city. All residences and commercial facilities inside Harrington are required to be connected to municipal sewer. The Delaware State Fair includes Midway Slots and Simulcast. The State Fair and the Town of Farmington are located immediately south of and directly adjoin the City of Harrington. Altogether, the City's sewer service area is 3.62 miles. It's eight pumping stations and gravity flow system serve just over 2,000 households.

In 2012, the City opted to close its wastewater treatment plant and has, instead, tied into the Kent County force main. The City continues to operate and maintain the lift station. Typical daily flow rates in the collection system sit at roughly one half million gallons per day (mgd). Though the system will still require incremental improvement, the City's agreement with Kent County provides a minimum allocation of one million gpd, roughly twice what the City currently delivers.

Having observed and studied significant inflow and infiltration issues, the City has systematically sought funds and issued municipal bonds to leverage available state and federal monies. Resolution 16-R-12 and 18-R-5 (2016 and 2018 respectively) together, allocated over \$1-million towards incremental upgrades. The City is currently in the middle of a significant capital program to permanently decommission the wastewater treatment lagoons that are no longer in service.

Given that the most likely cause of the I&I is simply the age of much of the existing infrastructure, addressing the issue will require continued diligence and attention to ensure that the City continues to be in a position to encourage and accept growth.

Presently, the City's base sewer rate is \$80 and \$5.76 per 1,000 gallons. The City is charged \$2.84 per 1,000 gallons by Kent County.

#### 4-3e. Stormwater Management and Flood Control

The Kent County Conservation District is the delegate agency for stormwater management for new construction that disturbs an area of more than 5,000 square feet. The City is responsible for existing infrastructure as well as

**water quality relating to the municipal storm sewer system.** The City's stormwater runoff is collected in strategically located catch basins. Rainfall is transported to the catch basins by a combination of street gutters, culverts, and storm sewers. The City's gently sloping topography and well-drained soil types serve to minimize flooding and ponding, however, inflow and infiltration of stormwater to the wastewater system remains a concern. The City's land use and development code prohibits the obstruction of tax ditches or drainage features and requires easements for said features when an area is developed. The City's Public Works Department provides routine maintenance and clearing of stormwater features.

**In 2023, the City adopted amendment 23-04 to its sediment and stormwater requirements. Titled the sourcewater protection amendment, it codifies a variety of best management practices. The amendment also, generally, requires parking area runoff to be directed to a stormwater management facility before discharge to a riparian buffer area.**

## 4-4. ELECTRICITY

The City of Harrington has an agreement with Delmarva Power for the electric utility franchise. Delmarva Power, a major investor-owned utility serving the entire Delmarva Peninsula, is part of a fully integrated Pennsylvania-New Jersey-Maryland interconnected electricity system and a partner in the Artificial Island Atomic Power Station in Salem, New Jersey. Delaware Electric Co-Op also services homes/businesses in Harrington.

## 4-5. TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Comcast of Delaware holds the telephone utility franchise for the City of Harrington. The need for expanded telecommunications services will occur, due to increases in the number of houses, demand for telephone service for home offices, and demands for internet connections. Comcast and Verizon provide residential and business broadband Internet service.

## 4-6. NATURAL GAS

Chesapeake Utilities supplies natural gas to Harrington. The utility company owns and maintains natural gas lines in the city and will provide service as needed for new development or redevelopment.

### Goals and Objectives

- Ensure a safe and reliable supply of drinking water.
  - Continue to require wellhead, recharge area, and wetland protections codified in the current land use ordinance.
  - Coordinate with DNREC on the development of the Murderkill watershed pollution control strategy (PCS).
- Ensure sufficient wastewater-treatment capacity for existing development and future expansion.
  - Continue to address Inflow and Intrusion in the wastewater collection system
  - Continue coordination with Kent County, when necessary, to ensure an adequate sewer allocation
- Ensure sufficient drinking water capacity for existing development and planned future expansion.
  - Coordinate with DNREC, as needed, to ensure an adequate pumping allocation
  - Monitor and maintain the City's inventory of wells and associated infrastructure
- Continue to ensure adequate police services in order to provide for the safety and welfare of current and future residents of the city.
  - Review mutual aid agreements with relevant municipalities and agencies.
  - Network with organizations, such as the Delaware League of Local Governments, to recruit skilled candidates.
- Provide for a sufficient level of fire-protection services and Emergency Medical Services in order to ensure the health and safety of current and future residents of the city

- Review mutual aid agreements with relevant municipalities and agencies.
- Strive to offer efficient, accountable, informed, and flexible governance and services
  - Encourage the appropriate use of low-impact development and resilient stormwater management practices contained in the Delaware Green Infrastructure Primer
  - Attend relevant workshops and training seminars, often hosted by the Delaware League of Local Governments, the American Planning Association, and some of the state's universities and colleges.

# CHAPTER 5. HOUSING

This section of the Plan addresses the current and future housing needs of the City of Harrington, including a detailed analysis of the City's housing stock and a plan for future housing based on the most recent U.S. Census data and City records.

## 5-1. OVERVIEW

Housing is an important issue in Harrington. Though not particularly old, significant chunks of the City's housing inventory are in the 30 to 50 years range. The City wants to maintain its small-town aesthetic, but must take into account a variety of factors. For one, the City has a higher than average family size. Second, Harrington would like to retain its young adults. Third, the City adjoins the Harrington Raceway and hosts its own industrial park. While many of these are quality jobs, they likely wouldn't responsibly support a mortgage on a \$450,000 home, which is not at all uncommon in the County.

In any event, Harrington is pro-growth in terms of build-out and redevelopment within its current municipal boundaries and favors housing and population growth in areas it may responsibly annex and provide services.

### Position on Housing Growth

*Harrington feels it is ideally located and economically positioned to responsibly absorb a portion of the significant growth envisioned to occur in Kent County. Therefore, it is supportive of housing growth within the City's current boundaries and in identified areas of potential annexation.*

## 5-2. HOUSING STOCK

Housing data is imperfect for Harrington. According to the 2022 ACS 5-year estimates, there are 1,499 housing units in Harrington. However, the older, full-count U.S. Census reported 1,661 units. Even the 2010 full-count Census reported a higher figure of 1,527 units. Therefore, the recent data is best viewed in terms of proportions and percentages that characterize the nature of Harrington's homes, not as a running tally.

In fact, Harrington staff and volunteers noted that there are, in fact, at least 100 mobile homes attributable to Messick's park. They were also quite confident the national figures significantly under-represent the number of apartment units.

## 5-2a. Housing Stock Composition

Table 10. Occupied Housing Stock

Housing Type	Harrington		Kent County		Delaware	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Single Family, Detached	1,036	71.10%	45,613	66.40%	235,374	60.50%
Single Family, Attached	13	0.90%	6,245	9.10%	60,864	15.60%
2 Apartments	28	1.90%	1,162	1.70%	5,349	1.40%
3-4 Apartments	13	0.90%	1,107	1.60%	8,502	2.20%
5-9 Apartments	64	4.40%	1,983	2.90%	15,093	3.90%
10 or More Units	295	20.20%	5,169	7.50%	38,754	10.00%
Mobile home or Other	9	0.60%	7,426	10.80%	25,064	6.40%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,458</b>		<b>68,705</b>		<b>389,000</b>	

Source: 2022 ACS 5 Year Estimate s2504

The City did not express great confidence in the housing stock composition figures. Even so, although Harrington does seem to possess a slightly higher percentage of single family, detached homes than the county or state, it also ranks well above the other geographies in terms of multi-unit apartments as a percentage of the total.

## 5-2b. Age of Housing Stock

Table 11. Year Structure Built

Year	Harrington	Kent County	Delaware
2020 or later	0.80%	0.60%	0.80%
2010 to 2019	4.00%	12.60%	11.10%
2000 to 2009	16.00%	25.00%	17.10%
1980 to 1999	23.50%	27.70%	26.40%
1960 to 1979	23.20%	19.60%	21.80%
1940 to 1959	11.50%	8.40%	14.60%
1939 or earlier	21.10%	6.10%	8.30%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2022 ACS, DP04

Like many railroad-era municipalities, Harrington has a somewhat higher percentage of homes built before 1940 than most. Otherwise, it tracks quite similarly with Kent County, comprised largely of homes built between 1960 and 2009.

## 5-2c. Housing Value

According to the American Communities Survey, owner occupied homes in the City of Harrington are significantly more affordable than those in unincorporated Kent County, or the State of Delaware. As of 2022, the median home value for homes (with a mortgage) for the state was \$314,000. The figure for Kent was \$284,000. Harrington's median home price was \$205,000. (ACS 2022 S2506)

## 5-2d. Ownership and Vacancy

The City’s vacancy rate compares favorably to those observed for the State and Kent County. According to the 2022 ACS survey, only 2.7 percent of Harrington homes were vacant. The figures for Kent County and the State of Delaware were reported as 6.65 percent and 13.85 percent, respectively.

## 5-3. HOUSING PIPELINE

Table 12. Home Construction

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Single Family, Detached	37	34	29	33	18
Single Family, Attached	1	2	1	1	6
Multi-Family	0	0	0	0	0
Total	38	36	30	34	24

Source: City of Harrington Planning Department, 2024

Single-family attached and detached homes accounted for all new construction over the course of the past planning period. From 2020 to 2023, the City added, roughly, 32 homes per year.

At the time of this document’s publication, there were only a handful of building permits in the pipeline.

Several recently begun projects and recent annexations are set to come online in the next planning period.

- **Harrington Meadows** – came online in 2020 and continues to sell. The City estimates approximately 20 lots remain. These are approved for single-family and duplex style homes.
- **Harmel Village** – behind the Food Lion, this development’s site work is underway. It is approved for 161 units (101 townhomes, 58 single-family, two duplex) and should begin selling in the near-term. The City estimates that 20 or even 30 units may come online each year.
- **Sunshine Estates** – also sometimes referred to as the Bonniwell annexations was incorporated in October of 2024. It is slated for 277 single-family homes.
- **Ryan Farm** – this annexation was incorporated in February 2024 and will eventually comprise 484 residential units with a number of amenities (clubhouse, pool, tennis court). The expected breakdown is 284 single-family homes and 200 townhomes.
- **Harrington Gardens** – is approved for 174 apartment units.

## 5-4. HOUSING NEEDS

Determining a “need” for Harrington is problematic. The official DPC population projections anticipate the City adding fewer than 200 residents over the next 25 years. Assuming regional and market conditions continue to allow for growth, the question at hand is the City’s housing wants.

The City already boasts a diverse housing stock mix within its existing inventory. In the near future, the City expects to see a significant number of units of all types come onto the market. Among these are nearly 200 apartments in the pipeline in the Harrington Gardens project that is site approved and awaiting an interested builder.

These aside, the City also has an additional nine acres within the City zoned for high-density residential. Of course, there are also numerous opportunities for single family detached and attached housing underway or anticipated in the near future, as outlined above in the housing pipeline.

Generally speaking, the City feels it is very well positioned in terms of the area’s housing market and wishes to “stay in that lane.” The City recognizes that affordability is a key factor for it, relative to Milford and Dover. Also, revisiting the City’s demographics, “young professionals,” were perhaps the one area the City struggles to retain. Harrington strives to offer reasonable rentals (apartments and townhomes) as well as ownership opportunities for the full spectrum of prospective owners. A review of the City’s proposed future land uses (Chapter 10) illustrates the general approach of favoring less dense housing options in recent and potential annexations while maintaining opportunities for more intensive development in identified areas.

#### 5-4a. Housing Needs – Affordability

Although affordability is a statewide and national concern, it does not appear to be an acute problem in Harrington. Even using the City’s 2022 median household income of \$63,814, the Fannie Mae affordability methodology calculates an “affordable” home at just over \$200k while making allowance for \$500/mo in other debt service. The number jumps to \$290k for those without student debt or a car payment. The median Harrington family (again making allowance for \$500 in other monthly debt service) can afford \$318,000.

Likewise, a spot survey of MLS listings in the spring of 2025 yielded 20 homes for sale. Listed prices ranged from \$180,000 to \$350,000. Nine were listed for below \$290k, eleven were over. The apparent conclusion is that the median household (and certainly family) can afford the median home on offer in Harrington.

In 2023, the Delaware State Housing Authority released a statewide housing needs assessment, available [here](#). Harrington falls within the “South Kent” study area. According to the study home prices, nationally, increased 46 percent over a four-year period from 2019 to 2023. Sussex County and the state, overall, outpaced the national figure. Fortunately, Kent County didn’t see as extreme an increase. According to the DSHA’s Housing Reform Map, Harrington qualifies as a “distressed” area. Accordingly, the agency’s policy preference would be to maintain the City’s affordability rather than aggressively pursue new affordable stock.

Almost all of the City’s ongoing developments include a significant proportion of townhomes. Land sits approved for multi-unit apartment development and nine more acres are appropriately zoned for similar future use. In short, there is capacity for moderately priced housing to come online if market conditions permit, but the City is not aggressively pursuing built-out.

Beyond this, the City has been active in supporting the revitalization of its rental stock, as evidenced by the recent awarding of a renovation grant to the Diamond Court Apartments in the City.

#### Goals and Objectives

- Encourage homeownership and citizen investment in the community
- Maintain the City’s position as a central, affordable, quality place to live and raise a family
  - Continue to support entities in their application for state, federal (or other) grants focused on housing redevelopment or rehabilitation
  - Continue to designate appropriate areas for multi-family use.
- Strive to offer ownership and rental opportunities for the young people Harrington has sometimes struggled to retain.
  - Coordinate with potential developers, particularly those interested in realizing some of Harrington’s approved, yet undeveloped, multi-family potential.

# CHAPTER 6. TRANSPORTATION

This chapter provides an inventory of the transportation system in Harrington and identifies issues that may need to be addressed. It details planned transportation improvements and makes recommendations to foster maximum mobility, via all modes, for residents and visitors using Harrington’s transportation network.

The *Roads and Boundaries* map in the appendix shows Harrington’s transportation network. It includes streets and roads, sidewalks, railroad, and bicycle routes.

## 6-1. TRANSPORTATION PLANNING TRENDS AND DEVELOPMENTS

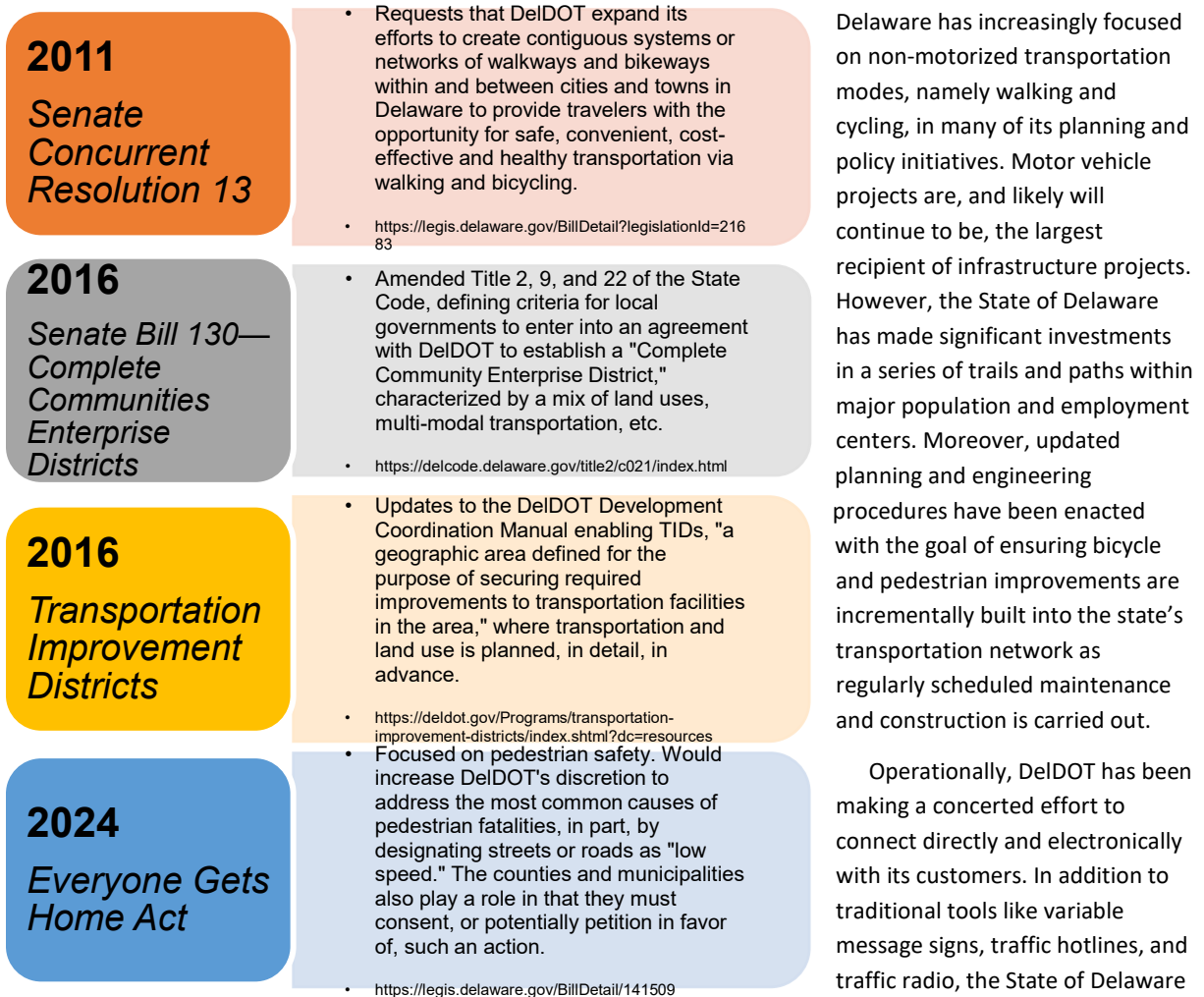


Figure 8 - Delaware Transportation Legislation

DelDOT App, a smartphone traffic application. The department has also developed a considerable social media presence, which it leverages to provide real-time updates.

The **Dover/Kent Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)** plays a critical role coordinating transportation planning and programming throughout Kent County. It’s plans and programs outline how federal transportation

funds will be spent and ensure compliance with federal regulations covering clean air, environmental justice, transportation, and performance measurement.

Another planning step of note is the availability of Transportation Improvement Districts (TID) as an alternative to numerous traffic impact studies (TIS) that are traditionally required in the approval process of developments of significant scale. The regulations and procedures required for a TID are laid out in DeIDOT's 2016 Development Coordination Manual.<sup>1</sup>

According to the manual, TIDs are "a geographic area defined for the purpose of securing desired improvements to transportation facilities in the area." Instead of required improvements being identified piecemeal, as development comes online, a municipal master plan may identify, in partnership with DeIDOT, all of the improvements that an area will need to achieve build-out. These may then be addressed systematically.

Most recently, the "Everyone Gets Home Act" represents another step by the legislature to strengthen the connection between municipal and county level safety priorities and the State's overall efforts.

## 6-2. ROADS AND TRAFFIC

The transportation system in the City of Harrington consists of roadways, rail, sidewalks, bicycle lanes, rideable shoulder, and DART First State buses. This section of the transportation chapter provides a brief overview of the major modes of transportation currently found in Harrington.

### 6-2a. Roadways

The *Roads and Boundaries* map in the appendix shows Harrington's transportation network. It includes streets and roads, sidewalks, railroad, and bicycle routes. The city lies along US 13, also known as S Dupont Hwy, one of the major north-south transportation corridors in the state. US 13 provides access to Dover, Middletown, and Wilmington to the north, in addition to Seaford, Salisbury, and Norfolk to the south. Delaware Route 14 (DE 14) bisects the city, connecting Harrington to Houston and Milford directly east. Carpenter Bridge Rd runs northeast from the city to Frederica.

Harrington's street network in its historic core, as with many historic towns from the railroad era, is largely laid out in a grid pattern. The railroad bisecting the city presents challenges in maintaining the connectivity of the transportation network, but there are three opportunities to cross the tracks by vehicle in the historic core. Each crossing is accompanied by a sidewalk on at least one side of the street.

### 6-2b. Roadway Maintenance

Figure 9 below illustrates locally vs. state-maintained streets in Harrington. Citizens interested in a high-def view of state versus municipally maintained streets may visit <https://deldot.gov/Programs/gate/index.shtml> and choose "Road Maintenance Responsibility."

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<sup>1</sup> Report available online at: [https://deldot.gov/Business/subdivisions/pdfs/changes/Development\\_Coordination\\_Manual-Chapter\\_2.pdf?041116](https://deldot.gov/Business/subdivisions/pdfs/changes/Development_Coordination_Manual-Chapter_2.pdf?041116)

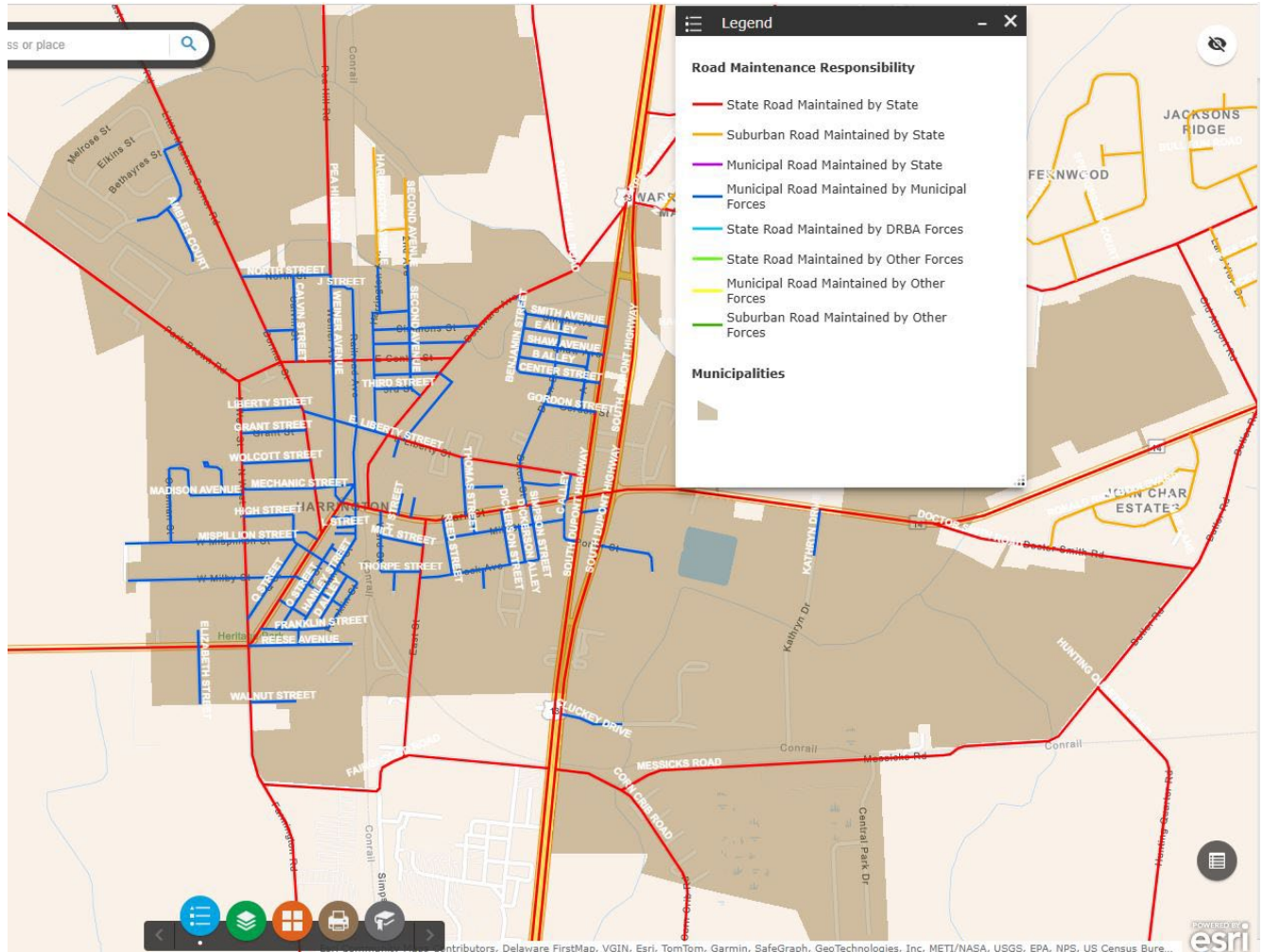


Figure 9 - Municipal and State-Maintained Streets

According to DeIDOT, the City is responsible for the maintenance of 78 roadway segments (mostly west of U.S. Rt. 13). Aside from Railroad Ave., Missillion, and Milby streets, all of which are just over a half mile, almost all are relatively short lengths of road one third of a mile or less. All told, the municipality is responsible for 16.48 lane miles. State-owned and maintained roadways include all segments of U.S. Rt. 13, all segments of S.R. 14, and all other roadway extending beyond the municipal limits. All told, the State divides its responsibility into 17 roadway segments totaling 12.44 lane miles. Three small roadway segments, Enterprise Ave, Harrington Ave., and Second Ave. are classified as “suburban maintained by state,” and total .29 miles for a grand total of just over 29 roadway miles in the City.

## 6-2c. Traffic

Automotive traffic data for Harrington is available from DeIDOT and can be viewed at <https://gateway.deldot.delaware.gov/>

Periodically, DeIDOT representatives conduct traffic counts. In other instances, development interests may be compelled to document traffic flows. In either case, the results are tracked as AADT, an acronym for Average Annual Daily Traffic. While useful, the data must be understood for what it usually is, a once or twice a decade count with estimates inserted for off years. Fortunately for Harrington, a fair bit of its network was counted as recently as 2023.

In Harrington’s case, it seems most useful to review figures in four general categories, 1) U.S. Rt. 13, 2) S.R. 14 (Commerce Street and Milford-Harrington Highway), 3) streets west of U.S. Rt. 13, and 4) streets east of U.S. Rt. 13.

*Table 13 - U.S. 13 AADT*

U.S. 13												
Road Name	Begin Breakpoint ID	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	Last
US13	SR14	24,113	23,234	23,494	16,464	20,709	21,029	21,385	21,031	20,670	19,574	2012
US13	HOPKINS CEMETERY ROAD	24,291	24,231	26,166	21,343	26,846	27,342	27,077	26,630	26,172	24,784	2012

Last counted in 2012, the AADT figures for U.S. Rt. 13 tend to show a modest increase along the northern segment; however, these figures are estimates from an old count. In this case, anecdotal local observations may be as telling.

Table 14 - SR 14 AADT

S.R. 14												
Road Name	Begin Breakpoint ID	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	Last
SR14 COMMERC E STREET	REESE AVENUE	6,136	6,121	6,074	5,094	6,408	6,115	6,722	6,433	6,599	6,043	2022
SR14 COMMERC E STREET	DORMAN ST., RD. 78	4,211	4,201	4,536	3,805	4,786	4,567	4,829	4,804	4,928	5,577	2015
SR14 COMMERC E STREET	WARD ST	6,970	6,953	7,508	6,124	7,703	7,845	7,769	9,479	9,723	8,902	2016
SR14 COMMERC E STREET	REED ST	6,581	7,387	7,976	6,506	8,184	8,335	7,747	7,707	7,906		2023
SR14 COMMERC E STREET	U.S. 13, RD. 6, S.B.	8,158	8,138	8,788	7,168	9,016	9,183	10,269	10,218	10,481	9,596	2016
SR14 MILFORD-HARRING	BROAD ST., RD. 37	7,295	7,277	7,858	6,409	8,062	8,211	9,038	8,864	8,817	8,661	2018

Table 14, above, shows S.R. 14 top to bottom, west to east, as it bisects Harrington. The data do not appear to show increased traffic. Regardless of the date of the last count, in no instance is the 2023 count (or estimate) higher than the figure for 2014.

Table 15 - AADT West of U.S. Rt. 13

West of U.S. 13												
Road Name	Begin Breakpoint ID	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	Last
PARK BROWN ROAD	FRIENDSHIP VILLAGE D	361	968	798	560	705	680	677	684	648	589	2023
EAST CENTER STREET	WEST STREET	901	923	894	715	899	899	899	1,056	1,001	910	2016
LITTLE MASTENS CORNE	LITTLE MASTENS CORNE	974	1,625	1,340	941	1,184	1,142	1,137	1,364	1,293	1,175	2023
DORMAN STREET	N. HARRINGTON LIMITS	1,087	2,573	2,493	1,992	2,506	2,506	2,506	1,886	1,788	1,625	2023
PEA HILL ROAD	HOPKINS CEMETERY ROAD	303	405	334	235	295						2023
RAUGHLEY HILL ROAD	HOPKINS CEMETERY RD.	248	535	441	309	389	376	374	396	375	341	2023
DELAWARE AVENUE	U.S. 13, RD. 5, S.B.	3,572	2,512	2,713	2,275	2,862	2,731	2,887	2,873	2,947	4,165	2023
DELAWARE AVENUE	RAUGHLEY HILL RD	2,086	2,768	2,989	2,507	3,153	3,009	1,886	1,956	2,006	3,799	2023
WEST STREET	E. CENTER ST., RD. 2	823	1,459	1,413	1,130	1,421	1,421	1,297	1,311	1,243	1,130	2023
SR14TR FARMINGTON ROAD	COMMERCIAL ST	2,178	3,513	3,794	3,182	4,002	3,819	3,833	3,876	3,674	3,340	2023
EAST STREET	DEL. 14, CLARK ST.	1,005	1,030	998	797	1,003	1,003	1,003	1,278	1,211	1,101	2017
FAIRGROUND ROAD	U.S. 13, RD. 6, S.B.	1,392	5,100	4,942	3,950	4,969	4,969	4,944	4,933	4,676	4,251	2023

Table 15 paints an unexpected picture of generally declining traffic in a City that has generally been growing. The west side of the City is, and has been, largely built-out. Still, it is very interesting to observe nearly across the board decreases in observed traffic volumes within a municipality that has been growing steadily. Despite relatively recent counts, in almost no instance does the 2023 figure exceed the oldest figure shown. There is also considerable variability in a handful of the segments, such as Fairgrounds, Farmington, and Delaware Avenue.

Table 16 - AADT East of U.S. Rt. 13

East of U.S. 13												
Road Name	Begin Breakpoint ID	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	Last Count
DOCTOR SMITH ROAD	BUTLER RD., RD. 429	570	584	566	452	569	569	569	645	611	555	2016
CORN CRIB ROAD	U.S. 13, RD. 6	441	814	671	471	593	572	618	626	593	591	2023
MESSICKS ROAD	BUTLER RD., RD. 429	848	989	959	766	964	964	871	880	834	735	2023
BUTLER ROAD	KC-00431-F (DOCTOR S	813	1,114	918	645	811	783	710	718	681	382	n/a

Looking east of U.S. Rt. 13, traffic trends again appear surprisingly flat. Messicks and Butler Road, leaving the City and skirting the Southeastern municipal boundary, do appear to have experienced a modest increase in traffic. Anecdotally, it appears this segment is used as an informal bypass for traffic connecting from S.R. 14 to U.S. Rt. 13.

Overall, City officials did not note vehicular traffic as an overriding priority for Harrington residents. Potential conflicts between pedestrians and cyclists, of course, always remain a concern. See below. Still, it may be advisable to have a clearer picture of traffic flows than what may be inferred from AADT figures. These are structured for regional, not local, analysis. If this becomes a priority, the City has an excellent potential partner in the Dover/Kent Metropolitan Planning Organization.

### 6-3. NON-AUTOMOTIVE TRAVEL

#### 6-3a. Sidewalks

Figure 10 shows the sidewalk network within the City of Harrington. A wider view is available in the transportation map in this document’s appendix. Here, it is evident that almost all of the City’s sidewalk infrastructure is west of U.S. Rt. 13, appropriately serving the municipality’s residential and neighborhood commercial core. Though there are some gaps, the City’s subdivision code does require the installation of sidewalks for new construction or whenever a certificate of occupancy is to be issued. East of the highway, the land uses do not necessarily call for sidewalks. However, their absence along the bulk of Rt. 13, inside and outside of the City, is worth noting. The Dover/Kent MPO systematically discusses this issue in a recent report noted in the “studies” portion of this plan.

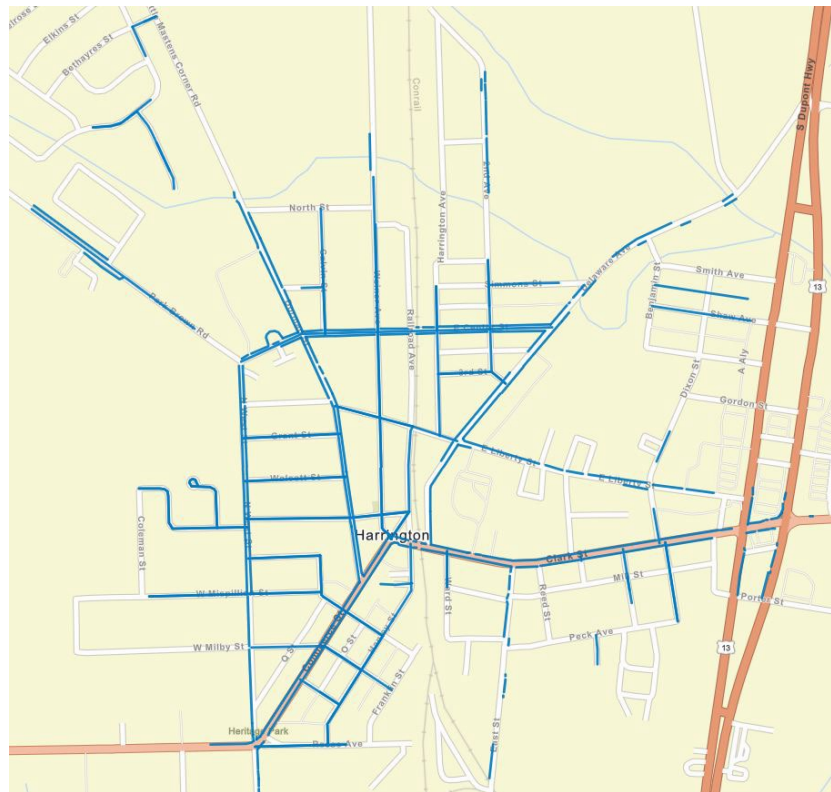


Figure 10 - Harrington Sidewalks

Incremental steps continue to be taken to improve the network. Recently DeDOT undertook ADA-related improvements at the intersection of SR 14 and US 13 as well as improved crosswalk timing on Commerce Street near the M&T Bank.

One area of potential concern was moving southwest on Commerce Street toward Walt Messick Road. The City feels signaled or higher-viz crosswalks may be warranted as some pedestrians may struggle to cross the street quickly enough.

### 6-3b. BICYCLE FACILITIES



Figure 11 - Delaware Bicycle Facilities Map

Figure 11 (above) is an excerpt from the Delaware Bike Council’s Delaware Bicycle Map from DeDOT. It is best viewed in full-size at this link - [https://deldot.gov/Programs/bike/biking\\_in\\_delaware/pdfs/maps/KentSide2-2021\\_web.pdf?cache=1734465319991?cache=1734466013303](https://deldot.gov/Programs/bike/biking_in_delaware/pdfs/maps/KentSide2-2021_web.pdf?cache=1734465319991?cache=1734466013303)

According to DeDOT, S.R. 14 is classified as a regional bicycle route with bikeway (which includes rideable shoulder) all through and around Harrington. Additionally, U.S. Rt. 13 is a connector bike route, again, with at least rideable shoulder. From the Northwest to the Southeast, Little Mastens Corner/Fairgrounds/Corn Crib roads form the local portion of a statewide bicycle route, in this case, largely without dedicated bikeways.

### 6-3c. BICYCLIST LEVEL OF TRAFFIC STRESS

Another interesting way to view the area’s bicycle network is via a relatively new (and still under development) convention titled, “Levels of Traffic Stress.” A full description of the methodology is beyond the scope of this document. At the most basic, State planners analyze roadway segments across a number of variables. Some of the most telling are traffic volume, traffic speed, the presence of separate facilities, the degree of separation from traffic, and potential conflicts. Roadway segments are then “graded” as level one (dark green) to level four (red). In the abstract, dark green areas would be suitable for capable older elementary and middle-school aged children, yellow (level three) for cautious and capable teens and adults, and level four (red) for dedicated cycling enthusiasts.

Local experiences and opinions will often differ from the results of this high-level analysis. Still, it's worth noting just how bicycle-friendly the core of Harrington appears to be. As Figure 12 (below) shows, only a handful of choke points serve to divide key areas of the city.

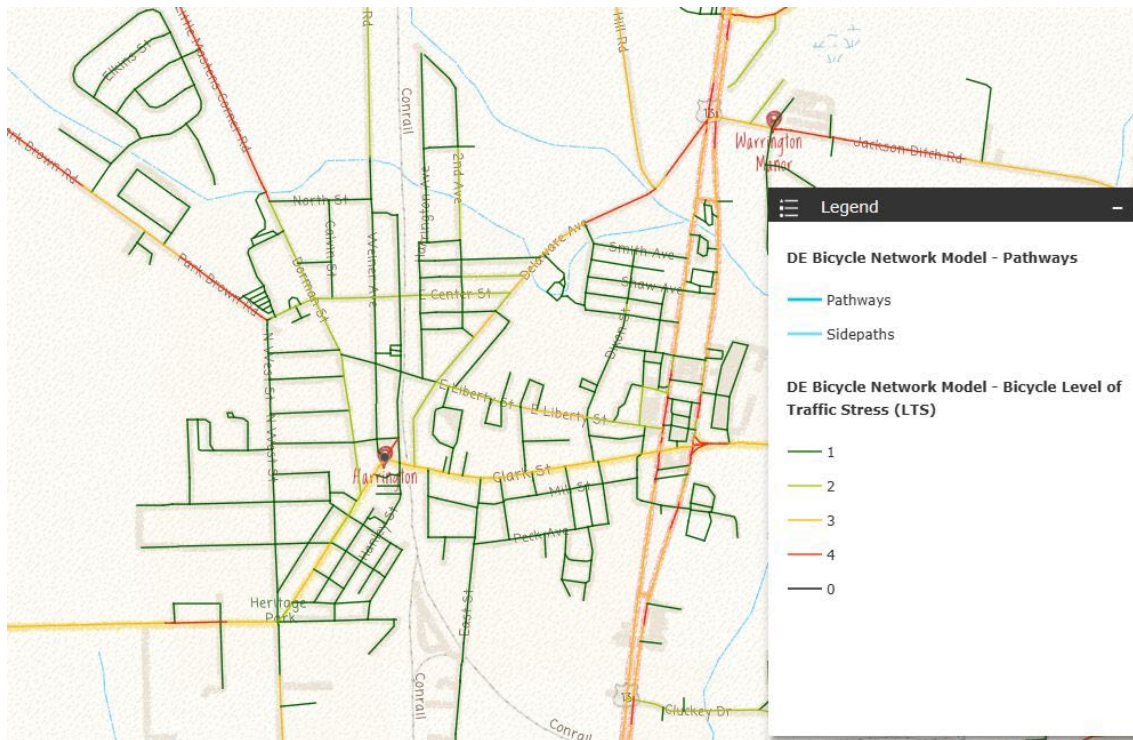


Figure 12 - Harrington Levels of Bicycle Stress

### 6-3d. Railroads

Harrington is an important junction lying on the route of the major north–south railroad line on the Delmarva Peninsula. The line is owned and operated by Norfolk Southern and only hauls freight at the moment. There are currently daily trains operating between Harrington and Harrisburg, Penn. The line enters Harrington in the north, before splitting in two. The main line continues south parallel to US13 through Seaford, Salisbury, and down to Cape Charles in Virginia, 13 miles north of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. The other line turns east traveling through Houston, Milford, Georgetown, and Millsboro.

Harrington is home to one of Norfolk Southern's four major classification yards in Delaware, with the others in Dover, Newark, and Wilmington. Harrington Yard is located adjacent to the State Fairgrounds just to the south of the city limits.

Harrington Yard is adjacent to land designated for industrial use. Harrington has explored options with the Office of State Planning to use this land for purposes consistent with the Delaware State Rail Plan and has participated in a feasibility study regarding the potential for a multi-modal freight terminal.

At present, there has been no movement on this front, but the City maintains an interest in rail freight and economic development in general. See the economic development chapter of this document for details involving the industrial park. The freight terminal study is detailed later in this chapter.

Harrington remains interested in pursuing rail-related industries to support economic development. Because of Harrington's proximity to agricultural areas, industries related to agriculture should be pursued and would be consistent with the types of commodities Norfolk Southern currently transports.

### 6-3e. Public Transportation

Harrington's public transportation is provided by DART First State. DART First State operates fixed-route service in all three counties. DART Paratransit service provides door-to-door transportation service for elderly and disabled riders statewide. Rides for DART Paratransit need to be arranged at least one day in advance.

. There are nine fixed-route bus stops in the city. There are four located off US 13, with the first/last stop at Clarks Corner in the northwest of the city. There is another by WT Chipman Middle School. The two others are in the center of the city. DART route 117 runs between Harrington and the Camden Walmart. DART Rt. 104 offers service into Dover, ending at the Dover Transit Center. Both routes run from the early morning to well into the evening on weekdays. City representatives felt that the bulk of the City's transit demand was back and forth to Dover. While Rt. 104 has Saturday service from roughly 9-5, Rt. 117 presently runs only on weekdays.

### 6-3f. Aviation

The Delaware Coastal Airport in Georgetown, Delaware, is the closest private airport to Harrington. It provides small plane services and a tower, operates on visual flight rules, and has a 5,500' runway. The closest larger facility is the Dover Air Force Base's Civil Air Terminal, offering a 13,000-foot-long paved runway. The nearest regular passenger air services are provided at the Philadelphia International Airport and Baltimore-Washington International, each roughly 85 miles away. The Delaware Airpark in Cheswold, Delaware, 25 miles due north, is home to 45 aircraft and Delaware State University's flight-training program, serving corporate and recreational flyers year-round. The Salisbury Regional Airport located in Salisbury, Maryland, 45 miles south, is the only commercial airport on the Delmarva Peninsula.

## 6-4. PLANNED TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS AND STUDIES

### 6-4a. Planned Transportation Improvements

At the time of this document's printing, according to DeIDOT, there were no projects in the State's capital improvement plan (CIP) for Harrington during the most recent (2020-present) funding cycle. Likewise, there is nothing on the books in the CIP for Harrington for the 2025-2030 funding cycle. Routine maintenance and paving will still occur.

### 6-4b. Studies

#### Multimodal Freight Terminal Study

As recently as the summer of 2021, the City worked with a private consultant to complete a feasibility study and develop the outline of a master site plan that would entail the redevelopment of 131 acres of three separately owned parcels astride the Delmarva rail line within the City's industrial park. Initial economic analysis suggested a market for bulk commodities to be transloaded to trucks for local and regional delivery.

Regarding the industrial park, the utilities and infrastructure has approved and funded through the legislature. However, at the time of this document's publication, the funding had not been distributed. The expectation was to break ground in the spring of 2025.

In regard to the freight terminal, the plan is still viable, but creative funding solutions would need to be developed.

#### Corridor Capacity Preservation Program

The Corridor Capacity Preservation Program (CCPP) impacts design considerations and future development patterns on both major highways (State Route 1 and U.S. Route 13), U.S. Rt. 13 (DuPont Highway) splits into two one-way segments in Harrington with businesses and a few residences in the median and serves as the main commercial area. The CCPP approach began as a pilot project in the early 1990s, established in accordance with 17 Del. Code § 145. The aim was, and is, to avoid the cycle of building a highway, attracting economic development (driveways, intersections, traffic lights), experiencing congestion, building a bypass, and repeating the cycle on the bypass. The program's main goals are to:

- Maintain a road's ability to handle traffic safely and efficiently
- Minimize the impacts of increased economic growth
- Preserve the ability to make future improvements
- Prevent the need to build an entirely new road
- Sort local and through traffic

The program is well coordinated with delineates areas, and potential remedies, based on the desirability of investment of state funds, very much in line with the Strategies for State Policies and Spending.

#### **DART REIMAGINED**

DART Reimagined, a year-long statewide transit study led by Delaware Transit Corporation, has identified opportunities to reconfigure the bus network and future service plan to provide a more sustainable and equitable statewide transit system. Through a comprehensive service review, the study identified rider needs and challenges and presented opportunities for service improvements and enhancements across the state of Delaware. It is available [here](#).

#### **Dover/Kent MPO Transportation Plan**

The Dover/Kent County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) *Innovation 2045* was published in 2020.<sup>2</sup> The MTP is a long-range, big-picture, regional planning and guidance document compiled by the Dover/Kent County MPO in close coordination with Kent County, DelDOT, the Office of State Planning Coordination (OSPC), and municipalities.

The MTP's three main goals are:

- Safely move people and commodities efficiently on connected and reliable transportation networks
- Integrate multi-modal transportation with local land-use decisions for healthier, stronger, and economically viable communities
- Support transportation system preservation through enhanced system operations, management and sound environmental practices

As of the writing of this document, the MPO's 2050 draft plan had been released for public comment. Both versions are available for review at <https://doverkentmpo.delaware.gov/draft-of-innovation-2045/>

#### **Other Dover/Kent MPO Studies**

The Dover/Kent MPO has been very active in analyzing transportation trends and economic development activities in Kent County. Detailing each is beyond the scope of this document. However, several of the MPO's initiatives from the past several years do relate to Harrington, or could serve as a template for similar efforts in the City.

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<sup>2</sup> Report available online at <https://doverkentmpo.delaware.gov/innovation-2045/>

The **2022 Kent County East-West Truck Freight Route Feasibility Analysis** speaks directly to the challenges of truck freight passing through Harrington and offers a few potential solutions for difficult turning intersection on U.S. Rt. 13. While these are state-maintained streets, the City should stay abreast of these discussions and ensure it has the opportunity to offer input. These potential improvements are, according to DelDOT, not imminent, as there is nothing on the books through 2030.

The MPO's **Rail Corridor Industrial Land Use Study**, from 2022 takes a more holistic view of the freight rail and industrial land uses for the length of the county. Though not as Harrington-specific as the multimodal freight terminal study, it explores the great majority of parcels with rail access, reviews their current and intended land uses, encourages municipalities and counties to zone adjacent properties in a rail-compatible manner, and references Harrington's study from the year prior, as well as its 2013 comp plan.

Other useful studies authored by the MPO concern regional truck parking, and an inventory of airports. The MPO's reports on sidewalk gaps on U.S. Rt. 13 in and around Dover and the U.S. Rt. 13 [North] Corridor Study are both insightful endeavors that only concern themselves with points North of Harrington. Ideally, the city might prevail on the MPO to do similar analysis further south.

## 6-5. ADDITIONAL TRANSPORTATION ISSUES

The City was largely satisfied with the transportation system. The consensus was that automotive traffic was not a 'big deal,' at the present time. However, two potential items were noted. A fair bit of truck traffic utilizes the intersection of Messicks Road and Corn Crib Road. It is a sharp turn and the City wonders if there is a way to discourage regional truck traffic to avoid this particular route.

Another observation was that it would be nice if sidewalk from Lake Forrest Elementary was continuous to library.

Also, the City felt that Jackson Ditch Road, East of the City in unincorporated Kent County, may benefit from improvement. The feeling was that the road (presently with only a 30' right of way and no shoulder) may not have the capacity to connect Carpenter Bridge and SR 14. Simply put, county residents may prefer to unnecessarily drive through Harrington.

### Goals and Objectives

- Continue ongoing coordination with DelDOT and the Dover/Kent MPO
  - Participate in any updates to the statewide bicycle plan
  - Watch for opportunities to connect the sidewalk from Lake Forrest to the library
  - Discuss the status of Jackson Ditch Rd in Kent County with DelDOT and/or the MPO
  - Engage with DelDOT and the Dover/Kent MPO on the possibility of improving truck flows regarding the intersection of Corn Crib and Messick Rd.
  - Ensure the maintenance status of crossover streets on DuPont Highway are clear between the City and State. These include Shaw St., Gordon St.
- Continue to rank and prioritize needed improvements to the transportation system
  - Maintain a sidewalk and curbing priority list to systematically allocate available revenues
  - Update the City of Harrington Street Priority list based on completed work and assessment information from the Dover/Kent MPO
- Coordinate with DTC regarding the condition of existing, or need for additional, transit stops, pads, shelters
- Attempt to maintain dialogue with the railroad representative regarding any new developments with freight or passenger rail
- Work with all relevant partners to ensure infrastructure installation at the industrial park is completed in a timely manner and in accordance with the recently completed TIS.



# CHAPTER 7. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT

This section of the Plan presents a profile of the City’s economic and community resources. It also provide details regarding some current community-development projects being undertaken by the City.

## 7-1. ECONOMIC PROFILE

### 7-1a. Labor Pool

Although U.S. Census survey data has limitations due to sample size, overall, the data suggest that Harrington added nearly 200 jobs in the past decade-plus. Decisive trends amongst the industry classifications cannot be accurately inferred. However, manufacturing appears to be down. Education has shown growth as a percentage of the total. The other potential growth area is, “professional services.” It may be likely that this is an early indication of the “gig” economy. City representatives were, generally, skeptical of the national results, wondering whether manufacturing was on the decline and suspecting that the local economy had, in fact, added more jobs than shown.

Table 17. Occupation by Industry

Industry	2010 Jobs		2022 Jobs	
	#	%	#	%
Agriculture	0	0	0	0
Construction	114	7.5	153	8.3
Manufacturing	186	12.2	43	2.3
Wholesale Trade	30	2	89	4.9
Retail Trade	213	14	222	12.1
Transportation	66	4.3	42	2.3
Information	0	0	12	0.7
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	63	4.1	29	1.6
Professional Services	85	5.6	208	11.3
Education	315	20.7	514	28
Arts and Entertainment	183	12	246	13.4
Other Services	82	5.4	16	0.9
Public Administration	182	12	260	14.2
Total Employed 16+	1751		1930	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010, 2020, 2022 American Community Survey (ACS)

*Table 18 - Occupational Type Over Time*

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>2010 Jobs %</b>	<b>2020 Jobs %</b>	<b>2022 Jobs %</b>
<i>Management, business, science, and arts occupations</i>	24.5	13.9	26.4
<i>Service occupations</i>	24.6	38.6	39.4
<i>Sales and office occupations</i>	19.8	12	19.1
<i>Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations</i>	16.3	11.6	9.3
<i>Production, transportation, and material moving occupations</i>	14.8	23.9	5.8
<i>Military specific occupations</i>	0	0	0

Source: 2010,2020, 2022 ACS 5-year Estimate S0802

There appears to be some variability in the census data. This may simply be because of sample size, It's also possible that the 2020 figures were impacted by the events of that year. In either case, there appears to be a general trend towards the service economy over the past decade-plus. Professional and management employment appears to have been steady. Some losses may have taken place in "blue collar" professions, but this is, as of yet, not clear.

*Table 19 - Occupational Type by Geography*

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>U.S.A. %</b>	<b>Delaware %</b>	<b>Kent Co. %</b>	<b>Harrington %</b>
<i>Management, business, science, and arts occupations</i>	41	41.5	35.1	26.4
<i>Service occupations</i>	16.5	17.2	17.6	39.4
<i>Sales and office occupations</i>	20.4	20.3	21.2	19.1
<i>Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations</i>	8.7	8.9	10.1	9.3
<i>Production, transportation, and material moving occupations</i>	13	11.7	15.1	5.8
<i>Military specific occupations</i>	0.4	0.3	1	0

Source: 2010,2020, 2022 ACS 5-year Estimate S0802

The potential loss of production, transportation, and maintenance-type jobs suggested in the previous table is potentially troubling for Harrington. Compared to the nation, state, and county, it lags behind in percentage of management and business. The other notable difference would seem to be Harrington's much higher percentage of service-sector employment. Though not always the case, these types of jobs are not typically as well compensated.

## 7-1b. Unemployment and Labor Force Participation

Table 20. Unemployment and Labor Force Participation, 2022

	Harrington	Kent County	Delaware	United States
Unemployed (20–64 year olds)	5.30%	5.40%	5.10%	5.00%
Labor Force Participation Rate	87.60%	77.70%	79.10%	78.30%
Population (20–64 year olds)	2,075	103,249	565,170	191,102,923

Source: 2022 U.S. Census ACS, S2301

Harrington compares favorably to the nation, state, and county in terms of unemployment, and, particularly, labor force participation rates. Harrington’s 5.3 percent (self-reported) unemployment is entirely in line with figures for Kent County, the State of Delaware, and the nation at large.

Where Harrington appears to stand out is in labor force participation rate. Simply put, the percentage of working-aged adults who are either working, or actively seeking employment. The data show nearly a full 10 percentage point difference between Harrington and the other geographies reviewed. Referring to the demographics section, this may be somewhat due to Harrington having a younger workforce. In either case, the apparent fact that Harrington hosts a prodigious and motivated workforce is definitely to its advantage concerning economic development and growth.

## 7-1c. Travel to Work

Table 21. Travel Time to Work, 2022

	Harrington	Kent County	Delaware
Less than 10 minutes	15.50%	12.70%	11.10%
10 to 14 minutes	6.20%	15.10%	13.80%
15 to 19 minutes	10.80%	16%	16.90%
20 to 24 minutes	8.90%	14.80%	16%
25 to 29 minutes	8.10%	6.80%	8%
30 to 34 minutes	29.50%	11.40%	12.80%
35 to 44 minutes	9.40%	5.30%	6.60%
45 to 59 minutes	3.80%	6.70%	7.10%
60 or more minutes	7.90%	11.20%	7.70%

Source: 2022 U.S. Census ACS, S2301

Unfortunately, the most recent American Communities Survey does not provide a mean and median trip distance (in time or distance) for Harrington. The data breakdown on the percentage of respondents indicating a given commute duration is available.

City representative were able to intuit the likely destinations for each time interval; 15-19 minutes is Milford, 20-29 minutes is Dover, 45 min and up are the beaches or northern New Castle County.

While the usual caveats regarding sample size errors still apply, a few general observations are possible. For one, Harrington does benefit from local centers of employment, with the Casino being a possible example. A fair percentage of City residents have a minimal commute and minimal commuting costs.

However, beyond the very local job market, Harrington residents tend to have to travel farther for work than their peers in the state or Kent County. Obviously, this is due, largely, to the City's less than central location from some of the County's major employment hubs. A decidedly smaller percentage of respondents reported trips in the ten to 24 minute range than did those in the state and county. Harrington's percentage evens out with the others at the 25 minute range. The City's "typical" commute appears to be of the 30-44 minute variety.

## 7-2. ECONOMIC OVERVIEW AND CURRENT CONDITIONS

Including all categories of commercial enterprise, the City of Harrington hosts more than 100 businesses in a fairly diverse local economy. Businesses in the City operate in a wide range of categories, including retail, service, food, hospitality, recreation, and banking. Collectively, the City's economic sector employs hundreds of permanent, full-time workers and even more part-time positions.

Although the City functions, somewhat, as a bedroom community, it still boasts a robust local economy driven, in large part, by the highway commercial uses along the highway, the in-town service economy, and the proximity of the regional casino. Moreover, the City has a stock of relatively affordable housing on hand, with more available to build, that may be in asset to attract employers and employees. New development will provide additional space, as well as build-to suit options for management.

Ultimately, the City feels itself on-track. It understands and values its role as a bedroom community to larger municipalities. Still, it envisions itself continuing to grow, adding quality jobs, and seeing its local economy continue to adapt to not only serve those passing by or passing through, but also those living there. A full-service grocery store, additional daycare, a pharmacy, and family dining remain high on Harrington's desired future commercial uses.

### 7-2a. Recent Economic Development Activity and Accomplishments

- Ryan and Bonneville Annexations
  - Together, these annexations will account for roughly 750 homes. The City views these annexations as economic development boons likely to bolster the City for over a decade. The City anticipates increased demand for trade labor, a steadily growing tax base, and increased demand for local goods and services.
- Ongoing residential development in the City
  - Harrington Meadows still has roughly 20 lots to sell and Harrington Gardens is approved and awaiting an interested builder for 174 apartments. These projects represent expanded tax base, ongoing demand for trade-labor, and a diverse, flexible, and affordable housing stock for the region's future employees and employers.
- Bay Health Facility
  - Completed in 2022, the facility sits on what was a vacant lot along US Rt. 13. It represents a local investment in a growing and durable economic sector.
- Downtown Development District
  - Though the designation was official nearly ten years ago, the City continues to update (2019) its strategy. See 7-3b.
- Taco Bell

- Completed in 2019, the restaurant made productive use of a vacant lot adjacent to the former American Legion. The establishment serves to lengthen the City’s commercial day and provides a number of jobs.
- Dairy Queen
  - Completed in 2024, this restaurant replaced an underutilized car wash structure. It also provides a number of jobs.
- Matrix Coating
  - One of the first tenants of the City’s industrial park, this business is expected to support 20 positions, once running at full-capacity.
- Solar Farm
  - In 2024, Harrington also approved a 16 acre solar farm, converting agricultural lands off of Delaware Avenue into a sustainable power project slated to include nearly 10,000 solar panels. At the time of this plan’s development, the implications for local jobs was not yet apparent. However, it does represent a local investment in a potentially emerging sector.

## 7-3. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT

### 7-3a. Main Street Programs

Harrington has achieved designation as an accredited affiliate of the Main Street America program. Correspondingly, it has achieved Affiliate status with Delaware on Main. It is an umbrella organization operated under the Division of Small Business, representing the state’s main street partners at the national level. The organization has four pillars, economic vitality, promotion, design, and organization. Harrington’s membership and participation in both initiatives affords it a marketing tool in attracting new businesses, as well as a rich repository of resources, and numerous networking opportunities.

### 7-3b. Downtown Development District

Since 2016, Harrington has been designated as a downtown Development District (DDD). This designation affords a raft of incentives for qualified investors within the identified district, most notably grant rebates of up to 20 percent on construction costs. Fee and tax reductions are also offered. Harrington’s district map can be viewed online [here](#) and in the appendix of this document.

City incentive are now mostly building permit fees and site inspection fees.

The program has ten goals:

- 1) Strengthen residential neighborhoods, with an emphasis on encouraging homeownership, rehabilitating older buildings, maintaining the existing character, and avoiding incompatible development.
- 2) Create a downtown where shops, banks, and other traditional businesses flourish alongside creative enterprises in a friendly, lively, and successful atmosphere.
- 3) Preserve natural and cultural resources by encouraging the appropriate preservation and/or reuse of older buildings and sites and the protection of environmentally sensitive resources.
- 4) Improve the appearance of the downtown’s public and private realm.
- 5) Proactively plan for improved infrastructure (e.g. structures, roads, utilities, pedestrian connectivity, routine maintenance).
- 6) Enhance the Downtown’s transportation and circulation system to connect and integrate amenities and destinations.

- 7) Provide a sufficient amount of parking within the Downtown and ensure its use is properly managed.
- 8) Create a downtown that is alive night and day with events and activities.
- 9) Create a downtown where residents, workers, visitors, and patrons feel safe both day and night.
- 10) Create an environment in which young people feel welcome in the downtown and contribute to making it a friendly, lively, and successful atmosphere.

Details on the City's DDD program are available [here](#). A full map is in the map series in the appendix. Additionally, a story map detailing many of the projects is available [here](#).

## Harrington Downtown Development Map

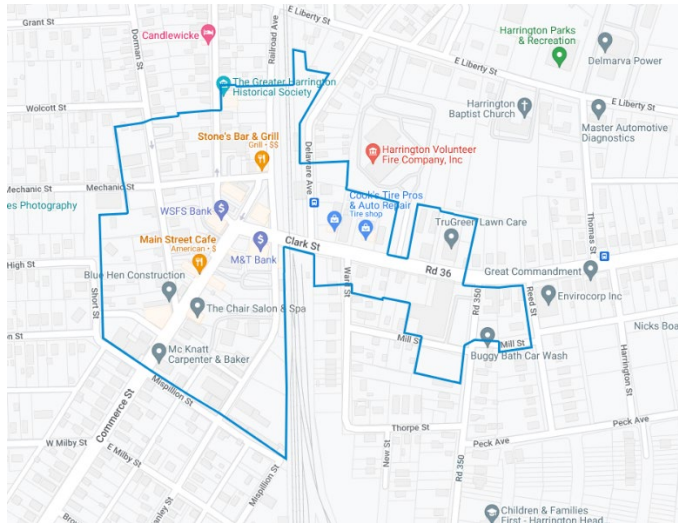


Figure 13 - Harrington's Downtown Development District

### 7-3c. Harrington Industrial Park

A longstanding initiative that has very recently (ongoing as of the writing of this document) seen renewed emphasis is the City's industrial park. As of the summer of 2024, the initiative was on track and working its way through the planning process, according to City officials.

The land area comprising the park is owned by several parties, one being the City. The complexities of coordinating between multiple landowners has been a challenge in the past. However, the current concept calls for a comprehensive re-subdivision of the tract.

Presently, the area is largely vacant, aside from two factories and some long-term storage. Though there are currently only one tenant, the City's vision is to attract a range of corporate interests, from smaller ventures, right up to those of a size and scale that may utilize the park's potential freight rail service, all with the hope of growing jobs and, by extension, municipal revenues.

The initiative was greatly aided by the infusion of over \$3-million in federal funds, backed by an earlier commitment from the Delaware Division of Small business for \$1 million in site-readiness funds. Although the direct connection to freight rail remains unresolved at present, it continues to be a long-term goal of a project that, it is hoped, could add hundreds of jobs to the local economy. The substantial state and federal monies are slated for the installation of the needed utilities, roads, and transportation connections.

The industrial park/multimodal freight terminal concept has been long pursued by the City and was aided greatly by its partnership with the Dover/Kent County Metropolitan Planning Organization. The 2021 study provided much of the groundwork and diligence necessary to secure state and federal funding. It is available to review [here](#).

The project was underway at the time of this document's publication. As of early 2025, the City was in the process of permitting with the aim of providing shovel-ready sites for contractors. The park's lot lines were envisioned to provide "standard" spaces for typically encountered needs; however, the City maintains the ability to customize lot dimensions for larger tenants.

Funding disbursement was expected in the Spring of 2025, at which time the infrastructure will be installed. The City is bullish on the park's potential, viewing the City's property as a huge asset because there is a shortage of developable industrial lots, particularly larger ones. The City feels that the potential for future freight rail access will make the property even more sought after. The City intends to continue its partnership with the Kent Economic Partnership with the expectation that the available lots will be bought up.

Unfortunately, the multi-modal freight rail component of the project, developed in part in cooperation with the Dover/Kent MPO, did not appear imminent. Although it remains technically feasible, and a hope for the future, creative financing solutions or funding sources would need to be found.

### 7-3d. Brownfields

Brownfields are real property that may be vacant, abandoned or underutilized as a result of a reasonably-held belief that they may be environmentally contaminated (7 Del.C. § 9103(3)). Productive use of these idle properties provides "new" areas for economic development, primarily in former industrial/urban areas with existing utilities, roads and other infrastructure. DNREC encourages the development of Brownfields and can provide grant funding and other assistance when investigating and remediating Brownfield sites.

The Delaware Brownfields Marketplace is an interactive database that contains a list of market-ready Brownfield sites throughout Delaware. The inventory is designed to make it easier for potential buyers and developers to locate available Brownfield properties. Cleaning up and reinvesting in these properties protects the environment, reduces blight, and helps to create jobs for Delaware citizens, while preserving Delaware's precious green space and natural resources.

To add sites in your municipality to the Marketplace (with owner approval) or to determine if any sites in your municipality are Brownfields, please contact DNREC's Site Investigation and Restoration Section at (302) 395-2600. For more information online, please visit: <http://apps.dnrec.state.de.us/BFExt/BFExtMain.aspx>

The State recommends the following: If any future development occurs on sites with previous manufacturing, industrial, or agricultural use, SIRS strongly recommends that the land owner(s) perform environmental due diligence of the property by performing a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (including a title search to identify environmental covenants) in accordance with Section 9105(c) (2) of the Delaware Hazardous Substance Cleanup Act (HSCA). While this is not a requirement under HSCA, it is good business practice and failure to do so will prevent a person from being able to qualify for a potential affirmative defense under Section 9105(c) (2) of HSCA.

The former Berry Plastics (DE-1526) is a Site Investigation and Restoration Section (SIRS) site. Another brownfield is the old "Super Soda Center" on the corner of U.S. 13 and Milford Harrington Highway. The property is in need of remediation due to soil infiltration from (since removed) fuel storage tanks. A current dispute over who is liable for further necessary remediation has resulted in a valuable, visible business location in the City sitting dormant.

### 7-3e. Planned Investments

The provision of infrastructure and eventual build-out of the City's industrial park, far and away, represents the City's most substantial investment in local economic development. The installation of streets, sidewalks, water/sewer, pump stations and electric represent a sizeable and durable investment. It is hoped to eventually result in up to 750 full-time jobs. Still, it is by no means the only likely future investment. The City is also entertaining several larger commercial propositions. Likewise it has, and does, continue to invest in civic and recreational

amenities, library, community center, rec center, playground (see community services chapter) to bolster the quality of life of what the City hopes will be a boon of new residents.

## 7-3f. Economic Development and Redevelopment Policies

### Position on Commercial Growth

*The City of Harrington welcomes economic growth of all stripes. Much of the City's economic base is comprised of commercial enterprises astride US 13, while the neighborhood-scale commercial uses remain the heart of Harrington. Many of the City's commercial structures have been refreshed, owing partly to the City's participation in the Downtown Development District program. The City wishes to continue to encourage commercial development and redevelopment while maintaining the flexibility to adapt to a quickly changing commercial/retail environment.*

### Position on Redevelopment Potential

*The City feels that it has significant redevelopment potential and has led the way with public/private investments into virtually all of the City's key municipal and community services. These infrastructure upgrades facilitate new development and redevelopment. The City wishes to continue the incremental rehabilitation of its commercial and industrial uses and has a particular interest in realizing a vision for its industrial park.*

### Position on Critical Development Issues

*With an affordable cost of living and a central, accessible location along the Kent County growth axis, Harrington expects to face continued development pressures within (and beyond) the envisioned planning period. Balancing this desired growth, development, and redevelopment against the City's capacity to provide services and its desire to preserve its existing community character are the key issues.*

## Goals and Objectives

- Invest in Harrington's economic foundations
  - Complete infrastructure improvements in the industrial park
  - Continue bolstering the City's cultural and civic offerings
  - Ensure adequate public services to facilitate growth
- Plan for diverse, sustainable, and continual growth
  - Pursue an incremental policy of annexation and growth
  - Preserve lands and opportunities for a variety of housing types
  - Preserve lands suitable for industrial and commercial use
- Coordinate with relevant agencies and organizations for continued success
  - Continue to coordinate with Dover Kent/MPO regarding the possibility of an eventual rail/freight terminal
  - Continue to work with the Kent Economic Partnership to fully realize the industrial park
  - Consult with DNREC periodically on the status of brownfields
  - Continue to manage and revise (as needed) the downtown development district in partnership with the relevant agencies.

# CHAPTER 8. NATURAL RESOURCES

Harrington owes its identity to the rich farmland and pastoral views in and around the municipality just as much as it does its proximity to the State Fairgrounds. It is committed to playing its part in protecting and preserving these invaluable resources for the next generation of residents.

Though Harrington can be described as, ‘pro-growth,’ in terms of increased economic activity and housing opportunities for residents across the spectrum, it has a strong interest in preserving its existing, small-town community character, as well as its irreplaceable environmental assets.

## 8-1. PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

Harrington, as with the rest of Kent County, is in the Atlantic Coastal Plain near the drainage divide between the Chesapeake and Delaware Bays. This geological formation consists of layers of rock covered with a layer of gravel and ice-age sand. The Atlantic Coastal Plain dips gently toward the Atlantic Ocean from north to southeast. The City actually sits just east of this divide and, thus, drains into the Delaware Bay Drainage Area.

Harrington is relatively flat, generally with 25 feet or less of relief. The majority of the City sits at between 50 and 60 feet above sea-level. Brown’s Branch and its tributaries in the Harrington area flow east, away from the city’s center for roughly a mile before bending north and joining the Murderkill River.

### 8-1a. Soils

According to the current U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA-NRCS) Soil Survey for Kent County, Delaware, the majority of underlying soils in Harrington is well suited for agriculture and drains moderately well. It is, generally, not overly prone to flooding. The most prevalent soil type is Fallsington Urban Land complex. Fallsington soils, in general, are characterized by a shallow depth to water table with almost no flooding and only occasional ponding. These account for over 50 percent of the area in and surrounding Harrington.

Corsica Mucky loam comprises 14 percent of the area in question. These are excellent agricultural soils, but are poorly drained and subject to ponding. Marshyhope sandy loam accounts for just over six percent of the area’s soil. It is a good farming soil that is somewhat poorly drained, but not subject to flooding or ponding issues. Rosedale loamy sand of zero to two, and two to five percent slope comprise roughly five percent. These are excellent agricultural soils with irrigation. Drainage, flooding, and ponding are not concerns. The remaining 20 percent of the Harrington area is comprised of small percentages of nearly a dozen similar soils.

## 8-2. WATER RESOURCES

The quality and quantity of water available to Harrington is key to the health and well-being of its residents and to ensuring the long-term viability of the City and the larger community. This section discusses water-quality issues and actions the City can take to minimize negative impacts on water quality within Harrington and the surrounding watershed.

### 8-2a. Watersheds and Total Maximum Daily Loads

A watershed is all the land that water moves across or under while flowing to a specific body of water and includes the plants, animals, and humans who live within it. The City of Harrington is located within the greater Delaware River Basin drainage, specifically within the Murderkill River watershed.. DNREC analysis concludes that the Murderkill and its tributaries are impaired by high levels of bacteria and elevated levels of the nutrients nitrogen and phosphorous.

As such, the watershed's designated uses (recreation, fishing, aquatic life/wildlife, industrial and agricultural water supply) are not fully supported. Accordingly, a TMDL (Total Maximum Daily Load) has been established, addressing point-source and nonpoint-source contributions to the watershed.

These reductions must be met to comply with the state's Water Quality Standards. Under Section 303(d) of the 1972 federal Clean Water Act (CWA), states are required to identify all impaired waters and establish TMDLs to restore their beneficial uses (e.g., swimming, fishing, and drinking water). A TMDL defines the amount of a given pollutant that may be discharged to a water body from point, nonpoint, and natural background sources and still allows attainment of maintenance of the applicable narrative and numerical water quality standards. A TMDL is the sum of the individual Waste Load Allocations (WLAs) for point sources and Load Allocations (LAs) for nonpoint sources and natural background sources of pollution. A TMDL may include a reasonable margin of safety (MOS) to account for uncertainties regarding the relationship between mass loading and resulting water quality. In simplistic terms, a TMDL matches the strength, location, and timing of pollution sources within a watershed with the inherent ability of the receiving water to assimilate the pollutant without adverse impact. A Pollution Control Strategy (PCS) specifies actions necessary to systematically achieve pollutant load reductions specified by a TMDL for a given water body and must reduce pollutants to levels specified by state Water Quality Standards.

TMDL 7408 and 7428, within Title 7 of the Delaware Code, lay out the prescribed limits for this watershed for nutrients and bacteria, respectively. TMDL 7408 contains 6 articles. Articles one through three set limits on discharges from point sources, in this case, the Kent County facility. Articles four and five deal with area-wide remediations. Article four calls for a 30 percent reduction in non-point source nitrogen loading from the 2007/2008 baseline. Article five calls for a 50 percent reduction in nonpoint source phosphorus loads. The final article simply affirms the adequacy of these targeted reductions. TMDL 7428 consists of five articles. Article one is most applicable to Harrington. It requires a 32 percent in nonpoint source bacteria loading for the freshwater portion of the Murderkill River Watershed from the 1997-2005 baseline. Article two sets out more aggressive limits for the marine portion of the watershed. Article three deals with discrete, point source emissions. Article four affirms the projected suitability of the pollution controls and targets. Article five notes that implementation of the TMDL will be achieved through the development of a Pollution Control Strategy (PCS,) developed in partnership with stakeholders, a tributary action team, and the public.

## 8-2b. Excellent Groundwater Recharge Potential Areas

The Environmental Features Map shows that there are significant areas within the municipal boundary and encompassing recently annexed areas. Likewise, there are pockets of excellent recharge surrounding the City in all directions, including areas of potential annexation.

Excellent groundwater recharge potential areas are places where soil composition and slope allow precipitation to readily infiltrate to such a depth that unconfined underground aquifers may be recharged and replenished. Excessive soil compaction, paving, or otherwise developing these areas with impervious cover, such as rooftops, driveways, and parking lots can diminish their function. This can lead to increased issues with storm water and runoff, and, potentially, deplete the aquifer. Delaware code (7 Del. Laws, c. 6082(c)) requires municipalities with populations above 2,000 persons to develop and enforce source water protection regulations, protecting excellent groundwater recharge potential areas and wellhead protection areas. This is typically accomplished by setting upper limits on impervious lot coverage and, in the case of wellheads, prohibiting the storage of toxic pollutants. There are a number of wellhead protection areas in and around Harrington. Five areas are just south of Messicks Road in the southeaster quadrant of the City. Two others are near the confluence of Fairgrounds Road and Harrington Fair Road, just outside the City. There are two areas centered in the City's traditional residential core in its southwestern quadrant and two others just outside of the present municipal boundaries just west of U.S. 13, north of the City.

Harrington’s land use and development code includes regulatory provisions and best management practices designed 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 potential areas and wellhead protection areas that are the source for public drinking water. These may be found in Chapter 350 of the municipal code.

Using the state-maintained maps as a template, the City classifies all excellent groundwater recharge and wellhead protection areas as the City’s sourcewater protection areas. These are then divided into two tiers, tier one and two. Tier one regulates areas within 100 feet of a wellhead. Tier two regulates sourcewater protection areas beyond 100 feet. This includes areas of excellent recharge.

Tier one areas prohibit on-site wastewater treatment, underground and above-ground storage tanks (in accordance with DNREC guidelines), junk-, scrap, or salvage yards and mines or gravel pits.

Tier two areas have impervious surface limits of 50 percent only if all stormwater is treated according to green technology best management practices and is directed to underground recharge or permeable surfaces with excellent recharge. LEED projects may also be partially exempt if accompanied by an environmental assessment report.

These regulations were crafted to satisfy the requirements of the Delaware Source Water Protection Law 2001 in Title 7 Chapter 60 of the *Delaware Code*, Subchapter VI Source Water Protection, Section 6082 (b) and (f) and most recently updated in 2023.

## 8-2c. Wetlands and Floodplain

The Environmental Features Map depicts wetlands in and around Harrington. There is also a floodplain map in the appendix. There are no regulated, tidal wetlands in, or in proximity to, the City. Reviewing the relevant maps, wetlands and floodplain generally follow the contours of the Brown’s branch tributary and streams along the eastern side of the municipality and again to the northwest. The well-defined 100-year floodplain is located along the Brown’s Branch.

In addition to providing wildlife habitat, wetlands provide protection from flooding and protect water quality by naturally filtering runoff on its way to water bodies. Protection of wetlands falls under the regulatory jurisdiction of Section 404 provisions of the federal Clean Water Act. In Delaware, tidal and non-tidal wetlands are regulated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) under this act; however, tidal wetlands are subject to additional and more stringent regulatory protection under Title 7, Chapter 66 provisions of the Delaware Code.

Harrington’s land-use ordinance generally forbids development within identified wetlands. It does make limited exceptions for utility access, pre-existing farming operations, activities specifically approved by the Army Corps of Engineers and DNREC, as well as limited repairs to pre-existing structures. Moreover, the code establishes a riparian buffer for any nontidal freshwater water body or stream depicted on the most recent United States Geological Survey Topographic map, or any wetland under jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and/or DNREC.

## 8-3. RELEVANT PROGRAMS, POLICIES, AND REGULATIONS

### 8-3a. Surface Water Protection—Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL)

The Clean Water Act and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s Water Quality Planning and Management Regulations were developed to maintain the health of our nation’s waters. They provide for the regulation of impaired waters (those polluted to the extent that they no longer meet their designated uses). Designated uses are identified in state water-quality standards. The Murderkill watershed’s uses are primarily recreation, fish and wildlife habitat, and agricultural/industrial water supply.

When waters do not meet these designated uses, TMDLs are required. They serve to specify the maximum amount of pollution that may be allowed to enter a water body and allow it to still meet water-quality standards. The Murderkill Watershed’s TMDL was most recently updated in 2014. The specific requirements are shown below.

*Table 22. TMDL (Nitrogen, Phosphorus, Bacteria) Requirements for the Murderkill Watershed*

Delaware River and Bay Drainage	N- Reduction Requirements	P- Reduction Requirements	Bacteria- Reduction Requirements (freshwater)
Murderkill	30%	50%	32%

With participation from local stakeholders, DNREC developed pollution control strategies (PCS) to meet the TMDL designated reductions. A PCS is a document that specifies where pollution reductions can be made to meet TMDL targets. The PCS document was completed in December 2012.<sup>3</sup> The strategies were designed to reduce nutrient loadings from existing and future land use practices. If implemented as designed, the combination of actions delineated in the strategy should lead to the achievement of the TMDL. DNREC reviews the strategies every ten years to assess if adequate progress is being made. Harrington should anticipate this process and collaborate for the best outcome.

### 8-3b. Air Quality

Air quality remains a regional concern according to the American Lung Association’s “State of the Air” report, which gave Kent County a “B” grade in 2024, up from a “C” grade in 2021. Harrington is committed to playing its part in regional air quality. Though land use regulations in Delaware for moderately sized municipalities do not typically regulate air quality, Harrington’s preference for responsible growth, interest in rail, and encouragement of alternative modes of mobility may aid in incrementally improving the region’s air quality. DNREC’s weatherization assistance program (WAP) may also assist homeowners and renters with cost savings, as well as overall reduced greenhouse emissions. Information is available at <https://dnrec.delaware.gov/climate-coastal-energy/sustainable-communities/weatherization>

### 8-3c. Subdivision Regulations

As a municipality of over 2,000 persons, Harrington was obligated, and has, developed a sourcewater protection ordinance, the City has had one in place for well over a decade. Sections 8-2 and 8-3 above reference specific provisions in the City’s ordinance as they relate to specific environmental concerns. Overall, the City’s provisions are comprehensive, providing significant guidance, and often restriction, to development within identified wetlands, wellhead protection areas, and areas of excellent recharge potential. Where development and disturbance are allowed, it is often required to adopt a series of best management practices or to demonstrate through certified analysis that the proposed change would have no adverse impact. The City’s riparian buffer requirement is consistent with the Kent County requirement.

#### Goals and Objectives

- Coordinate with relevant agencies and committees to improve water quality in the Murderkill Watershed
  - Consider municipal participation in the eventual update of the Murderkill Watershed pollution control strategy (PCS) document
  - Review the municipal environmental ordinances for opportunities to align with the updated PCS.

<sup>3</sup> This report is available online at: <https://documents.dnrec.delaware.gov/swc/wa/Documents/WatershedPlans/Murderkill%202012%20PCS%20final.pdf>

- Assist property owners interested in agricultural preservation of high-value agricultural parcels, in keeping with the City's pastoral surroundings
  - Link to the Delaware Department of Agriculture (DDA) agricultural preservation program from the municipal website
  - Coordinate with DDA on the status of parcels the city would like to see preserved, as well as maintaining an awareness of parcels that may exit the program
- Preserve the environmental features, including mature vegetation, with an emphasis on preserving quality tree stands, stream valleys, steep slopes, floodplains, and other wetlands
  - Evaluate the efficacy of existing regulations in the municipal ordinance and revise as needed
- Limit the growth of harmful atmospheric emissions attributable to Harrington
  - Continue to encourage a community design accessible to all transportation modes
  - Continue to consider innovative, green projects such as the recently completed solar farm

# CHAPTER 9. PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE

Harrington residents are fortunate to live within easy reach of several flagship outdoor recreation attractions. Locally, the City boasts its own parks and recreation department as well as a recently expanded community center. Aside from its own amenities, City residents also benefit from nearby recreational activities in Milford.

## 9-1. LOCAL AND REGIONAL FACILITIES

Table 23 (below) details many of the parks and recreation venues in proximity to the City of Harrington.

*Table 23 - Harrington Region Park and Recreation Facilities*

Facility	Features
Freedom Park and Chief Normal Barlow Pavilion	Open space, picnic/gazebo facilities
Harrington Parks & Rec Facility	The City's newly expanded parks and rec facility hosts an outdoor playground, on-site parking, and a full-sized hardwood court.
Lake Forest Middle School Add high school.	The elementary school hosts a playground, baseball/softball diamonds, and a football field.
Harrington Little League	The Harrington Little League, between Raughley Hill Road and U.S. 13, boasts five diamonds accommodating all levels from T-ball to full-sized "majors" play.
Can-Do Playground	15 minutes due east, on the outskirts of Milford, the Can-Do playground offers a wide variety of swings, climbing structures, etc. on a rubberized surface. There is equipment suitable for younger children of all ages and abilities.
Killens Pond State Park	Killens Pond State Park is located immediately to the east of U.S. Route 13 just north-east of Harrington next to Lake Forest High School. The park surrounds a 66-acre pond known as Killens Pond located along the Murderkill River. Amenities available include boating, fishing, hiking, playgrounds, and picnic areas. The park also features a nature center, year-round campgrounds, and a water park that is open during the summer months. An admission fee or yearly pass is required to enter the park.
Killens Pond Water Park	Killens Pond Water Park is a unique facility located within Killens Pond State Park that is usually open from Memorial Day to Labor Day. Amenities include a mushroom fountain, a floating lily pad fun walk, two 205-foot-long twisting water slides, and other interactive water features.

Facility	Features
Browns Branch County Park	Browns Branch Park is a 78-acre park located south of Carpenter Bridge Road, to the northeast of Harrington. Park amenities include two children’s playground areas, softball fields, volleyball courts, a football field, 6.5 acres of multipurpose fields, trails, and picnic areas.
Hunn Nature Park	Hunn Nature Park is located off Route 10 on the far side of Camden. At 172 acres, this park is the largest in the Kent County system. It comprises uplands, wetlands, restored landfill meadows, and subaqueous lands. Features of the park include approximately 1.3 miles of trails, most of which is hard-packed stone. An additional 0.6 miles is planned to connect directly to the multi-modal path on Route 10 out to a waterway overlook and a bridge crossing to create a loop on the east end of the park.
Blairs Pond Public Park	Blairs Pond, administered by DNREC, is a 30+ acre recreational opportunity a few minutes east on Williamsville Road. The pond itself (and boat ramp) is the primary attraction for fishing or wildlife enthusiasts. Still, the park has some trails and picnic facilities as well.
Brecknock County Park –	<p>This 86-acre park boasts multiple recreational opportunities. For the kids, there is a one-of-a-kind playground called Piccadilly Castle. The park is managed by Kent County Parks and Recreation and the playground is just one of the kid-friendly features. More than a mile of nature trails lies along the Isaac Branch.</p> <p><b>Facility Amenities Include:</b></p> <p>Public Restroom, Playground, Horseshoes, Nature Trails, Walking Trails, Sand Volleyball, Pavilion, Softball Fields, Multi-Purpose Fields, Picnic Area, Outdoor Grill, Nature Center, Fitness Area, Bike Rack, Field Rentals, &amp; Stage.</p>
Abbott’s Mill Nature Center - Milford Millponds Nature Preserve	The Abbott’s Mill Nature Center is a 376 acre property and part of the much larger (1,880-acre) Milford Millponds Nature Preserve. The Nature Center boasts several miles of woodland trails and a handicap-accessible boardwalk. Boating and fishing is available in the pond and is facilitated by a public boat launch.

There are a number of places that Harrington residents can enjoy outdoor recreation and physical activity. Freedom Park, directly adjacent to the police department, offers passive open spaces, a picturesque gazebo, and about as safe an environment as one is likely to find. The Killen’s Pond water park is a regional destination perfect for beating the summer heat, only minutes away. The middle school also hosts football, baseball, softball, and outdoor playground facilities. Additional playground facilities are a short drive away in and around Milford, as well as the Brown’s Branch County Park, which serves as an anchor point for outdoor sports. Likewise, the Milford riverwalk is easily accessible and an alluring destination for those seeking a casual stroll. Fishermen, kayakers, birdwatchers, or general nature enthusiasts have their pick of nearby destinations between the numerous local ponds and nature areas. Those seeking wilderness trails literally have a myriad of options.



*Figure 14 - Harrington's Little League Field, a Prized Community Asset*

## 9-2. OPEN SPACE AND NATURAL AREAS

The City of Harrington has no direct neighbors. With the exception of the casino and fairgrounds due south, the City is ringed in all directions by a mixture of agricultural uses and forested areas, and limited residential development, as envisioned by the Ken County plan.

Several state-identified natural areas are located in proximity to Harrington. To the north, there is the nearly 6,000 acre Murderkill River natural area. To the west, several tracts comprise the 2,900 acre Marshyhope Forests natural area. To the east/southeast, several tracts comprise the 1,900 acre Milford MillPonds natural area. There are also a handful of conservation easements.

## 9-3. LOCAL AND REGIONAL TRAILS

Trails are also an important local and regional consideration. Sometimes useful to the local transportation system, they are almost always a welcome diversion from the day-to-day and provide physical and mental health benefits in equal measure.



Figure 15 - Killens' Pond Splash Park

Table 24. Regional Pathways and Trails

Trail	Length
Brecknock Loop	0.9 miles
Brecknock Nature Extension (Park to W.B. Simpson Elementary)	0.8 miles
Tidbury Creek Loop	0.5 miles
Abbott's Mill Nature Center	2.5 miles
Browns Branch Nature Trail	0.3 miles
Browns Branch Boundary Loop	1.1 miles
Hunn Nature Park	1.3 miles
Blair's Pond	.5 miles
Killens Pond Loop Trail	2.7 miles

Source: DNREC

Harrington residents have numerous opportunities to access quality trails readily at hand, so many, in fact, that this document only lists those within walking distance or a very short drive. Those willing to drive 20 or so minutes may also access The Isaacs Branch greenway, the Fork Branch Nature preserve, the Bridgeville trail, the Redden State Forest, Ponder's Tract Pemberton Forest, and of course, the neighboring Milford Riverwalk.

## 9-4. HARRINGTON PARKS AND RECREATION

The Harrington Parks and Recreation Department is staffed by full-time employees and enthusiastically supplemented by numerous volunteers. Among these is the 'Friends of Harrington Parks and Recreation,' a 501©3 group that supports the department.

The community center serves a variety of civic uses. A partial list of the sports and physical activities either organized by the department or hosted by the community center would include:

- Adult fitness
- Dance (youth and adult)
- Field Hockey
- Pop-Warner Football
- Tennis
- Soccer
- Wrestling
- Cheer
- Basketball
- Pickleball

## 9-4a. William R. “Bobby” Outten Complex Expansion



Figure 16 - William R. "Bobby" Outten Complex

At the time of this plan’s writing, the City had recently completed a significant expansion to the existing community center. Several years of planning, fundraising, and grant-writing have enabled the city to add a second structure to the facility.

Key additions now include a full-sized basketball court, a playground, and on-site parking, as well as **outdoor basketball and pickleball**. City staff are hopeful that the increased capacity may be leveraged to increase the center’s draw to middle and high-school-aged athletes.

## 9-5. RECREATION FACILITY NEEDS

Technically speaking, Harrington does not have an abundance of open space or parkland in the city. However, significant assets are in close proximity and are widely considered as assets by the community.

The Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), lists the following activity types as “high facility needs,” in the Harrington area:

- Walking and jogging trails
- Public swimming pools or beach
- Visiting historic sites
- Fishing
- Picnicking
- Playgrounds
- Visiting a zoo
- Bicycling
- Camping
- Dog Walking

Though generally well covered by local offerings, the City may wish to refer to these regional needs as it considers new offerings at the community center.

### Goals and Objectives

- Work toward a network of interconnected open spaces, parks, and trails
  - Coordinate with DeDOT and the Dover/Kent MPO to rectify any sidewalk or crosswalk issues as needed
- Expand the reach and scope of offerings at the Community Center

- Consider programs and opportunities to entice middle and high-school aged children to be more involved
- Provide safe and reliable circulation for all road users within the city, including roads, sidewalks, and bike paths
  - Consider a bicycle safety assessment
  - Consider a walking inventory of sidewalk, crosswalk, and curb-cut positioning, adequacy, and condition
  - Coordinate with the school district or the DelDOT Safe Routes to School program regarding the missing sidewalk segment between the elementary school and the library
  - Explore opportunities to utilize the City's TND designation, assuring maximum connectivity within and between potential new developments

# CHAPTER 10. LAND USE AND ANNEXATION

This chapter begins with a discussion of Harrington’s existing land use. It then focuses on the discussion of planning efforts that have been considered during the development of the city’s future land uses. The future land uses are designated for the area within the municipal boundary, and the link between land use and zoning is provided. The chapter discusses recommendations concerning land use and zoning, concluding with a discussion on growth and annexation.

## 10-1. EXISTING LAND USE

Existing land use is a snapshot of the city’s current development pattern. This development pattern is depicted on the Existing Land Use Map. The map identifies the land use for each parcel as of 2024.

### 10-1a. Existing Land Use Designations

Table 25 explains how land was classified into the uses shown on the Existing Land Use Map.

*Table 25. Existing Land Use Designations*

Land Use	Description
Parks and Recreation	Preserved public and private open spaces including parks, recreation facilities, and areas dedicated in connection with land development
Low Density Residential	Primarily single-family residential units
Medium Density Residential	These are primarily single family homes, single family conversions to duplex, duplex/twin units, and townhomes
High Density Residential	Typically ranging from multi-family structures up to multi-family, multi-story designated apartment dwellings.
Mixed Residential	These areas may contain a mixture of all residential structures. In some cases, limited commercial uses may also be present.
Neighborhood Commercial	Smaller scale personal services, typically pedestrian-oriented or generating very little traffic.
Central Commercial	Neighborhood-scale commercial structures providing retail or services. These typically cover a significant proportion of the lot and rely on pedestrian access or street parking.
Service Commercial	Highway/regional commercial structures

Manufacturing	Areas and structures used for the assembly of goods, office complex, or warehousing.
Industrial	Areas or structures capable of accommodating uses encompassed in “manufacturing,” as well as industrial use which may produce some objectionable conditions.
Railroad	The physical rail bed and infrastructure as well as land within the railway’s ownership or right-of-way
Undeveloped	These areas have a zoning and a designated future land use. However, if one were to walk past and look, they are presently undeveloped.

Table 26 summarizes the distribution of land uses within the City. As shown below, Harrington is largely a residential community, though it does host significant manufacturing uses and has a good portion of yet to be developed land. Much of this is anticipated to transition to residential (see future land use discussion).

*Table 26. Existing Land Use Breakdown*

Existing Land Use	Number	Total Acres	Percent
Parks and Rec	3	6.84	0.1%
Low Density Residential	1086	1033.16	27.1%
Medium Density Residential	79	41.14	0.9%
High Density Residential	180	207.48	4.6%
Mixed Residential	201	115.73	17.6%
Neighborhood Commercial	10	15.97	0.4%
Central Commercial	89	36.84	0.8%
Service Commercial	98	209.29	4.6%
Manufacturing	20	193.35	7.4%
Industrial	3	156.89	1.5%
Railroad	3	32.04	0.7%
Undeveloped	10	942.95	34.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1789</b>	<b>2745.95</b>	

Source: City of Harrington, 2024

## 10-2. PLANNING ENVIRONMENT

The Comprehensive Plan effort has reviewed other applicable plans and policies that influence the Harrington area.

### 10-2a. Strategies for State Policies and Spending

Delaware’s Strategies for State Policies and Spending, prepared by the Delaware Office of State Planning Coordination and adopted by Executive Order 42 by Governor Carney on July 23, 2020, identifies “Level of Investment” areas that are guidelines for land use as well as state investment. The 2020 Strategies Map, in the appendix, show Level of Investment Areas within the City. Harrington is shown to be largely within the Level 1 zone. Small areas within appear as Level 2, with a few pockets classified as Level 3, seemingly for their proximity to streams.

Beyond the City’s current boundary, the strategies show a mixture of Level 2 and Level three immediately North of the City, with some Level 4 surrounding streams and tributaries. Existing development in the Northeast quadrant is also a mix of Level 2 and 3. Southeast of the City is almost exclusively “out of play” or Level 4, as are much of the lands to the South, with the exception off the fairgrounds.

Generalizing, the State is most supportive of new growth and redevelopment in Level 1, anticipates growth in Level 2, and is accepting of thoughtful, planned, adequately resourced development in Level 3.

### 10-2b. Kent County

Kent County’s latest comprehensive plan was adopted in the fall of 2018.

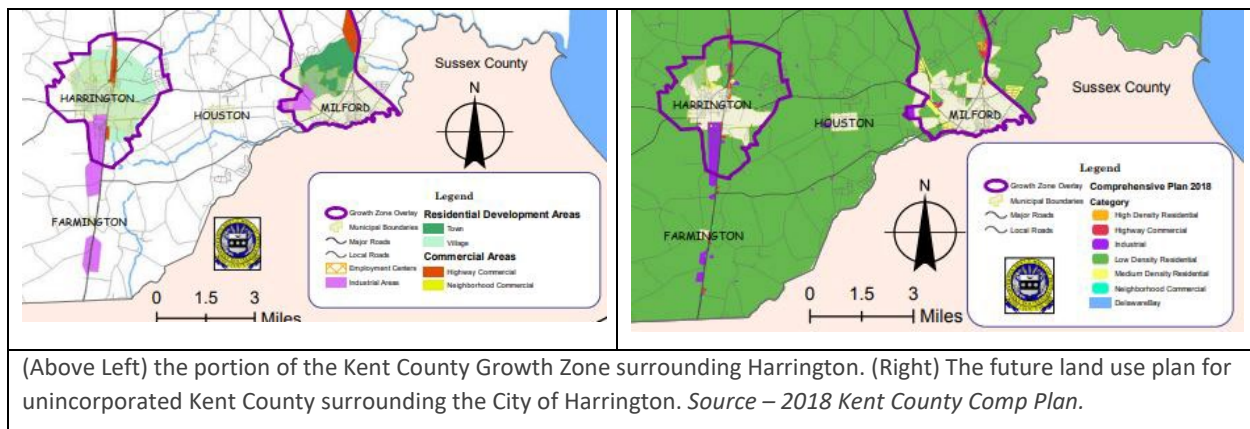
A longstanding principle of the county is its growth overlay feature. Kent County has long sought to direct and encourage residential growth to areas and municipalities within the identified zone. It aims to discourage unnecessary sprawl, preserve high-value agricultural lands, promote growth near existing infrastructure and services, and increase efficiencies in the provision of public services.

**Growth Zone** - The county recognizes municipalities as central to the above approach. Beginning at the New Castle/Kent County line, the zone largely encompasses Smyrna and Clayton and, proceeding south, surrounds Cheswold. The zone encompasses the majority of the Dover/Camden/Wyoming area and, moving south, extends from Woodside and Felton as far East as Magnolia and Frederica before narrowing as it proceeds southward to Milford. Well west of Milford, Harrington has been afforded its own “bubble” of growth zone, encompassing the City and its immediate surrounds.

As such, the City should not expect intense development pressure beyond the identified zone in Kent County, particularly with the County having recently taken steps to seriously discourage on-site septic. Map 7B of the Kent County Plan illustrates the growth zone and future land use discussion.<sup>4</sup>

**Kent County Future Land Use** – Beyond the municipal boundary, in any direction Harrington could conceivably grow or annex, the County shows a preference for “Low Density Residential.” This meshes perfectly with the city’s modest annexation considerations. The only real exception being the County envisioning some industrial and highway commercial astride U.S. 13 and the rail line.

Figure 17 - Kent County Growth Zone and Future Land Use



### 10-3. FUTURE LAND USE WITHIN HARRINGTON

The Future Land Use Map, in the appendix, illustrates Harrington’s desired configuration for, at least, the next five to ten years. Harrington’s anticipated layout stands largely unchanged since the prior plan’s adoption. City representatives did identify some housekeeping edits. Other than these, the only notable changes were assigning future land-use designations to recent annexations. In all cases, these were accomplished in accordance with the previous document’s description. Most are now coded mixed residential. One is shown as low density residential.

Table 27. Future Land Use Designations

Land Use	Description
Parks and Recreation	Preserved public and private open spaces including parks, recreation facilities, and areas dedicated in connection with land development
Low Density Residential	Primarily single-family residential units

<sup>4</sup> Map is available to view online here: <https://www.co.kent.de.us/media/913825/2018-Comprehensive-Plan-Adopted-9-11-18-Full-Documents-with-Appendices.pdf>

Medium Density Residential	These are primarily single family homes, single family conversions to duplex, duplex/twin units, and townhomes
High Density Residential	Typically ranging from multi-family structures up to multi-family, multi-story designated apartment dwellings.
Mixed Residential	These areas may be suitable for a variety of residential structures and densities. In some instances, limited commercial may be allowed.
Neighborhood Commercial	Smaller scale personal services, typically pedestrian-oriented or generating very little traffic.
Central Commercial	Neighborhood-scale commercial structures providing retail or services. These typically cover a significant proportion of the lot and rely on pedestrian access or street parking.
Service Commercial	Highway/regional commercial structures
Manufacturing	Areas and structures used for the assembly of goods, office complex, or warehousing.
Industrial	Areas or structures capable of accommodating uses encompassed in "manufacturing," as well as industrial use which may produce some objectionable conditions.
Railroad	The physical rail bed and infrastructure as well as land within the railway's ownership or right-of-way

## Future Land Use Breakdown

Table 28 shows the breakdown of the future land use categories by geographic area.

*Table 28. Future Land Use Breakdown*

Future Land Use	Number	Total Acres	Percent
Parks and Rec	3	6.84	0.2%
Low Density Residential	1088	1229.05	41.1%
Medium Density Residential	79	41.14	1.4%
High Density Residential	180	207.48	6.9%
Mixed Residential	208	800.68	26.8%
Neighborhood Commercial	10	15.97	0.5%
Central Commercial	89	36.84	1.2%
Service Commercial	98	209.29	7.0%
Manufacturing	20	193.35	6.5%
Industrial	4	219.00	7.3%
Railroad	3	32.04	1.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,782</b>	<b>2,991.68</b>	

Source: City of Harrington, 2024

## 10-4. LAND USE AND ZONING

The link between land use and zoning is important because Title 22, Section 702(c) of the Delaware Code requires that municipalities:

*“...within 18 months of the adoption of a comprehensive development plan or revision thereof, amend its official zoning map to rezone all lands within the municipality in accordance with the uses of land provided for in the comprehensive development plan.”*

Zoning is the chief means for implementing the Comprehensive Plan, consisting of a written document and a series of maps. The maps show districts or zones into which the municipality is divided to regulate the use of land. The document specifies the types of activities (uses) that can occur in each district either as a matter of right (in all circumstances) or under certain conditions (conditional uses). It also regulates building height, lot sizes, setbacks, yards and green space, the number and sizes of signs, and space for off-street parking. Some municipalities incorporate environmental protection standards in zoning ordinances, while others have stand-alone ordinances with cross-references to zoning standards.

Zoning works with subdivision regulations. Subdivision refers to the process of splitting up or assembling land for development. The regulations governing this process designate utility locations, street rights-of-way, open space, and common areas. They also outline the services, such as water, sewer, gas, and electricity, and amenities that a developer must supply prior to the sale of subdivided (or assembled) land. Increasingly, the distinction between zoning and subdivision regulations is becoming blurred.

Development plan approvals cannot take place without making sure that plans comply with zoning and subdivision codes. Over the past several years, there has been a trend in the state towards consolidated subdivision and zoning regulations into a single land use code.

### 10-4a. Harrington’s Existing Zoning Classifications

Most recently comprehensively updated in 2015, The Harrington’s ordinance is available to review on the City’s website <https://harrington.delaware.gov/files/2015/07/15-06-Ch-440-Zoning-with-Exhibit-Final-1.pdf>.

It is important to clearly state three points.

One, the linked code and map depicts and describes Harrington’s ordinance as it was before the adoption, certification, and implementation of this comprehensive plan. As discussed in the section above, municipalities have an 18-month window to update their zoning and subdivision ordinances following the adoption and certification of a new plan.

Two, the City is not bound by previous conventions, terminology, or versions of its land-use code, or any apparent connection between its vision for future land use and current (pre-update) zoning classifications. It is obligated by state code only to update its ordinance to reflect the future land uses, as depicted on the future land use map. Though City representatives have not indicated the likelihood of a sweeping overhaul, it is free to do so and the names, characterization, or nature of the districts may change.

Three, (below) the plan will abbreviate and characterize the existing (2015) zoning classifications. Interested parties should consult the actual code for a definitive understanding or legal interpretation of each.

## Residential

### Single-Family Residential (R1)

As the name implies, this zoning category is intended for single-family homes at a lower density. Aside from these, it allows for public buildings, parks, and playgrounds. If certain conditions are met, certain religious, civic, or health-care related uses may be allowed, as well as railroad ROW and structures. This classification has been most closely associated with the “low density residential” future land use designation.

### Duplex Residential Zone (R-2)

Again, as the name implies, the R-2 zone is intended to provide “low to medium density” residential development, primarily in the form of duplex homes. New construction is allowed, though it seems the zone was created, at least in large part, to permit and codify the conversion of single-family homes into duplexes. R-1 uses are permitted. B&B’s are possible as a conditional use. This classification has been most closely associated with the “medium-density residential” future land use designation.

### Townhouse Residential Zone (R-3)

Intended largely for townhomes, which the City characterizes as medium density, this zone includes areas where a townhome development pattern is generally established. It is also a potential designation for areas where services and facilities could support a bit more density. Less intense uses continue to be allowed. This classification has been most closely associated with the “medium-density residential” future land use designation.

### Multi-Family Residential Zone (R-4)

The R-4 zone is intended to provide for medium to high density, multi-family dwelling units. All less intense residential uses are allowable by-right. The zone’s primary function would seem to be permitting designated, purpose-built apartment complexes. The City’s preference for single-party ownership of the structure seems to favor apartment rentals over condominiums. This zone is most closely associated with the “high density residential” future land use designation, though the text of the (2015) code also makes mention of “medium density.”

## Commercial

### Neighborhood Commercial Zone (C-1)

The C-1 zone represent the City’s least intense commercial designation. Its purpose is to permit small-scale commercial (light retail and personal services) in close proximity to, and in relative harmony with, residential areas. Commercial on the ground floor with residential above is also allowable. Drive throughs are not permitted. This zone is most closely associated with the future land use designation of the same name.

### Central Commercial Zone (C-2)

The C-2 zone is intended to permit commercial uses primarily providing local goods and services. It is generally located in or near areas of medium to high residential density and/or where mixed-use patterns of development are generally established. It was designed to create lively, safe, human-scaled gathering places for the community. Less intense commercial uses are allowed. Residential above commercial is allowed. Drive throughs are generally not allowed. In terms of scale, the code allows a range of 2,500sq/ft to 10,000sq/ft in building area. This zone is most closely associated with the future land use classification of the same name.

### Service Commercial (C-3)

The C-3 zone is intended to permit highway-oriented commercial uses serving the locality and the region. It is most closely associated with the “Service Commercial” future land use designation.

## Other

### **Manufacturing Zone (M)**

The Manufacturing Zone is intended to provide locations for light to moderate intensity manufacturing, office, warehouse, wholesale and research establishments. The code makes several mentions of employment. Aside from the above, permitted uses include public utilities, breweries, beverage blending or bottling, credit card processing/bulk mailing, and nurseries. The zone contains provisions largely containing all production processes to the interior of buildings. A number of typically objectionable uses that are prohibited are laid out in the code. Examples include hot mix asphalt, smelting and refining, slaughterhouses, and junkyards. This zone is most closely associated with the future land use designation of the same name.

### **Industrial Park Zone (IMP)**

The IMP zone largely mirrors the manufacturing zone, but is intended to regulate activity within the City's industrial park. The code alludes to a more permissive range of activities, including "those which may produce some objectionable conditions." However, the prohibited uses and conditions are very similar to manufacturing. This zone is most closely associated with the "Industrial" future land use designation.

### **Traditional Neighborhood Development Zone (TND)**

Potential TND sites must also be at least 25 acres in size, or directly abut an existing TND parcel (with other conditions as well). Summarily, the zone encourages a development pattern typical of a traditional neighborhood: connected streets, a mix of residential and commercial uses, and residential densities above that of the typical single-family or townhouse development. Although the zone has much in common with the "neighborhood commercial," "central commercial," "medium density residential," and "high density residential" future land use classifications, there is no direct correlation. At present, TND does not have a direct association with a particular future land use designation, though, in practice it has been applied in areas shown as mixed residential for future land use.

## 10-5. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN – FUTURE LAND USE AND ANNEXATION

Harrington very much sees itself as a small City primed for growth of all types. Residentially, the City feels it is well positioned to continue to serve as a comparatively affordable bedroom community to Dover and other larger municipalities. Concurrently, it is very aware of the potential value of the shovel-ready manufacturing and industrial opportunities it has, as well as potential rail access.

Given that the City sits squarely within areas favored for growth by Kent County and the State's own growth strategies, it has opted to adopt a pro-growth strategy in terms of internal build-out, as well as identifying adjoining areas for potential further expansion. Speaking in broad terms, the City generally favors buildout within existing municipal boundaries as a logical and responsible first step. However, it has developed a substantive land-use ordinance with provisions for the sustainable development of larger tracts of land. The City is very aware that these types of opportunities are sometimes only on offer one time.

## 10-5a. Community Development Plan – Foundational Policy Statements

### Community Character Statement

*Harrington is fortunate to have a strong sense of community. It cherishes its rich traditions and strong civic engagement. Harrington is a small city where families and community members can thrive in a small-town atmosphere. It is somewhat of a bedroom community to its larger neighbors, but it's a bedroom community with homes families can afford to live in that also offers opportunities for entrepreneurs and entertainment and civic opportunities for its residents to enjoy. Harrington is, and aspires to continue, as a safe, clean, engaged, small-town City.*

### Position on Housing Growth

*Harrington feels it is ideally located and economically positioned to responsibly absorb a portion of the significant growth envisioned to occur in Kent County. Therefore, it is supportive of housing growth within the City's current boundaries and in identified areas of potential annexation.*

### Position on Population Growth

*Harrington welcomes population growth and development in general. The City sits astride Rt. 13, south of Dover, representing the western portion of Kent County's identified growth zone. At its present size, the City already serves as a commercial and employment center for many of the smaller communities surrounding it. The adjoining casino and the City's own industrial park provide a sound foundation for growth.*

### Position on Commercial Growth

*The City of Harrington welcomes economic growth of all stripes. Much of the City's economic base is comprised of commercial enterprises astride SR 13, while the neighborhood-scale commercial uses remain the heart of Harrington. Many of the City's commercial structures have been refreshed, owing partly to the City's participation in the Downtown Development District program. The City wishes to continue to encourage commercial development and redevelopment while maintaining the flexibility to adapt to a quickly changing commercial/retail environment.*

### Position on Development of Adjacent Areas

*Harrington has periodically annexed or updated its plan to allow for the annexation of interested property owners. Consistent with the State Strategies for Policies and Spending, the City generally favors the development and annexation of adjoining parcels and tracts of land*

*when sufficient municipal services and capacity can be demonstrated. The City is generally less supportive of adjacent development when annexation is not considered.*

## Position on Expansion of Boundaries

*The City is amenable to expansion, the extent of which is depicted in the growth and annexation map. Generally, the City would prioritize enclaves and contiguous parcels. The City is also mindful of demonstrating sufficient capacity to provide services. However, in keeping with the City's position on the development of adjacent areas, it would prefer that nearby development occur within the City's boundaries at the outset, instead of being developed in Kent County and then annexed in.*

### 10-5b. Community Development Plan – Future Land Use in the City

Harrington's desired pattern of future land use within the municipal boundaries is depicted in the future land use map in the appendix to this document. Typical of many growing communities, the City does show a fair bit of un (or under) developed areas reserved for lower density residential growth. These can be seen on the periphery of the City, particularly in the east/southeast and northwest parts of the city.

Less commonly seen is Harrington's diversity in future land use/housing policy. Significant chunks of undeveloped lands, many of which are comprised of annexations from the past planning period, are envisioned as mixed residential. These allow for a wide variety of housing types, styles, and densities while also, potentially, providing for significant rental opportunities. If successfully implemented, one can envision a city full of varied and diverse neighborhoods instead of the typical "historic core" ringed and isolated exclusively by larger lot, single family developments.

The overall vision has remained consistent with highway commercial dominating along Rt. 13, the bulk of the City's existing neighborhoods west of the rail line with local commercial centered on the area surrounding Commerce Street. Pockets of medium and high-density residential are interspersed throughout the fabric of the City, both east and west of the rail line. The City also reserves significant tracts for manufacturing and industrial.

### 10-5c. Community Development Plan – Growth and Annexation

Harrington has been reasonably active in annexing throughout the past planning period. The Bonniwell, Ryan Farms, Hollywood Cemetery, and the Coastal Medical incorporations represent the bulk of this activity. Screen grabs of all annexations can be found in the appendix to this document.

### 10-5d. Community Development Plan – Position on Development of Adjacent Areas

The City's position on the expansion of boundaries appears above in section 10-5a. Given that the City sits squarely within areas favored for growth by Kent County and the State's own growth strategies, it has opted to adopt a pro-growth strategy in terms of internal build-out, as well as identifying adjoining areas for potential further expansion. Speaking in broad terms, the City generally favors buildout within existing municipal boundaries as a logical and responsible first step. However, it has developed a substantive land-use ordinance with provisions for the sustainable development of larger tracts of land. The City is very aware that these types of opportunities are sometimes only on offer one time.

The areas the city would consider for possible annexation can be seen on the Annexation map in the appendix of this document. City officials did not describe any annexations they viewed as imminent or targeted. The City's concern could best be described as proactive. For one, most surrounding residences utilize private wells and septic.

Should issues with either of these arise and homeowners request annexation, the City wants to be prepared. Second, and perhaps most likely, is that the City would very much prefer that any substantive development to take place adjacent to Harrington be undertaken as an annexation to be developed rather than the annexation of a development. Without having pre-identified these annexation areas, the City feels it risks development pressures potentially outpacing the planning process.

Just west of the rail line on the south side of town, the City identified a handful of manufacturing parcels it would be amenable to annexing. Due south, the City would be very willing to incorporate the Delaware State Fair and casino. To the City's southeast, it has identified a handful of parcels that could be suitable for somewhat higher density development, if annexation were pursued. The City is aware that some of these parcels have agricultural preservation easements. Others are identified as preservation districts and, in the future, may be under easement. The City supports agricultural preservation. These parcels are indicated on the annexation map in the appendix. However, until the ultimate disposition of all the parcels bordering the City are determined, Harrington prefers to depict the hypothetical pattern of development it would support if the property owners approached it for annexation and were unincumbered.

To the east and northeast of town, the City identifies a mixture of existing suburban and undeveloped/underdeveloped agricultural parcels as candidates for mix of residential uses. Many of these sit adjacent to areas the City has recently annexed and zoned TND. All enclaves (and quasi-enclaves) are identified. To the west, the City identifies most of the parcels abutting its boundary, and/or the larger agricultural parcels behind the parcels directly abutting its municipal boundary.

All told, the annexation map details seven potential commercial annexations totaling just under 21 acres; 58 high density residential parcels totaling nearly 550 acres; five low density residential parcels at just over three acres, 21 manufacturing parcels totaling 57 acres, and 614 mixed residential totaling just under 4,400 acres.

## Goals and Objectives

- Continue to accommodate a mix of uses and use intensities within the City, in accordance with Harrington's favored community character
  - Preserve existing areas slated for medium or higher-density residential development
  - Explore opportunities to site manufacturing and industrial uses in appropriately designated areas
- Maximize the benefit of potential future annexations
  - Encourage street and pedestrian connectivity to the existing community
  - Consider utilizing the City's TND approach on suitably large parcels
  - Ensure sufficient capacity for service provision
- Evaluate and update the City's zoning and subdivision ordinance to reflect the vision detailed in the comprehensive plan
  - Consider revisions or code updates to potentially exclude certain features (wetlands, buffers, stormwater management) from allowable density calculations.

# CHAPTER 11. IMPLEMENTATION AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION

## 11-1. POST-PLAN REQUIREMENTS

This section summarizes the provisions of the Delaware Code that must be complied with following adoption of this Comprehensive Plan.

- Section 702(c) – Adopt comprehensive rezoning in accordance with land uses provided for in this plan within 18 months after adopting this Plan.
- Section 702(e) – Within five years following adoption, review this plan to determine if its provisions are still relevant.
- Section 702(f) – Submit annual reports to the Office of State Planning Coordination (OSPC) each July 1.

## 11-2. INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION

During this plan's development, Harrington coordinated with Kent County. Of course, the City relied heavily on the goals and data points in the most recent Kent County plan as well as informal back and forth with Kent planning staff. In March of 2025, the City shared a draft of its plan with Kent County planning. The City invited general comment, as well as any specific thoughts on its proposed annexation map. The County promptly responded, noting that portions of the area are under agricultural preservation. This was added to the map.

Although Harrington is reasonably staffed, it is still a very small city. Like most all Delaware municipalities, it faces issues such as regional growth pressure, the demands of emergency preparedness, water quality, stormwater intrusion, a regional shortage of affordable housing, and the demands of significantly sized economic development initiatives. Notable areas where collaboration will remain essential include:

- Ongoing assurance of adequate police, fire, and EMS services and mutual aid agreements
- Ongoing cooperation with DNREC to close out and/or monitor any remaining brownfield concerns
- Ongoing cooperation with DNREC and future tributary action teams in order to engage in upcoming pollution control strategies
- Periodic consultation with DNREC regarding the City's water allocation
- Periodic consultation with Kent County regarding sewer outflows and allocations
- Continued engagement with DeIDOT and the Dover/Kent MPO regarding improvements noted in the industrial park TIS, as well as routine sidewalk, crosswalk, traffic, and transit concerns.
- Ongoing engagement with the Kent County Conservation District regarding stormwater management

## 11-3. IMPLEMENTATION

Below are the City's identified goals and objectives. In practice, the majority of the City's priorities will require some measure of collaboration. The plan goals are also listed at the end of each relevant chapter.

Reader's note, the goals and objectives are formatted with the objectives listed as sub-bullets of the most relevant goal.

- **Goal** is a broad statement of direction or intent
  - **Objective** is an action or consideration that may be accomplished in support of the stated goal.

## Community Character and Design

- Continue economic development, housing, land use, and annexation policies that will support continued growth and vitality of the Harrington area
  - Update the City's zoning and subdivision ordinance to reflect the vision put forth in the plan maps.
- Value the City's socio-economic, racial, and ethnic diversity throughout the growth process
- Grow from within by continuing to serve as a destination for families to form, grow, and thrive
- Continue to provide sound and affordable options for home ownership and rentals
- Support private historic preservation initiatives
  - Consider mapping and delineating historic districts if and when private entities petition for preservation or recognition
- Encourage home ownership and citizen investment in the community
  - Consider opportunities to obtain Community Development Block Grants that may assist homeowners with property maintenance or repair needs.
- Maintain and improve the City's cultural and community resources, particularly its robust culture of civic and community engagement.

## Community Profile (demographics)

- Continue economic development, housing, land use, and annexation policies that will support continued growth and vitality of the Harrington area.
  - Update the City's zoning and subdivision ordinance to reflect the vision put forth in the plan maps
- Value the City's socio-economic, racial, and ethnic diversity throughout the growth process.
- Grow from within by continuing to serve as a destination for families to form, grow, and thrive
  - Continue to allow for a variety of housing styles, densities, and rental opportunities
  - Continue to diversify and grow the Harrington economy to provide opportunities for the City's youth.

## Government, Community Services, and Infrastructure

- Ensure a safe and reliable supply of drinking water.
  - Continue to require wellhead, recharge area, and wetland protections codified in the current land use ordinance.
  - Coordinate with DNREC on the development of the Murderkill watershed pollution control strategy (PCS).
- Ensure sufficient wastewater-treatment capacity for existing development and future expansion.
  - Continue to address Inflow and Intrusion in the wastewater collection system
  - Continue coordination with Kent County, when necessary, to ensure an adequate sewer allocation
- Ensure sufficient drinking water capacity for existing development and planned future expansion.
  - Coordinate with DNREC, as needed, to ensure an adequate pumping allocation
  - Monitor and maintain the City's inventory of wells and associated infrastructure

- Continue to ensure adequate police services in order to provide for the safety and welfare of current and future residents of the city.
  - Review mutual aid agreements with relevant municipalities and agencies.
  - Network with organizations, such as the Delaware League of Local Governments, to recruit skilled candidates.
- Provide for a sufficient level of fire-protection services and Emergency Medical Services in order to ensure the health and safety of current and future residents of the city
  - Review mutual aid agreements with relevant municipalities and agencies.
- Strive to offer efficient, accountable, informed, and flexible governance and services
  - Encourage the appropriate use of low-impact development and resilient stormwater management practices contained in the Delaware Green Infrastructure Primer
  - Attend relevant workshops and training seminars, often hosted by the Delaware League of Local Governments, the American Planning Association, and some of the state’s universities and colleges.

## Housing

- Encourage homeownership and citizen investment in the community
- Maintain the City’s position as a central, affordable, quality place to live and raise a family
  - Continue to support entities in their application for state, federal (or other) grants focused on housing redevelopment or rehabilitation
  - Continue to designate appropriate areas for multi-family use.
- Strive to offer ownership and rental opportunities for the young people Harrington has sometimes struggled to retain.
  - Coordinate with potential developers, particularly those interested in realizing some of Harrington’s approved, yet undeveloped, multi-family potential.

## Transportation

- Continue ongoing coordination with DeIDOT and the Dover/Kent MPO
  - Participate in any updates to the statewide bicycle plan
  - Watch for opportunities to connect the sidewalk from Lake Forrest to the library
  - Discuss the status of Jackson Ditch Rd in Kent County with DeIDOT and/or the MPO
  - Engage with DeIDOT and the Dover/Kent MPO on the possibility of improving truck flows regarding the intersection of Corn Crib and Messick Rd.
  - Ensure the maintenance status of crossover streets on DuPont Highway are clear between the City and State. These include Shaw St., Gordon St.
- Continue to rank and prioritize needed improvements to the transportation system
  - Maintain a sidewalk and curbing priority list to systematically allocate available revenues
  - Update the City of Harrington Street Priority list based on completed work and assessment information from the Dover/Kent MPO
- Coordinate with DTC regarding the condition of existing, or need for additional, transit stops, pads, shelters
- Attempt to maintain dialogue with the railroad representative regarding any new developments with freight or passenger rail
- Work with all relevant partners to ensure infrastructure installation at the industrial park is completed in a timely manner and in accordance with the recently completed TIS.

## Economic Development

- Invest in Harrington’s economic foundations
  - Complete infrastructure improvements in the industrial park
  - Continue bolstering the City’s cultural and civic offerings
  - Ensure adequate public services to facilitate growth

- Plan for diverse, sustainable, and continual growth
  - Pursue an incremental policy of annexation and growth
  - Preserve lands and opportunities for a variety of housing types
  - Preserve lands suitable for industrial and commercial use
- Coordinate with relevant agencies and organizations for continued success
  - Continue to coordinate with Dover Kent/MPO regarding the possibility of an eventual rail/freight terminal
  - Continue to work with the Kent Economic Partnership to fully realize the industrial park
  - Consult with DNREC periodically on the status of brownfields
  - Continue to manage and revise (as needed) the downtown development district in partnership with the relevant agencies.

## Environmental Protection

- Coordinate with relevant agencies and committees to improve water quality in the Murderkill Watershed
  - Consider municipal participation in the eventual update of the Murderkill Watershed pollution control strategy (PCS) document
  - Review the municipal environmental ordinances for opportunities to align with the updated PCS.
- Assist property owners interested in agricultural preservation of high-value agricultural parcels, in keeping with the City's pastoral surroundings
  - Link to the Delaware Department of Agriculture (DDA) agricultural preservation program from the municipal website
  - Coordinate with DDA on the status of parcels the city would like to see preserved, as well as maintaining an awareness of parcels that may exit the program
- Preserve the environmental features, including mature vegetation, with an emphasis on preserving quality tree stands, stream valleys, steep slopes, floodplains, and other wetlands
  - Evaluate the efficacy of existing regulations in the municipal ordinance and revise as needed
- Limit the growth of harmful atmospheric emissions attributable to Harrington
  - Continue to encourage a community design accessible to all transportation modes
  - Continue to consider innovative, green projects such as the recently completed solar farm

## Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

- Work toward a network of interconnected open spaces, parks, and trails
  - Coordinate with DeLDOT and the Dover/Kent MPO to rectify any sidewalk or crosswalk issues as needed
- Expand the reach and scope of offerings at the Community Center
  - Consider programs and opportunities to entice middle and high-school aged children to be more involved
- Provide safe and reliable circulation for all road users within the city, including roads, sidewalks, and bike paths
  - Consider a bicycle safety assessment
  - Consider a walking inventory of sidewalk, crosswalk, and curb-cut positioning, adequacy, and condition
  - Coordinate with the school district or the DeLDOT Safe Routes to School program regarding the missing sidewalk segment between the elementary school and the library
  - Explore opportunities to utilize the City's TND designation, assuring maximum connectivity within and between potential new developments

## Land Use and Annexation

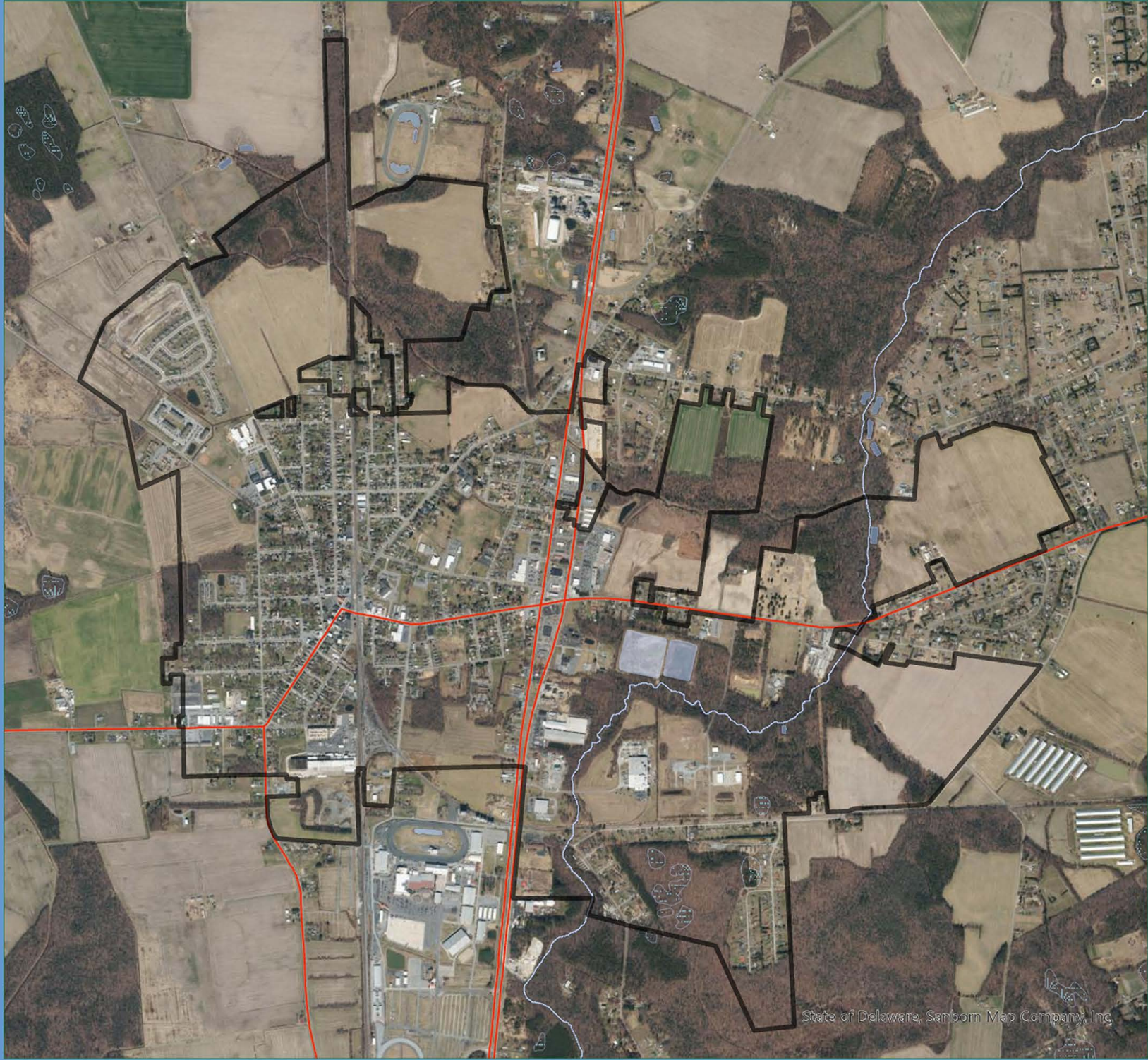
- Continue to accommodate a mix of uses and use intensities within the City, in accordance with Harrington's favored community character






- Preserve existing areas slated for medium or higher-density residential development
  - Explore opportunities to site manufacturing and industrial uses in appropriately designated areas
- Maximize the benefit of potential future annexations
  - Encourage street and pedestrian connectivity to the existing community
  - Consider utilizing the City's TND approach on suitably large parcels
  - Ensure sufficient capacity for service provision
- Evaluate and update the City's zoning and subdivision ordinance to reflect the vision detailed in the comprehensive plan
  - Consider revisions or code updates to potentially exclude certain features (wetlands, buffers, stormwater management) from allowable density calculations.

City of Harrington,  
Delaware



Aerial View



-  City of Harrington, Delaware
-  Major Routes
-  Major Rivers
-  Marsh
-  Water



June 2025



Sources:  
 Delaware Imagery - State of Del., Sanborn Map Company Inc., FirstMap 03/24,  
 Municipal Boundaries - Delaware Office of State Planning, Coordination (DMB),  
 FirstMap 03/25,  
 Road and Railroad Network - Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT),  
 FirstMap 03/25,  
 Hydrology - National Hydrography Dataset (NHD), USGS and EPA,  
 FirstMap 03/25.

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State of Delaware, Sanborn Map Company, Inc.





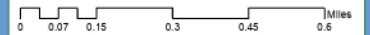
2020 State Strategies

Investment Level

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- Out of Play
- City of Harrington, Delaware
- Major Routes
- Centerline Roads
- Major Rivers
- Water
- Marsh

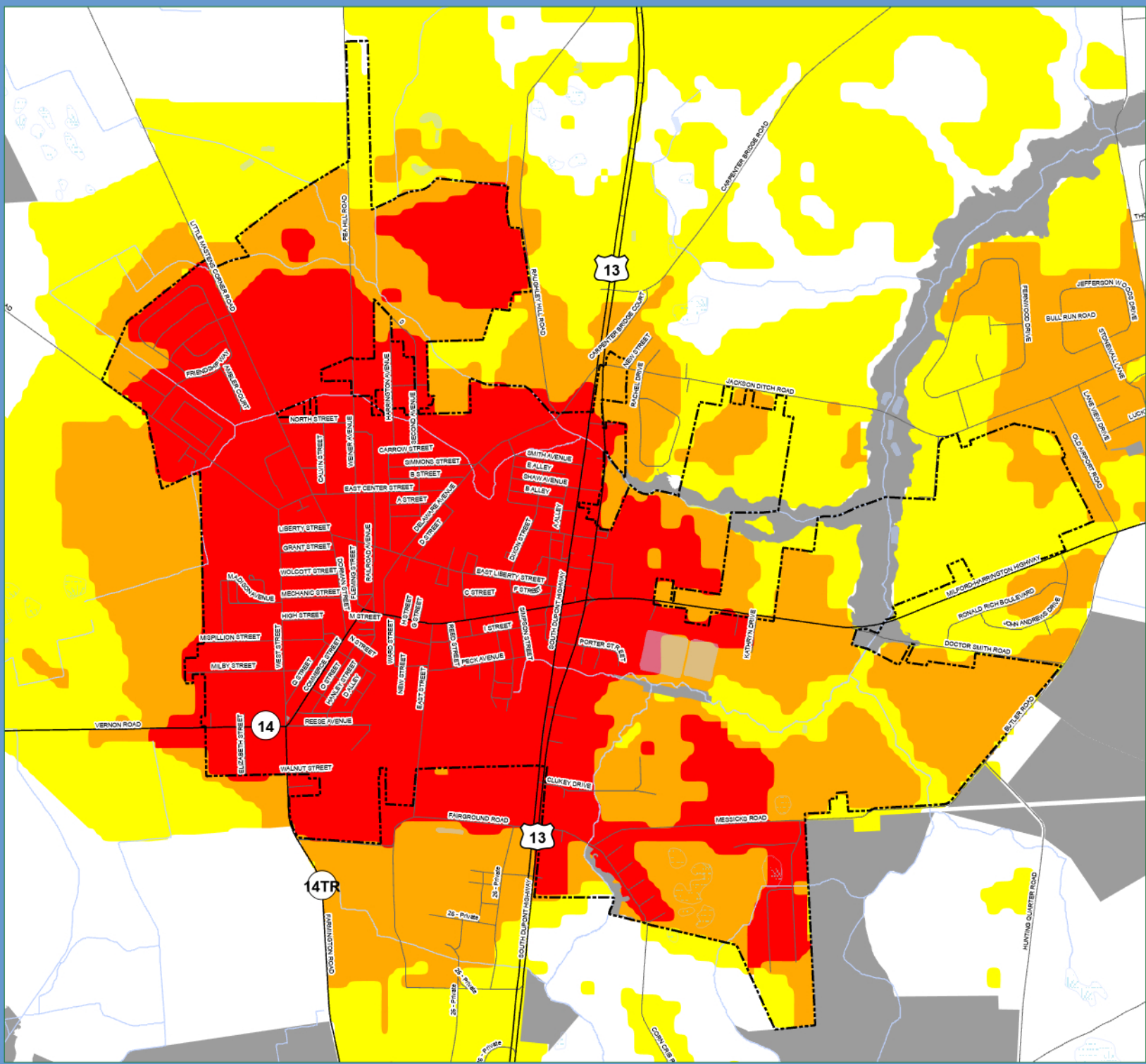


June 2025



Sources:  
 2020 State Strategies - Delaware Office of State Planning Coordination (OSPC), FirstMap 03/24.  
 Municipal Boundaries - Delaware Office of State Planning Coordination (OSPC), FirstMap 03/24.  
 Road and Railroad Network - Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT), FirstMap 03/24.  
 Hydrology - National Hydrography Dataset (NHD), USGS and EPA, FirstMap 03/24.

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## Downtown Development District

### Downtown Development Projects

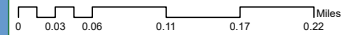
- ★ Large Commercial Project
- Small Commercial Project
- Small Mixed Use Project
- Small Residential Project

- Major Routes
- Centerline Roads
- Major Rivers

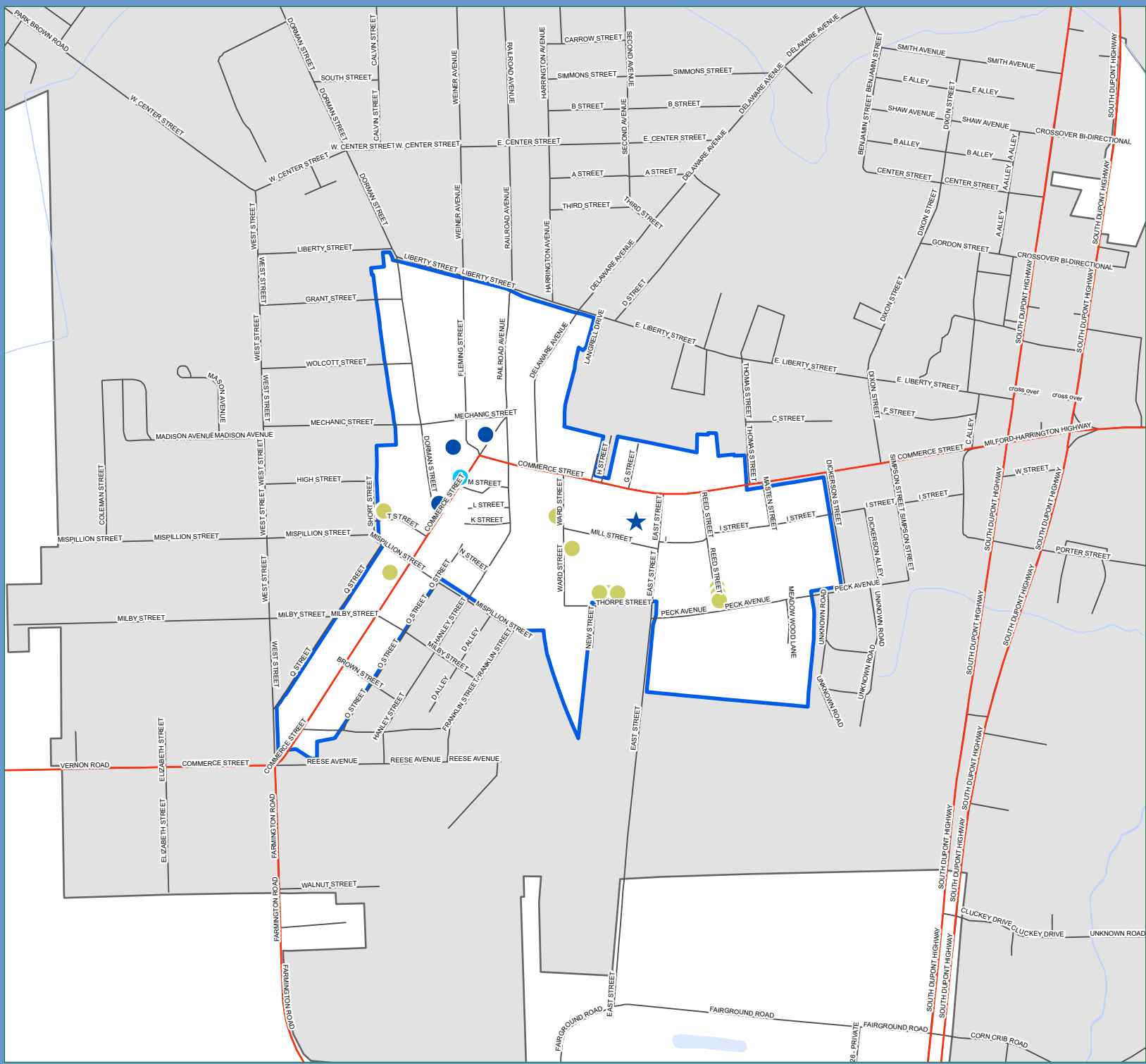
- Lakes and Ponds
- Marsh
- Water
- Downtown Development District Boundary
- City of Harrington, Delaware



June 2025



Sources:  
 Downtown Development Districts - Delaware State Housing Authority, FirstMap 03/25  
 Municipal Boundaries - Delaware Office of State Planning Coordination (OMS), FirstMap 03/25  
 Road and Railroad Network - Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT), FirstMap 03/25  
 Hydrology - National Hydrography Dataset (NHD), USGS and EPA, FirstMap 03/25  
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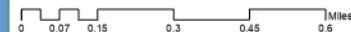


Transportation Network

- City of Harrington, Delaware
- Major Routes
- Centerline Roads
- Crosswalk
  - Yes
- Sidewalk
  - Yes
- Lakes and Ponds
  - Marsh
  - Water
  - Major Rivers

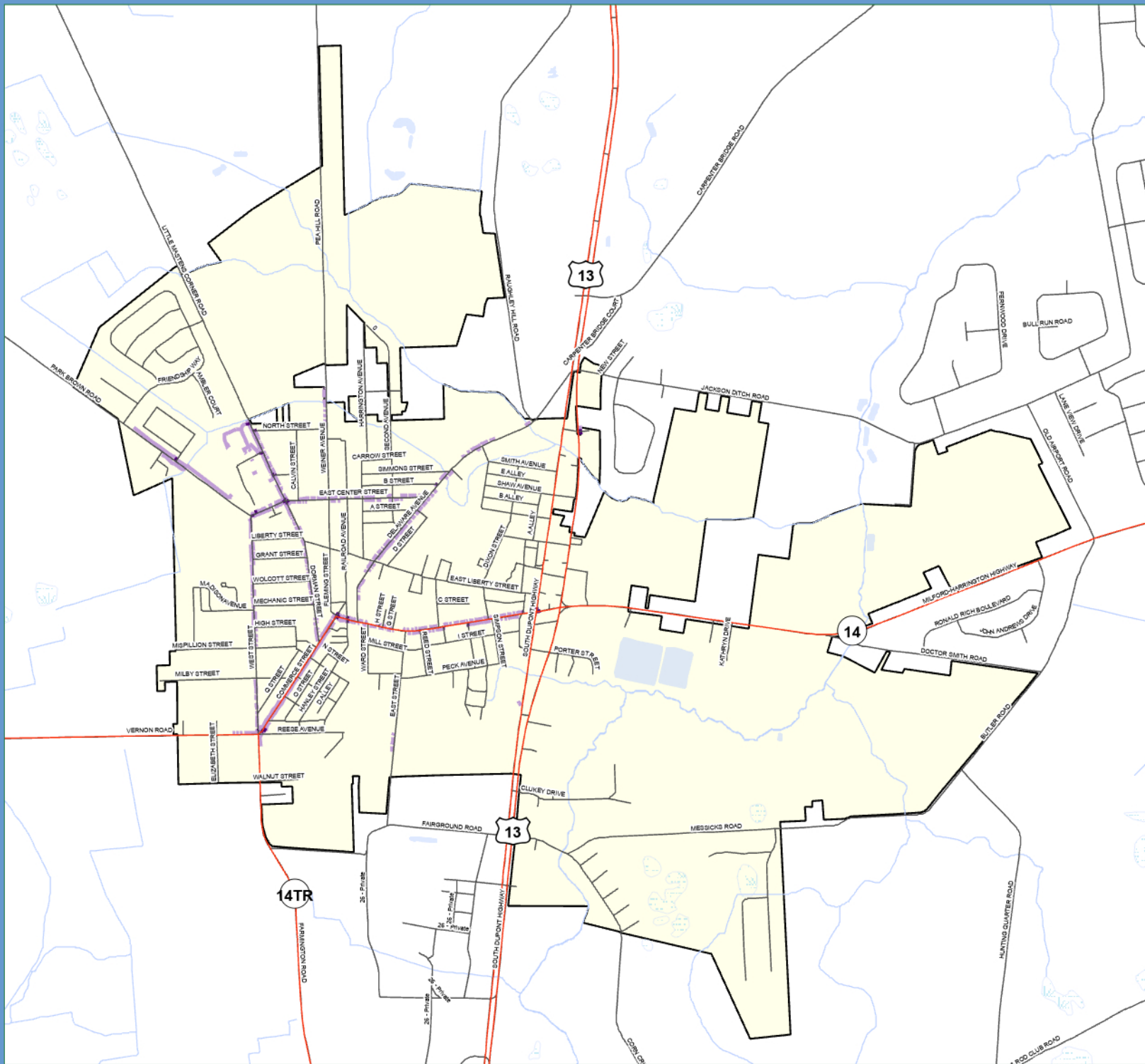


June 2025



Sources:  
 Municipal Boundaries - Delaware Office of State Planning Coordination (OMB), FirstMap 0324.  
 Road and Railroad Network - Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT), FirstMap 0324.  
 Hydrology - National Hydrography Dataset (NHD), USGS and EPA, FirstMap 0324.

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City of Harrington, Delaware

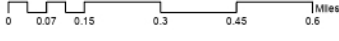


Environmental Features

- City of Harrington, Delaware
- Delaware Watersheds (HUC12)
- Wellhead Protection Areas
- Groundwater Recharge Potential**
- Excellent
- Water area
- 2017 Wetlands (not regulatory)
- Certified Brownfields
- Septic-UIC
- SIRS Projects
- SIRS Sites
- Hazardous Waste Generators
- Waste Water Outfalls
- Pesticide Loading, Mixing & Storage
- Major Routes
- Centerline Roads
- Major Rivers

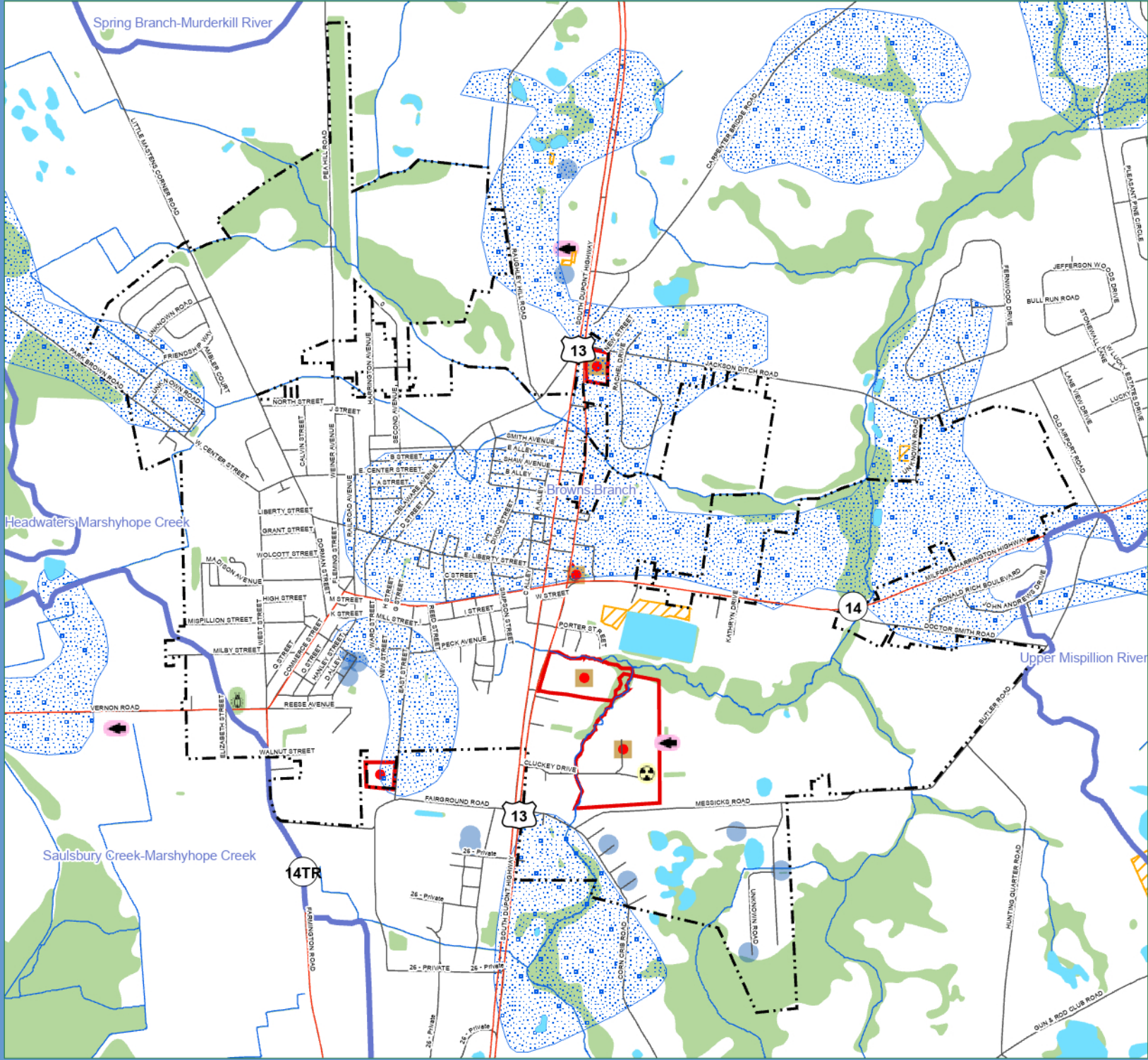


June 2025



Sources:  
 Environmental - DNREC, FirstMap 03/25.  
 Wellhead Protection Areas, Watersheds - DNREC, Division of Water, FirstMap 03/25.  
 Groundwater Recharge - Delaware Geological Survey, FirstMap, 03/25.  
 Municipal Boundaries - Delaware Office of State Planning Coordinator (OSPC), FirstMap 03/25.  
 Road and Railroad Network - Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT), FirstMap 03/25.  
 Hydrology - National Hydrography Dataset (NHD), USGS and EPA, FirstMap 03/25.

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Floodplains

City of Harrington, Delaware

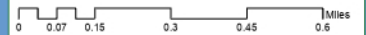
FEMA Flood Maps

Flood Zone

- A
- AE
- AE, FLOODWAY
- AO
- VE
- X, 0.2 PCT ANNUAL CHANCE FLOOD HAZARD
- State Parcels
- Major Routes
- Centerline Roads
- Major Rivers
- Marsh
- Water

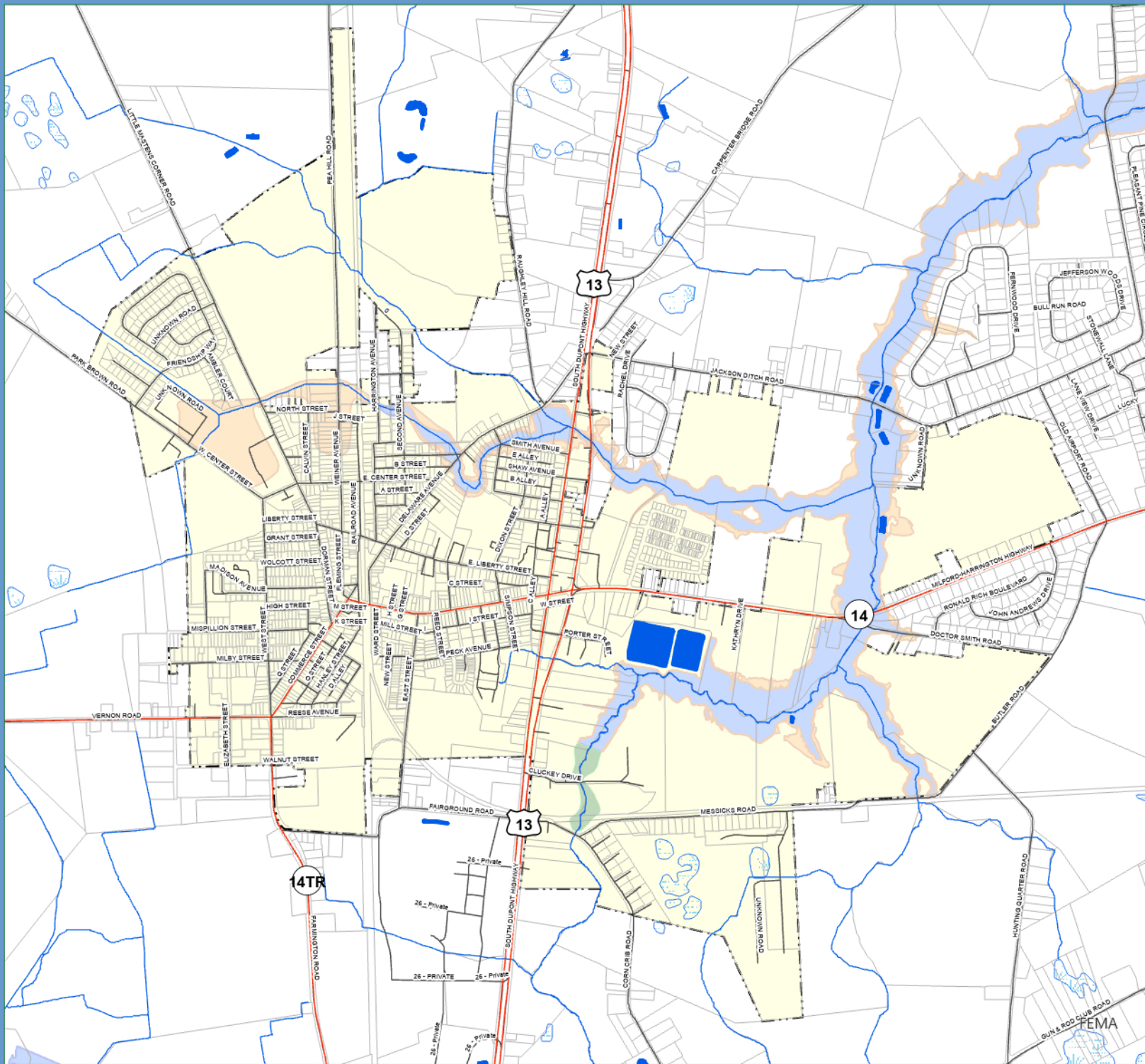


June 2025



Sources:  
 FEMA Flood Maps - Flood hazard areas identified on the Flood Insurance Rate Map are identified as a Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA), FirstMap 03/24.  
 Municipal Boundaries - Delaware Office of State Planning Coordination (OSPC), FirstMap 03/24.  
 Parcels - MDC, KCC, and SC, State Parcels, FirstMap 03/24.  
 Road and Railroad Network - Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT), FirstMap 03/24.  
 Hydrology - National Hydrography Dataset (NHD), USGS and EPA, FirstMap 03/24.

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Parks and Recreation

- City of Harrington, Delaware
- Outdoor Recreation
- Baseball Field
- Multi-purpose Fields
- Picnic Pavilion
- Playground
- Other Parks
- Public Schools
- Major Routes
- Centerline Roads
- Major Rivers
- Marsh
- Water
- Conservation Easements

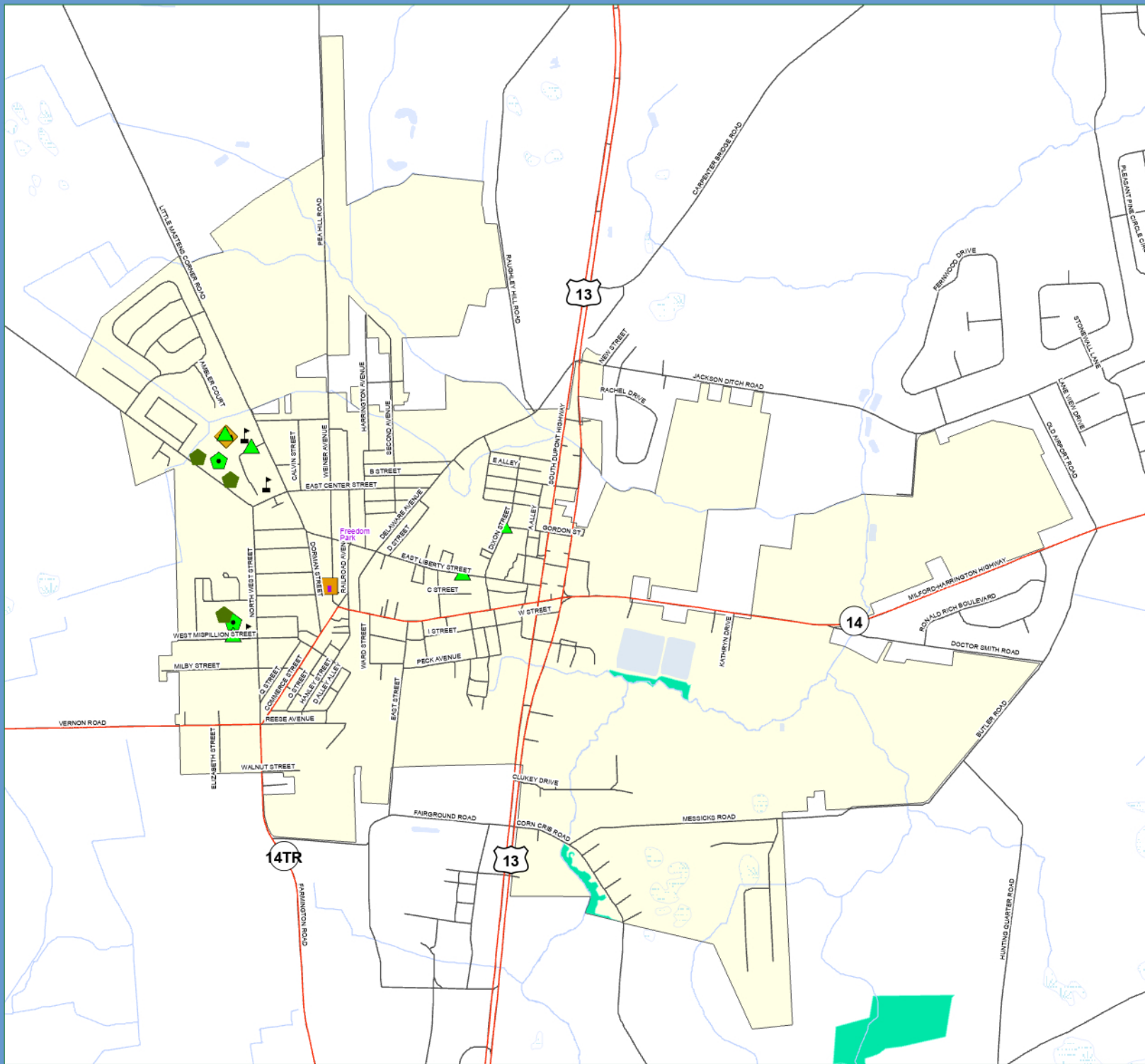


June 2025



Sources:  
 Public Schools - Delaware Department of Education, FirstMap, 03/24.  
 Parks and Recreation - DNREC, Division of Parks and Recreation, FirstMap, 03/24.  
 Municipal Boundaries - Delaware Office of State Planning Coordination (OSPC),  
 FirstMap 03/24.  
 Road and Railroad Network - Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT),  
 FirstMap 03/24.  
 Hydrology - National Hydrography Dataset (NHD), USGS and EPA, FirstMap 03/24.

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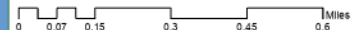


Existing Land Use

- Parks and Recreation
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Mixed Residential
- Neighborhood Commercial
- Central Commercial
- Service Commercial
- Undeveloped
- Manufacturing
- Industrial
- Railroad
- City of Harrington, Delaware
- State Parcels
- Major Routes
- Centerline Roads
- Major Rivers
- Marsh
- Water

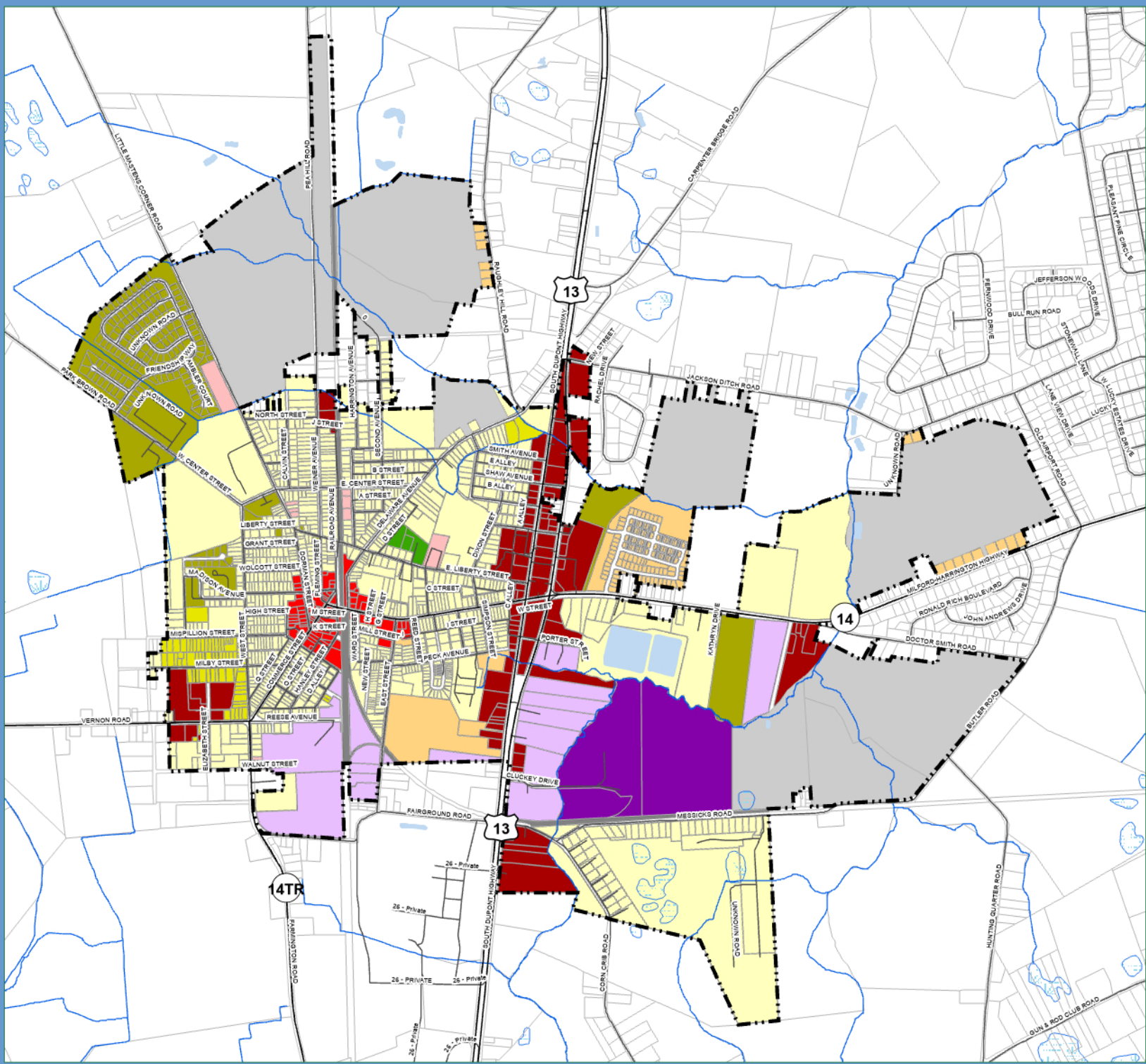


June 2025



Sources:  
 FEMA Flood Maps - Flood hazard areas identified on the Flood Insurance Rate Map are identified as a Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA), FirstMap 03/25.  
 Municipal Boundaries - Delaware Office of State Planning Coordination (OSPC), FirstMap 03/25.  
 Parcels - MDC, KC, and SC, State Parcels, FirstMap 03/25.  
 Road and Railroad Network - Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT), FirstMap 03/25.  
 Hydrology - National Hydrography Dataset (NHD), USGS and EPA, FirstMap 03/25.

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Future Land Use

- Parks and Recreation
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Mixed Residential
- Neighborhood Commercial
- Central Commercial
- Service Commercial
- Manufacturing
- Industrial
- Railroad
- City of Harrington, Delaware
- Parcel Boundaries
- Major Routes
- Centerline Roads
- Major Rivers
- Marsh
- Water

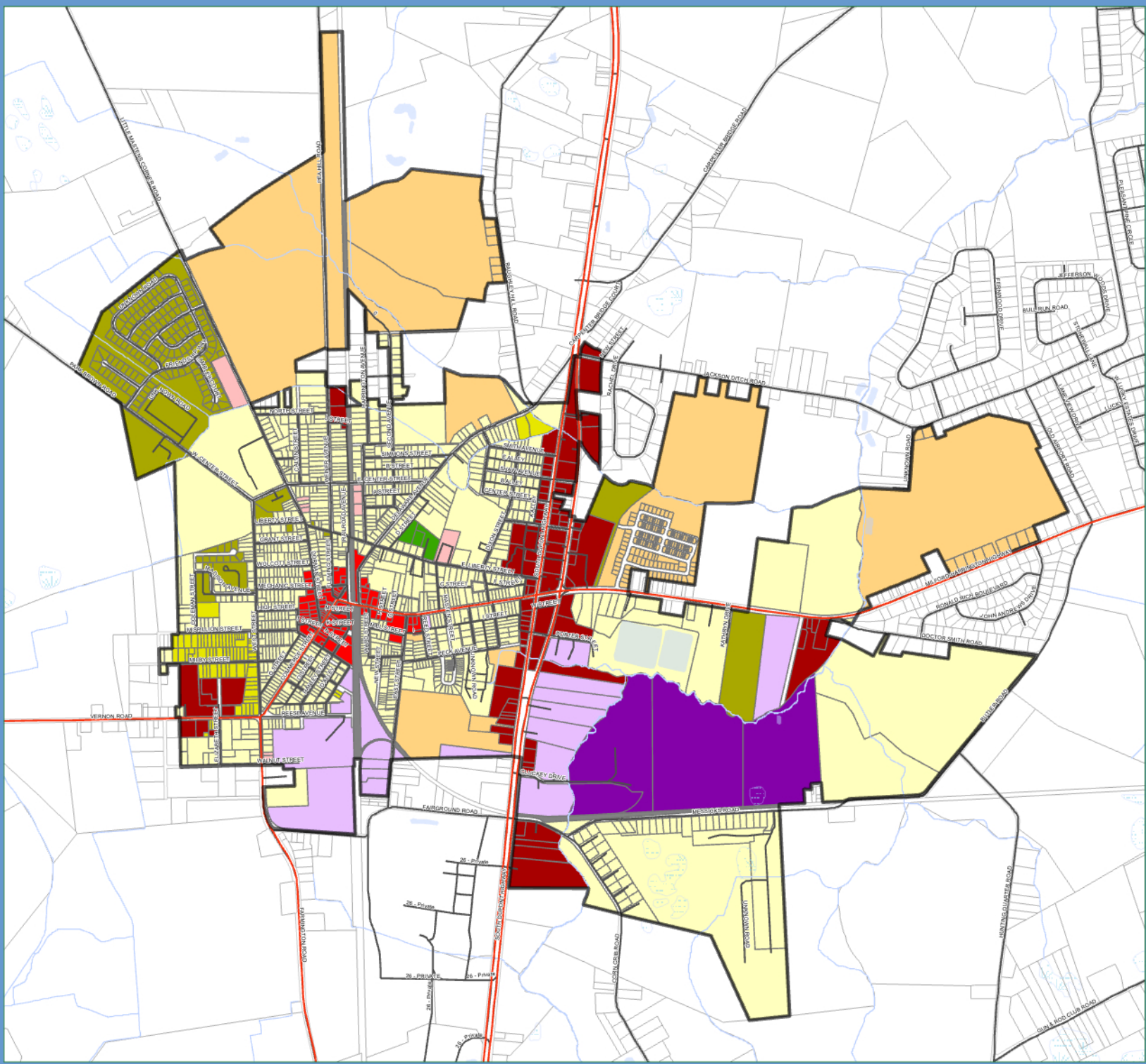


June 2025



Sources:  
 Municipal Boundaries - Delaware Office of State Planning Coordination (DMB), FirstMap 02/25.  
 Road and Railroad Network - Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT), FirstMap 02/25.  
 Hydrography - National Hydrography Dataset (NHD), USGS and EPA, FirstMap 02/25.

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Annexation Areas

Harrington Annexation Areas

- Low Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Mixed Residential
- Commercial
- Manufacturing

Aglands Preservation Districts

- Ag Easement
- Expansion
- City of Harrington, Delaware

Major Routes

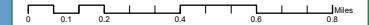
- Major Routes
- Centerline Roads

Lakes and Ponds

- Marsh
- Water
- Major Rivers

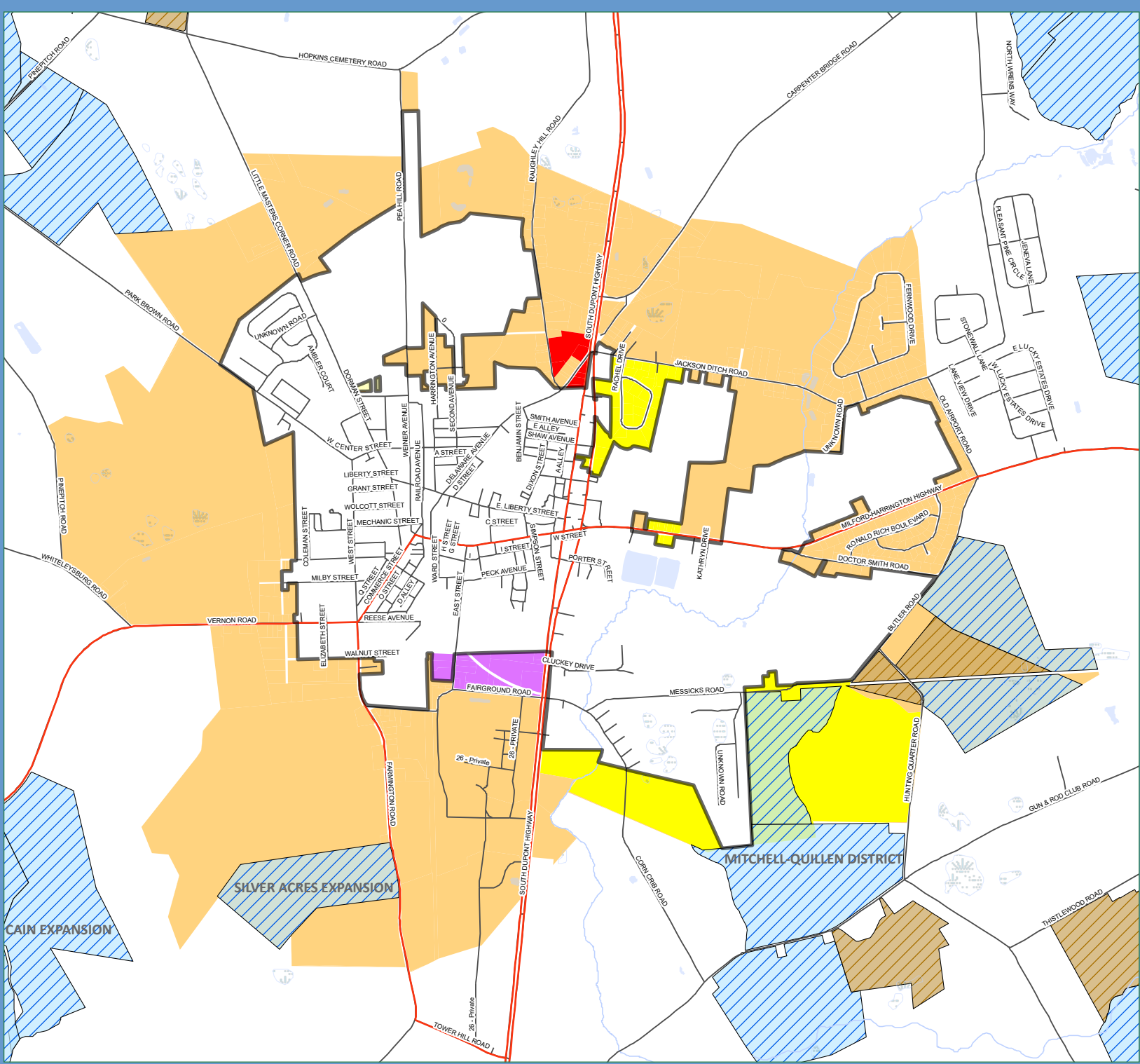


June 2025



Sources:  
Annexation Areas - Determined by the Town of Harrington, Delaware. 03/25.  
Municipal Boundaries - Delaware Office of State Planning Coordination (OMB), FirstMap 03/25.  
Road and Railroad Network - Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT), FirstMap 03/25.  
Hydrography - National Hydrography Dataset (NHD), USGS and EPA, FirstMap 03/25.

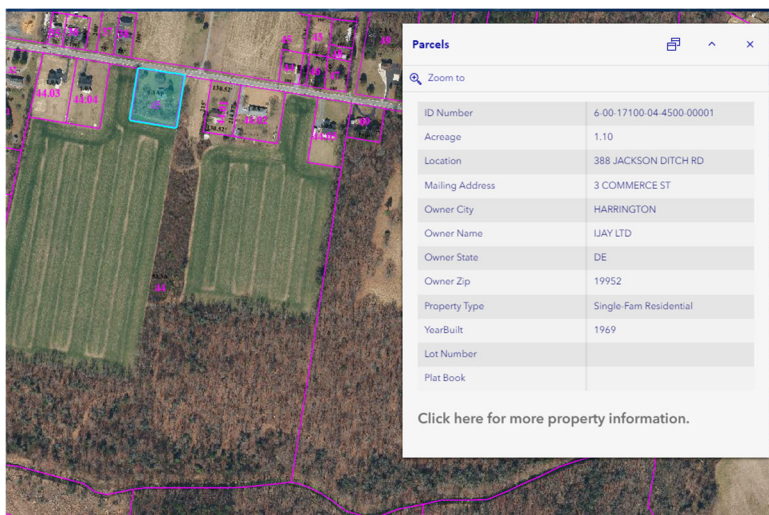
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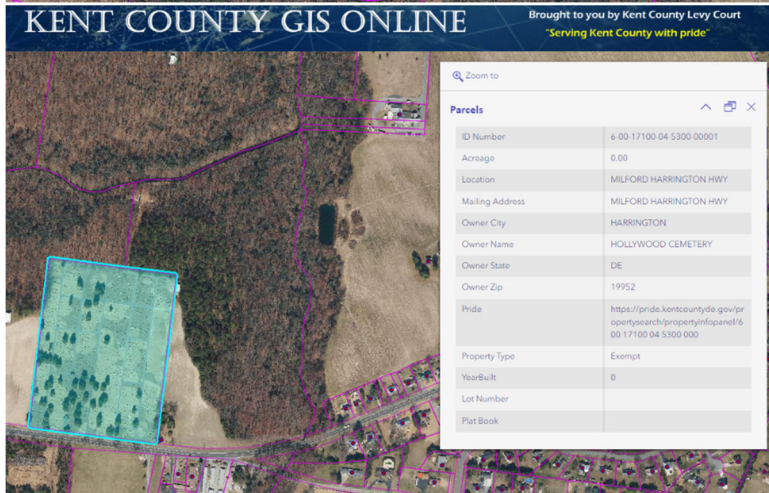
## Appendix – Annexations



Left – the “Ryan Farm” annexation.



Left – 388 Jackson Ditch



Left – Hollywood Cemetery 1 of 2

KENT COUNTY GIS ONLINE Brought to you by Kent County Levy Court  
"Serving Kent County with pride"

Zoom to

**Parcels**

ID Number	6-00-17100-04-5200-00001
Acreage	36.50
Location	6520 MILFORD HARRINGTON HWY
Mailing Address	C/O FRANKLIN HENDRICKS JR.
Owner City	HARRINGTON
Owner Name	HOLLYWOOD CEMETERY
Owner State	DE
Owner Zip	19952
Pride	<a href="https://pride.kentcountysde.gov/pr-openresearch/pr-propertyinfopanel/6-00-17100-04-5200-000">https://pride.kentcountysde.gov/pr-openresearch/pr-propertyinfopanel/6-00-17100-04-5200-000</a>
Property Type	Vacant Land
Year Built	0
Lot Number	
Plat Book	

Left – Hollywood Cemetery 2 of 2

KENT COUNTY GIS ONLINE Brought to you by Kent County Levy Court  
"Serving Kent County With Pride"

Zoom to

**Parcels**

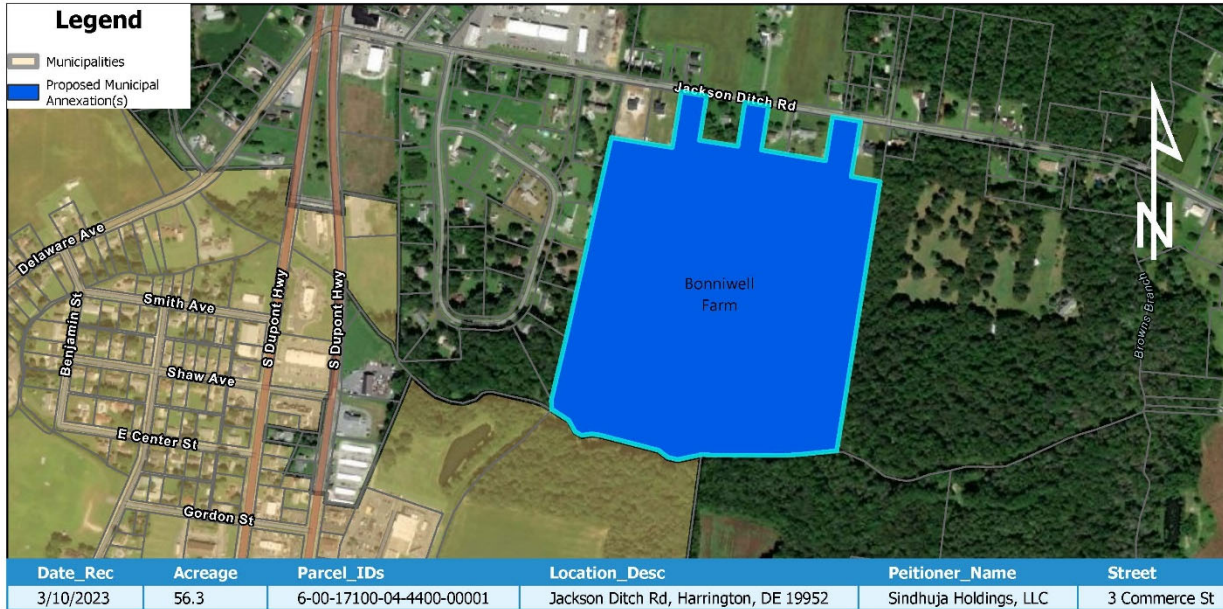
ID Number	4-89-17100-02-2000-00001
Acreage	1.20
Location	1847'S DUPONT HWY
Mailing Address	1847'S DUPONT HWY
Owner City	HARRINGTON
Owner Name	COASTAL MEDICAL CENTER/LLC
Owner State	DE
Owner Zip	19953
Property Type	Commercial
Year Built	1992
Lot Number	
Plat Book	

Left – Coastal Medical Center

KENT COUNTY GIS ONLINE

Left – East Street Parcels

Municipality: Harrington  
 Name: Bonniwell Farm  
 Plan of Services ID: 2022-26



Office of State Planning coordination (OSPC) comments:

This exhibit is provided in response to the above referenced Plan of Services request. The purposes of this exhibit is to ensure that OSPC is clear as to its understanding of the proposed geographic representation of the intended Annexation.

Above – Bonniwell Farm