



Downtown Development Districts

Application for District Renewal

District Renewal Application for Expiring DDD Districts

Application Period and Deadlines: The application period opens three years prior to expiration. Applications for extensions must be submitted within 6 months of the current DDD program expiration. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis and reviewed by the Cabinet Committee on State Planning Issues (CCSPI) at their next scheduled meeting.

Application must be accompanied by a Resolution from the legislative body supporting the application for a DDD District Designation Extension, and an updated District Plan.

Review and Approval: Applications for five-year DDD District Renewal are reviewed by OSPC and agency partners. OSPC will prepare a report and recommendation which will be presented to the CCSPI which will in turn make a recommendation to the Governor. The Governor may renew Districts for up to two 5-year renewal periods.

Completed applications should be sent to OSPC@delaware.gov

Completeness: Applications for District Renewal will be evaluated by the Office of State Planning Coordination for completeness upon receipt. Incomplete applications will not be reviewed and will not be forwarded to the Cabinet Committee on State Planning Issues for their consideration. Applicants are encouraged to meet with the OSPC early in the process, and work with the OSPC Principal Planners throughout the application process to ensure a complete and accurate application.

Municipality / County: **Town of Georgetown**_____

DDD Program expiration date: **08/31/2026**

Check list:



Application Form



Legislative Body Resolution



Updated District Plan

If proposing the removal of parcels from the original District Boundary:



Certified Mail Receipts, to owners of all parcels to be removed

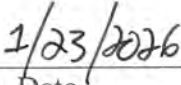
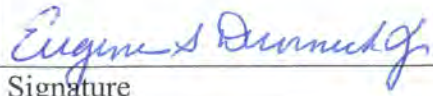
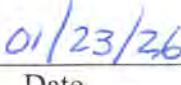


Public Hearing Minutes, revised boundary meeting



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Contact Person for Application Name: <u>Brian J. Olszak</u> Address: <u>37 The Circle, Georgetown, DE 19947</u> Phone: <u>302-856-7391</u> Email: <u>bolszak@georgetowndel.com</u>  Signature  Date	District Administrator (if different) Name: <u>Gene Dvornick</u> Address: <u>37 The Circle, Georgetown, DE 19947</u> Phone: <u>302-856-7391</u> Email: <u>gdvornick@georgetowndel.com</u>  Signature  Date
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Legislative Body Resolution:

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

Date of Resolution in support of DDD Extension Application: **1/12/2026**

Resolution number: **2026-01**

Program Administration:

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

Overall the program is integrated into the several workflows of Town Administration. The Town Community Development staff discuss the incentives available at every Predevelopment Meeting focused on a property in the DDD. Town staff administer the long-term incentive programs, such as the Property Tax Phase-In programs, successfully.

However, it's been determined that there may be under-participation in the non-Town incentive and rebate programs (i.e. those that must be applied for, such as the State and County rebate and other programs) from those applicants in the Hispanic or Latino communities. Presently, DDD promotional materials are not translated into Spanish: this



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is something the Town is actively pursuing to rectify. Stakeholder interviews revealed that there was a perception that DDD benefit opportunities were not being communicated adequately, or that there was not enough flexibility in applying to the programs. There were also misperceptions that the Town incentives (such as building permit and impact fee discounts) had to be applied for to be awarded, instead of being automatically granted upon building permit approval. Additionally, partnerships are being sought to partner with Hispanic and Latino business organizations to ensure that information about the DDD program is accurate and kept up to date. The Town will also develop partnerships to increase knowledge-sharing and technical assistance.



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Need and Impact:

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

Provide justification as to why the program should be extended.

Need

While the DDD designation has aided significantly in the development of this part of Georgetown, there is still more work to be done, both from a planning and program administration perspective as well as from the economic incentive perspective.

According to the DelDOT Equity Focus Area Tool, the part of the DDD north of E. Market Street and east of North Bedford Street, has an Equity Focus Area Designation of 'Significant,' indicating that the area faces significantly challenges related to social and economic disadvantage disproportionate to the state at large, particularly in the concentration of Hispanic or Latino residents (3x the state average), the poverty rate (2x the state average) and median household income below the state average. The part of the DDD south of E. Market, the designation is 'Moderate.' According to the ACS 2019-2023 estimates, the median household income of Georgetown is \$47,423 (in 2023 dollars) which, compared to the ACS 2009-2013 median household income estimate of \$47,945 (in 2013 dollars), is a reduction. Even though the increases in investment and jobs in this part of Georgetown are promising, and vacant lot development in Kimmeytown specifically has progressed, there are still a number of vacant lots and deteriorated homes in the neighborhood, especially those just east of the existing DDD boundary.

Despite only comprising 3.2% of the land area and 12% of properties in Town limits, the DDD contains 16% of registered vacant properties (5), 41% of vacancy citations within the last 5 years (9), and 34% of the condemnation notices issued in the last 5 years (13). This illustrates that the DDD neighborhoods suffer disproportionately from quality of life and investment challenges.

Impact

Not including the Family Court building and parking garage, the District has seen \$11,498,983.65 of capital investment measured by the value of building construction improvements. A full accounting of the investment impacts are below:

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Sum of Total New Construction Improvement Investment by Land Use

Land Use	Investment
COMMERCIAL	\$ 3,315,431.00
GOVERNMENT BUILDING	\$ 89,619,063.00
MIXED RESIDENTIAL & COMMERCIAL	\$ 700,000.00
MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL	\$ -
SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL	\$ 2,538,215.59
Grand Total	\$ 95,272,709.59
Grand Totals (without Govt Buildings)	\$ 6,553,646.59

Sum of Total Renovation Improvement Investment by Land Use

Land Use	Investment
COMMERCIAL	\$ 3,228,929.51
GOVERNMENT BUILDING	\$ 9,770.00
MIXED RESIDENTIAL & COMMERCIAL	\$ 30,375.00
MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL	\$ 563,054.00
SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL	\$ 1,114,478.55
Grand Total	\$ 4,946,607.06
Grand Totals (without Govt Buildings)	\$ 4,936,837.06

The DDD Small and Large Rebate Programs have significantly contributed to the investment in Georgetown's Downtown: over \$1,093,827 in rebates have already been granted, with \$828,000 in anticipated Large Rebate Reservations Grants to two projects with qualified real estate investments of \$12,758,619.00. The full accounting of DDD rebate-awarded projects in Georgetown are below:

Georgetown DDD Projects

Rebate	Year	Project Name	Address	Development Type	Construction Type
Large (set-aside)	FY25	Bahar Opportunity Zone	208 & 210 N. Race Street	Mixed-Use	New Construction (in progress)
Large (set-aside)	FY25	Georgetown Apartments 2	700 Ingramtown Road	Residential	New Construction (in progress)
Small	FY25	Georgetown Mini Market, Inc	106 Railroad Ave.	Mixed-Use	New Construction
Small	FY24	Sussex County Habitat for Humanity (15)	211 Rosa St.	Residential	Rehab-Existing

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Small	FY24	Sussex County Habitat for Humanity (16)	203 Rosa St.	Residential	New Construction
Small	FY24	Sussex County Habitat for Humanity (17)	207 Rosa St.	Residential	New Construction
Small	FY24	Sussex County Habitat for Humanity (19)	220 Kimmey St.	Residential	New Construction
Small	FY24	Sussex County Habitat for Humanity (18)	224 Kimmey St.	Residential	New Construction
Small	FY24	Sussex County Habitat for Humanity (20)	202 E. North St.	Residential	New Construction
Small	FY24	Sussex County Habitat for Humanity (21)	301 Rosa St.	Residential	New Construction
Small	FY24	Sussex County Habitat for Humanity (22)	303 Rosa St.	Residential	New Construction
Small	FY24	Sussex County Habitat for Humanity (23)	299 Rosa St.	Residential	New Construction
Large	FY24	Greenlea, LLC (3)	4 E. Laurel St.	Commercial	New Construction
Small	FY22	HP Layton Partnership	135 E. Market St.	Commercial	Rehab-Existing
Small	FY21	Epic Homes LLC	8 S. King St.	Residential	New Construction
Large	FY21	Jaelen LLC	201 E. Laurel St.	Mixed Use	New Construction
Small	FY20	Anchor Hope Investments LLC	413 E. Market St.	Commercial	Rehab-Existing
Small	FY18	Greenlea, LLC	32 The Circle	Commercial	Rehab-Existing
Small	FY18	H.P. Layton Partnership	131 E. Market St.	Commercial	Rehab-Existing
Small	FY17	Sussex County Habitat for Humanity (2)	11 N. Race St.	Residential	Rehab-Existing

Regarding the DDD's effectiveness in increasing population: Georgetown's estimated 2016 population of 6,917 (ACS 2016), and a 2020 population of 7,150 has increased significantly to an estimated 2024 population of 8,098. While population numbers are unavailable for smaller geographic units such as the DDD area, the growth in new and renovated residential units (see below) point to significant population growth.

Regarding the DDD's effectiveness in creating jobs: From 2016 to today there has been an increase of over 100 jobs within the DDD – from 446 to 559. While many of those have come from the two Large Rebate projects in the area (the JB Wagamon building and Jaelen LLC/Splash Laundromat), there has been a noted increase in the number of small Hispanic restaurants and retail operations on and around North Race Street.

Regarding the DDD's effectiveness in improving housing stock: A total of 11 new residences have been constructed which have taken advantage of the DDD Small Rebate, with at least 3 others likely to apply for the Small Rebate in the immediate future. An

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additional \$1,677,532.55 has been invested into existing single-family and multi-family units in the neighborhood. Habitat for Humanity's construction of an office and warehouse in the district, which may likely apply for a receive a Small Rebate award as well, will further enhance their capability to deliver housing in the community.

Georgetown Apartments II, an existing 49-unit affordable-housing project, is nearing final approval of 12 additional affordable units – the project has also been selected for a Large Project Reservation Award. Another affordable-housing project, Georgetown Apartments I, is going through the approval process of renovating all 79 of its units and improving accessibility to several of those units, where DDD incentives will significantly improve the financial viability of renovating these long-term affordable units.

Regarding the DDD's effectiveness in providing enhanced retail and entertainment options: The district is responsible for enabling several small grocery store and restaurant operations along North Race Street. However, as reflected in the District Plan Update's outreach surveys, there is significant progress still to be made on enhancing the opportunities for diverse retail and entertainment options on East Market Street and elsewhere in the District as well.

District Plan:

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

District Plan update must include the following:

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

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Briefly summarize changes made to the plan here:

The plan acknowledges the progress made to date regarding Georgetown's goals and strategies for transformation. Significant milestones have been achieved regarding the development of the Lewes-Georgetown Trail – for instance, the recommendations to identify locations for a trailhead in Town, and to support the overall development of the trail have been completed, as construction on the trailhead will begin momentarily and the overall trail will be completed by the end of 2026. While many of the recommendations from the original plan are still relevant, many of them have been consolidated and simplified in the revised Plan. The Town has taken the time to review the implementation table initially submitted and revised the projects into more measurable items. Additionally, several new recommendations have been added as key recommendations. Many of these recommendations respond to feedback received from the stakeholder interviews and public outreach held during the plan update process, as well as the analysis of current program performance:

- Develop communications and marketing plan for renewed DDD – including new website, and translating all materials into Spanish, exploring other languages in the future as need be.
- Consider forming a permanent Town working group or committee of civic volunteers on Economic Development. Such a committee would aid in coordinating community and economic efforts for the Town which may currently be happening in silos and could reduce redundancies of effort and organize work of multiple parties together.
- Consider taking more initiative in working with potential applicants to develop project ideas and pursue state incentives, including partnering with organizations to do that work, especially those organizations that work with the Hispanic and Latino community.
- Look at existing zoning within DDD: many lots that technically have a commercial or business zoning designation (such as UB1 or UB2) are not utilized for commercial at all. UB2 is almost entirely contained within the DDD. Consider ways to incentivize commercial development in these districts
- Look at parking requirements for zoning districts within the DDD; explore parking requirement reductions for certain in-demand uses or other means of other potential parking reductions

A significant change recommended is the expansion of the DDD further east into Kimmeytown, the neighborhood with the highest concentration of low-income households and higher rates of vacancy and condemnations, as well as to remove unqualified parcels from the DDD, including those owned by local and state government.

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Local Incentives:

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

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

Façade, Sign and Awning Improvement Grant Program

This program addresses the maintenance and rehabilitation needs of building facades in the Downtown Development District by offering 50/50 matching grants to interested, qualified building and business owners. Grants may be awarded for up to 50% of the total cost of qualified façade rehabilitation, repair, or restoration projects, signs, or awnings with a maximum grant award of \$500. The annual amount set aside for this program is \$3,000, funded from Real Estate Transfer Tax revenues. *Analysis of Effectiveness: The program has been used successfully by several business and property owners; however, the funds allocated each year have only rarely been fully committed to grantees. The Town will expand the marketing and advertising around this particular incentive, especially because it can enable quick and low-cost repairs that can have an outsized impact on the aesthetics of a property and neighborhood, while considering increasing the amount allocated for this program.*

10 Year Property Tax Increase Phase In (on improvements)

This program applies to the incremental increase in the property tax due as a result of the improvement. The phase in will be a 10% increase each year. In year one the Applicant would only pay 10% of the actual property tax, increasing by 10% each year until the full annual property tax is paid in year 10. *Analysis of Effectiveness: This incentive definitely positively affects the long-term viability of a project. It is especially beneficial for residential projects when a new homebuyer can be settled in a home before the full increase in property taxes will be felt.*

Impact Fee Reduction

The fee reduction will be based on the type of use. Projects of a commercial nature will be afforded a 20% reduction in water and sewer impact fees. Mixed use projects (commercial and residential) will allow for a 35% reduction in fees. *Analysis of Effectiveness: The majority of projects in the Georgetown DDD have been residential in nature, so those projects have not been able to partake in these incentives. However, the commercial and mixed-use projects have indeed benefited.*

Business License Fee Waiver

The annual Town of Georgetown Business License Fee will be waived for the first five years a business is in operation. Previously, this fee waiver only applied to new businesses, but the Town is proposing to amend the program in order to qualify existing

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businesses which are relocating to the DDD for this fee waiver. An Applicant that utilizes the fee waiver will still be required to complete a Business License application to be kept on file. *Analysis of Effectiveness: The Town found that businesses moving from a home-based business model to having a physical presence in the DDD were not benefiting from this incentive. Also, businesses wishing to open a second or additional location in Georgetown would not qualify as a "new business," even if they are new to Georgetown or new to the district. It is the goal of the DDD to incentivize businesses to locate to and invest in the Downtown, and amending this incentive as mentioned above will further this goal.*

Accelerated Development Review Process

All projects that are in complete compliance with the Town Zoning Code are administratively approved. Planning Commission hearings are not be required if a project can be administratively approved, provided no design standard waivers or other relief is required. All reviews, controlled by the Town, are completed within three weeks of submission. *Analysis of Effectiveness: While project owners appreciate the incremental time difference in receiving back reviews from Town engineers and staff, if it is a large project such as a new commercial building, the complexities of the project are generally not weighed down by discretionary approvals. Stormwater and other infrastructure design work cannot necessarily be accelerated. The Town will continue to find efficiencies in the design review process to ensure timely approvals, and hope that recently implemented electronic plan review and online permitting portals will expedite design reviews.*

Building Permit Fee Reduction

All projects are eligible for a reduction in the Building Permit Fee based on the value of the improvement. The reduction amount ranges from a minimum of 15% to a maximum of 75%. The reduction amount increases as the value of the improvement increases. *Analysis of Effectiveness: This has significantly improved financial viability of projects, especially for large projects that have an increased discount rate. This incentive is also the most visible and immediately-recognizable incentive available.*

Emergency Services and Georgetown Recreation, Education and Arts Trust Reduction

All projects are eligible for a 50% reduction in this fee. The fee is based on the value of the new construction cost and is a sliding scale with a minimum of 0.10% and the maximum of 0.50%. *Analysis of Effectiveness: As above with the building permit reductions, this incentive does add value to projects.*

Zoning

Upon initial designation, the Town considered enacting form-based code provisions to apply in the Downtown Development District. Choosing to not advance those measures, the Town is considering revisions to Zoning provisions in this program renewal period. In particular, the UB2 Neighborhood Business district may benefit from revisions. Presently, increased setbacks and requirements to ensuring a building has the appearance of a single-family dwelling limit the full feasibility of pedestrian-friendly,



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downtown development along much of East Market Street and North Railroad Avenue. The UB2 District is almost entirely contained within the geographic area of the DDD, so beneficial changes would be particularly felt to commercial or mixed-use projects.

Key Priority Projects:

The DDD application was updated in 2019 to include discussion of Key Priority Projects. These projects were to be identified in the District Plan as potential catalysts for other redevelopment activity or as examples of superior urban design. Key Priority Projects are specific projects expected to provide significant impact to the District when implemented. See *DDD Program Guidelines* for more information. [ddd-program-guidelines-2022.pdf \(delaware.gov\)](https://delaware.gov/files/ddd-program-guidelines-2022.pdf)

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

Since Georgetown's original DDD and District Plan was adopted before the "Key Priority Projects" requirements for District Plans were adopted by the State, those that are being added to the Plan in this renewal are new to the Town's District Plan.

Please find the Town's Key Priority Projects for the DDD:

107 Depot Street: The former Ice House at 107 Depot Street has been underutilized for several years. A vestige of Georgetown's industrial past, the property's large size has proved challenging to adapt for modern uses. Owned and developed by an Opportunity Zone investor, the site will become the home of Las Américas ASPIRA Academy, a bilingual-education K-8 charter school. Anticipated with the school's development is significant multimodal facilities, including expanding pedestrian infrastructure, traffic calming, and marked crossings. Its development will provide a needed amenity and community resource within walking distance of many potential students and their families, activating a street which otherwise felt more industrial.

11 North Railroad: This property has been vacant since the former dry-cleaning facility at the site closed. The property is a certified brownfield due to previous contamination, which has limited its redevelopment potential and challenges those seeking to invest in the immediate area. Additionally, the previous building which was demolished took up most of the small parcel and, because of the parcel's size, meeting parking requirements

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will be challenging. So close to East Market Street, this site could be a great candidate for a commercial application. The existing DART Bus Depot abutting the property to the north, leased from Norfolk Southern, may continue in its current state, but development of 11 North Railroad Avenue could catalyze development of other vacant lots in the area, such as a lot diagonal to this property (100 N. Railroad Avenue).

County Land on E. Market Street and Layton Avenue: Located in the heart of Georgetown's downtown, these county-owned lots represent a potential game-changing development opportunity. Presently used as paved and unpaved parking lots, these two properties may likely see less usage as the new Family Court Building's parking garage comes online. Access to the site from Layton Avenue or the rear alley could enable a signature, multistory mixed-use building built right to the sidewalk. This work could also catalyze the development of an adjacent vacant parcel (137 E. Market Street), the successful development of which might only be accomplished through cooperation with these two other parcels.

409 E. Laurel Street: Proposed to be added to the District, this property is a 3.5-acre vacant parcel, and is the largest undeveloped parcel left in Kimmeytown. A developer would need to extend street access and utilities into the site. This site may be suitable for a denser residential development type, but the site would require a zoning amendment. When developed, this will dramatically increase housing availability in the neighborhood and could stimulate additional developments within the parts of the neighborhood nearby which have been newly-added to the District.

202 North Bedford Street.: Proposed to be added to the District, this property is a former sober-living house presently for sale (as of this writing). This is a building on a high-visibility corner coming into Town that could serve as a historic renovation and adaptive reuse project. Presently residentially zoned, there has been a proposal to convert the structure into a restaurant and inn. Should this not proceed, there is still significant potential for a commercial application at this site, given its location. The property abutting to the north is also for sale (as of this writing), so there may be opportunities to co-develop the two properties.

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District Boundary Revisions:

As a part of the District Renewal process the local jurisdiction may revise the original District Boundary to meet the redevelopment goals of the next five-year period. The updated District Plan must fully describe the rationale for the revised boundary. The revised boundary must meet all guidelines and criteria for the District Boundary as described in Chapter 5 of the *DDD Program Guidelines*.

It is permissible to remove parcels from the original District Boundary and reallocate that acreage to other areas of the downtown as a part of the boundary revisions during the District Renewal process. Should the local jurisdiction propose removing parcels from the original boundary, the following is required:

- The owners of all parcels that are proposed to be removed from the District Boundary must be noticed of the change via Certified Mail or similar method. The local jurisdiction shall keep receipts or other documentation of this notice and submit it with the District Renewal application.
- All property owners that are proposed to be removed from the District Boundary must be given an opportunity to speak at a public hearing hosted by the local jurisdiction, to be held before the final decision has been reached regarding the revised boundary that is to be proposed as a part of the District Renewal application. Minutes of this public hearing or hearings must accompany the District Renewal application.

If the revised District Boundary proposes to remove any parcels from the original District Boundary, please briefly describe the rationale for removing the parcels and where the acreage has been reallocated to:

Seven parcels are proposed to be removed from the District: two owned by the Town of Georgetown, three owned by the State of Delaware (including the new Sussex County Family Courthouse) and two owned by First State Community Action Agency (FSCAA). The government-held properties do not qualify to participate in DDD rebates or incentives, and the FSCAA properties, while significant to the community and have received Town incentives in the past, have a low likelihood of developing program-eligible activities which could be funded by State DDD rebates. This acreage to be reallocated, as well as additional reserved acreage which had not been previously allocated, will be distributed primarily to easterly areas of the Kimmeytown neighborhood, as well as to properties along the east side of North Bedford Street. This will enable the transformation of parts of Kimmeytown not previously included the



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DDD, as well as to take advantage of indicators of potential commercial conversion and development along North Bedford Street.

If the revised District Boundary proposes to remove any parcels from the original District Boundary, please include the receipts or other documentation of the public notice to all property owners to be removed, as well as the minutes of the public hearing where the boundary revisions were discussed in the District Renewal application.



2025 Downtown Development Plan Update:

Since the last Downtown Development Plan submittal, Georgetown has been actively working to implement the goals and objectives identified for the revitalization of the downtown area. With this update, the Town has taken the time to re-visit some of the goals identified as well as identify some new challenges to continue to help the downtown area grow into a space usable for all residents and stakeholders.

Since 2016, the Town has completed several different studies to better identify and understand challenges to further the development of the Downtown area. These include:

- 2017 Cool & Connected...Actions and Strategies for Georgetown, DE
- 2018 Walkability Study
- 2018 Georgetown Downtown Roadmap Report
- 2020 Downtown Dining Case Study
- 2021 Comprehensive Plan
- 2025 Georgetown Bicycle and Pedestrian Study

Using feedback from each of these studies, as well as through working with the Downtown Development applicants, the Town has been able to continue to work with developers, business owners, and stakeholders to employ the incentives identified in the 2016 plan, as well as develop a new list of Key Priority Projects and Recommendations for the 2026 Downtown Development Plan Renewal.

Goals of the Update

With this update, the Town made a point to revise both the Downtown Development District Boundaries, as well as the goals of the plan through the Key Priorities Project list. After holding a public workshop, speaking with several stakeholders, including the Sussex County Realtors Association, the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce, Sussex County Economic Development Office, and the Historic Georgetown Association, the Town had a better understanding of the concerns that business owners and residents had.

Need for more restaurant options

Concern for misperception of crime

Homeless population creates a deterrent for businesses and visitors

Hard to compete with businesses on Rt. 13

Lack of parking downtown

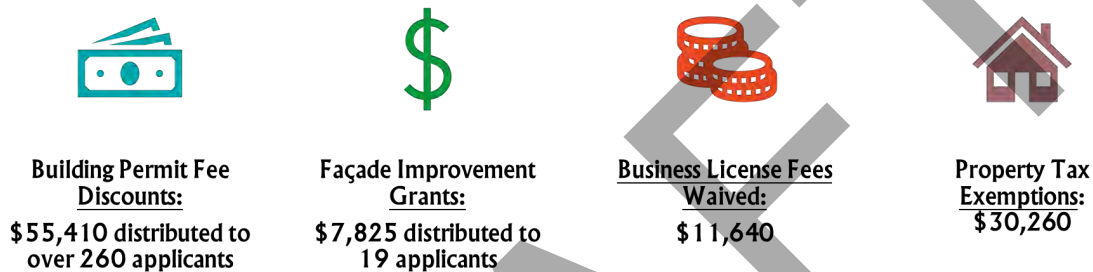
While public perceptions are not always rooted in fact, it is a common misconception that crime is an issue in the downtown area. In addition to crime, homelessness is also a deterrent that was mentioned several times in conversations about challenges of operating a business downtown.

An important goal for the Town has always been to provide affordable housing to its residents, as well as to have affordable housing options available to those looking to relocate to the Town of Georgetown. Currently there are 9 section 8 housing units available to those who qualify, and the Town is actively working to provide more affordable housing choices such as cottage communities, as well as working to reform zoning regulations around housing with help from technical assistance grants from the state.

Current census data reports that in 2025 the average household income has increased to \$47,423, with homeownership at a low percentage of 42%. Public feedback from the survey as well as the workshop could account the low percentage of ownership to lack of Town amenities as well as potentially a function of the overall lack of affordable housing in Sussex County overall.

Implementation

The Town will continue to foster relationships with the Chamber of Commerce, Sussex County Economic Development office, and surrounding businesses in order to provide as much support as possible as a business owner in the downtown area. Using the Key Priority Projects list as an implementation guide will allow the Town to pair initiatives with funding as well as opportunities for development. It will also continue to incentivize the program for those looking to conduct business downtown as well as start businesses downtown. A summary of those incentives already provided is below:



Key Priority Recommendations

While many of the recommendations from the 2016 plan are still relevant today and are incorporated by reference in this update, the following additional recommendations were added as priorities:

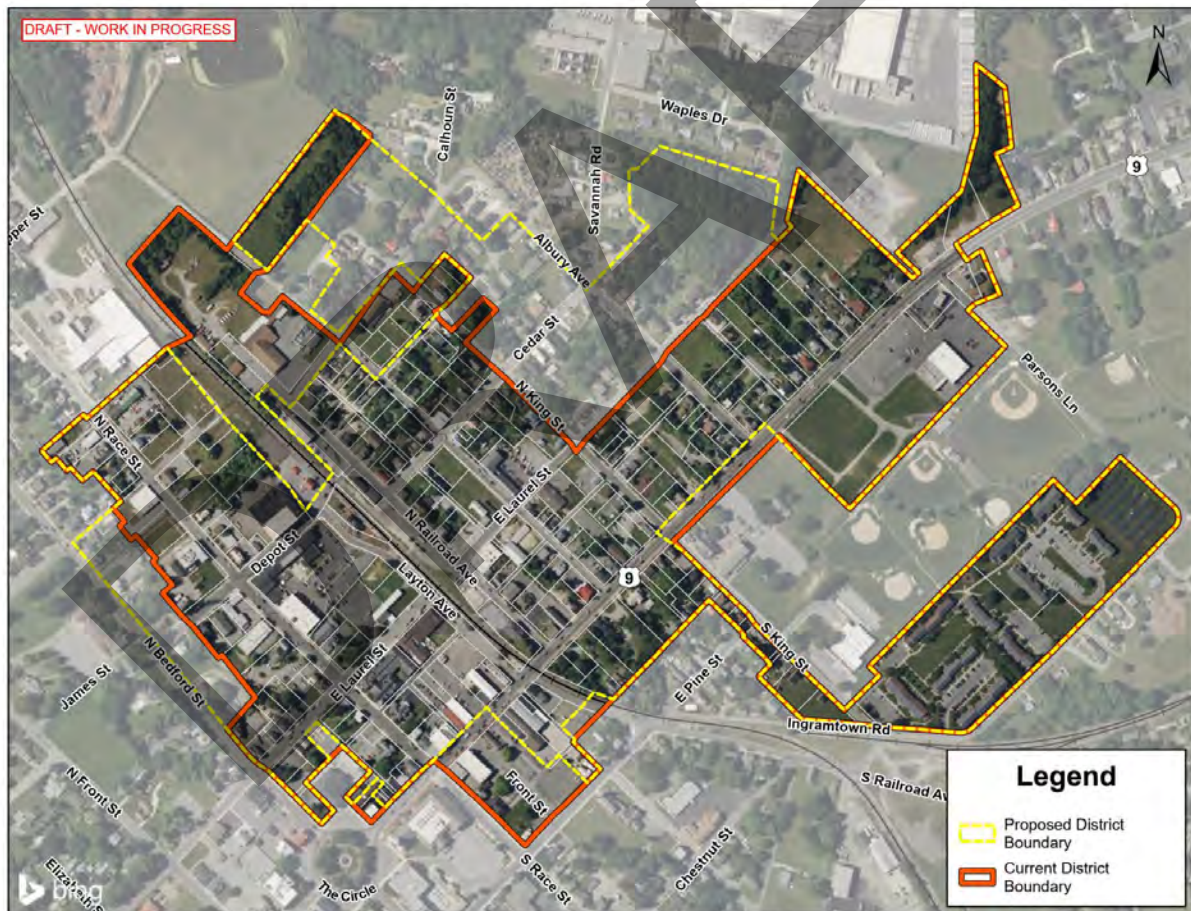
- Develop communications and marketing plan for renewed DDD – including new website, and translating all materials into Spanish, exploring other languages in the future as need be.
- Consider forming a permanent Town working group or committee of civic volunteers on Economic Development. Such a committee would aid in coordinating community and economic efforts for the Town which may currently be happening in silos and could reduce redundancies of effort and organize work of multiple parties together.
- Consider taking more in working with project applicants to pursue state incentives, including partnering with organizations to do that work
- Look at existing zoning within DDD: many lots that technically have a commercial or business zoning designation (such as UB1 or UB2) are not utilized for commercial at

all. UB2 is almost entirely contained within the DDD. Consider ways to incentivize commercial development in these districts

- Look at parking requirements for zoning districts within the DDD; explore parking requirement reductions for certain in-demand uses or other means of other potential parking reductions

Downtown District Boundary Update

The Town took this opportunity to adjust the existing Downtown District Boundary, as seen on the following page. Given that many vacant lots in the Kimmeytown section of Georgetown have been developed since the first plan was adopted, the Town proposes to expand the DDD further east into Kimmeytown, as well as to parts of North Bedford Street, while removing State-owned properties and others not likely to see redevelopment.



2025 Downtown Development Plan Update:

What's new?

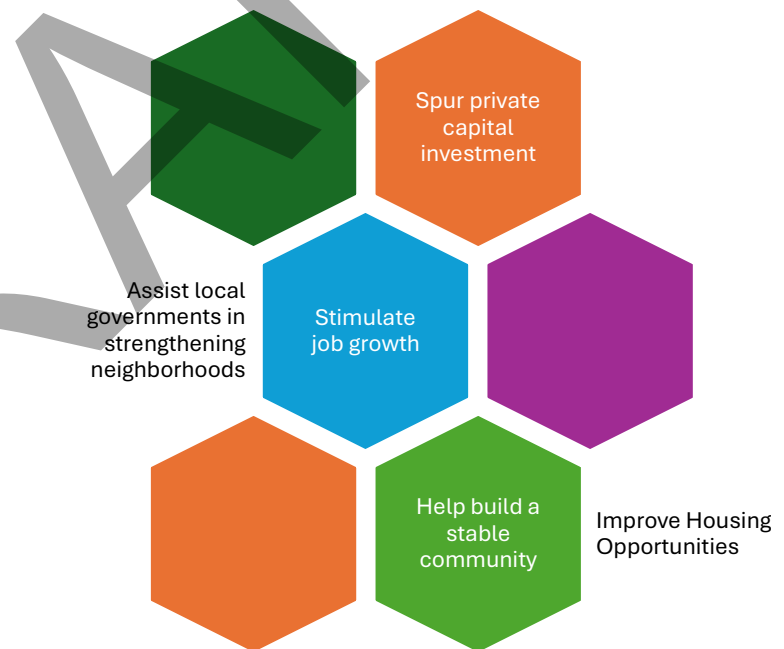
Since the last Downtown Development Plan submittal, Georgetown has been actively working to implement the goals and objectives identified for the revitalization of the downtown area. With this update, the Town has taken the time to re-visit some of the previous goals identified, as well as identify some new challenges to continue to help the downtown area grow into a usable space for all residents and stakeholders.

There is still an overall need to improve the public perception of the downtown area. Through stakeholder interviews as well as public outreach for this update, the Town continually heard concerns in reference to homelessness, crime, etc. Working to change the perception that both of those issues are prevalent in the Town will increase the opportunity for community events, and help to draw businesses to the Downtown area in general.

Purpose and Need

People often refer to downtowns as the “heart” of the community. Like a heart, the downtown pumps life and energy into the rest of the city or town. Busy streets and sidewalks, creative store fronts and colorful streetscapes all help contribute to the character and vibrancy of downtowns. It is critical to cities and towns that they continuously make improvements to their downtowns to ensure the “heart” of their community is always thriving and lively. To help our downtowns and neighborhoods become more dynamic and vibrant

places, the Delaware General Assembly enacted the Downtown Development Districts Act in 2014, which helps our cities and towns create designated areas that can then qualify them for significant development incentives and other State benefits. The Town of Georgetown is seeking to renew its Downtown Development District (DDD) designation as an integral component to its comprehensive economic, housing and community development initiatives.





Georgetown originally received a Neighborhood Building Blocks Fund Grant in 2015 to develop a DDD Plan, in order to one day apply for State designation under this program. The grant, funded by a JP Morgan Chase settlement agreement, awarded \$45,000 to Georgetown to engage a planning consultant and prepare its first District Plan, and in pursuit of its renewal. The District Plan identifies needs, challenges and opportunities within the designated downtown, establishes a shared vision and goals for the downtown, and recommends development strategies and incentives to achieve this vision. The planning process for the Plan included an extensive stakeholder and public outreach process.

Georgetown's downtown has strong bones, rich in history with the capacity and infrastructure to absorb growth. The amount of planning documents and efforts speaks volumes about the Town's design expectations in the area as well as its political will to cultivate positive and context sensitive change. Since its initial DDD designation, the Town has invested in planning studies and actions that address downtown development, including the 2021 Comprehensive Plan, East Market Street Design Standards, Historic District Study Committee, Downtown Façade Improvement Program, and the Branding Initiative and Beautification Efforts Improvement Program. The Town has also made many public investments in the downtown including, but not limited to: improving public spaces such as Wilson Park and developing the Town's first public playground on North King Street, beautifying the streetscapes such as tree plantings and sidewalk upgrades along Market Street, and improving pedestrian safety and mobility such as crosswalks and signage around the Circle, and repairing the Circle Fountain.

While the Town has set forth great energy and taken many steps forward, the downtown still faces many challenges. These challenges first include creating the right mix of uses and promoting day and night economic activity. As the Sussex County Seat the Town consists of mostly weekday daytime activity resulting from the courthouse and government employment. The Town desires to create a more vibrant, 24-hour community where people stay after work to dine, shop and recreate. The downtown would benefit from a wider range of options to engage community residents after hours. It is difficult for a business to be more successful if it is not open during the hours when most people have free time – evenings and weekends.

Second, the downtown struggles to compete with the commercial retail along the Route 113 corridor. This was a common theme heard during the initial DDD Plan designation and continues to be a concern with the submittal of the renewal.

In addition to providing a mix of pedestrian-oriented uses, a third challenge is to improve the physical walking environment. Many times throughout the day it is difficult to cross Market Street, Bedford Street and the Circle. This contributes to discouraging a person from visiting multiple businesses and discourages persons employed in the downtown from visiting businesses over their lunchtime and after work.



Other challenges and needs include reducing the amount and perception of crime within the District area, providing the appropriate amount of parking in strategic locations, enhancing gateways and maintaining the Town's unique historic character. The Town further desires to physically and culturally connect adjacent neighborhoods with minimal adverse impact, as well as promote economic and social diversity within the downtown area.

Benefits

The Town District Plan and DDD designation will result in an additional mix of uses, beautifying the streetscape, and marketing and stimulating economic activity. A live-work-play community requires a mix of residential, retail, service and entertainment uses. Market, economic and social diversity will create a more vibrant place and strengthen the downtown's market position. DDD designation will promote and incentivize infill development of prime vacant and underutilized lands in key locations in the downtown which will in turn be a catalyst to spur redevelopment and physical improvements elsewhere in the District and surrounding neighborhoods.

Designation will help leverage and 'make the case' for other funding opportunities for private and public projects that improve the downtown aesthetic and function, as well as public health and safety. Improvements would make the streets more pedestrian friendly and beautify the public realm generating street activity and foot traffic. Pedestrian activity means more visits to downtown establishments, and puts more 'eyes on the street' creating a safer and more comfortable environment. Such physical improvements may include new street amenities with tree plantings, pedestrian scale lighting, or street furniture such as benches and trash/ recycling receptacles. They may also include façade improvements with creative window displays and signage, or adaptive reuse and restoration of underutilized buildings with historical and/or architectural value.

In addition, marketing, promotion and additional downtown branding efforts are needed to encourage local residents, employees, and visitors to regularly visit downtown businesses and community events. Businesses need to be organized and set forth joint promotions, advertising, marketing and special events. Through designation the Town would also be able to better focus on business recruitment and investment incentives, while maintaining an inventory of available business space and publicizing commercial opportunities.

In short, Downtown Development District designation by the State will be a catalyst for public and private investments. Designation will assist to make the entire District, and strategic sites in the downtown, market-ready, and attract and incentivize private capital investment by entitling private construction projects to receive grants and other local incentives. While designation is not guaranteed, this District Plan will be used as the



primary tool to not just stimulate economic activity within the downtown, but to also guide this activity through strategic, efficient and sound investments.

District Planning Process

Stakeholders and Partnerships

Town of Georgetown

The Town will continue to work to promote the District Plan, administer the incentives and work on completing the strategies put forth in the Plan. The Plan can be used as a tool to support the reasons developers and business owners should come to Georgetown.

Georgetown Chamber of Commerce

The Greater Georgetown Chamber of Commerce is a business corporation dedicated to serving its membership. The non-profit 501(c) (6) is organized to promote and advance the business of its members and, through group effort, expand and improve the economic, physical, and social welfare of the Greater Georgetown area. Member benefits include Chamber referrals, broadcast emailing, networking events, special event sponsorships, ribbon cuttings, monthly newsletter, low-cost advertising, Member2Member program, notary services and more.

Historic Georgetown Association

The Historic Georgetown Association (HGA) was formed in 1993 and included Mayor Joe Booth and several members of the Council, Chamber of Commerce, Georgetown Business Association as well as concerned residents. Some of the many important projects the HGA has worked on include the revitalization of Kimmeytown, restoration of the train station and restoring the Town's first fire house. The organization continues to be active in preserving the history and the Town of Georgetown.

Sussex County Economic Development Office

With the motto: Explore, Excite, Exceed the County's Economic Development Office is the "key business connector in Southern Delaware." The Office works closely with businesses of all sizes including start-ups and businesses looking to expand or relocate. Recruit and retention are two key words the Office focuses on. Every day Sussex County's Economic Development Office is striving to ensure all businesses throughout the County are successful through outreach, support and incentives.

Community Outreach

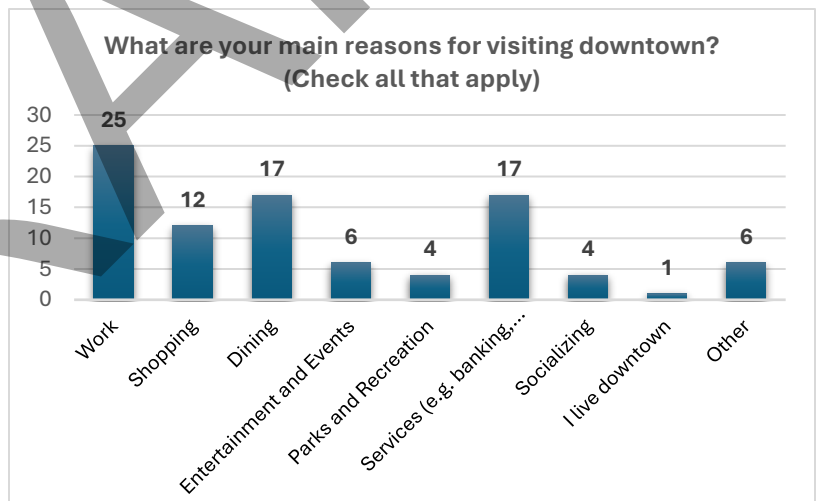
Community outreach is an important component to the planning process. The opinions of residents, business owners and operators, property owners, downtown employees, and visitors help to identify what they think the important issues are that need to be addressed and how they think Georgetown's downtown can be improved for the future. In the process of updating the Georgetown Downtown Development District Plan, community outreach has come into play through several Stakeholder Interviews, a community outreach event, as well as a Downtown Survey for both business owners and residents, available in both English and Spanish.

Downtown Development District Survey

This survey was conducted to receive the public's opinions, experiences, and hopes for the future of the Town center. Twenty-seven (27) questions were asked, and the survey was open until October 31, 2025. A total of 52 completed surveys were received from online and paper copies. Most questions centered around why people travel to downtown, what aspects they value about it, concerns, what changes or improvements are needed, accessibility, livability, sustainability, and what economic development they support.

Their survey data showed that most people live outside the downtown area and mostly visited it due to work, dining, or other services, such as visiting their bank or for governmental reasons. Common elements heard through the survey were:

- Lack of available parking.
- Lack of businesses or activities that catch people's interest.
- Would like to see more green space, landscaping, and parks.
- Would like a greater variety of shops, businesses, and restaurants.
- Upgrade sidewalks and improve connectivity/multi-modal forms of travel within the Town.
- Preservation of the character and historic buildings within the Town.
- Congestion issues and lack of traffic calming measures.
- More affordable housing/availability of housing for all age groups.
- More security, lighting, and police presence to make it feel safer at night.



- Concern with the rising rate of homelessness within the Town.
- Local business support and encouragement is very important to the Town.

Downtown Development District Business Survey

A business-related survey was also conducted to receive the local business owner's opinions, experiences, and hopes for the future of the businesses within the Town center. Ten (10) questions were asked, and the survey was open from September 10 to October 31, 2025. A total of 3 completed surveys were received from online and paper copies. Most questions centered around the overall experience of owning a business in Town, accessibility to their business, business challenges, and how Georgetown could improve business support/incentives. Overall, existing business owners feel like owning a business downtown is a positive experience. Common elements from responses were:



Challenges with Parking



Need more variety in regards to shops



Lack of foot traffic due to safety concerns



Need for an expansion of the Development District

Existing Documents

Comprehensive Plan

Georgetown's Comprehensive Plan, adopted in 2021, recommends major policies regarding the development and conservation of the Town and adjacent areas over the next decade. It sets out an overall vision for the Town, where Georgetown is a destination showcasing small town charm, historical prominence, cultural diversity and excellence in educational facilities. The Town will continue to be the heart of Sussex County's legislative



and judicial activity. It will remain a great place to live, work, learn, shop and play, with affordable homes and a strong sense of community. The underlying vision throughout the Comprehensive Plan is to protect vital resources, improve the quality of life for residents and provide new commercial services to the area, especially those that are not already offered in Sussex County.

The overall goal of the Comprehensive Plan is to continually strive to make Georgetown partner with the community to deliver excellent service, and plan for the future while preserving, protecting, and enhancing the quality of life. To help further achieve this overarching goal, the Plan lists 15 goals under a series of topics with specific recommendations, many of which are applicable to the Downtown Development District. Applicable goals fell under the topics of Land Uses and Housing, Community Facilities and Services, Transportation, Natural Features, and Putting the Plan into Action. The Comprehensive Plan also included a series of policies to be considered to strengthen the downtown area.

As part of this Downtown Development District Planning process, the goals and strategies relating to the downtown area were evaluated. Those that are still valid and have not yet been completed have been incorporated into this Plan. This Plan has also augmented the goals and strategies found in the 2021 Comprehensive Plan and set forth additional implementation strategies aimed at creating the vision outlined in this Plan's Downtown Vision.

An updated comprehensive plan will be developed in 2026. The 2021 Comprehensive Plan can be found on the Town's website.

Other Planning Initiatives

- 2017 Cool & Connected: Leveraging Broadband...Actions and Strategies for Georgetown
- 2018 Walkability Study
- 2018 Georgetown Roadmap Report
- 2020 Downtown Dining Case Study
- 2021 Comprehensive Plan
- 2025 Georgetown Bicycle and Pedestrian Study

State Strategies

Every five years, the Delaware Governor approves an update of the Strategies for State Policies and Spending, originally approved in 1999. The strategies represent a combination of state and local land use policies intended to guide State agencies as they make investment decisions. Throughout the successive updates to the Strategies, the District and the majority of the Georgetown remain within Level 1. Designated Level 1 identifies areas that are most prepared for growth and where the State can make the most cost-



effective infrastructure investment for schools, roads and public safety. The State Strategies generally prioritize the most intense State investments in and around municipalities such as Georgetown. These areas typically provide an opportunity for contiguous development that should grow consistently with historic character. The State encourages new development and reinvestment in these areas.

Zoning Regulations and Design Standards

The Town has been proactive in progressing downtown redevelopment by promoting pedestrian-oriented and placemaking principles, and retaining and attracting neighborhood scale businesses.

In general, the mix of zoning districts within the Downtown permit a wide range of uses that is conducive toward creating a vibrant, traditional mixed-use and walkable downtown. However, some permitted uses are antiquated or may be unsuitable for a downtown. Previous planning efforts have recommended prohibiting uses that may have an adverse effect in achieving the desired downtown character, such as “drive-thrus” and auto-oriented business. The Comprehensive Plan recommends that pedestrian-oriented uses be encouraged in the downtown, including retail sales, personal services, offices and restaurants. With few exceptions, the zoning requirements in the District zones generally allow an overall density, rhythm and scale that are typical of traditional downtowns. A more detailed description and assessment of the zoning districts within the downtown are provided in Section 2 District Existing Conditions.



2025 Downtown Development Plan Update:

What's new?

With this update, the Town reviewed its proposed boundary for economic and community development, and revised as necessary. This revision took into consideration potential for future development, or buildings that may have different uses, and also accounted for development growth since the initial submission. It also took into account the development that has occurred throughout the last ten years. Demographic and Housing data was updated to reflect the current submission.

District Boundary

Map 1 - District Boundary delineates the existing boundary for economic and community development efforts that are part of this District Plan. Except when otherwise noted, remaining maps regarding existing conditions reference the area of the new proposed District boundaries. The District's key corridors are East Market Street and North Race Street. Georgetown has some development constraints to overcome as well as many strengths and assets that can be drawn upon to augment the vision and goals for improvement in the Downtown Development District. Georgetown wishes to address several critical issues that may be slowing the Town from meeting its economic potential and capitalize on its many assets and opportunities.

Demographics

Population

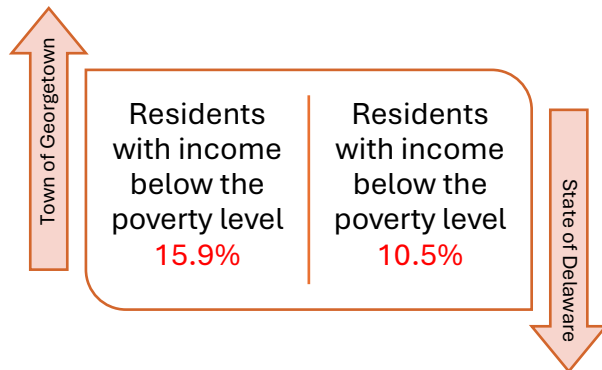
Georgetown's estimated population in 2023 was 7,456, a slight increase over the 2020 US Census count of 7,134, but a 16% increase to the 2010 population of 6,422. While the populations of both Sussex County and the State of Delaware increased somewhat significantly between 2000 and 2013, 32% and 18% respectively, Georgetown's increase exceed both by a fairly strong amount during the same time period. Census Blocks that approximate the District boundary showed a 2010 US Census count of 1,663, an increase of just over 8% from the 2000 Census count of 1,538. The 2023 estimates were not available at the Block level.



Income and Poverty

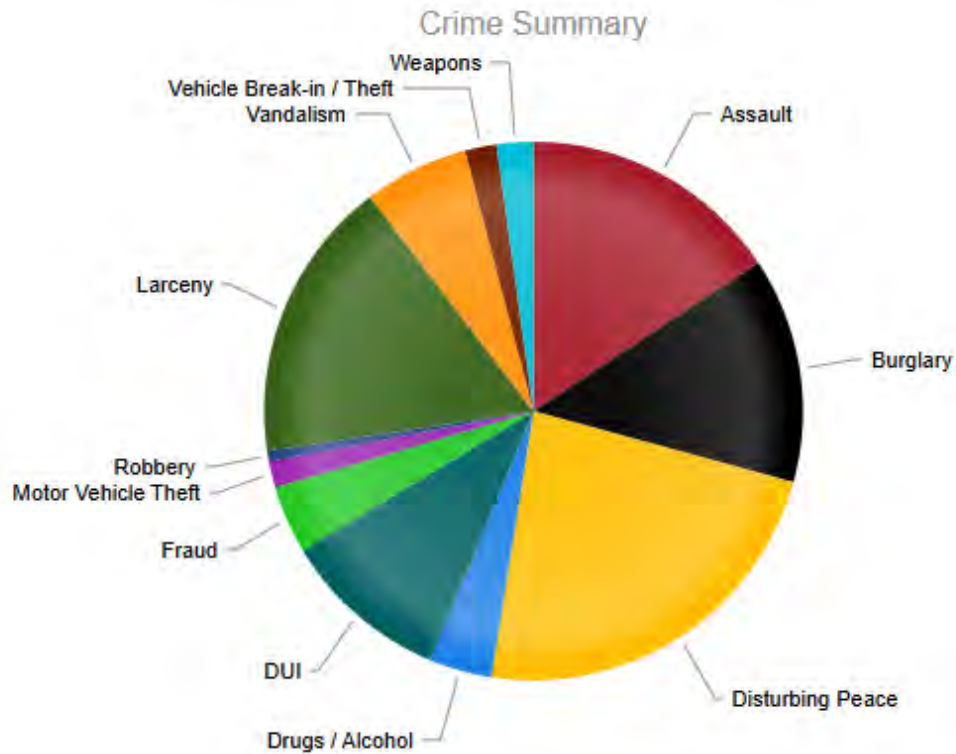
Median household income within the Town was estimated to be around \$47,423 in 2023, which is about three-fifths of the State median of \$82,855. Some of that may be due to inflation, state of the economy, etc. Median per capita income was \$22,713, compared to the State's \$44,219. The 2019-2023

American Community Survey lists Georgetown's poverty rate as 15.9%, a rate almost twice that of the State's 10.7%. While both the State and the nation have been experiencing slight, but steady, increases to the poverty rate since 2000, Georgetown saw an 8% decrease in this rate from 2000-2013, but has had a sharper increase since that time.



Crime

Over the years crime has become an increasing problem throughout the Town. Using an online crime mapping program hosted by the Town, TriTech Software Systems, and the Georgetown Police Department (GPD), crime statistics were extracted for a mile radius of Georgetown. The crime data is extracted through the GPD's records and up to six months of data can be viewed. Between May 1, 2025 and October 1, 2025 there were almost 318 incidents reported. The chart below shows the crime type summary. The most frequent types of crime committed between this time included disturbing peace (74 reports), larceny (54 reports), assault (50 reports), burglary (43 reports), and DUI's (32 reports).



Source: *Crimemapping.com*, crime data from March 1, 2025 to October 1, 2025

It is also important to analyze when reported incidents occur. Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays are when the majority of criminal activity is being reported and most of them occur after 5 PM.

Source: *Crimemapping.com*, crime data from March 1, 2025 to October 1, 2025

Homeownership and Vacancy Rates

The Town's homeownership rate of 41.9% greatly falls behind the County (82%), State (74%), and national (65%) rates. The addition of rental apartments as well as amount of housing located within the Downtown Development District contributes to the lower rate. Homeownership rates in Georgetown have been consistently lower in recent decades. This can, in part, be attributed to the Town's mobile population, with high rates of housing moves and occupancy changes. In the latter part of the 1980s, almost half of the residents had moved. In the subsequent decade, over 63% of residents moved. Frequent mobility combined with higher poverty rates, yield lower homeownership rates than the Town would like to see. In addition, Georgetown has seen an increase in vacancy rates from 9% to 13.8% between 2010 and 2013. Most of the vacancies in the latter year can be found in the homeowner market. As of 2023 Census data reports, the vacancy rate has dropped to 4.6%.

Statewide rental housing demand is strong for deeply affordable units (those less than 50% area median income) and market rate units (those above 80% area median income) and



the majority of demand for home purchases is from households earning more than 80% area median income.

Georgetown has also experienced a shift not only in the percentage of owner-occupied units versus renter-occupied units, but in the value of those units. The 2020 US Census identified 1,043 owner-occupied housing units. The majority of these, 42% were valued between \$200K and \$300K. 33% were valued above \$300K, while 25% were valued below \$200K. The median value was \$235,000. The number of renter-occupied units also saw an increase of 10%, with 80% of units valued over \$750 per month. The median rental value increased to \$1,200. This indicates a steady rise in both home values and rental prices, reflecting a positive and growing demand for housing in Georgetown.

Housing Stock

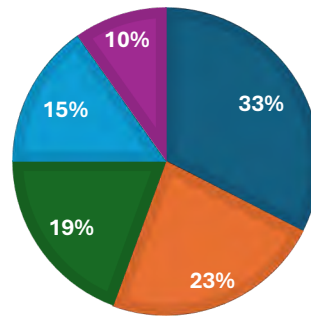
Almost 40% of Georgetown's housing units were built prior to 1980 and over 29% were built prior to 1960. Thirty years is considered to be the standard life cycle for homes before requiring substantial rehabilitation. It is often financially difficult for homeowners with lower incomes to maintain their homes over time, often leading to postponed maintenance, substandard housing conditions and, without some kind of repair and/or demolition, blight and abandonment. This is true for both owner occupied homes and rental housing. For many low income homeowners the cost to repair aging homes is too costly, and in cases where home values are depressed, the costs of repair do not add sufficient home value to warrant investment. Areas that represent older housing stock and have concentrations of lower-income households have the potential to become clusters of substandard housing if property maintenance codes are not regularly enforced, something that Georgetown hopes to avoid.

Employment

Georgetown's 2020 population was comprised of 7,134 people aged 16 years and over, with 4,765 of those (or 66.8%) being in the labor force. Four hundred and twenty of those in the labor force, or 8.8%, were unemployed. Workers were employed in the following occupations: production, transportation, and material moving occupations (32.5%); service occupations (23.1%); sales and office occupations (19.4%); management, business, science, and arts occupations (15.2%); and natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations (9.8%). Most of the Town's residents are private or salaried workers (86.2%), with 10.7% employed by a government entity, and 3.1% being self-employed. Industries representing Georgetown's citizens are shown in the table below.

INDUSTRIES OF EMPLOYMENT

- Production, Transportation and Material Moving
- Service Occupations
- Sales and Office Occupations
- Management, Business, Science and Arts
- Natural Resources, Construction, and Maintenance



Education

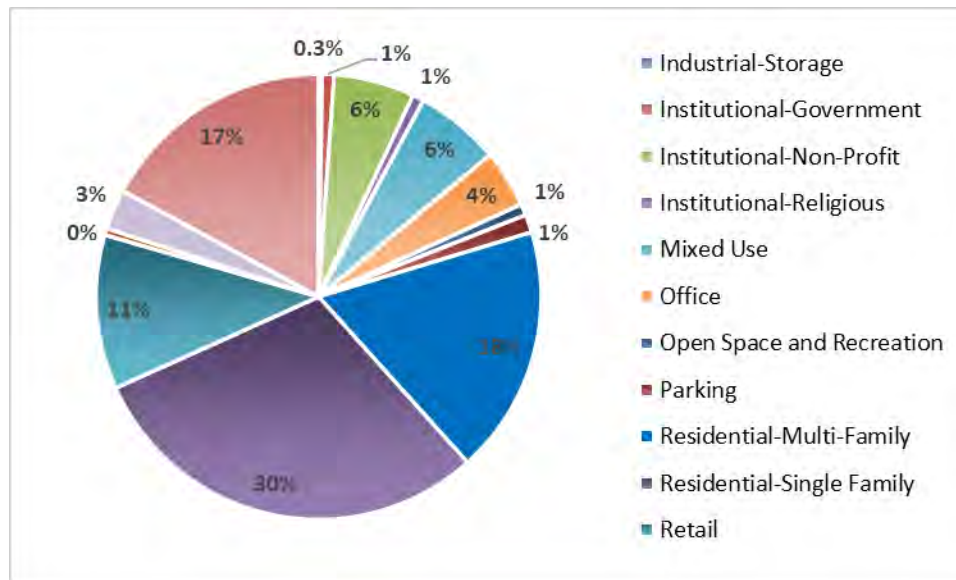
The percentage of Georgetown's population that has a high school diploma or higher has increased since 2013, when 65% of the population had achieved this goal. The percentage of the population achieving a bachelor's degree or higher has also increased slightly from just under 14.1% in 2013. In 2023, 66.1% of the Town's adult population had graduated with a high school diploma or higher degree and 15.3% had obtained a bachelor's degree or higher.

Land Use and Zoning

Land Use

Map 2, Figure 6 and Table 3- Land Use display the distribution of each land use type within the proposed District boundaries. The District contains a diverse mix of uses that are well-dispersed throughout. The most prevalent land uses in terms of land area are open institutional/non-profit, single-family and multi-family residential, retail, and vacant land. These four categories make up 82% of the Proposed District area outside of the road and railroad rights-of way. While single-family residential uses are dispersed throughout the District, the majority of the area is clustered along the north side of East Market Street between Albury Avenue and Parsons Lane. Retail uses are grouped into two categories of general retail of goods and services and food related retail; together they make up 12% of the land area. Eight percent (8%) of the District includes institutional uses such as non-profits (ex. Habitat for Humanity), religious uses (ex, Georgetown United Methodist), and state and local government building sites. Offices and professional uses, including law

firms, make up 4% of the District land uses. Mixed-use buildings that contain retail or offices on the first floor and residential apartments on the upper floors make up 6%. The remaining land uses include industrial, storage, and utility sites.



Land Use	Acres	%
Industrial-Storage	0.23	0.3%
Institutional-Government	0.76	1%
Institutional-Non-Profit	5.15	6%
Institutional-Religious	0.73	1%
Mixed Use	5.45	6%
Office	3.67	4%
Open Space and Recreation	0.72	1%
Parking	1.15	1%
Residential-Multi-Family	15.84	18%
Residential-Single Family	26.30	30%
Retail	9.85	11%
Retail-Food	0.42	0.05%
Utility	2.57	3%
Vacant	15.03	17%
Total	87.87	100%

It is important to note that as the Sussex County seat, the County Administrative Building and the County Courthouse are located in the downtown and directly adjacent to Downtown Development District boundary. While not located in the District, these uses



physically and socially anchor the downtown, and have generated many spinoff uses, such as government and non-profit offices, professional offices such as law and engineering firms, bail bond services and weekday lunch venues.

Zoning

Given the wide range of land uses in the District, it is not surprising that the zoning districts permit a variety of uses. Even though the predominant existing land use is residential, the zoning would permit a transition to commercial uses depending on real estate market conditions. This transition is already evident in the adaptive reuse of several homes along East Market, east of the railroad, extending the retail and office uses eastward.

Map 3- Zoning, Figure 7 and Table 4 display zoning categories within the proposed District boundaries. The District is made up of nine zoning districts, with the urban business zones (UB1- Urban Business and UB2- Neighborhood Business, and UB3- Professional Business) making up the majority (47%) of the area. The UB3 zone permits offices/professional uses. The UB2 zone permits professional uses as well as neighborhood retail type uses such as, barber shops, banks, restaurants and retail stores. The UB1 permits the largest range of uses, including those in the UB2 and UB3, as well as bakeries, cafes, delicatessens, flower shops, and other similar uses. Many of the permitted uses in the UB zones are conducive toward creating a vibrant, traditional mixed-use and walkable downtown. However, it also permits uses that are antiquated or may be unsuitable for a downtown such as wholesale establishments, warehouses, burial vault preparation, drive-in restaurants, telephone stations and frozen food lockers.

The HD- Historic District covers 8% in the center of the District and surrounding The Circle to the railroad. The permitted uses in the HD- Historic District build upon what is allowed UB zones. The Historic District Committee Report prepared in 2014 stated that allowing the same use as the rest of the downtown would result in the Historic District having no individual identity. The Committee recommended modifying the list of permitted uses to promote a more family and business friendly environment and that were unique to the historic character of the Town, which would be a draw to visitors. There are few entertainment, shopping and restaurant venues that would draw visitors, create the opportunity for employees to stay in Town after 5pm, and attract new residents to live, work and play in the downtown. Previous planning efforts have recommended prohibiting uses that may have an adverse effect in achieving these goals, such as pawn shops, adult stores, auto parts, drive-through restaurants, among others. The Comprehensive Plan recommends that pedestrian-oriented uses be encouraged in the downtown, including retail sales, personal services, offices and restaurants.

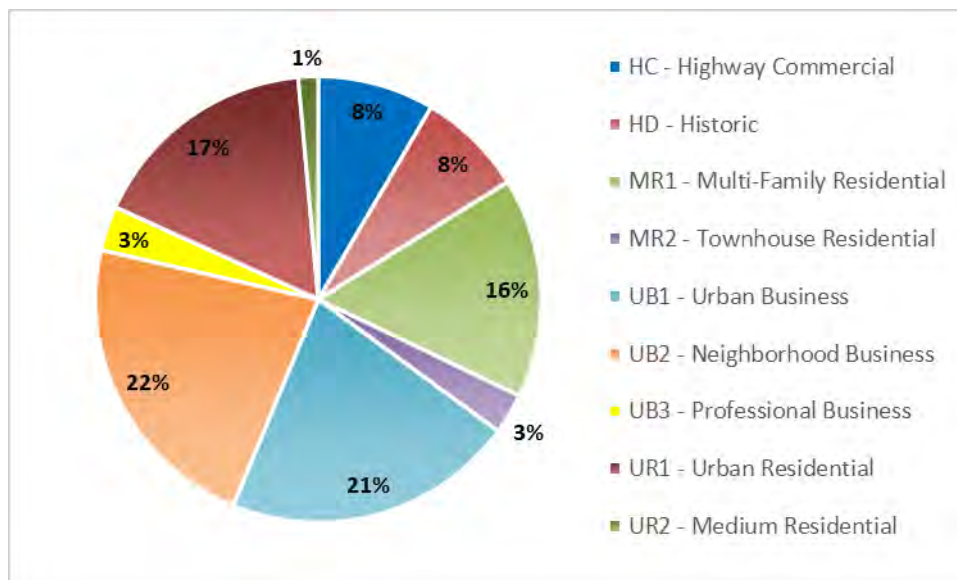
The HC- Highway Commercial zone located at the eastern boundary consists of four parcels making up 8% of the District area. While the uses permitted in the HC- Highway Commercial zone includes uses in the UB zones, it also permits uses that typically exist



along highways such as Route 113, rather than a traditional downtown. These uses include auto sales and service stations, car washes, farm equipment sales and service, lumber and storage yards, and mobile home sales and storage. Some of the properties are currently underutilized, are highly visible and accessible, and are part of the eastern gateway. This area is therefore identified as priority redevelopment area, and is further discussed in the Development Potential section below. It is also noted that the existing land use of the adjacent parcel owned by Georgetown United Methodist Church is open space and recreational; however the zoning is UB1.

Residential uses (UR1- Urban Residential, UR2- Medium Residential, MR1- Multi-Family Residential, and MR2- Townhouse Residential) are mostly clustered around Cooper Alley between King Street and Albury Avenue, and make up the rest of the District at 37%. All of the zones in the District permit residential uses.

With few exceptions, the height, area and bulk requirements in the District zones generally allow an overall density, rhythm and scale that are typical of traditional downtowns. The HD and UB1 zones offer flexibility and help to foster a pedestrian-oriented scale as they do not have minimum area and setback requirements, which allow a building to be built to the sidewalk and close to each other. The height requirement is 24 feet, which further helps define the streetscape and create a public realm. The UB2 and UB3 zones require a minimum lot area and lot width of 7,200 square feet and 60 feet, front yard and side yards of 25 feet and 10 feet, and maximum height of 24 feet and two stories. It is noted that the residential zones permit building heights of 35 feet and three stories. The requirements in the HC zone promote larger scale commercial developments. While there are no lot area and width requirements, the front yard is required to be a minimum of 40 feet and the maximum height is 55 feet and five stories.





Zoning	Acre	%
HC - Highway Commercial	7.26	8%
HD - Historic	6.61	8%
MR2 - Townhouse Residential	2.52	3%
UB1 - Urban Business	18.16	21%
UB2 - Neighborhood Business	19.15	22%
UB3 - Professional Business	2.77	3%
UR1 - Urban Residential	14.38	17%
UR2 - Medium Residential	1.24	1%

Development Potential

As shown on Map 4- Development Potential, there are numerous vacant and underutilized parcels that offer opportunities for compatible infill development. There are 46 vacant parcels totaling 18.5 acres and 13 parcels with infill potential totaling 6.5 acres. Lots with infill potential currently contain an occupied building or parking area, but are large enough with large yard areas to be subdivided and accommodate additional development under the current zoning regulations. It is further noted that while the parking areas are used to some extent, they may be underutilized and create unattractive dead spaces on the streetscape. These lots offer an opportunity for higher and more beneficial uses that better fit the downtown historical context and character. As noted above, there is also retail space available in some existing buildings.

While the entire District is available for development, there are some highly visible and notable vacant lots and infill potential in prominent locations presenting a clear opportunity for infill development. There are multiple vacant and underutilized areas that are identified as prime opportunities for redevelopment. These vacant lands are considered an asset as they offer space to grow and an opportunity for infill development that fits within the context of the District vision and goals. Some examples from the District Survey for what the vacant lots and buildings could be used for include restaurants, niche retail and space for community events. As stated above there are many opportunities for redevelopment throughout the District, but there are four areas that have been identified as priority areas due to their high visibility, see Map 4- Development Potential and Table 5- Priority Redevelopment Areas.

Map Key	Location	Opportunities
A	Available retail space in existing buildings, large lots with large	These vacant storefronts and lots are highly visible and offer opportunities for infill development that would fill in the



	yards, and underutilized lots near Market Street	gaps, define the street, and add pedestrian activity. There is also an opportunity for temporary uses such as pop-up venues, a farmers market, and other community events.
B	Vacant parcel and open land between Georgetown Square and United Methodist Church	Adjacent to the ballfields and currently used for community events, this area provides enormous potential for infill development and improved community gathering space.
C	Vacant parcels north of East Market Street and east of Parsons Lane	Redevelopment and improvements in this highly visible area would help provide a more attractive gateway for travelers entering the downtown from the west.
D	Vacant parcels to the west of N Railroad Ave	The 2021 Comprehensive Plan notes that there is opportunity for continued redevelopment of underused lands.

Connectivity

Walkability

Map 5- Transportation shows the road, sidewalk and bike route network within and surrounding the District. The center of Town is located at the intersection of two major arterial/collector state roads – Market Street (Route 9) and Bedford Street (Route 18 / 404). Both roads connect commuters to Route 113, and Route 9 is a major route to the Lewes-Rehoboth area. Airport Road directly connects the downtown and the Delaware Coastal Airport (formerly Sussex County Airport), which serves southern Delaware. This location and proximity to major access routes provides convenient access to surrounding areas, which is a key asset and offers an opportunity for bringing more people into the downtown. It will be important that the downtown not be separated and that there be a regional draw and adequate signage bringing in travelers from Route 113 into the downtown.

It is noted that since the majority of the regional traffic occurs on Route 113 as an arterial bypass of the downtown, the downtown does not have major traffic problems similar to larger towns and cities. This has allowed Market Street to operate as a multi-function corridor meeting vehicular, biking and pedestrian needs. In general, the District is very pedestrian friendly as it is reasonably compact and has high connectivity within and to surrounding neighborhoods. Vehicular and pedestrian commuters are well-connected to employment, retail, professional and personal service, and recreational opportunities in the District. The District has a grid street network made up of narrow local roads, alleys and extensive sidewalks. Street blocks lengths are short and conducive to walking and biking. In most cases, the local road and intersection widths are narrow, which make it easier and safer for pedestrians to cross the street. The alleys provide access to rear parking areas for employees and residents, as well as places for trash/recycling pick-up and potential locations for some utilities and drainage.



The design of Market Street from The Circle to King Street, focuses on pedestrian mobility and safety with crosswalks and signs.

A railroad operated by the Norfolk-Southern Railroad bisects the District, impeding connectivity and limits movement to some degree; however the District does have multiple crossings at Depot Street, Cooper Alley, East Market Street, Strawberry Alley and East Pine Street. It is worth noting that it is difficult to obtain approval from Norfolk Southern Railroad for new at grade crossings of a main railroad line, so any additional crossings may not be likely.





The Norfolk - Southern Railroad runs north/south through the District. While the railroad limits mobility in the District, it also offers an historical context and character to the District.

In the future the rail line may act as a way to not only improve connectivity within the District but also to surrounding communities. The proposed Lewes to Georgetown Rail-with-Trail will be almost 17 miles of mixed-use trail running along the railroad from Georgetown's historic Train Station to Cape Henlopen State Park. The trail segment which arrives at Georgetown has already been constructed, and the remaining segments from Harbeson to Georgetown are presently being constructed, fully completing the trail all the way to Lewes. Amenities to the trail will include trailheads, mile markers and connections to other trails such as the popular Junction and Breakwater Trail. The Parsons Lane Trailhead is actively in development by the Town, which will be ready by the time the entire trail is completed in 2026. The Lewes to Georgetown Rail-Trail has the potential to improve connectivity, but will also act as a draw bringing people to the District and promoting health and wellness.

The majority of the District is well-served by over three miles of sidewalks and crosswalks. The sidewalks on Market Street from The Circle to King Street are wide and made of brick, which significantly add to the historic character of Georgetown and help to create a public realm. The sidewalks become narrower and transition to concrete east of King Street. In addition, as a walking and biking alternative to the main roads, the District also has many alleys that are less traveled by cars.

Another challenge includes reducing the amount and perception of crime within the downtown, which can influence a person's behavior on where, when and how people visit downtown. Almost 100% of people that took the Survey said they feel safe during the daytime, time, but only two-thirds said they feel safe at night. Reasons varied as to why people felt unsafe but two reoccurring points were lack of people walking around and poor lighting. Providing lighting on unlit streets and parking areas, and having more "eyes on the streets" from places being open past 5 pm would help reduce crime and perceived fear of crime, which in turn encourages even more pedestrian activity.

In general, the sidewalks and crosswalks in the District boundary are in good condition and well maintained, however there are areas in need of maintenance. In addition, there are gaps in the network at the following locations:

- Market Street (south side from Albury Avenue eastward).
- Laurel Street east of the railroad (both sides).
- North Railroad Avenue (west side).
- South Railroad Avenue (both sides).
- Parsons Lane (both sides).
- Market Street and South Railroad Avenue and the railroad crossing.

Additional gaps and sections in need of repair should be identified by sidewalk inventory.



The sidewalks end on Market Street near Albury Avenue, so pedestrians have created their own path.

Providing a safe, comfortable, convenient and interesting pedestrian environment throughout the district and surrounding neighborhoods provides a clear competitive advantage over suburban or highway commercial areas. As the District provides a greater regional draw, it will be important to maintain and enhance pedestrian connections and traffic calming features wherever possible.

Public Transit

There are three DART bus routes in town, as shown in Table 7. The main bus stop and regional hub for transfers between transit lines is located within the District at Railroad Avenue. Improvements to this area, such as increased lighting, landscaping and pedestrian connections, would help the station feel more comfortable and secure, and could help solidify the downtown as regional transportation hub in the long-term.



Bus Route	Destinations	Operation and Frequency
Route 206	Lewes/Rehoboth area, Harbeson, Delaware Tech, SCI	Weekdays: 8 round trips; Weekends: 2 round trips (summer only)
Route 212	Laurel, Blades, Seaford, Bridgeville, Delaware Tech	Weekdays: 6 round trips
Route 303	Dover, Milford, Milton, Frederica, Ellendale, Delaware Tech	Weekdays: 8 round trips

Gateways, Streetscape, and Public Spaces

The Downtown Development District has one of the most prominent gateways in The Circle and the County Administration Building steeple. These key features in the Historic District

along with the downtown's historic brick architecture and sidewalks, and streetscape amenities such as aesthetic lighting and banners, lets residents and visitors know that they have arrived in the historic downtown and provides a strong sense of place.

Buildings in this area are built up to the sidewalk, anchor the intersection corners, are within close proximity of each other, and are of varying sizes. The buildings have distinguishable architectural features, and the ground floors of retail stores, such as the Georgetown Antique Market, are largely dominated by attractive window displays. These factors help to define the streetscape as public realm and create a more interesting and pedestrian-friendly environment.



Many buildings on Market Street have unique architectural features, such as large window displays, awnings and signage that help define the District's quaint and pedestrian-oriented character. These are all great examples of a traditional historic downtown.

Further west on Market Street, between the railroad tracks and Albury Avenue, residential homes have been converted to offices and retail stores, which further add to the District's unique architecture and pedestrian-scale character. Streetscape amenities, such as brick sidewalks, decorative street lighting, and street trees exist from The Circle to King Street.



Georgetown Hair Studio reflects the architectural character of the historic downtown that has been preserved and enhanced through adaptive reuse.

The eastern District boundary lacks a sense of arrival. The lack of sidewalks, streetscape amenities, vacant properties, and expansive parking areas do not offer a sense of place and entry into a pedestrian friendly, historic and vibrant downtown. The streetscape and pedestrian amenities on Market Street from The Circle to the railroad and the adaptive reuse of vacated homes offer some great examples for improvements at the eastern gateway, as well as other areas in the District. For instance, given the mixed-uses, the high level of activity and its connection to Market Street, streetscape amenities may be desired on North Race Street.



Vacant land, vast parking areas, highway scale development, lack of sidewalks and streetscape amenities do not help to create a welcoming entry into the downtown.

There are five recreational areas within the Downtown Development District area. Four of these are public spaces, including The Circle, Wilson Park on Market Street, the recreational fields at the Georgetown United Methodist Church site, and the tot lot on North King Street. These amenities are key assets and opportunities for the District, as they could offer residents and visitors a public gathering space for community events and programs, and another place to visit while in the downtown.



The Circle offers a public space for residents and visitors to relax in Georgetown.

Parking

Map 6- Parking shows off-street parking, both private and public, that are five spaces or more. There are large expanses of parking covering a significant portion of the downtown. The total parking area, including the driveways and driving aisles, is approximately 12 acres.

Many of the parking lots are situated on the same lot as the buildings they serve. Given the overall mixed-use nature of the downtown with some mixed-use buildings, there are some shared and satellite parking areas. In addition, most of the streets in the District have available on-street parking. The major facilities in downtown that require large amounts of parking are the County Administrative Building and the County Courthouse. In general, the parking areas for these and other government buildings are located behind the buildings, in associated parking garages, connected by alleys, and are improved and well-maintained. Even though these parking areas are large, their location behind the buildings lessens their visual impact. These parking lots and the on-street parking around The Circle and the Courthouse fill up during the day time hours, and the parking demand that they generate overflow into other areas of the Downtown. Still, there are predominantly vacant parking areas elsewhere in the District during the day, such as Layton Street adjacent to the railroad. The majority of all the lots in the District are empty during the night time hours and on weekends.

As noted in the section above, there are some parking areas in the downtown that may be underutilized, and in some cases, do not have improvements such as striping, clearly



designated access driveways and drive aisles, curbing and landscaping. These lots create unattractive dead spaces on the streetscape, and offer an opportunity for higher and more beneficial uses such as improved parking lots and/or infill development that better fits the downtown historical context and character.

The Comprehensive Plan notes the importance of not only providing a sufficient amount of parking, but also to properly manage the spaces that is available. Metered on-street parking is located around The Circle, on East Market Street, along parts of North and South Front Street, and on Race Street one block in both directions off East Market Street. Enforcement of these time-limited spaces allow for a high turnover of short-term users throughout the day.

The Comprehensive Plan also identifies the need to increase the parking supply without interrupting the “face” of the downtown along streets. There is an opportunity to acquire underutilized rear yards for public parking, which could be combined into one coordinated joint parking area. Joint parking spaces often results in a much higher number of parking spaces because the layout is more efficient. Another long-term opportunity is for the Town, the County and the State to jointly consider the construction of a parking structure in a strategic downtown location.

The Town’s parking regulations has some elements that are conducive to a walkable, mixed-use downtown environment than an auto-oriented commercial environment. Commercial and office uses are required to have one off-street parking space for each 200 square feet, which is high for a typical downtown; however to help remove any potential undue burden of complying with the parking requirements on property owners and developers, the regulations offer some alternatives. For instance, parking spaces may be provided on a separate lot if located within 400 feet of the building. In addition, two or more lot owners may join together towards complying with the required number of parking spaces. For instance, up to 100% of the spaces required for a church may be used jointly by banks, offices and retail and service shops.

While there are provisions in the Zoning Code which offer some flexibility, the code could be more prescriptive to provide greater certainty and predictability to builders and existing business owners wishing to make improvements to their lots. Property owners and prospective builders should be made aware of and encouraged to take advantage of these parking alternatives and credits. In addition, the code could allow a reduction in the number of spaces for proximity to on-street parking, municipal lots and public transit.



Designated government parking in the rear of buildings on Market Street are well-maintained and well-connected by alleys to local roads.



Unimproved parking areas such as these owned by Sussex County could have a better use appropriate for downtown. Many respondents in the Downtown Survey state they want improved parking conditions, though these may be alleviated by the new Family Court parking garage

Natural Resources

Floodplain

The Downtown Development District is in an area of minimal flood hazard, with no special flood hazard areas mapped as of the latest FIRM publication of June 20, 2018.

Wetlands

There are no mapped wetlands located within the Downtown Development District.



Wellhead Protection

The full extent of the Downtown Development District lies within the Town's Wellhead Protection Areas, designated by DNREC. Georgetown adopted groundwater protection regulations in order to meet requirements of the State Source Water Protection Act of 2001. The purpose of Georgetown's Source Water Protection Area Ordinance is to ensure the protection of the public drinking water supply from contamination. While the entire DDD lies within the Town's Wellhead Protection Area, there are no delineated Excellent Recharge Areas within the Downtown Development District.

Historic Preservation

Preserving Georgetown's historic buildings has been seen as a high priority to Town residents. The Town has worked closely with the Georgetown Historical Society, the State Historic Preservation Office, and Sussex County to preserve historic structures in and around The Circle. The Georgetown Historical Society keeps records on file of local historically significant properties.

Map 7 displays designated historical properties within the District boundaries. There are currently twenty Georgetown properties included on the National Register of Historic Places, two of which fall within the Downtown Development District:

- Georgetown Coal Gasification Plant at 116 New Street; and
- Dr. John W. Messick House at 144 East Market Street.

Other historic structures that can be found within the Downtown Development District include:

- Town Hall at 39 The Circle;
- Old Fire Hall at 37 The Circle;
- Georgetown Train Station at 140 Layton Avenue;
- Wesley United Methodist Church at 10 North Race Street; and
- Masonic Lodge at 151 East Market Street.

Recent Development and Impact of DDD

Not including the Family Court building and parking garage, the District has seen \$11,498,983.65 of capital investment measured by the value of building construction improvements. Map 9 illustrates the parcels which have received investment and received state Rebates for projects in the DDD over the past 10 years. A full accounting of the investment impacts are below:



Sum of Total New Construction Improvement Investment by Land Use

Land Use	Investment
COMMERCIAL	\$ 3,315,431.00
GOVERNMENT BUILDING	\$ 89,619,063.00
MIXED RESIDENTIAL & COMMERCIAL	\$ 700,000.00
MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL	\$ -
SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL	\$ 2,538,215.59
Grand Total	\$ 95,272,709.59
<i>Grand Totals (without Govt Buildings)</i>	<i>\$ 6,553,646.59</i>

Sum of Total Renovation Improvement Investment by Land Use

Land Use	Investment
COMMERCIAL	\$ 3,228,929.51
GOVERNMENT BUILDING	\$ 9,770.00
MIXED RESIDENTIAL & COMMERCIAL	\$ 30,375.00
MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL	\$ 563,054.00
SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL	\$ 1,114,478.55
Grand Total	\$ 4,946,607.06
<i>Grand Totals (without Govt Buildings)</i>	<i>\$ 4,936,837.06</i>

The DDD Small and Large Rebate Programs have significantly contributed to the investment in Georgetown's Downtown: over \$1,093,827 in rebates have already been granted, with \$828,000 in anticipated Large Rebate Reservations Grants to two projects with qualified real estate investments of \$12,758,619.00. The full accounting of DDD rebate-awarded projects in Georgetown are below:



Georgetown DDD Projects

Rebate	Year	Project Name	Address	Development Type	Construction Type
Large (set-aside)	FY25	Bahar Opportunity Zone	208 & 210 N. Race Street	Mixed-Use	New Construction (in progress)
Large (set-aside)	FY25	Georgetown Apartments 2	700 Ingramtown Road	Residential	New Construction (in progress)
Small	FY25	Georgetown Mini Market, Inc	106 Railroad Ave.	Mixed-Use	New Construction
Small	FY24	Sussex County Habitat for Humanity (15)	211 Rosa St.	Residential	Rehab-Existing
Small	FY24	Sussex County Habitat for Humanity (16)	203 Rosa St.	Residential	New Construction
Small	FY24	Sussex County Habitat for Humanity (17)	207 Rosa St.	Residential	New Construction
Small	FY24	Sussex County Habitat for Humanity (19)	220 Kimmey St.	Residential	New Construction
Small	FY24	Sussex County Habitat for Humanity (18)	224 Kimmey St.	Residential	New Construction
Small	FY24	Sussex County Habitat for Humanity (20)	202 E. North St.	Residential	New Construction
Small	FY24	Sussex County Habitat for Humanity (21)	301 Rosa St.	Residential	New Construction
Small	FY24	Sussex County Habitat for Humanity (22)	303 Rosa St.	Residential	New Construction
Small	FY24	Sussex County Habitat for Humanity (23)	299 Rosa St.	Residential	New Construction
Large	FY24	Greenlea, LLC (3)	4 E. Laurel St.	Commercial	New Construction
Small	FY22	HP Layton Partnership	135 E. Market St.	Commercial	Rehab-Existing



Small	FY21	Epic Homes LLC	8 S. King St.	Residential	New Construction
Large	FY21	Jaelen LLC	201 E. Laurel St.	Mixed Use	New Construction
Small	FY20	Anchor Hope Investments LLC	413 E. Market St.	Commercial	Rehab-Existing
Small	FY18	Greenlea, LLC	32 The Circle	Commercial	Rehab-Existing
Small	FY18	H.P. Layton Partnership	131 E. Market St.	Commercial	Rehab-Existing
Small	FY17	Sussex County Habitat for Humanity (2)	11 N. Race St.	Residential	Rehab-Existing

Regarding the DDD’s effectiveness in increasing population: Georgetown’s estimated 2016 population of 6,917 (ACS 2016), and a 2020 population of 7,150 has increased significantly to an estimated 2024 population of 8,098. While population numbers are unavailable for smaller geographic units such as the DDD area, the growth in new and renovated residential units (see below) point to significant population growth.

Regarding the DDD’s effectiveness in creating jobs: From 2016 to today there has been an increase of over 100 jobs within the DDD – from 446 to 559. While many of those have come from the two Large Rebate projects in the area (the JB Wagamon building and Jaelen LLC/Splash Laundromat), there has been a noted increase in the number of small Hispanic restaurants and retail operations on and around North Race Street.

Regarding the DDD’s effectiveness in improving housing stock: A total of 11 new residences have been constructed which have taken advantage of the DDD Small Rebate, with at least 3 others likely to apply for the Small Rebate in the immediate future. An additional \$1,677,532.55 has been invested into existing single-family and multi-family units in the neighborhood. Habitat for Humanity’s construction of an office and warehouse in the district, which may likely apply for a receive a Small Rebate award as well, will further enhance their capability to deliver housing in the community. Georgetown Apartments II, an existing 49-unit affordable-housing project, is nearing final approval of 12 additional affordable units – the project has also been selected for a Large Project Reservation Award. Another affordable-housing project, Georgetown Apartments I, is going through the approval process of renovating all 79 of its units and improving accessibility to several of those units, where DDD incentives will significantly improve the financial viability of renovating these long-term affordable units.

Regarding the DDD’s effectiveness in providing enhanced retail and entertainment options: The district is responsible for enabling several small grocery store and restaurant operations along North Race Street. However, as reflected in the District Plan Update’s outreach surveys, there is significant progress still to be made on enhancing the



opportunities for diverse retail and entertainment options on East Market Street and elsewhere in the District as well.

Other Developments

Within the last ten years, several changes have occurred to provide affordable housing options to residents and those looking to relocate to Georgetown.

Georgetown successfully opened its first Pallet Village in 2023, housing 40 people who were previously experiencing homelessness. The project was funded by the American Rescue Plan, and is now also home to a community center, where residents can access a kitchen, office spaces, and community meeting rooms. This space will further allow residents of the pallet village to transition out of homelessness. The success rate has seen roughly 30% of residents transition to permanent housing, while approximately 10% have returned to homelessness over the last two years.

There is currently discussion surrounding the development of James Place – a single family residential to mixed residential community propose for the 22 acre parcel located on North Bedford Street. A public hearing was held on April 28th, 2025 to introduce the future land use map amendment to allow for the development. Habitat for Humanity would be in support of the project, using 20 of the properties for affordable housing.

The Town has seen the addition of the Family Court building as well as the future associated parking garage downtown as well, and has seen considerable development within the Kimmeytown area – resulting in the current request to expand the Downtown Development District Boundary to encourage the continued development of that area.

With the potential new developments coming to Georgetown, the Town is hopeful that the revitalization of downtown would occur organically – with more businesses and restaurants opening to support foot traffic and resident needs. Incentivizing this area through the DDD plan would assist in the growth necessary to allow for continued improvement downtown.



2025 Downtown Development Plan Update

What's new?

The Town has taken the time to review the implementation table initially submitted and revised the projects into more measurable items, as seen on the attached “Implementation Schedule” table, and added new recommendations to respond to new and evolving challenges, added below. Listed below are the Town’s Key Priority Projects moving forward.

What stayed the same?

While the list may be smaller, the Town is still working towards many of the goals initially submitted in the original Plan, including increased downtown activity, incentives, cohesive plans with the Chamber as well as local Real Estate offices to market vacant properties, and boosting the social media presence to attract more visitors to the Downtown area.

Key Priority Projects

As a result of the new requirement for DDD’s to identify Key Priority Projects, the Town of Georgetown has identified the following properties where projects might have a positive, catalyzing effect on the overall development and revitalization of the District:

107 Depot Street (ASPIRA School)

The former Ice House at 107 Depot Street has been underutilized for several years. A vestige of Georgetown’s industrial past, the property’s large size has proved challenging to adapt for modern uses. Owned and developed by an Opportunity Zone investor, the site will become the home of Las Américas ASPIRA Academy, a bilingual-education K-8 charter school. Anticipated with the school’s development is significant multimodal facilities, including expanding pedestrian infrastructure, traffic calming, and marked crossings. Its development will provide a needed amenity and community resource within walking distance of many potential students and their families, activating a street which otherwise felt more industrial.



11 North Railroad

This property has been vacant since the former dry-cleaning facility at the site closed. The property is a certified brownfield due to previous contamination, which has limited its redevelopment potential and challenges those seeking to invest in the immediate area. Additionally, the previous building which was demolished took up most of the small parcel and, because of the parcel's size, meeting parking requirements will be challenging. So close to East Market Street, this site could be a great candidate for a commercial application. The existing DART Bus Depot abutting the property to the north, leased from Norfolk Southern, may continue in its current state, but development of 11 North Railroad Avenue could catalyze development of other vacant lots in the area, such as a lot diagonal to this property (100 N. Railroad Avenue).



County Land on E. Market Street and Layton Avenue

Located in the heart of Georgetown's downtown, these county-owned lots represent a potential game-changing development opportunity. Presently used as paved and unpaved parking lots, these two properties may likely see less usage as the new Family Court Building's parking garage comes online. Access to the site from Layton Avenue or the rear alley could enable a signature, multistory mixed-use building built right to the sidewalk. This work could also catalyze the development of an adjacent vacant parcel (137 E. Market Street), the successful development of which might only be accomplished through cooperation with these two other parcels.



409 E. Laurel Street

Proposed to be added to the District, this property is a 3.5-acre vacant parcel, and is the largest undeveloped parcel left in Kimmeytown. A developer would need to extend street access and utilities into the site. This site may be suitable for a denser residential development type, but the site would require a zoning amendment. When developed, this will provide a dramatic increase to the housing availability in the neighborhood and could stimulate additional developments within the parts of the neighborhood nearby newly-added to the District.



202 North Bedford Street

Proposed to be added to the District, this property is a former sober-living house presently for sale (as of this writing). This is a building on a high-visibility corner coming into Town that could serve as a historic renovation and adaptive reuse project. Presently residentially zoned, there has been a proposal to convert the structure into a restaurant and inn. Should this not proceed, there is still significant potential for a commercial application at this site, given its location. The property abutting to the north is also for sale (as of this writing), so there may be opportunities to co-develop the two properties.



New Recommendations

- Develop communications and marketing plan for renewed DDD – including new website, and translating all materials into Spanish, exploring other languages in the future as need be.
- Consider forming a permanent Town working group or committee of civic volunteers on Economic Development. Such a committee would aid in coordinating community and economic efforts for the Town which may currently be happening in silos and could reduce redundancies of effort and organize work of multiple parties together.
- Consider taking more in working with project applicants to pursue state incentives, including partnering with organizations to do that work
- Look at existing zoning within DDD: many lots that technically have a commercial or business zoning designation (such as UB1 or UB2) are not utilized for commercial at all. UB2 is almost entirely contained within the DDD. Consider ways to incentivize commercial development in these districts
- Look at parking requirements for zoning districts within the DDD; explore parking requirement reductions for certain in-demand uses or other means of other potential parking reductions

Implementation Schedule

It is going to take continuous work to put this plan into action. There is no one fix or solution to improve Georgetown's downtown; instead it will take many short-term actions with a long-range perspective. A vision for the downtown and the goals and objectives have been established through public and stakeholder outreach process including the downtown survey, community events, and the Task Force meetings. Through this process Georgetown's assets, challenges to overcome, and opportunities for improvement have been identified. The next step is to outline recommendations for the Town to move forward and start implementing these solutions to create a healthy and vibrant downtown.

This Implementation section is intended to function as a summary and an implementation tool for the Downtown District Plan. It is intended to assist town officials and staff in coordinating planning actions with other government agencies and making decisions in a timely, systematic manner. Many of the recommended strategies involve coordinating with other governing agencies and partners that have a shared interest or jurisdiction towards obtaining technical guidance and assistance, securing funds, seeking approval, coordinating physical improvements, and aligning common goals.



The following table, Implementation Schedule, summarizes the recommended strategies provided throughout this plan, lists the applicable agencies and partners to coordinate with, and prioritizes the strategies. The recommendations are grouped into three categories: Short term, High Priority and Medium Priority. The Town should act on the short term items immediately in order to benefit from and work in conjunction with the State Downtown Development District incentives and the Town's local incentives. Short term items are also grouped with High Priority recommendations. The Medium and High Priority recommendations are grouped by actions that need to be completed but are more long range strategies (Medium), and those that need to be completed in a timely manner after designation (High). All the recommendations presented in this Plan may require further analysis and discussion in the next Comprehensive Plan Update. Criteria for selecting the priorities include the following: 1) Level of importance towards achieving downtown development goals, 2) Realistic expectation to achieve in a certain time frame, 3) Logical order to implement a task prior to the implementation of other tasks, and 4) Feasibility considering resources, available funding and time. This table will further serve as a checklist for the Town in implementing the District Plan.

DRAFT

RECOMMENDATIONS	POTENTIAL PARTNERS & COORDINATING AGENCIES	PRIORITY LEVEL	POTENTIAL TECHNICAL & FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE
HOUSING			
Promote and advertise the use of grant and loan programs to assist lower income homeowners in rehabilitating and maintaining homes.	Delaware State Housing Authority Habitat for Humanity Chamber of Commerce	Medium	DSHA's Affordable Housing Resource Center Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) USDA Rural Development Loans and Grants Rural Repair and Rehabilitation Housing Preservation
Put together a community group that would be willing to walk the District and identify properties that need improvements. Local organizations could then offer to assist with small home improvements for donations.		Medium	Town Resources
ECONOMIC & RETAIL DEVELOPMENT			
Consider forming a permanent Town working group/committee of civic volunteers focused on Economic Development; This committee would aid in coordinating community and economic efforts for the Town which may currently be happening in silos and could reduce redundancies in effort and organize work of multiple parties together.	Town of Georgetown	High	
Proactively market downtown Georgetown as a business-friendly area and emphasize the revisions the Town has made to their Code making their approval process clearer and more streamlined.	Chamber of Commerce	High	Town Resources
LAND USE, ZONING & DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL			
Encourage adaptive reuse of existing structures that have character and architectural significance for new uses rather than replacement them. Preserve and protect home-like business structures east of the railroad.	Historical Society Sussex County Office of Historic Preservation State Historic Preservation Office	High	Town Resources
Look at existing zoning within DDD: many lots that technically have a commercial or business zoning designation (such as UB1 or UB2) are not utilized for commercial at all. UB2 is almost entirely contained within the DDD. Consider ways to incentivize commercial development within these districts.	Town of Georgetown	Medium	
Ensure the design for mixed-use and commercial buildings is sensitive			

to the overall character of the neighborhood, and that the buildings are human scaled and pedestrian friendly.		High	Town Resources
NATURAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES			
Encourage appropriate reuse of older buildings, particularly including rehabilitation of historically or achitecturally significant buildings.	State Historic Preservation Office	High	Town Resources
CONNECTIVITY & WALKABILITY			
Identify, enhance, and maintain appropriate traffic calming and pedestrian safety measures for Market Street, Race Street, and other Key streets as necessary	DelDOT	High	
Determine the trail head location for the Lewes to Georgetown Rail-with-Trail plan and work towards funding and implementation of the Georgetown portion of the trail.	DelDOT	High	Municipal Street Aid Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)
GATEWAYS, STREETScape & PUBLIC SPACES			
Identify, prioritize, and construct placemaking improvements along Market Street and Race Street, and at the District's gateways, including but not limited to: Extending streetscape improvements,such as sidewalks, traffic calming, and pedestrian scale lighting with banners; Establish wayfinding signage to attractions and parking.	DelDOT and DNREC	Medium	Municipal Street Aid
			Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)
			Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)
			Delaware/Main Street USA
PARKING			
Evaluate and improve wayfinding signage with a parking-unique logo to guide drivers to parking areas (such as areas on Railroad Avenue and Layton Street)		High	
Look at parking requirements for zoning districts within the DDD; explore parking requirement reductions for certain in-demand uses or other means of other potential parking reductions	Town of Georgetown	Medium	
Conduct a thorough parking analysis and make recommendation for improved parking at businesses and points of interest			
COMMUNITY EVENTS			

Consider holding food related festivals such as an International Food Day on Race Street where local restaurants and other vendors could participate, or an annual Food Truck Festival/"Food Truck Friday" event where food trucks could be licensed to be set up in Town one day a week.	Chamber of Commerce Convention and Visitors Bureau for Sussex County	Medium	
Better advertise community events by using all forms of media, TV and Radio, Newspaper, Town and Community websites, and social media.	Chamber of Commerce Convention and Visitors Bureau for Sussex County	High	
MARKETING/GENERAL			
Develop a strategic marketing campaign for Georgetown for general informational purposes and to market community events.	Chamber of Commerce Convention and Visitors Bureau for Sussex County	Medium	
Develop communications and marketing plan for renewed DDD - including new website, with all materials available in Spanish (other languages to be explored in the future as needed).	Town of Georgetown	High	
Consider taking more in working with applicants to pursue state incentives, including partnering with organizations to do that work	Town of Georgetown	Medium	



Program Administration Analysis

Overall the program is integrated into the several workflows of Town Administration. The Town Community Development staff discuss the incentives available at every Predevelopment Meeting focused on a property in the DDD. Town staff administer the long-term incentive programs, such as the Property Tax Phase-In programs, successfully.

However, it's been determined that there may be under-participation in the non-Town incentive and rebate programs (i.e. those that must be applied for, such as the State and County rebate and other programs) from those applicants in the Hispanic or Latino communities. Presently, DDD promotional materials are not translated into Spanish: this is something the Town is actively pursuing to rectify. Stakeholder interviews revealed that there was a perception that DDD benefit opportunities were not being communicated adequately, or that there was not enough flexibility in applying to the programs. There were also misperceptions that the Town incentives (such as building permit and impact fee discounts) had to be applied for to be awarded, instead of being automatically granted upon building permit approval. Additionally, partnerships are being sought to partner with Hispanic and Latino business organizations to ensure that information about the DDD program is accurate and kept up to date. The Town will also develop partnerships to increase knowledge-sharing and technical assistance.

Existing and Potential Revisions to Incentives

Façade, Sign and Awning Improvement Grant Program

This program addresses the maintenance and rehabilitation needs of building facades in the Downtown Development District by offering 50/50 matching grants to interested, qualified building and business owners. Grants may be awarded for up to 50% of the total cost of qualified façade rehabilitation, repair, or restoration projects, signs, or awnings with a maximum grant award of \$500. The annual amount set aside for this program is \$3,000, funded from Real Estate Transfer Tax revenues. A cash match is required. Grants are awarded on a reimbursement basis only after the applicant demonstrates full compliance with the grant award. Each eligible improvement may be phased over two fiscal years in order to maximize grant assistance. Full details on this grant program along with the current application (if application period is open) can be found on the Town's website.

Analysis of Effectiveness: The program has been used successfully by several business and property owners; however, the funds allocated each year have only rarely been fully committed to grantees. The Town will expand the marketing and advertising around this particular incentive, especially because it can enable quick and low-cost repairs that can have an outsized impact on the aesthetics of a property and neighborhood.



Realty Transfer Tax Exemption – 1st Time Homebuyers

This program was established in August 2004 and applies to the entire Town. As stated in the Town of Georgetown Code (Chapter 199, Article I, Section 199-3) there is no tax imposed on realty transfers for those that qualify as first-time home buyers. A first-time home buyer is defined as a person who “individually or as a co-tenant, has at no time held any interest in residential real estate, wherever located and which has been occupied as his or her principal residence, and who intends to occupy the property being conveyed as his or her principal residence within 90 days following recordation.” This incentive encourages first-time home buyers to consider Georgetown over neighboring communities. It is a big financial step to buy your first home and this program helps to lessen some of that cost. This program applies everywhere in Town, not just in the District.

10 Year Property Tax Increase Phase In (on improvements)

This program applies to the incremental increase in the property tax due as a result of the improvement. The phase in will be a 10% increase each year. In year one the Applicant would only pay 10% of the actual property tax, increasing by 10% each year until the full annual property tax is paid in year 10. A chart is included below:

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10
10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%

Analysis of Effectiveness: This incentive definitely positively affects the long-term viability of a project. It is especially beneficial for residential projects when a new homebuyer can be settled in a home before the full increase in property taxes will be felt.

Impact Fee Reduction

The fee reduction will be based on the type of use. Projects of a commercial nature will be afforded a 20% reduction in water and sewer impact fees. Mixed use projects (commercial and residential) will allow for a 35% reduction in fees. The fee calculation will be based on one initial EDU with additional EDU's being calculated at the end of the first 12 months in operation. A table illustrating the fee reductions is shown below. As mentioned, there are many up-front costs associated with development, and this is another incentive that will help lessen the cost burden.

Utility	Impact Fee	Commercial	Mixed Use
Water	\$1,599.00	\$1,279.20	\$1,039.35
Sewer	\$7,400.00	\$5,920.00	\$4,810.00
	\$8,999.00	\$7,199.20	\$5,849.35
Savings		\$1,799.80	\$3,149.65



Analysis of Effectiveness: The majority of projects in the Georgetown DDD have been residential in nature, so those projects have not been able to partake in these incentives. However, the commercial and mixed-use projects have indeed benefited.

Business License Fee Waiver

The annual Town of Georgetown Business License Fee will be waived for the first five years a business is in operation. Previously, this fee waiver only applied to new businesses, but the Town is proposing to amend the program in order to qualify existing businesses which are relocating to the DDD for this fee waiver. An Applicant that utilizes the fee waiver will still be required to complete a Business License application to be kept on file. There are many up-front costs associated with starting a new business and this incentive will alleviate some of those costs.

Analysis of Effectiveness: The Town found that businesses moving from a home-based business model to having a physical presence in the DDD were not benefiting from this incentive. Also, businesses wishing to open a second or additional location in Georgetown would not qualify as a “new business,” even if they are new to Georgetown or new to the district. It is the goal of the DDD to incentivize businesses to locate to and invest in the Downtown, and amending this incentive as mentioned above will further this goal.

Accelerated Development Review Process

All projects that are in complete compliance with the Town Zoning Code are administratively approved. Planning Commission hearings are not be required if a project can be administratively approved, provided no design standard waivers or other relief is required. All reviews, controlled by the Town, are completed within three weeks of submission. Whether it is a new or renovation project time is a big factor, from first concept stages to construction. An accelerated review process will allow a project to continue to move forward in a timely manner.

Analysis of Effectiveness: While project owners appreciate the incremental time difference in receiving back reviews from Town engineers and staff, if it is a large project such as a new commercial building, the complexities of the project are generally not weighed down by discretionary approvals. Stormwater and other infrastructure design work cannot necessarily be accelerated. The Town will continue to find efficiencies in the design review process to ensure timely approvals, and hope that recently implemented electronic plan review and online permitting portals will expedite design reviews.

Building Permit Fee Reduction

All projects are eligible for a reduction in the Building Permit Fee based on the value of the improvement. The reduction amount ranges from a minimum of 15% to a maximum of 75%. The reduction amount increases as the value of the improvement increases. The chart below illustrated how the incentive works:

GREATER THAN OR EQUAL TO	BUT NO MORE THAN THAN	COST	DDD	Savings
\$ 300.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 25.00		\$ -
\$ 99,000.01	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 520.00		\$ -
\$ 100,000.01	\$ 101,000.00	\$ 525.00	15%	\$ 78.75
\$ 999,000.01	\$ 1,000,000.00	\$ 5,020.00	15%	\$ 753.00
\$ 1,000,000.01	\$ 1,001,000.00	\$ 5,025.00	30%	\$ 1,507.50
\$ 1,999,000.01	\$ 2,000,000.00	\$ 10,020.00	30%	\$ 3,006.00
\$ 2,000,000.01	\$ 2,001,000.00	\$ 10,025.00	45%	\$ 4,511.25
\$ 2,999,000.01	\$ 3,000,000.00	\$ 15,020.00	45%	\$ 6,759.00
\$ 3,000,000.01	\$ 3,001,000.00	\$ 15,025.00	60%	\$ 9,015.00
\$ 3,999,000.01	\$ 4,000,000.00	\$ 20,020.00	60%	\$ 12,012.00
\$ 4,000,000.01	\$ 4,001,000.00	\$ 20,025.00	75%	\$ 15,018.75
\$ 4,999,000.01	\$ 5,000,000.00	\$ 25,020.00	75%	\$ 18,765.00
\$ 5,000,000.01	\$ 5,001,000.00	\$ 25,025.00	75%	\$ 18,768.75

Analysis of Effectiveness: This has significantly improved financial viability of projects, especially for large projects that have an increased discount rate.

Emergency Services and Georgetown Recreation, Education and Arts Trust Reduction

All projects are eligible for a 50% reduction in this fee. The fee is based on the value of the new construction cost and is a sliding scale with a minimum of 0.10% and the maximum of 0.50%. A chart showing the fee reduction amount is shown below:



Value of Improvement	Emergency Services Fee	GREAT Fund Fee	Improvement Value	Fee	DDD
Less than \$99,999	0.10%	0.10%			
\$100,000 to \$499,999	0.30%	0.30%	\$150,000	\$900	\$450
Over \$500,000	0.50%	0.50%	%1,500,000	\$15,000	\$7,500

Analysis of Effectiveness: As above with the building permit reductions, this incentive does add value to projects.

Zoning

Upon initial designation, the Town considered enacting form-based code provisions to apply in the Downtown Development District. Choosing to not advance those measures, the Town would consider revisions to Zoning provisions in this program renewal period. In particular, the UB2 Neighborhood Business district may benefit from revisions. Presently, increased setbacks and requirements to ensuring a building has the appearance of a single-family dwelling limit the full feasibility of pedestrian-friendly, downtown development along much of East Market Street and North Railroad Avenue. The UB2 District is almost entirely contained within the geographic area of the DDD, so beneficial changes would be particularly felt to commercial or mixed-use projects.

Value of Incentives

To show how the incentives package could have an impact on potential developers two scenarios have been put together showing the outcome of a renovation and new construction.

Renovation – Improvement: \$150,000.00

Assumptions – Commercial Structure, One (1) EDU Required



<u>Item</u>	<u>No</u> <u>Designation</u>	<u>DDD</u> <u>Designation</u>	<u>%</u> <u>Reduction</u>	<u>Incentive</u> <u>Value</u>
Building Permit Fee	\$ 771.00	\$ 655.35	15%	\$ 115.65
Property Tax	\$ 760.80	\$ 76.08	90%	\$ 684.72
Impact Fee	\$ 8,999.00	\$ 7,199.20	20%	\$ 1,799.80
Business License	\$ 78.00	\$ -	100%	\$ 78.00
Emg Svcs & GREAT Fee	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 750.00	50%	\$ 750.00
Total	\$ 12,108.80	\$ 8,680.63		\$ 3,428.17

Percentage of Savings 28%

New Construction – Improvement: \$1,500,000.00

Assumptions – Mixed-Use Structure, Two (2) EDUs Required

<u>Item</u>	<u>No</u> <u>Designation</u>	<u>DDD</u> <u>Designation</u>	<u>%</u> <u>Reduction</u>	<u>Incentive</u> <u>Value</u>
Building Permit Fee	\$ 7,521.00	\$ 5,264.70	30%	\$ 2,256.30
Property Tax Svgs (Yr 1)	\$ 7,608.00	\$ 760.80	90%	\$ 6,847.20
Impact Fee	\$ 17,998.00	\$ 11,698.70	35%	\$ 6,299.30
Business License	\$ 78.00	\$ -	100%	\$ 78.00
Emg Svcs Fee	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 7,500.00	50%	\$ 7,500.00
Total	\$ 48,205.00	\$ 25,224.20		\$ 22,980.80

Percentage of Savings 48%



Funding Opportunities

The following is a list of agencies and programs that could provide valuable funding opportunities, as well as partners for technical support to complete the implementation strategies.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

www.hud.gov/cdbg

Delaware Historic Preservation Tax Credit Program

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

Delaware Main Street / USDA Rural Community Development Initiative Grants

<http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/rural-community-development-initiative-grants>

Delaware Preservation Fund

<http://preservationde.org/delaware-preservation-fund/>

DSHA's Affordable Housing Resource Center

http://destatehousing.com/AffordableHousingResourceCenter/ot_toolbox.php

Municipal Street Aid

<http://deldot.gov/information/projects/msa/>

NCALL

<http://www.ncall.org/>

Sussex County Association of Realtors

<http://scaor.com/>

Surface Transportation Block Grant Program, formerly Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)

<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/specialfunding/stp/160307.cfm>

USDA Rural Development Loans and Grants

<http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services>

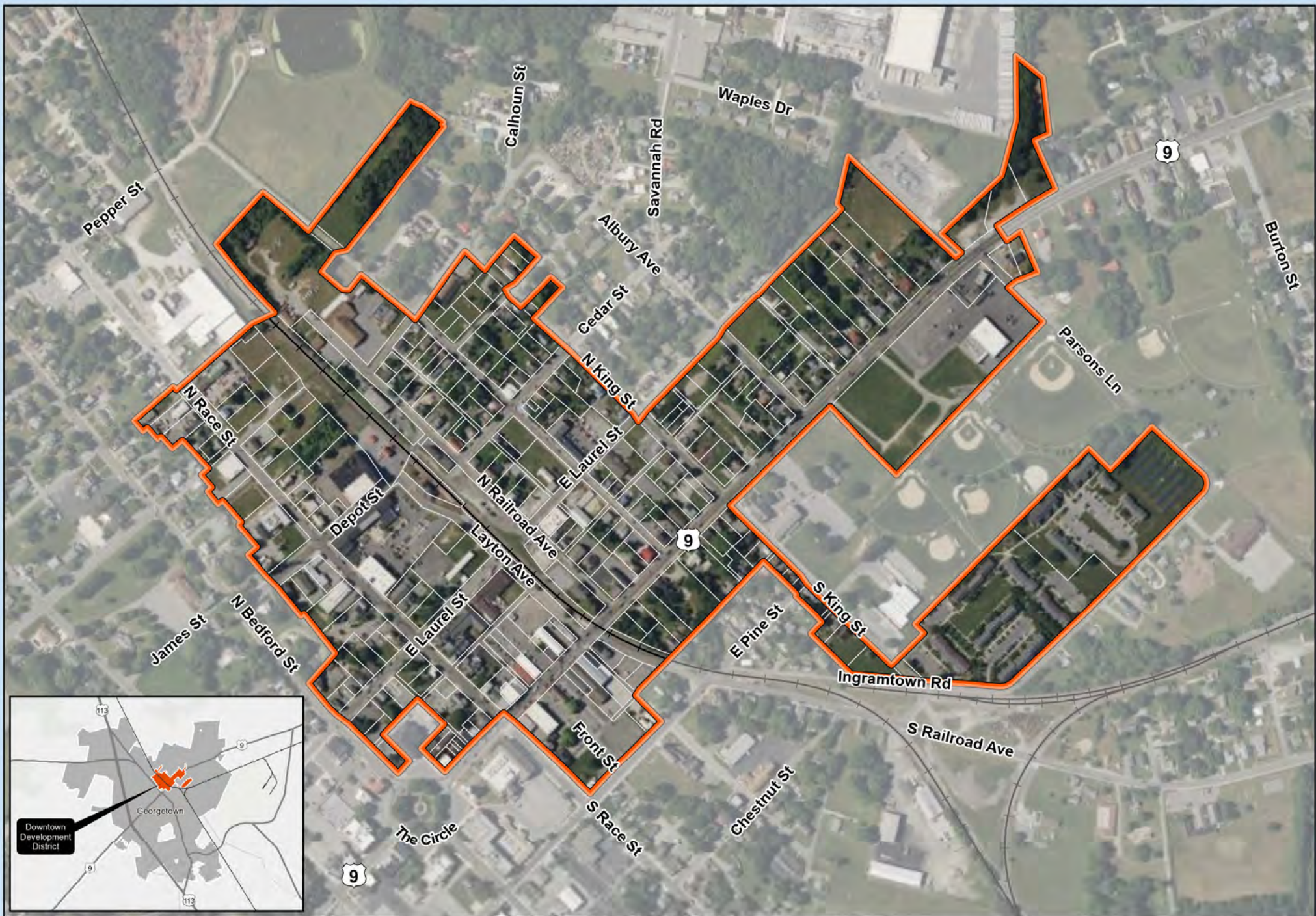


Conclusion

The Town of Georgetown has been working to improve the downtown for years through planning projects and design guidelines specific to the downtown, as well as going through a rebranding process. With all the efforts the Town has put forward they have yet to see their vision achieved. There are numerous obstacles that have kept the downtown from becoming the vibrant and thriving area the Town wishes to see. Putting a Downtown Development District (DDD) Plan together, and applying for DDD designation, has been a great opportunity for the Town to concentrate on a specific area of the downtown and explore the issues it faces and how to best solve those concerns.

Through the process of completing this District Plan there was a real focus on the existing conditions of the Town, downtown and proposed District. Topics such as demographics, land use and development potential, and economic development were all thoroughly researched. This helped to clearly identify the number of critical issues the downtown faces. Once the issues were understood, a comprehensive list of goals and strategies were put together that in concert will work to help solve the identified issues.

The District Plan also categorizes the strategies in an implementation schedule that the Town can use as a planning tool to apply the strategies in an organized and systematic manner. The strategies are prioritized setting forth what issues are critical to begin with to start moving towards improvements to the downtown. Having a clear understanding of what the problems are that the downtown faces and solutions on how to alleviate these issues, along with quality incentives to potential developers, the Town is well positioned to begin to see the vision they have worked so hard to achieve finally start to become reality.

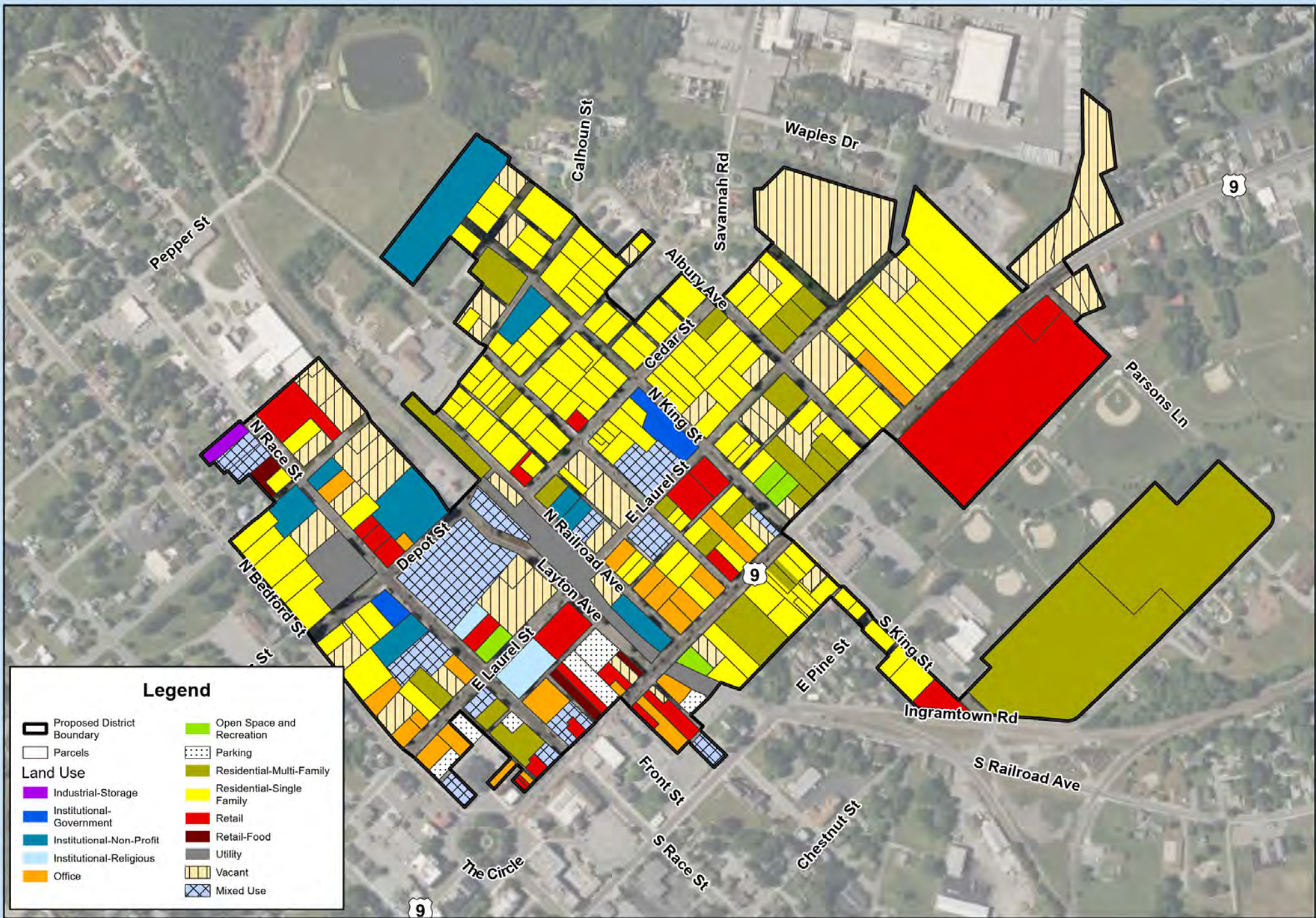


Map 1, Existing District Boundary

Downtown Development District
Georgetown, Delaware

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Miles

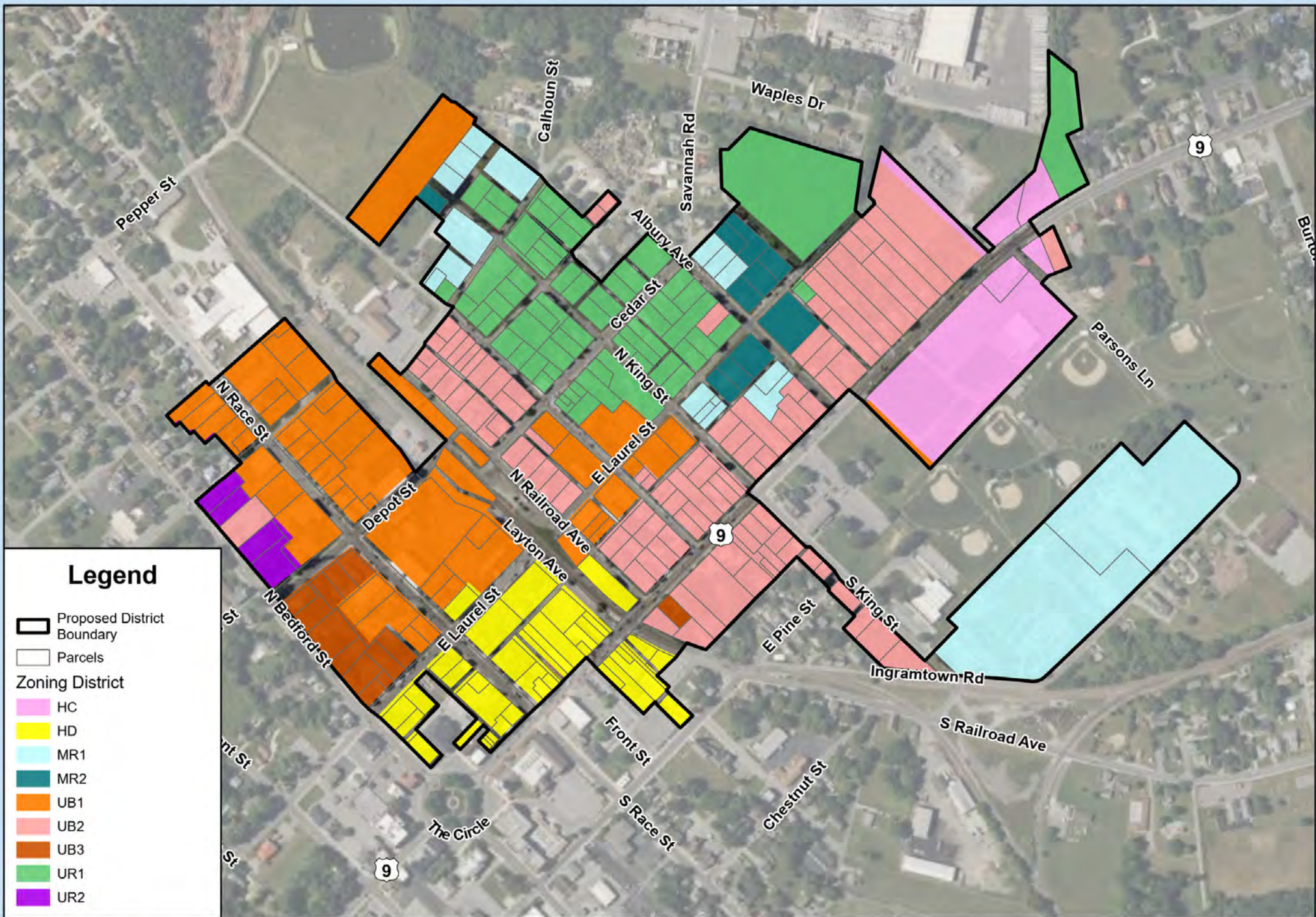




Map 2, Land Use
Downtown Development District
Georgetown, Delaware

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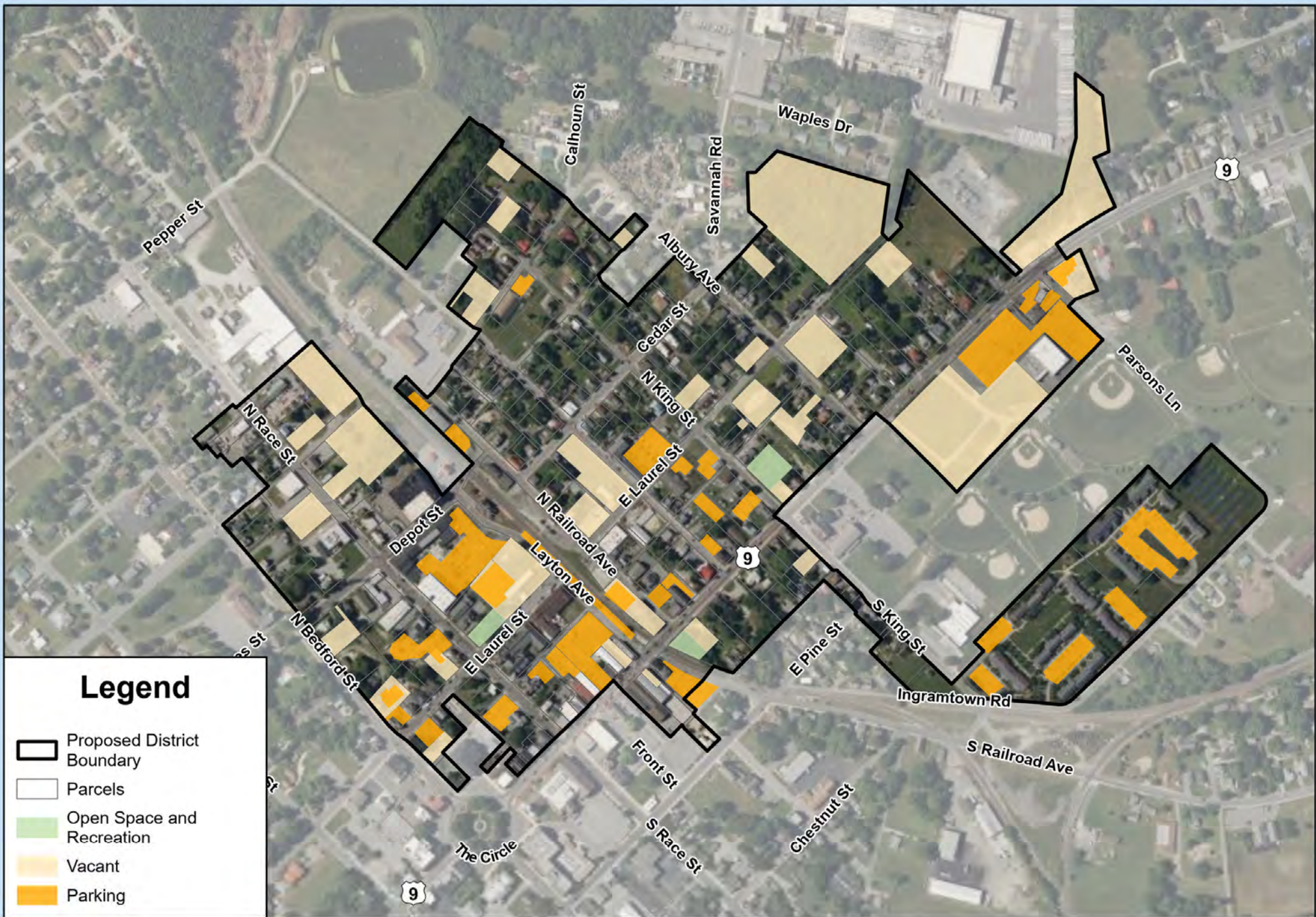




Map 3, Zoning Districts
 Downtown Development District
 Georgetown, Delaware

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 Miles





Map 4, Development Potential
Downtown Development District
Georgetown, Delaware

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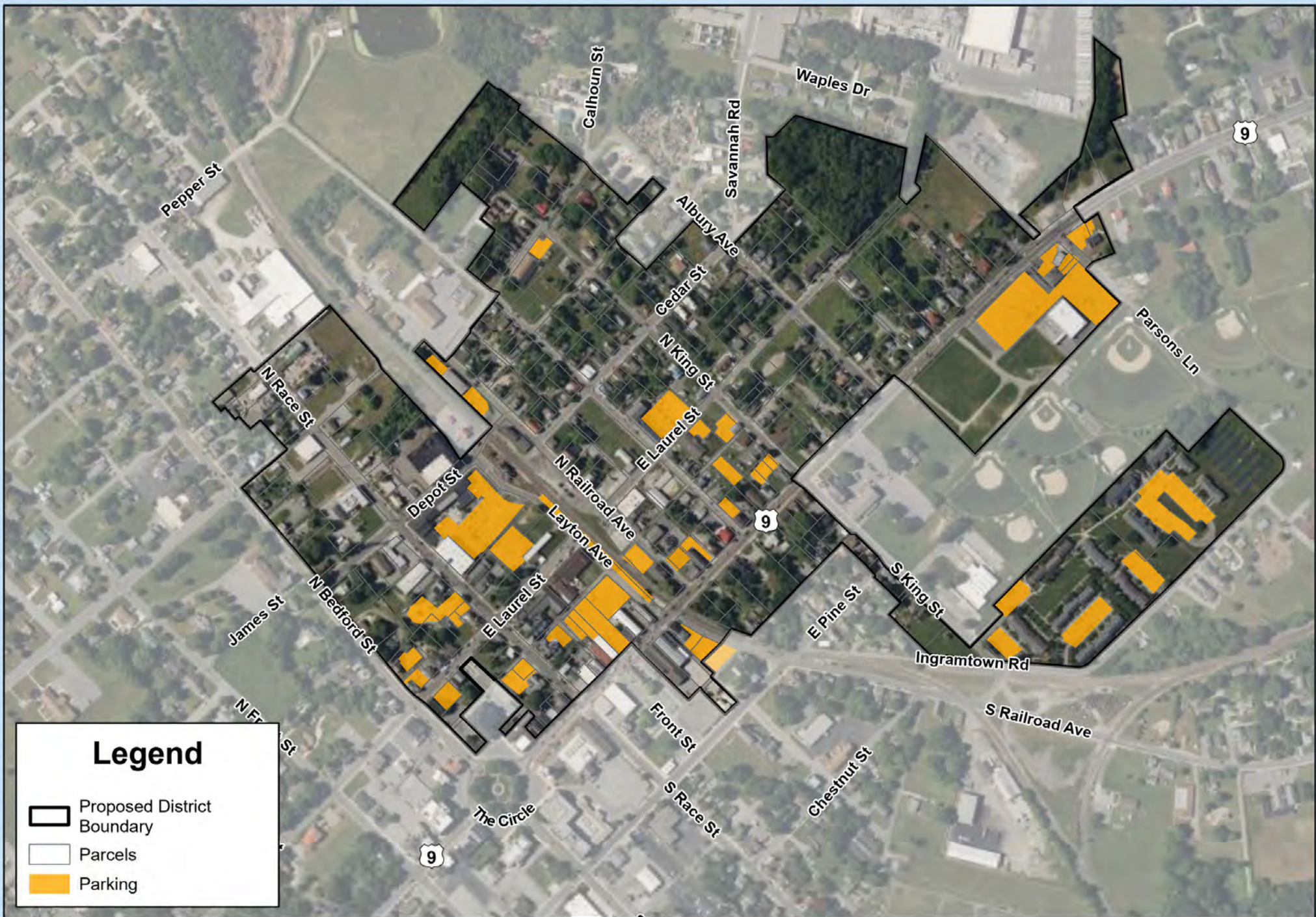




Map 5, Transportation
Downtown Development District
Georgetown, Delaware

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Map 6, Parking
Downtown Development District
Georgetown, Delaware

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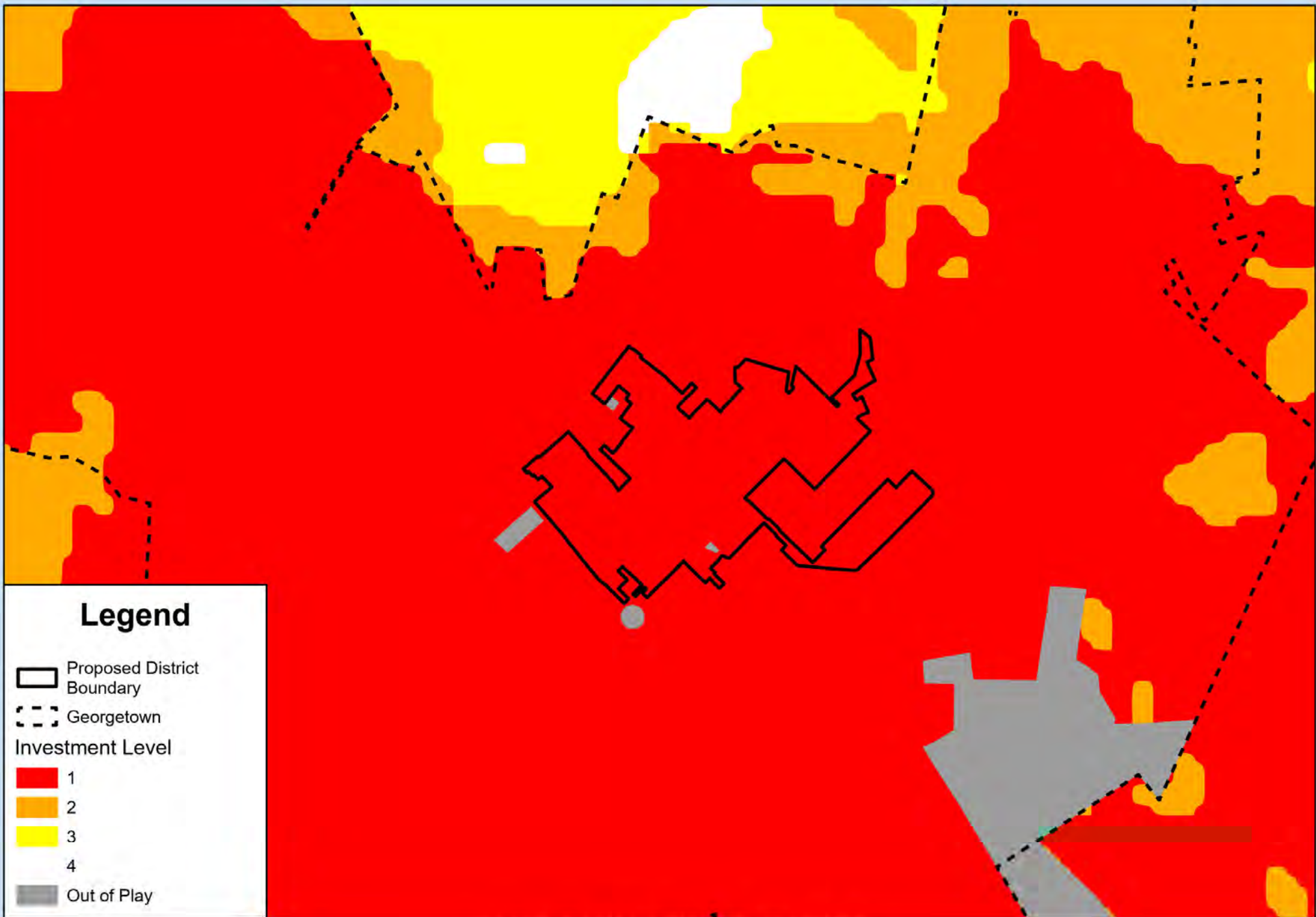




Map 7, Historic Places
Downtown Development District
Georgetown, Delaware

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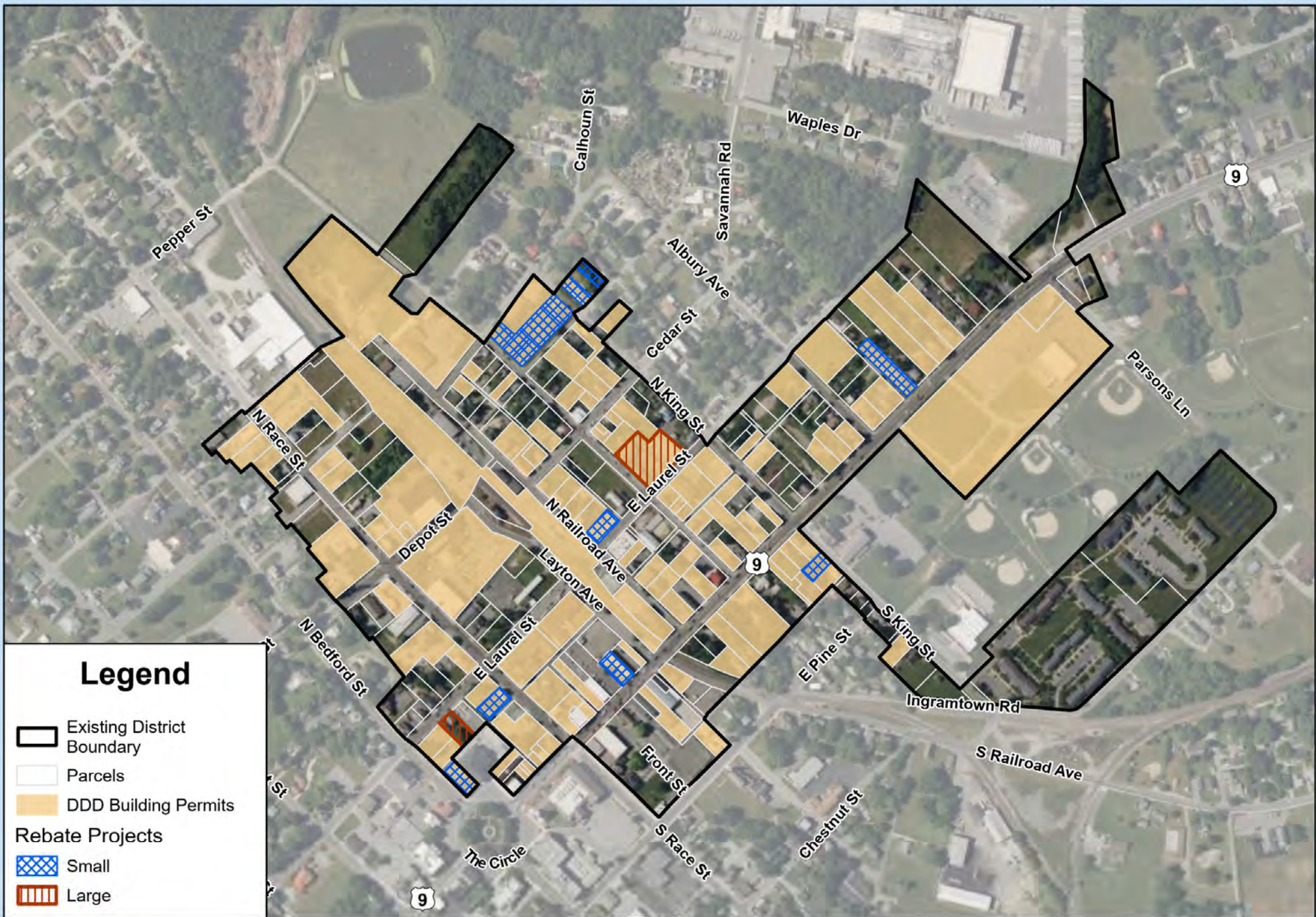


Map 8, 2020 State Strategies

Downtown Development District
Georgetown, Delaware

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Miles



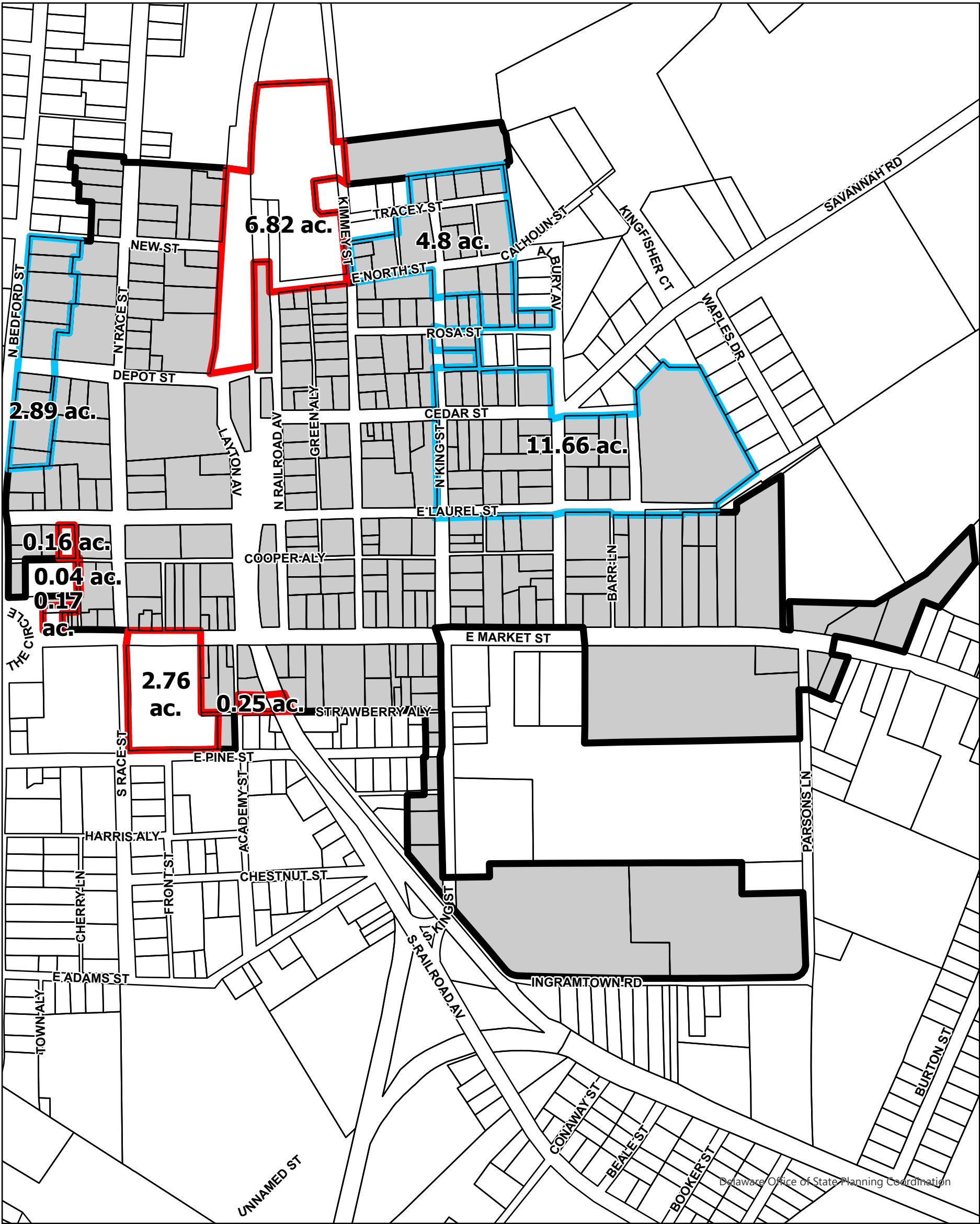


Map 9, Rebate Projects & Permits

Downtown Development District
Georgetown, Delaware

0 0.05 0.1 Miles





Map 10, Proposed DDD Boundary Revision

- Existing DDD Boundary
- Additions
- Reductions

New DDD Boundary
293 Parcels
104.54 Acres
Existing Boundary as of May 2025
95.59 Acres



This map is created from official sources for informational and planning purposes only. This map is not meant to be used as a legal description of properties or for engineering purposes. The Town makes no claims, no representations, and no warranties, express or implied, concerning the validity (express or implied), the reliability or the accuracy of the GIS data and GIS data products furnished by the Town, including the implied validity of any uses of such data.



RESOLUTION #2026-01

A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE APPLICATION FOR A FIVE-YEAR EXTENDED DESIGNATION AS A DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

WHEREAS, under the Downtown Development Districts Act, 22 Del.C. §§ 1901 et seq. (the "Act"), the State of Delaware may designate districts within Delaware's cities, towns, and unincorporated areas that will qualify for significant development incentives and other State benefits; and

WHEREAS, these districts are known as Downtown Development Districts ("Districts"); and

WHEREAS, in 2016, the downtown area of the Town of Georgetown was designated as a Downtown Development District for an initial ten-year period; and

WHEREAS, the Act allows the Governor to renew existing Districts for up to two five-year renewal periods, upon recommendation of the Cabinet Committee on State Planning Issues; and

WHEREAS, the Office of State Planning Coordination has developed a renewal application process to evaluate the performance of district responsibilities by the municipality, the continued need for the district, and its effectiveness in achieving program goals, with such applications being due six months prior to expiration; and

WHEREAS, application materials must include an updated district plan including updated goals, objectives, strategies, and key priority projects, a program evaluation, and a discussion of the continued need for the District designation supported by data, and information about the proposed incentive package to achieve the purposes set forth in the Act (the "Local Incentives") and;

WHEREAS, Applicants may revise the original District Boundary as a part of the renewal process to meet the redevelopment goals of the next five-year period; and

WHEREAS, if the renewal application is successful and the Town receives a five-year extension of its District designation, the District Plan and Local Incentives proposed by the Town shall be binding; and

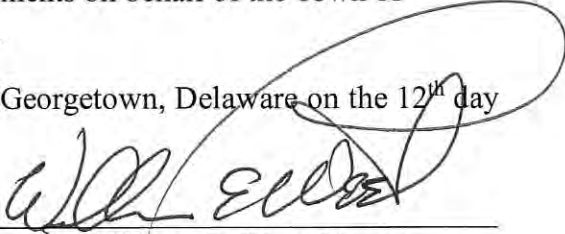
WHEREAS, the incentives associated with designation as a Downtown Development District have and are expected to continue to greatly benefit current and future residents, businesses, non-profit organizations, and others within the Town of Georgetown; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council of the Town of Georgetown strongly believes that it is in the best interest of the Town of Georgetown to apply for a renewal of the District designation.

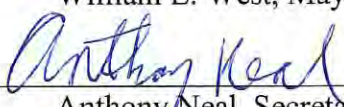
NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Town of Georgetown, as follows:

1. The Mayor and Council supports the Application for a five-year extension of District Designation prepared by the Town and Wallace Montgomery, dated January 2026 (the "Application"); and
2. The Town Manager of the Town of Georgetown is authorized to appoint a District administrator (the "Administrator") to file the Application on behalf of the Town, and to provide such other documents and information as may be necessary or desirable in connection with the Application; and
3. If the Application is successful and the Town of Georgetown receives notice of District renewal:
 - a. The Town shall adhere to the District Plan and the Local Incentives contained in the Application for the duration of the District designation; and
 - b. The Administrator, or their designee(s), is authorized to execute such documents and enter into such agreements as may be necessary or desirable in connection with the Downtown Development Districts program and the rights and obligations of the Town of Georgetown thereunder; and
 - c. The Administrator, or their designee(s), is authorized to carry out all District administrative and reporting requirements on behalf of the Town of Georgetown for the duration of the District.

ADOPTED by the Town Council of the Town of Georgetown, Delaware on the 12th day of January, A.D., 2026.



William E. West, Mayor


Anthony Neal, Secretary

**TOWN OF GEORGETOWN
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

Meeting Date: Monday, January 12, 2026
Location: 39 The Circle, Georgetown, DE 19947

Live Stream Can be Found at the Following Link:
Website: <https://www.georgetowndel.com/live-stream.htm>

Zoom.us/join
Zoom Meeting ID: 860 5514 2515

Time: 6:30 PM Public Hearings
Regular Meeting Immediately Following Public Hearing

TOWN COUNCIL PRESENT:

Bill West, Mayor
Christina Diaz-Malone, Ward One
Tony Neal, Ward Two
Eric Evans, Ward Three
Penuel Barrett, Ward Four

STAFF PRESENT:

Stephani Ballard, Town Solicitor
Diana Ramirez, Administration

ABSENT:

Eugene Dvornick, Town Manager

6:30 PM PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT RENEWAL APPLICATION.

A proposal by the Town of Georgetown to apply for renewal of its Downtown Development District designation with the State of Delaware, to include proposed revisions to the District's boundaries.

Brian Olszak presented an overview of the application to Council.

No questions/comments.

B. OPPORTUNITY FOR INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY OWNERS TO BE HEARD ON POSSIBLE REMOVAL OF THEIR PROPERTIES FROM THE DDD, PER THE PROPOSED REVISIONS

None

C. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

None

REGULAR MEETING IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING PUBLIC HEARING

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor West led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. INVOCATION

Councilman Neal led the Invocation.

3. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Motion by Councilman Barrett, seconded by Councilman Neal to adopt the agenda as presented. **Motion Carried (unanimous)**

4. APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 8, 2025 TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

Motion by Councilwoman Diaz-Malone, seconded by Councilman Evans to approve the December 8, 2025 Town Council Minutes as presented. **Motion Carried (unanimous)**

5. COUNCILMEMBERS COMMENTS

Councilwoman Diaz-Malone, Ward 1

- Happy New Year

Councilman Neal, Ward 2

- Happy New Year

Councilman Evans, Ward 3

- Welcome

Councilman Barrett, Ward 4

- Good to see everyone tonight

Mayor West

- Thank you to everyone who helped put together the vigil for Cpl. Snook

6. BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT APPOINTMENTS

One letter of interest received from Lance Mears

Motion by Councilwoman Diaz-Malone, seconded by Councilman Barrett to appoint Lance Mears to the Board of Adjustment.

Vote:

Councilwoman Diaz-Malone, Ward 1: Yea

Councilman Neal, Ward 2: Yea

Councilman Evans, Ward 3: Yea

Councilman Barrett, Ward 4: Yea

Mayor West: Yea

Motion Carried (unanimous)

7. PROPOSAL FOR DESIGN AND PERMITTING – TOWN CIRCLE BOLLARD PROTECTION - \$26,000

Motion by Councilman Evans, seconded by Councilwoman Diaz-Malone to approve the proposal for design and permitting for the town circle bollard protection at an amount not to exceed \$26,000.

Vote:

Councilwoman Diaz-Malone, Ward 1:	Yea
Councilman Neal, Ward 2:	Yea
Councilman Evans, Ward 3:	Yea
Councilman Barrett, Ward 4:	Yea
Mayor West:	Yea

Motion Carried (unanimous)

8. DELDOT RIGHT-OF-WAY AGREEMENT – CROSSWALK ART

Motion by Councilman Barrett, seconded by Councilman Evans to approve the DelDOT Right-of-Way agreement for the crosswalk art as presented.

Vote:

Councilwoman Diaz-Malone, Ward 1:	Yea
Councilman Neal, Ward 2:	Yea
Councilman Evans, Ward 3:	Yea
Councilman Barrett, Ward 4:	Yea
Mayor West:	Yea

Motion Carried (unanimous)

9. RESOLUTION

A. RESOLUTION #2026-01 A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE APPLICATION FOR A FIVE-YEAR EXTENDED DESIGNATION AS A DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

Motion by Councilwoman Diaz-Malone, seconded by Councilman Barrett to adopt Resolution #2026-01 as presented.

Vote:

Councilwoman Diaz-Malone, Ward 1:	Yea
Councilman Neal, Ward 2:	Yea
Councilman Evans, Ward 3:	Yea
Councilman Barrett, Ward 4:	Yea
Mayor West:	Yea

Motion Carried (unanimous)

10. 1ST RADING OF ORDINANCE

A. ORDINANCE #2025-09 SIGN REGULATIONS

Town Solicitor Ballard stated what was changed in the Ordinance.

No action at this time.

B. ORDINANCE #2026-01 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FUTURE LAND USE MAP AMENDMENT AND ZONING AMENDMENT FROM HIGHWAY COMMERICAL (HC) TO URBAN RESIDENTIAL (UR1) FOR THE PROPERTIES LOCATED AT 501 AND 503 EAST MARKET STREET – SC TAX PARCELS 135-15.13-16.00 AND 135-15.13-17.00

No questions/Comments posed from Council

Comments from Public:

- Adam Buczkowski, 200 South Bedford Street
 - o Commented on having affordable housing for first time homebuyers.

No action at this time.

11. 2ND READING & ADOPTION OF ORDINANCE

A. ORDINANCE #2025-07 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FUTURE LAND USE MAP AMENDMENT AND ZONING AMENDMENT FROM URBAN RESIDENTIAL (UR1) TO URBAN BUSINESS (UB1) FOR THE PROPERTIES LOCATED AT 3 AND 7 PARSONS LANE, SUSSEX COUNTY TAX MAP AND PARCEL 135-15.17-121.00 AND 135-15.17-122.00

Motion by Councilman Barrett, seconded by Councilwoman Diaz-Malone to adopt Ordinance #2025-13 as presented.

Vote:

Councilwoman Diaz-Malone, Ward 1:	Yea
Councilman Neal, Ward 2:	Yea
Councilman Evans, Ward 3:	Yea
Councilman Barrett, Ward 4:	Yea
Mayor West:	Yea

Motion Carried (unanimous)

12. DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

A. TOWN MANAGER – GENE DVORNICK

Project Updates

- Public Works Salt Barn
 - o Final Payment pending
 - o Actively in use for storage
- Pump Station Rehabilitation
 - o Big Park
 - Achieved Substantial Completion
 - Waiting for door and window installation
- Emerging Contaminants
 - o Pilot plant in operation
 - o Design and Construction grant funding applications submitted
- Neighborhood Access and Equity Program (FHWA)
 - o \$41,000 Grant – 8 rail crossings
 - Community Engagement
 - Initial Feasibility Study
 - Project Concepts & Alternatives
 - o No Project Design and Approval

Legislative Update

- 153rd General Assembly, Second Session starts January 13, 2026
- Tracking of introduced legislation has begun

Upcoming Events

- Town Offices Closed: Monday, January 19, in observation of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- Planning Commission Meeting: Wednesday, January 21, 6:00 PM, Town Hall
- Delaware League of Local Governments: Thursday, October 23, 5:30 PM, Cheswold

13. PUBLIC COMMENT

Linda Dennis, 4 Huckleberry Drive

- Provided a status report on the Supportive Housing Committee

Sunny Gyani, Springfield Lane

- Commented on affordable housing

Jon Peterson, 304 North Bedford Street

- Provided information on hunger

Rick Thomas, 229 South Bedford Street

- Commented on the dirty water tower on South Bedford Street.

Angela Townsend, 20293 Ennis Road

- Commented on the proposal for tiny homes in Georgetown

Sue Barlow, 703 East Laurel Street

- Commented on the proposal for tiny homes in Georgetown
- Commented on the need for improvement of storefronts on North Railroad Avenue
- Commented on the need to clean the streets

14. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Councilman Barrett, seconded by Councilman Neal to adjourn at 7:19pm.

Motion Carried (unanimous)

APPROVED:

Anthony Neal, Secretary

ATTEST:

Eugene S. Dvornick Jr., Town Manager

****These minutes are a summary of the meeting. Complete audio and visual recordings are available upon request****

DRAFT

9589 0710 5270 3005 4307 25

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ALERT: WINTER WEATHER IN THE OHIO VALLEY, GREAT LAKES, AND NORTHEAST REGIO...

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Delivered, Individual Picked Up at Post Office

DOVER, DE 19903

December 29, 2025, 7:41 am

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Your item was forwarded to a different address at 7:58 am on January 2, 2026 in DOVER, DE. This was because of forwarding instructions or because the address or ZIP Code on the label was incorrect.

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Alert

Forwarded

DOVER, DE

January 2, 2026, 7:58 am

In Transit to Next Facility

December 26, 2025

[See All Tracking History](#)[What Do USPS Tracking Statuses Mean? \(https://faq.usps.com/s/article/Where-is-my-package\)](https://faq.usps.com/s/article/Where-is-my-package)[See More](#) ▼

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Delivered

Delivered, Left with Individual

GEORGETOWN, DE 19947

December 30, 2025, 2:49 pm

[See All Tracking History](#)[What Do USPS Tracking Statuses Mean? \(https://faq.usps.com/s/article/Where-is-my-package\)](https://faq.usps.com/s/article/Where-is-my-package)

Latest Update

Your item was delivered to an individual at the address at 2:49 pm on December 30, 2025 in GEORGETOWN, DE 19947.

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Latest Update

Your item was picked up at the post office at 12:47 pm on December 29, 2025 in GEORGETOWN, DE 19947.

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Delivered

Delivered, Individual Picked Up at Post Office

GEORGETOWN, DE 19947

December 29, 2025, 12:47 pm

See All Tracking History

[What Do USPS Tracking Statuses Mean?](https://faq.usps.com/s/article/Where-is-my-package) (<https://faq.usps.com/s/article/Where-is-my-package>)

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Alert

Latest Update

Your item was returned to the sender on December 29, 2025 at 8:31 am in DOVER, DE 19901 because the addressee was not known at the delivery address noted on the package.

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Confirmed receipt via email (attached)

Addressee Unknown

DOVER, DE 19901
December 29, 2025, 8:31 am

Redelivery Scheduled for Next Business Day

DOVER, DE 19901
December 27, 2025, 8:15 am

See All Tracking History

What Do USPS Tracking Statuses Mean? (<https://faq.usps.com/s/article/Where-is-my-package>)

See More ▼

Tracking Number:

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Latest Update

Your item was delivered to the front desk, reception area, or mail room at 10:08 am on December 29, 2025 in GEORGETOWN, DE 19947.

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Delivered

Delivered, Front Desk/Reception/Mail Room
GEORGETOWN, DE 19947
December 29, 2025, 10:08 am

[See All Tracking History](#)[What Do USPS Tracking Statuses Mean? \(https://faq.usps.com/s/article/Where-is-my-package\)](https://faq.usps.com/s/article/Where-is-my-package)[See More](#) ▼

Tracking Number:

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Latest Update

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Get More Out of USPS Tracking:**USPS Tracking Plus®**

Delivered

Delivered, Front Desk/Reception/Mail Room

GEORGETOWN, DE 19947

December 29, 2025, 10:08 am

[See All Tracking History](#)[What Do USPS Tracking Statuses Mean? \(https://faq.usps.com/s/article/Where-is-my-package\)](https://faq.usps.com/s/article/Where-is-my-package)[See More](#) ▼

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Need More Help?

Contact USPS Tracking support for further assistance.

[FAQs](#)



FW: DDD Renewal Application

From Morris, Dorothy (OMB) <Dorothy.Morris@delaware.gov>

Date Thu 1/8/2026 2:56 PM

To Brian Olszak <bolszak@georgetowndel.com>

Brian

Please see below. OMB/DFM is the person that should be contact about the removal of these parcels and I have made sure they have the letters. The guidelines do state that they must receive a certified letter but I will check with David to see if the email and the confirmation are adequate proof of notification.

The address for DFM is The Facilities Management Office is located at 122 Martin Luther King Jr., Blvd., Dover, DE 19901; however I understand why you would not know that as the DuPont Highway is the address on record.

I will check with David tomorrow and get back to you.

Thanks



Dorothy L Morris, AICP

Principal Planner

Office of State Planning Coordination

Office: (302) 672-5136 **Email:** Dorothy.morris@delaware.gov

stateplanning.delaware.gov 122 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. South, Dover, DE 19901

From: Chant, Dana (OMB) <dana.chant@delaware.gov>

Sent: Thursday, January 8, 2026 2:51 PM

To: Morris, Dorothy (OMB) <Dorothy.Morris@delaware.gov>

Subject: RE: DDD Renewal Application

Good afternoon! I'll make sure this gets to the OMB/DFM Director, Jen Coverdale. Thank you!

DANA CHANT

Real Property Administrator



Office of Management and Budget

Division of Facilities Management

Haslet Armory

122 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.

Dover, DE 19901

(302) 612-1189

dana.chant@delaware.gov

From: Morris, Dorothy (OMB) <Dorothy.Morris@delaware.gov>
Sent: Thursday, January 8, 2026 2:43 PM
To: Chant, Dana (OMB) <dana.chant@delaware.gov>
Subject: FW: DDD Renewal Application

Good afternoon Dana

Would you be the person to get these letters?

Georgetown originally sent the letters certified but they were sent to the wrong address so he sent to me to determine who should receive the letter. Georgetown is currently renewing their Downtown Development District (DDD) and would like to remove the state owned property from the DDD boundary as they are ineligible for DDD rebates and the town would like to use the acreage in another area of the town.

Please let me know if these should be sent to someone else and I am available for questions if you have them

Thanks



Dorothy L Morris, AICP
Principal Planner
Office of State Planning Coordination

Office: (302) 672-5136 **Email:** Dorothy.morris@delaware.gov

stateplanning.delaware.gov 122 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. South, Dover, DE 19901

From: Brian Olszak <bolszak@georgetowndel.com>
Sent: Monday, January 5, 2026 3:54 PM
To: Morris, Dorothy (OMB) <Dorothy.Morris@delaware.gov>
Cc: Eugene Dvornick <GDvornick@georgetowndel.com>
Subject: Re: DDD Renewal Application

Great thank you so much!

Also, I wonder if you can help me with a second thing: we tried to send Certified Mail to the state regarding 3 parcels of land we propose to take out of the DDD: I've received one back as Not Deliverable and expect another to return as well, since they were both addressed the same: 540 S. Dupont Highway, Suite 1, Dover, DE 19901. This is the address that both we and the county have as the "owner" or C/O address for the Sussex County family Courthouse and a parking lot on Strawberry Alley. I'm wondering if these attempts to send notice for these properties as required by the DDD program guidance, even if unsuccessful, are sufficient or, in the alternative, if you could help us forward these letters to the appropriate agency/party.

Thanks so much,
Brian

Brian J. Olszak
Community Development Director
Town of Georgetown
Phone: (302) 856-7391

Fax: (302) 856-6348



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From: Morris, Dorothy (OMB) <Dorothy.Morris@delaware.gov>

Sent: Monday, January 5, 2026 10:29 AM

To: Brian Olszak <bolszak@georgetowndel.com>

Cc: Eugene Dvornick <GDvornick@georgetowndel.com>

Subject: RE: DDD Renewal Application

Brian

Thanks. I will take a look and let you know if I see anything additional that is needed.



Dorothy L Morris, AICP

Principal Planner

Office of State Planning Coordination

Office: (302) 672-5136 **Email:** Dorothy.morris@delaware.gov

stateplanning.delaware.gov 122 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. South, Dover, DE 19901

From: Brian Olszak <bolszak@georgetowndel.com>

Sent: Friday, January 2, 2026 3:37 PM

To: Morris, Dorothy (OMB) <Dorothy.Morris@delaware.gov>

Cc: Eugene Dvornick <GDvornick@georgetowndel.com>

Subject: DDD Renewal Application

Hi Dorothy,

Happy New Year! We are putting the finishing touches on the District Plan Update, which I hope to send you by early next week, but I was hoping to see if you/DSHA would be able to review our draft application. I know that it may lack some context without the Plan itself, but I've tried to include enough narrative for it to convey the required information. Please let me know if you'd need anything besides the Plan to facilitate a review. Thanks so much!

Regards,
Brian

Brian J. Olszak

Community Development Director

Town of Georgetown

Phone: (302) 856-7391

Fax: (302) 856-6348



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