

# City of Dover Downtown Development District Renewal Application

May 2024







## MAYOR AND COUNCIL

### COUNCIL RESOLUTION NO. 2024-06

#### **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 2015, the downtown area of the City of Dover 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 City receives a five-year extension of its District designation, the District Plan and Local Incentives proposed by the City 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 City of Dover; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council of the City of Dover strongly believes that it is in the best interest of the City of Dover to apply for a renewal of the District designation.

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:**

1. The City Council supports the Application for a five-year extension of District Designation prepared by Rossi Group and dated March 2024 (the "Application"); and
2. The City of Dover is authorized to appoint a District administrator (the "Administrator") to file the Application on behalf of the City, 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 City of Dover receives notice of District renewal:
  - a. The City 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 City of Dover thereunder; and
  - c. The Administrator, or their designee(s), is authorized to carry out all District administrative and reporting requirements on behalf of the City of Dover for the duration of the District.

ADOPTED: May 13, 2024

  
ROBIN R. CHRISTIANSEN  
MAYOR

  
DAVID L. ANDERSON  
COUNCIL PRESIDENT

Actions History

05/13/2024 – Introduction – City Council



# *Downtown Development Districts*

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## **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](mailto: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: City of Dover, Kent County, Delaware

DDD Program expiration date January 2025

- 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



# Downtown Development Districts

## Application for District Renewal

<p>Contact Person for Application</p> <p>Name: <u>David Hugg, III, City Manager</u></p> <p>Address: <u>15 Loockerman Plaza</u> <u>Dover, DE 19901</u></p> <p>Phone: <u>(302) 736-7005</u></p> <p>Email: <u>dhugg@dover.de.us</u></p> <p> <span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">5/15/2024</span></p> <p>Signature <span style="float: right;">Date</span></p>	<p>District Administrator (if different)</p> <p>Name: _____</p> <p>Address: _____</p> <p>Phone: _____</p> <p>Email: _____</p> <p>Signature <span style="float: right;">Date</span></p>
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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: May 13, 2024

Resolution number: 2024-06

### 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).

Dover’s Downtown Development District (DDD) program is administered out of the Department of Planning and Inspections. From 2017 until October 2023, a City Planner/Planning Director within the Department served as the administrator of the program, with other planning staff support. The Downtown Dover Partnership (DDP) assisted with marketing the program. In October 2023, this planner left the City. In the interim, the City Manager has been filling the role of program administrator. The City is recruiting to fill this planner position vacancy, along with the Director of Planning and Inspections position. Once these vacancies are filled, the program administration will be transferred back to the Department of Planning and Inspections.

As the Main Street organization and downtown redevelopment organization, the Downtown Dover Partnership (DDP) has been an important partner in administering and



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### **Application for District Renewal**

promoting the Downtown Development District program. Tina Bradbury, the DDP's Operations Manager, is often the first point of contact for business prospects looking to invest in downtown Dover. Ms. Bradbury is well-versed on the DDD program, including the City's incentives. Additionally, the DDP offers its own incentives to prospective businesses, including façade grants, architectural assistance, and critical improvement grants.

With the DDD designation renewal, Dover will renew efforts to market the program and will update the program materials and website. The City proposes developing a memorandum of understanding with the DDP to formalize the DDP's role as an program partner and with program administration. Before finalizing the MOU, the City will provide a copy to the Office of State Planning Coordination and the Delaware State Housing Authority for review to ensure consistency with the requirements of the program.



# Downtown Development Districts

## Application for District Renewal

### 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.

The Dover DDD has been instrumental in the success of transforming Downtown Dover's residential neighborhoods by demolishing inadequate buildings and replacing them with new, affordable, owner-occupied homes during the first 10 years of the program. However, Dover has faced, and continues to face, significant challenges to downtown revitalization efforts due to the deterioration of existing building stock, the costs associated with renovating buildings that have been vacant or underutilized for decades, and fragmented neighborhoods resulting from neglected housing stock, low homeownership rates, and crime.

At the time of the initial application, beginning in 2014/2015, investing in housing was identified as being pivotal to revitalization efforts, because perceptions of safety and crime, high home rental rates, and the deteriorated condition of much of the housing stock deterred potential investors. These conditions resulted in a considerable number of marginally compliant rental properties owned by absentee or unresponsive landlords. Efforts for infill on vacant lots and replacing vacant and demolished buildings with new, owner-occupied homes or other structures was key to the *Restoring Central Dover Plan*, which was led by NCALL, now known as NeighborGood Partners. At the time, it was clear that revitalization of the Central Business District could not be realized without addressing the deterioration of the downtown neighborhoods. This was a strong focus of the past ten years of the program. The transformation of neighborhood blocks was the key project for the program to date. Central Delaware Habitat for Humanity has constructed 34 new homes so far, and NeighborGood Partners has completed 17. In addition, Milford Housing Development Corporation constructed two homes and several small, private developers built homes as well, for a total of more than 60 new homes. There are additional need and impact details included on pages 1-2 of the Updated District Plan attached, as well as detailed demographic data on pages 8-14.

As a result of the DDD program, the City of Dover has been able to achieve significant improvements in terms of:

#### 1. Housing:

According to decennial census data, in census blocks that intersect with the DDD, the number of vacant housing units as a percentage of total housing units fell from 13% in 2014 to 10% in 2020. Additionally, homeownership rates improved. Based on block level data from the 2010 Decennial Census, of all occupied housing units, 82% were rentals and 18% were owner-



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## **Application for District Renewal**

occupied, with or without a mortgage. As of 2020, 25% of all occupied housing units within the DDD were owner-occupied and just 75% were rented. While clear progress has been made in terms of stabilizing housing and increasing homeownership in the DDD, homeownership rates in the City of Dover as a whole, are significantly higher at 47% in 2020, and vacant housing units comprise only 6% of all units. This indicates that there is still need for ongoing investment in housing stock to continue increasing homeownership in Dover's DDD. Please refer to the housing and population demographic data on pages 8-12 of the Updated District Plan for more information, as well as Appendix B of the plan. Maps 7 and 8 illustrate the block level change in homeownership rates from 2010 to 2020, and Map 9 shows 2020 block level vacancy rates.

### **2. Vacant and Dangerous Buildings**

In 2010, the DDD contained 49 registered vacant buildings, 7 buildings that had been declared dangerous, and 25 lots where buildings had been demolished due to a dangerous building declaration. Today, the number of registered vacant buildings has been reduced to 42. Additionally, there are 35 properties where a building has been repaired by the owner. While progress has been made in reducing blight within the DDD boundary, there is ongoing need. Even with the reduced number of vacant buildings, a disproportionate number of neglected buildings and lots are located within the district and immediately surrounding areas. The City continues to take a strong stance on code enforcement. As of May 2024, there are 17 buildings that have been declared dangerous, and 38 lots where buildings have been demolished by the City or by the Owner. Please refer to the housing and population demographic data on pages 8-12 of the Updated District Plan for more information, as well as Appendix B of the plan. Maps 10 and 11 illustrate the locations of vacant and dangerous buildings.

### **3. Crime**

According to data provided by the Dover Police from 2019-2023, crime density remains highest along S. New Street within the DDD, as it was in 2010; however, the intersection in Loockerman and State St. now shows as a crime hot spot based on recent data. Please see Appendix B of the Updated District Plan. Maps 12-15 provide more information about crime patterns within the DDD.

### **4. Poverty & Income**

Based on available census data, it is challenging to draw any conclusions about the impact of the DDD on income and poverty thus far. There is not block level data for most income and poverty measures included in the U.S. Census. Block group shapes have changed significantly between 2010 and 2020, meaning direct comparisons of block groups over time are not useful. Therefore, we have used tract level data though census tract shapes have changed slightly, and significant portions of each census tract that intersects with the DDD fall outside of the district boundary. Please see Appendix B of the Updated District Plan. Maps 3 and 4 outline current



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tract, block group, and block shapes. Maps 5 and 6 demonstrate how those shapes changed between 2010 and 2020.

According to 5-Year American Community Surveys (ACS), the median household income increased in three of the four census tracts that intersect with the DDD between 2010 and 2020. Census Tracts are illustrated on Map 5 of Appendix B. Tracts 409 and 413 saw increases as much as 15%-16%. At the same time, median income in DDD census tracts ranged from \$33,846 to \$45,545, which is lower than the 2020 median of \$48,500 in the City of Dover and \$60,117 in Kent County. The percentage of the population living below the poverty level in census tracts that intersect with the DDD is higher than it is in Kent County. The percentage of the population living below the poverty level fell from 44.1% to 25.7% in tract 413 and from 27.2% to 20.1% in tract 414 between 2010 and 2020. At the same time, the percentage increased in tracts 409 and 433. It is unclear what impact the COVID-19 pandemic had on these ACS estimates. Please refer to the income and poverty data on pages 13-14 of the Updated District Plan for more information.

The notable housing improvements that occurred in the first nine years of the DDD program were a critical first step in revitalizing downtown Dover. At the time the initial application was submitted, the *2008 Dover Comprehensive Plan* called for the creation of a downtown plan. The *Transit Center Neighborhood Plan* and *Restoring Central Dover Plan* met that objective and served as the heart of the District Plan in the City's initial DDD application. Since that time, the City, in collaboration with the Downtown Dover Partnership and others, worked with Mosaic Development Partners to create the *Capital City 2030: Transforming Downtown Dover Strategic Master Plan* for the downtown district and downtown gateways. The creation of *Capital City 2030 Plan*, along with track record of improvements to housing stock and neighborhood stabilization have spurred significant investment from the State, and several key projects are moving forward. This plan, along with the State's planned investment to support it, will be a catalyst for even further investment in downtown Dover. The DDD designation is essential to the realization of this plan.

For the current momentum created by *Capital City 2030* and the recently announced State investment to generate the anticipated success and other investment, the City of Dover must maintain its DDD designation for an additional five years. In the process of conducting an evaluation of the programs' first ten years, stakeholders made it abundantly clear that the investment to date would not have occurred without the incentives afforded by the program. Ongoing incentives are needed to spur the transformational capital investment needed to return Dover to the thriving hub of activity that it once was. The costs of revitalization remain high. Developers, builders, and potential property owners are often deterred from investing in the downtown area because the cost of renovating or building on a property may exceed the value of the property with the improvements, and the return on investment is uncertain. Prospective businesses are often undercapitalized and cannot complete the building renovations necessary to bring their shops up to code, purchase equipment and inventory, and pay expenses until they



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are able to turn a profit. Without the DDD incentives, there is a sense that it is easier and less expensive to locate elsewhere, such as in a shopping center on Route 13 or Route 8.

With the many overlapping challenges creating hurdles to revitalization, Dover needs this additional time to achieve its goals. The City is just now on the precipice of seeing real capital investment, with the needed assistance of the DDD designation and the State of Delaware's investment. Within the next five years, Dover has tangible plans to leverage its DDD designation with other public and private funds to spur transformational capital investment, create jobs, and providing enhanced retail and entertainment opportunities, as well as transportation, culture, and quality of life improvement that will attract visitors to the area.

#### **District Plan:**

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

District Plan update must include the following:

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

Briefly summarize changes made to the plan here:

At the time of the initial DDD application in 2014, Dover was utilizing the *Restoring Central Dover Plan* to inform its vision, goals, and strategies. Since that time, the City partnered with the Downtown Dover Partnership and Mosaic Development Partners to create the *Capital City 2030: Transforming Downtown Dover Strategic Master Plan*. While many core goals and strategies from the original plan remain intact, several additional key projects have been proposed, and modernized strategies have been identified to revitalize downtown Dover and achieve the vision developed with citizens.

To date, through local, county and state incentives, \$13,297,542 of private funds were leveraged and 59 projects were completed since the program's implementation. The City of



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Dover contracted the Rossi Group to conduct a thorough program evaluation to assess implementation and performance to date, and recommend program changes moving forward as part of this application. Information and feedback gathered through the program evaluation process resulted in a series of recommendations that informed the updated district plan. The attached Updated District Plan includes a summary of the *Capital City 2030 Plan* on pages 15-19 and a full copy is included in Appendix A. In addition, the Updated District Plan includes the full program evaluation on pages 3-7.



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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.

The City of Dover offers five (5) different incentives to encourage investment in the DDD. They include waivers of Building Permit Fees and City Impact Fees. New Business License Fees are waived for three (3) years. There is also an abatement of property taxes on the value of improvements for ten (10) years, and a rebate of buyer's City Transfer Tax when a Certificate of Occupancy is issued within five (5) years of property transfer. From 2018 to 2023, the total value of local incentives utilized was \$73,134.20. In addition, the Downtown Dover Partnership offers a number of grants to incentivize development. These include: an architectural grant that reimburses up to \$5,000 for architectural services, a façade improvement matching grant of up to \$5,000, and a new critical improvements grant program offering rebates of up to 20% for priority projects, such as those that address critical life-safety and ADA compliance, preparing for commercial kitchens, or ensuring that properties become leased. The DDP also offers a business retention/expansion assistance program that provides small grants of up to \$2,000.

The most frequently utilized incentive is the Building Permit Fees Waiver which covers Building, Plumbing, Mechanical, and Fire Protection Permit fees. With the exception of one (1) project, every DSHA-rebated project from fiscal year 2019 to 2023 was also provided Permit Fee waivers. The estimated value of Permit Fees ranged from \$1,518 to \$8,387, which can have a significant impact on the purchaser or builder. As larger transformative projects move forward, the value of the Permit Fee Waiver will increase.

City Impact Fee waivers cover Water and Sewer Impact Fees. They are utilized less often than Permit Fee waivers because some projects redevelop lots with preexisting water and wastewater services. Applicable projects greatly benefit from this incentive, which has been valued up to \$4,000 per project. In the fiscal years 2022 and 2023, City Impact Fees waivers were provided for every applicant. As more high density, mixed use developments gets underway, the use of City Impact Fee Waivers is expected to increase.

The New Business License Fee Waiver attracts commercial development to the Dover Downtown Development District. It waives New Business License Fees for three (3) years. As most of the projects in the past six (6) years were residential, this incentive was not as frequently utilized as the other fee waivers; however, numerous businesses have received its benefits. In 2019, it was utilized 19 times.



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Abatement of property taxes on the value of improvements for ten (10) years is an incentive that offers effective and longer-term benefits for participants in the Downtown Development District program. While other incentives alleviate some of the upfront costs to developing, the ten (10) year property tax abatement offers continual support for remaining in the DDD. From 2015 to 2020, it was eligible for use 63 times and was provided for nearly every project in the years following. This incentive is effective in ensuring that the development is completed after the property is transferred because it is only offered when a Certificate of Occupancy is issued within five (5) years of property transfer. It was most frequently utilized in 2018 where it was used 17 different times. Aside from one (1) project, it was provided for every project from 2021 to 2023.

During the entire Downtown Development District program in Dover (2015 to 2023), projects received \$1,619,563 in Rebates through the state administered program by the Delaware State Housing Authority, thereby leveraging \$13,297,542 in private investments. The City does not propose changes to the local incentives; however, the proposed expansion of the DDD boundary will result in an increase in the applicability of those incentives.

#### **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 \(delaware.gov\)](#)

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?

Key projects and implementation strategies identified in the initial application included the addition of new housing units in the Central Dover neighborhoods within the district and expanded access to housing repair programs. Partnerships with Central Delaware Habitat for Humanity, NeighborGood Partners (Formerly NCALL), and Milford Housing Development Corporation resulted in more than 60 new homes built to date.

Housing improvements have been a catalyst for new investment; New establishments like the Rail Haus and Stonerail Market would not exist without DDD incentives. However, Dover has had a slow start in terms of realizing truly transformational commercial and mixed-use projects. Several businesses have closed during the past ten years of the program. The challenges of attracting and retaining businesses were exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.



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Unfortunately, the key projects identified in the initial DDD plan have not come to fruition. Most of these projects remain part of the vision in *Capital City 2030*, and with new momentum and funding opportunities, these projects are well-positioned to move forward.

Governor John Carney recently announced plans to allocate a total of \$25 million in State funding to the City of Dover and Downtown Dover Partnership (DDP) to support implementation of *Capital City 2030*. Please see Appendix F of the attached Updated District Plan for the Governor's press release and other relevant press coverage. This funding will be used for critical water and wastewater infrastructure upgrades as well as two key projects identified in the plan. The DDP will focus on five major projects from *Capital City 2030* in the next few years, several of which will utilize this funding. The DDP notes that significant, visible changes will begin to take place in Downtown Dover in the next two to three years as they begin to implement the strategic plan. The three most transformational projects, identified as key projects for the DDD renewal application, include the following.

#### **Key Projects:**

**Old Post:** This city-owned parcel at 55 Loockerman Plaza, home to the former Dover Post Office, is currently under contract with a developer. The City selected a developer to redevelop the site through an RFP process. *The Capital City 2030: Transforming Downtown Dover Strategic Master Plan* initially re-envisioned this lot as a new building with commercial and office space as well as an outdoor courtyard. The developers selected through the City's RFP process have proposed a 4-story mixed-use building with space for 2 retail establishments on the ground floor, parking, a courtyard, office space, and 30 apartment units.

**120 South Governors Avenue:** This is the site of the former Acme grocery store. It is currently owned by the DDP and occupied by Auto Plus and a day care center. This site represents DDP's priority redevelopment project with Mosaic Development Partners and Colonial Parking Inc. *Capital City 2030* proposed constructing a 6-story mixed-use complex on this lot with a ground level grocery store, a parking garage, and more than 100 residential units. Additional amenities included in current planning efforts include a coffee shop, fitness center, and daycare facility. The State plans to utilize a portion of their investment on this project, which will cost \$80 million in total.

**129 South Governors Avenue:** The Bradford Street Parking Lot, at 129 South Governors Avenue and several adjacent parcels are currently owned by the city and used for public parking. *Capital City 2030* envisions Bradford Street as a multi-modal connector between Delaware State University's (DSU) downtown campus and Loockerman Street. To that end, *Capital City 2030* proposes replacing this lot with a parking deck and mobility hub. This property is directly across the street from the 6-story building planned for 120 South Governors Avenue and will complement that project. A mobility hub is a place where people can park, access travel information, and connect to multiple modes of transportation. This may include a car and/or bikeshare program, bicycle parking, and rideshare access. The State



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intends to utilize a portion of their investment on this proposed \$14 million mobility hub between South Governors Avenue and South Bradford Street. The DDP notes that the hub will feature a parking garage, bike share, and micro-transit bus service. Local news sources note that the hub will include EV charging stations and additional amenities proposed by *Capital City 2030*. The target completion date for the transit hub is 2026. This transit hub complements the Downtown Dover Pathways Plan, being completed by the Dover/Kent County MPO in collaboration with the City of Dover and the DDP, to better connect activity centers and downtown anchors and create a more walkable district with multi-modal transit options like bikes and scooters.

Once these have been successfully implemented, State investment in infrastructure improvements take place, and marketing and program administration efforts are improved to spread awareness of DDD incentives and program successes, Dover expects to see greater interest in commercial development downtown and will have an easier time leveraging incentives to attract investors.



## *Downtown Development Districts*

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### **Application for District Renewal**

#### **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:

Since the initial establishment of the DDD Boundary, the City completed expansions in the 200-300 Blocks of South State Street and on the south side of West Water Street. Additionally, there have been changes in property ownership, most notably in the southwest edge. Of the 22 acres in the District's southwest corner, 20 acres are owned by either the State, City of Dover or US Postal Service and are therefore ineligible to receive the Downtown Development District program benefits. To maximize the program's potential, the boundary has been revised to remove this portion and redistribute that acreage to properties eligible for the program.

In accordance with the State requirements, the Dover City Council held a public hearing on May 13, 2024, regarding the removal of properties from the DDD boundary. The City of Dover notified affected property owners via certified mail about public hearing and ran a public notice in the Delaware State News on May 3, 2024 advertising the public hearing.



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### **Application for District Renewal**

The DDD Program now allows DDDs to encompass up to 275 acres, an increase of 50 acres since the initial application. The City has strategically reviewed areas adjacent to the current District boundary to identify areas that meet the need and impact criteria and would benefit from the Downtown Development District Program. The revised District Boundary adds the following areas in an effort to capture parcels prime for larger redevelopment projects and to enhance gateways to the City. Additions include the following:

- A 12-acre area north of Mary Street: Includes some of the former Wesley College athletic program lands (Now DSU) and the land of the former National Guard armory. This area is positioned for future redevelopment and may provide more opportunities for housing development and vacant property improvements.
- A 14-acre area to the West of the district on the north side of Loockerman Plaza was already approved by the City of Dover and the State of Delaware in February of 2024.
- A 7 acre area to the West of the district between Kings Highway and W. Division St.: Along with the 14-acre addition, this area provides opportunities for redevelopment along the western gateway to Downtown Dover.
- A 21-acre area to the east: This small area along S. State St./Division St./Kings Highway includes the former Dover Public Library building, which has been vacant since the opening of the new library. The addition of this area to the District will improve the opportunity for investment in this building and the surrounding area.

The proposed expansion utilizes the updated allotted Downtown Development District acreage to maximize the potential of program incentives and investments. Please see Appendix B of the attached Updated District Plan as Map 16 illustrates the proposed boundary changes.

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.



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- Appendix H- Letters of Support





## Introduction

The Downtown Development Districts Act was enacted by the Delaware General Assembly in 2014 to spur private capital investment, stimulate job growth and improve commercial vitality, build a stable community of long-term residents by improving housing opportunities, and strengthen neighborhoods while harnessing the attraction that vibrant downtowns hold. The City of Dover applied to the Office of State Planning Coordination, which included a proposed district, documentation of need, proposed program impact, and available local incentives, as well as a plan for downtown revitalization. The Cabinet Committee on State Planning Issues reviews applications and makes recommendations to the Governor, who ultimately designates downtown development districts. Governor Jack Markell designated the City of Dover's Downtown Development District (DDD) in the first round of designations in January of 2015. This designation entitles private construction projects within the District to receive rebates from the State of Delaware to offset up to 20% of their capital construction costs as well as other benefits. The initial designation is for ten years, after which time the City may apply for two consecutive five-year extensions. Currently, the City of Dover is applying for its first five-year renewal.

Dover initially submitted two plans developed in coordination with other partners in the community. These plans include *Restoring Central Dover: Our Vision for Vitality*, which was developed by a steering committee led by NCALL (now NeighborGood Partners), a housing and community development non-profit; and *Dover Transit Center Neighborhood Plan and Design Book*, developed through the Dover/Kent County MPO. A 4-page plan summary described the role of the plans in comprising the plan for Dover's DDD. Dover outlined incentives predating the DDD designation including building permit fee waivers, impact fee waivers, and a tax abatement on the value of improvements. Additionally, the Downtown Dover Partnership, Dover's Main Street organization, managed a façade grant program to assist business owners and property owners in upgrading their building facades. In creating the DDD, the City of Dover and the Downtown Dover Partnership added new incentives. In addition to the municipal incentives, qualifying projects were eligible to receive a grant from Kent County and a rebate from the State of Delaware for investment within the DDD. Once designated, Dover moved forward with implementation of the program, promoting the municipal, county, and State incentives to developers locally and outside of the area.

The following plan includes updated need and impact data, details of the comprehensive program evaluation conducted, updated demographic data, and revised visions, goals, and strategies informed by The *Capital City 2030: Transforming Downtown Dover Plan*.

## Need and Impact

The City of Dover is seeking a five-year extension to its Downtown Development District (DDD) designation. A five-year extension will allow Dover the opportunity to meet goals and objectives outlined in the initial district plan of 2015 that include:

- Mixed use development
- Retail uses within the Central Business District



- Increase the number/percent of owner occupied homes
- Increase the density of development
- Build on vacant lots
- Bring buildings close to the street to line the sidewalk
- Strategic location of open spaces, parks and gateways

These goals were products of the *Dover Transit Center Neighborhood Plan* and *Restoring Central Dover Plan*. The *Capital City 2030: Transforming Downtown Dover Strategic Master Plan* (Appendix A) is Downtown Dover's newest master plan that builds on the previous vision and outlines key projects and strategies to achieve this vision. The DDD designation allows those investing in downtown Dover to receive a rebate on the cost of improvements of up to twenty (20) percent from the State. In addition, the City of Dover offers five different incentives to encourage investment, and the Downtown Dover Partnership (DDP) offers four incentive programs. City incentives include a Building Permit Fee Waiver, sewer and water Impact Fee Waiver, Business License Fee Waiver for new businesses, and an abatement on tax on the value of improvements. The DDP incentives include architectural grants, façade grants, critical infrastructure grants, and business retention/expansion grants. In addition, investors have leveraged other grant funds including the EDGE grant administered by the Delaware Division of Small Business and the Strong Neighborhood Housing Fund administered by the Delaware State Housing Authority. Federal, State and local historic preservation tax credits can further leverage investments for qualifying properties. The layering of these various incentives has been instrumental in realizing the nearly sixty (60) projects that have occurred since the program was implemented. See Appendix B for maps that provide additional information about the DDD in Dover. Over the past nine (9) years, the DDD program has been successful in building affordable owner-occupied housing and reducing blight within the City of Dover. According to the [DDD FY2023 Annual Report](#), since the program's implementation, \$13,297,542 in private funds were leveraged through local, county and state incentives, and 59 projects were completed.

The City of Dover hired Rossi Group in 2024 to conduct an independent program evaluation as part of the renewal application. Rossi Group analyzed program data, conducted interviews, and held a focus group meeting with stakeholders to assess program implementation and performance thus far. The information gathered was used to identify program strengths and areas for improvement, informing the development of this updated district plan.

The program evaluation confirmed that Dover's DDD has successfully improved housing stock and reduced blight, particularly in the residential areas. A review of relevant census data demonstrates that homeownership rates within this area have increased, but the need for additional affordable homes persists. Stakeholders who invested in projects within the Dover DDD noted that their projects would not have been possible without available incentives. The program evaluation indicated that there is an interest in ongoing investment, provided the incentives continue. The program evaluation made suggestions for improved program implementation such as hiring a designated program liaison, streamlining processes, and increasing marketing efforts. A five-year extension to Dover's Downtown Development District (DDD) designation would allow for the implementation of these suggestions, ensuring increased program benefits moving forward.



At year ten of the DDD program, Dover is starting to see momentum pick up rapidly with the beginning stages of the *Capital City 2030* plan kicking off. In February 2024, Governor Carney and state legislators announced plans to invest a total of \$25 million in Downtown Dover revitalization. Please see Appendix E for relevant press coverage, including the Governor’s press release. Through the Governor’s proposed 2025 capital budget and a portion of the state’s American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds, the City of Dover and the DDP will proceed with three key projects from the *Capital City 2030* strategic plan, including: critical water and wastewater infrastructure upgrades, a six-story multi-use building, and a mobility hub. Mayor Robin Christiansen remarked that downtown revitalization efforts have been ongoing since the early 1990’s and the City now has a solid roadmap for success. As a result, City officials are hopeful that meaningful change will be realized by 2030.

**Governor John Carney Announces \$25M Investment in Dover**

Governor Carney and Dover-area legislators announced the State’s plan to invest more than \$25 million in three priority projects for revitalizing downtown Dover.

**Read more**



**Governor Carney and Project Partners at 120 S. Governors Ave.**

*Figure 1: DDP Newsletter Blast about Downtown Investment*

The DDD incentives will play a vital role in supporting these initial projects, which are expected to be transformational in the community and a catalyst for future investment. The state investment in water and wastewater improvements will reduce the cost of renovating older buildings and increasing residential density in the area, providing added incentive for investment.

## Program Evaluation

In the process of updating the district plan, Rossi Group completed an evaluation of Dover’s DDD program by soliciting perspectives from a range of stakeholders along with available program data to assess areas of success and areas for improvement. Stakeholders included City and State staff, organizations within Dover, program beneficiaries, and other DDD administrators. Stakeholders were engaged through a series of interviews and a moderated focus group session.

### Stakeholder Interviews and Focus Groups

Stakeholder interviews were guided by pre-written questionnaires tailored to the different roles of stakeholders. Interviews were conducted between January 11 and February 7, 2024, and



detailed notes were collected to document responses. For detailed interview summaries please see Appendix C.

### *Dover DDD Program Beneficiaries*

Rossi Group interviewed stakeholders identified as downtown redevelopment partners in the 2014 District application. Interviewees included representatives of NeighborGood Partners (formerly NCALL), Central Delaware Habitat for Humanity, City of Dover Departments, Delaware State University, the Office of State Planning Coordination, and members of City Council representing the area encompassed by the District. NeighborGood Partners and Central Delaware Habitat for Humanity both benefited from the program as they redeveloped properties.

In addition, program beneficiaries were invited to participate in a more in-depth focus group, which took place on February 6, 2024. Eight (8) individuals attended including Theresea Owens (owner of Stonerail Market), Trish Kelleher of NeighborGood Partners, Todd Stonesifer (President of DDP and downtown property owner), Donny Legans (owner of Rail Haus), Reverend Hodge of The People's Church, Ashley Robinson of The Wedding Boutique, and property owners Doug Ferris and Michael Harrington, Sr. A list of questions was prepared containing the prompts listed below. The resulting conversation was not strictly guided by the question list, but organically touched on all the focus points.

#### Focus Group Questions:

1. Please identify your role as it relates to a project in Downtown Dover. Raise your hand if you:
  - a. Opened a new business
  - b. built a new home
  - c. renovated a home
  - d. renovated an existing commercial space
  - e. built a new commercial building
  - f. other (explain)
2. Program Value
  - a. Was the availability of incentives important in your decision to invest downtown?
  - b. Were the incentives helpful in making the numbers work with your investment?
  - c. Are there additional incentives you feel would be helpful?
  - d. Were the incentives easy to understand and apply for?
  - e. Did the City and DDP help to make your investment worthwhile?
  - f. Would you recommend downtown Dover investment to a friend or colleague? If not, why?
3. Program Administration
  - a. How easy was it to navigate the incentives?
  - b. How easily accessible was the information about the program?
  - c. How did you hear about the program?
  - d. Were City/DDP staff knowledgeable about the program? Were they responsive?
  - e. Were the website and brochures helpful?



- f. If you needed information about the program, where did you go to find it?
4. Review Process
  - a. Did you find the City's review process straightforward and easy to understand?
  - b. If not, what did you find difficult?
5. Going forward
  - a. What suggestions do you have to help make the downtown revitalization efforts more successful?
  - b. Is there anything you wish you'd known before applying for DDD program incentives?
  - c. Do you see yourself investing in future downtown Dover projects?
6. Final Exercise: SWOT Analysis (Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Challenges)

Across all organizations, the DDD incentive package was considered very helpful for encouraging downtown development. Some participants went so far as to assert that their housing efforts would be crippled had they not had access to the financial incentives made available through the DDD program. The City Impact Fee Waiver and 20% State Rebate were noted to be especially beneficial, and participants benefited from the ability to stack incentives with other funding sources. The Downtown Dover Partnership (DDP) was also said to be instrumental in helping individuals navigate the development process. Participants utilized the DDD program at different stages of the program's implementation, therefore their experiences varied. For example, some of the first individuals to use the program did not receive the guidance that later participants had. The DDP, particularly Tina Bradbury, was unanimously named as a resource for navigating incentives; however, that expertise had been refined after the initial phases of the program and was not available to the early applicants. Most participants expressed enthusiasm for the DDD program and its potential to improve Dover's downtown.

Multiple participants identified opportunities for improvement in administering the program. Participants perceived City departments as disconnected from one another which complicated program participation. Feedback indicated that City Planning and Inspections, Public Works, and Water and Wastewater departments appeared to be disconnected and staff turnover rates did not help.

Multiple participants expressed frustration with the City due to prolonged Building Permit wait times. Several mentioned that they received vacant building fees while improving properties. Others received grass cutting fines. Some felt the need to continuously advocate for themselves because permit issuing agencies did not know they are part of the program.

There was additional frustration with upgrading buildings to meet code requirements. Curb cut and sidewalk upgrades were mentioned numerous times as a reliable challenge. A few participants mentioned changes to fire suppression requirements were not communicated by the City in the initial stages of their projects. The necessary upgrades were a large and unexpected expense. Multiple people mentioned that the age of buildings downtown complicates site plans, renovations, and their corresponding code requirements. To avoid surprise costs, one developer suggested that proactive efforts such as walkthroughs and onsite meetings with Public Works could help to identify construction requirements in earlier stages of projects. Additionally, there



was some confusion about Impact Fee Waivers because they are only applicable to City Impact Fees, not the County Portion of the fee.

All the focus group attendees suggested that the City create a program liaison to help guide applicants and coordinate among City departments. An allowance or waiver for code-required upgrades was also suggested. Additionally, some individuals believed the City should stay in touch with completed projects. A few participants stated they would appreciate a gesture of gratitude while others suggested longer term incentives to assist remaining downtown.

### *DDD Administering Bodies*

Rossi Group interviewed representatives across City Departments including Public Works, Electric, Water and Wastewater, Planning and Inspections, and City Council Members. Acknowledging DDP's role in the DDD administration, DDP leadership was also interviewed.

The success of the program was most evident within the residential realm. Multiple participants noted converting vacant lots into affordable housing has improved the area, especially north of West Division Street. Commercial success has not been as prolific, however, there have been several successful businesses.

Navigating various incentives and their corresponding requirements was mentioned to be confusing for applicants. Participants across City Departments and the DDP felt that an official point of contact or program liaison would help applicants optimize the program and better coordinate downtown improvement efforts across City departments. It was noted that the DDP is often the first point of contact for applicants, and it may be beneficial to formally establish their role in program administration through a memorandum of understanding between the City and DDP. Interviewees also noted that City staff needed better process education to adequately to answer applicant questions or direct them to someone who can. Multiple participants acknowledged that staff turnover rates within City government make that difficult. In addition to improving communication about incentives, some interviewees identified a need to lay out code requirements for projects. Some suggested providing a flow chart or check list that walks applicants through the whole process, thereby reducing the frequency of surprise construction costs. City staff also suggested having internal training on the program on a regular (annual) basis.

In response to recommendations within *Capital City 2030* to accelerate approvals, City officials stated there are multiple factors that influence the approval process. Receipt of code-compliant plan submissions would be key to expediting approval. Participants stated submissions could be better coordinated to expedite approvals. Some projects require review and approval by multiple entities; for example, plans for new construction or building exterior improvements in the Historic District require review by the Historic District Commission in addition to traditional code-compliant review. Other projects require external agency review and approval, such as DelDOT, Kent Conservation District, or DNREC, which may result in delays.



### *Other DDD's*

Rossi Group also interviewed Rob Pierce from the City of Milford and Sheldon Hudson and Jeremy Rothwell from the Town of Smyrna. Commercial façade grants funded most of the façade improvements in downtown Smyrna. City of Milford representatives noted building permits take one to two weeks to be issued and cautioned offering expedited services. Interviews confirmed that neighboring communities have similarly had more success with the residential development and have struggled to see significant mixed-use projects come online. Each town placed emphasis on the importance of having someone act as a champion for the DDD program, promoting incentives. Milford noted that they use their code enforcement process to spread awareness of the program. Smyrna indicated that they help applicants layer historic preservation tax credits with DDD incentives to create generous packages.

### *DSU*

Rossi Group met with Delaware State University (DSU) representatives, Marlena Gibson, Bernard Pratt, and Anas Ben Addi, to discuss the DDD program's impact on the University. When asked if there have been any benefits to the campus following the programs implementation, representatives were neutral. Higher education is not eligible for the DDD Program; therefore, the university cannot take advantage of it. There have been indirect benefits as a result of the improvements downtown, but they feel Dover could better attract investors and engagement. Students and their families are still more inclined to spend their money outside of downtown Dover. The discussion with DSU was helpful in determining where the City may be interested in expanding the District boundary. As DSU recently acquired the former Wesley College campus, it is possible that some of their lands in the downtown could be identified as excess and available for redevelopment.

### *Key Takeaways*

Dover's DDD program has successfully attracted investment in historically neglected areas. Residential projects have improved the area by converting vacant buildings and lots into affordable housing. These projects would not have been possible without the support of the DDD program's incentive package. While the program is instrumental in encouraging improvements within Dover, there are areas to improve its implementation. Based on input received during nearly all stakeholder interviews and the focus group, there is a clear need for a designated point of contact or program liaison. Due to staff turnover within the City, this role has been left vacant. Program beneficiaries and administrators agreed that hiring someone who could assist program applicants and communicate projects between City departments would enhance and encourage the use of the program. In addition to a program liaison, stakeholders suggested that a user-friendly resource, such as a flow chart or series of checklists, to clearly communicate program and code requirements to applicants would be beneficial. Participants mentioned that marketing efforts for the program should be more robust and that City staff may play a role in spreading awareness of the program and its incentives.



## Demographic Data

A lack of quality housing stock in Downtown Dover was identified as an impediment to downtown redevelopment in the *Restoring Central Dover Plan* submitted with Dover's initial 2015DDD application. Since that time, the DDD program has had a significant impact on improving housing stock in downtown Dover. As a result of the available incentives, Central Delaware Habitat for Humanity constructed 34 new homes, and NeighborGood Partners was able to complete 17 homes. This means that, in the first decade of the program, Dover's DDD saw a total of more than 50 new homes constructed, transforming entire street blocks in Dover. Appendix B Map 1 shows the locations of all projects within the DDD and Map 2 shows the locations of Central Delaware Habitat for Humanity and NeighborGood Partners projects.



Figure 2: 18, 22, 26, & 29 N. Kirkwood St.

## Housing & Population Data

Block level census data supports the narrative that Dover's DDD has seen decreased vacancy rates and increased homeownership. Below, Tables 1 and 2 include population and housing data at the county, city, tract, and block level from the 2010 and 2020 decennial census. The tables include all blocks that either fall within the DDD boundary or intersect with the DDD boundary. Note, census block shapes and numbers changed between 2010 and 2020. This resulted in the land area being larger in 2010 and smaller in 2020. Please see Appendix B Maps 3 and 4 for details of current shapes of census tracts, block groups, and blocks. Maps 5 and 6 illustrate the changes that occurred between 2010 and 2020. It is unclear what impact the COVID-19 pandemic had on 2020 census data. Ultimately, this means that the data is not a perfect measure of what has taken place within the Dover DDD boundary from 2010 to 2020. That said, this census data is still a helpful tool in terms of indicating that some improvements have taken place, and that ongoing need exists in the area encompassing the DDD. Figures 3 and 4 further illustrate how homeownership and vacancy rates have changed from 2010 to 2020 within DDD census blocks and the surrounding areas.

Overall, in the Dover DDD Census Blocks:

- The number of **vacant housing** units as a percentage of total units **decreased** from 13% in 2010 to 10% in 2020.
- In 2010, only 18% of housing units were **owner-occupied** (owned free and clear or with a mortgage/loan). In 2020, that percentage **increased** to 25%.



- Census blocks that intersect with the Dover DDD include areas that are not inside of the DDD.
- As depicted in Map 4, census block boundaries changed between 2010 and 2020; the area encompassed in 2010 is larger, possibly explaining the reduced population and number of housing units. As such, percentages are a better measure for comparing data.

**Table 1: Dover Block Level Housing & Population Data 2010**

Dover Block Level Data- Housing and Population 2010							
	Kent County	Dover	Tract 409	Tract 413	Tract 414	Tract 433	Blocks that Intersect with DDD
<b>POPULATION</b>							
Total	162,310	36,047	2,561	2,068	3,648	6,131	2,958
<b>HOUSING UNITS</b>							
Total	65,338	15,024	1,211	1,073	1,628	1,743	1,252
<i>Occupied</i>	60,278	13,771	1,119	927	1,477	1,572	1,084
<i>Vacant</i>	5,060	1,253	92	146	151	171	168
<i>% Vacancy</i>	8%	8%	8%	14%	9%	10%	13%
<b>OCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS, BY TENURE</b>							
Total Occupied Housing Units	60,278	13,771	1,119	927	1,477	1,572	1,084
<i>Owner-Occupied w/ Mortgage or Loan</i>	30,880	5,172	227	205	407	466	116
<i>Owner-Occupied, free &amp; clear</i>	12,166	1,978	117	120	146	198	75
<i>Renter-Occupied</i>	17,232	6,621	775	602	924	908	893
<i>% Homeownership</i>	71%	52%	31%	35%	37%	42%	18%

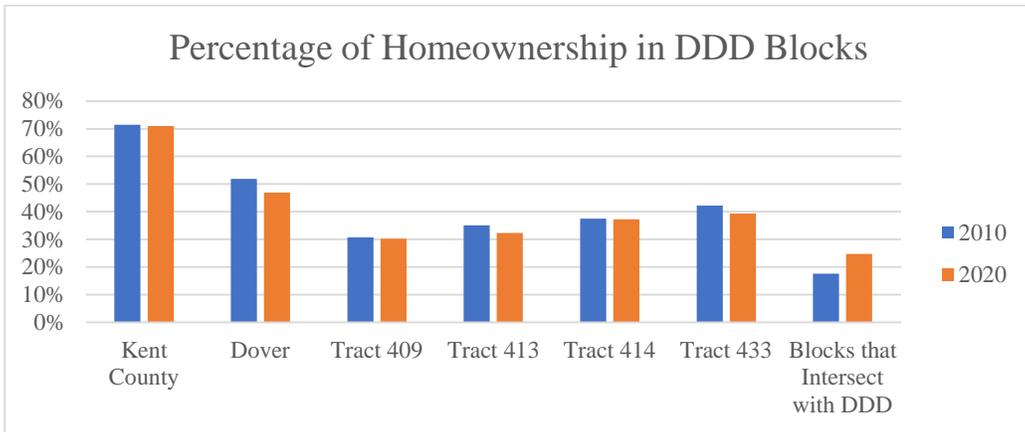
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census

**Table 2: Dover Block Level Housing & Population Data 2020**

Dover Block Level Data- Housing and Population 2020							
	Kent County	Dover	Tract 409	Tract 413	Tract 414	Tract 433	Blocks that Intersect with DDD
<b>POPULATION</b>							
Total	181,851	39,403	2,374	2,059	3,839	6,553	2,381
<b>HOUSING UNITS</b>							
Total	72,708	16,055	1,211	1,004	1,685	1,824	1,204
<i>Occupied</i>	68,290	15,155	1,147	926	1,575	1,688	1,084
<i>Vacant</i>	4,418	900	64	78	110	136	120
<i>% Vacancy</i>	6%	6%	5%	8%	7%	7%	10%
<b>OCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS, BY TENURE</b>							
Total Occupied Housing Units	68,290	15,155	1,147	926	1,575	1,688	1,084
<i>Owner-Occupied w/ Mortgage or Loan</i>	34,442	5,207	239	206	446	490	180
<i>Owner-Occupied, free &amp; clear</i>	14,050	1,909	108	93	141	174	88
<i>Renter-Occupied</i>	19,798	8,039	800	627	988	1,024	816
<i>% Homeownership</i>	71%	47%	30%	32%	37%	39%	25%

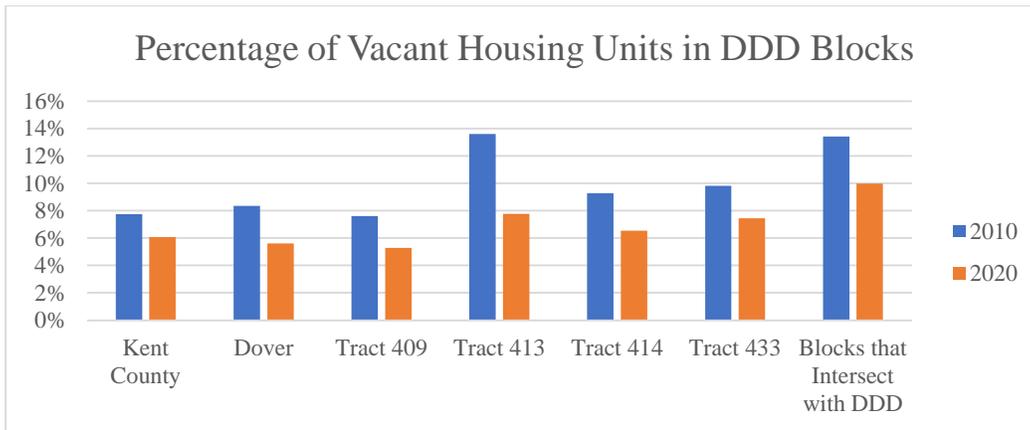
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 Census

Additional information regarding block level census data is available in Appendix D.



**Figure 3: % Homeownership in DDD Blocks Bar Chart**

The percentage of owner-occupied homes (with or without a mortgage), as opposed to a renter, increased from 18% in 2010 to 25% in 2020 in census blocks that intersect with the Dover DDD boundary. Meanwhile, homeownership rates appear to have remained the same or fallen in surrounding areas.



**Figure 4: % Vacant Housing Units in DDD Blocks Bar Chart**

The percentage of vacant housing units decreased from 13% in 2010 to 10% in 2020 in census blocks that intersect with the Dover DDD boundary. The percentage of vacant housing units appears to have decreased in surrounding areas as well.



Table 3 illustrates that the number of registered vacant buildings has decreased since the DDD program launched in 2010. Dover has maintained a strong stance on code enforcement, and while improvements have been made, there are still a disproportionately high number of neglected buildings and lots within the district and immediate surrounding areas, indicating a strong need for ongoing investment. Figure 5 provides examples of some of the vacant and blighted buildings within the DDD boundary as of March 2024.

**Table 3: Vacant & Dangerous Buildings Within Dover’s DDD**

**Vacant & Dangerous Buildings within Dover’s DDD**

	<b>2010</b>	<b>2024</b>
Registered Vacant Buildings	49	42
Buildings Declared Dangerous	7	17
Lots where Dangerous Buildings were Demolished	25	38



**Figure 5: Vacant & Blighted Buildings Within the DDD Boundary**



Tables 4 and 5 include additional housing data, while Tables 6 and 7 address income and poverty data at the County, City, and Tract levels. Data comes from the U.S. Census Bureau’s 5-Year American Community Survey (ACS) from the years 2006-2010 and 2016-2020 to provide an accurate comparison to the original application which also utilized ACS data. Block level data is unavailable for these measures. The Dover DDD boundary spans four census tracts, though each tract contains land that falls outside of the district. Census tract shapes changed somewhat between 2010 and 2020 as well, as illustrated in Appendix B Map 5. Tract level data still provides some insight into the progress that has occurred from 2010 to 2020 as well as need that still exists in census tracts that intersect with Dover’s DDD. The ACS contains estimates with a margin of error, and it is unclear what impact the COVID-19 pandemic had on 2020 data.

**Table 4: Tract Level Housing Data 2010**

<b>Dover Tract Level Data- Housing 2010</b>						
	Kent County	Dover	Tract 409	Tract 413	Tract 414	Tract 433
<b>AGE OF STRUCTURES</b>						
% Housing Built 1940 or earlier	10%	11%	31%	38%	11%	19%
Total Housing Units Built 1940-1949 estimate	2,127	667	125	235	75	88
Total Housing Units Built 1939 or earlier estimate	4,324	934	253	168	111	291
Total Housing Units Estimate	63,563	14,829	1,205	1,067	1,746	1,984
<b>MEDIAN HOME VALUE</b>	\$ 207,500.00	\$ 192,400.00	\$218,000.00	\$ 170,700.00	\$ 195,200.00	\$ 185,200.00

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 5-Year American Community Survey

**Table 5: Tract Level Housing Data 2020**

<b>Dover Tract Level Data- Housing 2020</b>						
	Kent County	Dover	Tract 409	Tract 413	Tract 414	Tract 433
<b>AGE OF STRUCTURES</b>						
% Housing Built 1940 or earlier	9%	10%	22%	38%	15%	15%
Total Housing Units Built 1940-1949 estimate	1,878	421	22	204	22	42
Total Housing Units Built 1939 or earlier estimate	4,719	1,128	228	182	249	233
Total Housing Units Estimate	73,073	16,062	1,114	1,010	1,833	1,785
<b>MEDIAN HOME VALUE</b>	\$ 226,600.00	\$ 182,100.00	\$ 239,900.00	\$ 173,600.00	\$ 185,500.00	\$170,600.00

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2016-2020 5-Year American Community Survey

- According to 5-Year ACS estimates from 2010 and 2020, the percentage of housing built in 1940 or earlier is currently higher in census tracts that intersect with the DDD than in the City of Dover or Kent County, though that percentage has declined in two of the four tracts that intersect with the DDD.
- Median home values in Kent County increased 8% from 2010 to 2020, but in Dover they fell 6% in that same time. Census tracts 409 and 413 saw median home values increase, though tracts 414 and 433 saw decreases.
- Census tract shapes have changed slightly between 2010 and 2020.
- Significant portions of each census tract that intersects with the DDD lie outside of the district boundary.



## Income & Poverty Data

**Table 6: Tract Level Income & Poverty Data 2010**

Dover Tract Level Data- Income & Poverty 2010						
	Kent County	Dover	Tract 409	Tract 413	Tract 414	Tract 433
<b>POPULATION</b>						
Population for whom poverty status is determined	160,007	32,450	1,767	2,234	3,060	3,701
<b>MEDIAN INCOME</b>						
Median Household Income in the past 12 months	\$ 55,149.00	\$ 46,267.00	\$ 28,864.00	\$ 31,429.00	\$ 40,043.00	\$ 45,000.00
<b>Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months</b>						
Below Poverty Level	20,720	5,989	352	985	831	531
Percent Below Poverty Level	12.90%	18.50%	19.90%	44.10%	27.20%	14.30%
<b>% Low/Mod Income</b>	31%	36%	28%	36%	37%	37%
80% of Median Income	\$ 44,119.20	\$ 37,013.60	\$ 23,091.20	\$ 25,143.20	\$ 32,034.40	\$ 36,000.00
Total Households	57,396	13,046	1,007	876	1,453	1,744
Households that earn less than \$10,000	6.60%	8.60%	12.00%	16.90%	14.40%	11.80%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	4.60%	5.50%	15.70%	8.40%	6.80%	2.50%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	10.00%	11.30%	20.30%	11.10%	15.80%	15.80%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	10.20%	10.10%	7.60%	5.50%	13.40%	7.30%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	15.60%	17.80%	7.80%	22.70%	14.20%	20.70%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	21.80%	22.10%	20.00%	11.60%	18.30%	24.70%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 5-Year American Community Survey

% Low/Mod Income estimate based on households earning less than 58% of the median household income

**Table 7: Tract Level Income & Poverty Data 2020**

Dover Tract Level Data- Income & Poverty 2020						
	Kent County	Dover	Tract 409	Tract 413	Tract 414	Tract 433
<b>POPULATION</b>						
Population for whom poverty status is determined	173,725	33,616	1,679	2,047	3,251	3,710
<b>MEDIAN INCOME</b>						
Median Household Income in the past 12 months	\$ 60,117.00	\$ 48,500.00	\$ 33,846.00	\$ 37,545.00	\$ 36,740.00	\$ 45,545.00
<b>Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months</b>						
Below Poverty Level	22,994	7,378	403	527	655	1,076
Percent Below Poverty Level	13.20%	21.90%	24.00%	25.70%	20.10%	29.00%
<b>% Low/Mod Income</b>	28%	37%	42%	39%	33%	38%
80% of Median Income	\$ 48,093.60	\$ 38,800.00	\$ 27,076.80	\$ 30,036.00	\$ 29,392.00	\$ 36,436.00
Total Households	67,299	14,740	1,028	883	1,617	1,601
Less than \$10,000	5.20%	5.80%	11.30%	7.50%	10.60%	9.90%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	4.40%	7.60%	8.50%	7.70%	5.20%	7.70%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	8.10%	11.50%	22.60%	23.60%	17.10%	8.90%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	10.40%	12.50%	10.00%	6.80%	12.90%	11.10%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	14.10%	13.60%	8.30%	15.70%	13.30%	17.70%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	19.60%	18.30%	15.90%	13.70%	15.00%	20.10%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2016-2020 5-Year American Community Survey

% Low/Mod Income estimate based on households earning less than 80% of the median household income



- According to 5-Year ACS, the median household income increased in three of the four census tracts that intersect with the DDD between 2010 and 2020. Tracts 409 and 413 saw increases as high as 15%-16%, which is higher than the 8% increase in Kent County.
- Median income in these tracts remained lower than the 2020 median of \$38,800 in the City of Dover and \$48,039.60 for Kent County.
- The 2020 percentage of the population living below poverty level in all census tracts that intersect with the DDD is higher than the 13.2% level in Kent County.
- The percentage of the population living below the poverty level fell in tracts 413 and 414 between 2010 and 2020 and increased in tracts 409 and 433.
- The percentage of low- or moderate-income households is based on the percentage of households who earn less than 80% of median household income. In all census tracts that intersect with the DDD, the percentage of low- or moderate-income households is higher than the 2020 percentage in Kent County of 28%.
- The percentage of low or moderate-income households fell in census tract 414, but increased in other census tracts that intersect with the DDD.
- Census tract shapes have changed slightly between 2010 and 2020.
- Significant portions of each census tract that intersects with the DDD lie outside of the district boundary.

### Employment Data

OnTheMap, a tool developed by the US Census Bureau for analyzing employment data, was utilized to analyze the flow of employees into and outside of the proposed DDD boundary. The full report produced is attached in Appendix E. As demonstrated in Figure 6, 1,501 employees are employed within the proposed DDD boundary, but live outside the boundary; 425 individuals live within the proposed DDD boundary, but work outside of it; only 11 individuals are both employed within the proposed DDD boundary and live within it as well. Overall, the DDD benefits from a net-migration of employees to the district. There is not a significant overlap between individuals who both live and work within the district boundaries.

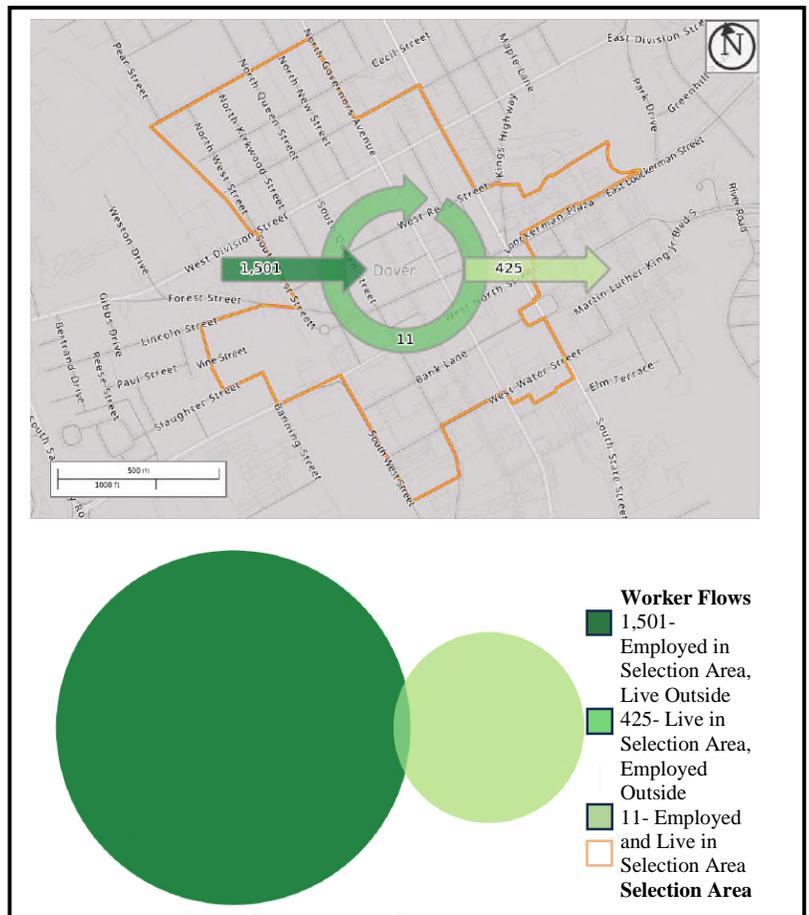


Figure 6: Worker Inflow and Outflow



## Vision, Goals, and Strategies

Dover has been active in its efforts to revitalize the downtown since the 1990s. While the words used to describe the vision for downtown Dover have changed over the years, the vision has remained unchanged. All previous efforts undertaken by the City of Dover and many partner organizations have been striving for a strong, vibrant downtown with a thriving commercial district, a safe and attractive environment for walking, and housing that meets the needs of the Dover community. In 2014, when applying for the DDD designation, the City of Dover submitted two plans to articulate this vision. These were *Restoring Central Dover: Our Vision for Vitality (2014)* and the *Dover Transit Center Neighborhood Plan and Design Book (2011)*. Together these plans established a roadmap for downtown revitalization while mitigating the gentrification that often accompanies reinvestment in an area. The *Dover Transit Center Neighborhood Plan and Design Book* sought to capitalize on the State's investment in a new transit center on Water Street. *Restoring Central Dover* sought to improve housing stock, bolster homeownership, and build community in an area that had lacked investment.

### The Capital City 2030: Transforming Downtown Dover Plan

The vision articulated in prior plans remains relevant, but the strategies and approaches outlined in *The Capital City 2030: Transforming Downtown Dover* reflect the time and the circumstances of Dover in 2023 (Appendix A, January 2023). This plan was a collaborative effort between the DDP, City of Dover, and Mosaic Development Partners as well as other private firms. Throughout 2022, the team worked to gather information and public input, assess current conditions, identify needs and opportunities for redevelopment and investment, and create implementation and investment strategies to guide the community toward an equitable and sustainable future. The target date by which Dover's commerce and housing will reach its full potential is the year 2030. This plan builds upon many of the initial goals and strategies outlined in the Transit Neighborhood Plan and the Restoring Central Dover Plan, while bringing these plans up to date, adding additional expert and community input, and incorporating lessons learned in the first decade of the DDD program.

Through a public process, barriers to capital investment were identified. These include the following key issues:

- Homelessness, vagrancy, and safety,
- The lack of pedestrian activity on Loockerman Street,
- Street design and streetscapes fail to support a destination retail street and thriving downtown,
- Condition of infrastructure,
- Scarce amenities,
- Streets prioritize vehicle movement over other modalities,
- Regional anchors are disconnected,
- Too few businesses to attract new residents,
- Not enough regular foot traffic for food and beverage establishments,
- Lack of parking,

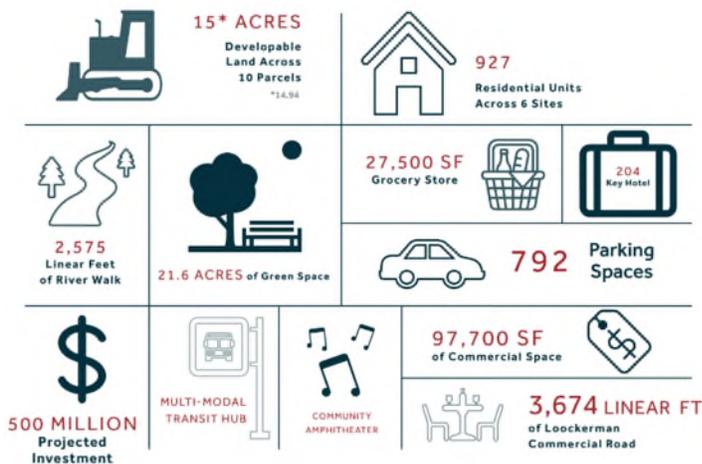


- Limited housing stock- insufficient to support retail programming, and
- More pro-business regulations and incentives are needed to spur private investment.

**Vision:**

- Transform Downtown Dover and the surrounding area into a vibrant, thriving community and regional destination, with Loockerman Street serving as the spine for the downtown district, with wide sidewalks, trees, vibrant store fronts, food and retail options, outdoor seating, and traffic calming strategies.
- A multi-modal Dover that welcomes people who walk, cycle, use a scooter, take a bus, or drive and offers connection to existing key anchors and major hubs in the area.
- A vibrant community built on the principles of equitable development that becomes a model for people to live, work, and play.
- A thriving economy, commercial center, and destination that attracts residents and visitors while honoring Dover’s heritage.

**Goals:**



*Figure 7: Capital City 2030 Plan Projected Outcomes*

- New Developments offering residential units to increase population density downtown, a boutique hotel, centralized parking, contemporary architecture upgraded building structures, and programmed public spaces.
- The projected outcomes of the Plan include 97,700sf of commercial space, a hotel, a grocery store, 792 parking spaces, and 927 residential units across 6 sites.
- Achieve an annual economic impact of 360 full time jobs per year offering \$11.8 million in compensation.
- Revive Loockerman and create 3,674 linear feet of commercial road.
- 21.6 acres of green space, a River Walk, and a community amphitheater.
- A multi-modal transit hub, streetscape improvements, and improved lighting systems to promote safety.
- Art installations, trees, and preservation of historic architecture to promote culture and preserve community character.



**Strategies:**

Important strategies identified in the strategic master plan include:

- Installing monuments at entry points to the downtown and implementing a crosswalk art program, which has already launched. Local artists have created painted crosswalks at 1 W. Loockerman Street and 394 W. Loockerman Street.
- Create a Multi-Modal Dover by ensuring that the downtown core is accessible from all directions by car, bike, and foot. This involves creating street typologies, bike lanes and bike networks, widening sidewalks, adding traffic calming infrastructure, installing raised intersections, and creating more centralized parking. It also includes a transportation hub and strategically placed wayfinding signage directing visitors to shopping, dining, and attractions.
  - The Dover/Kent County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is currently conducting a Downtown Dover Pathways study to identify means to better connect key activity centers within downtown Dover by walking, cycling, scooter, other active transportation and micromobility options. Activity centers include facilities such as Bayhealth, legislative mall, Delaware State University, Dover Transit Center, and Dover Air Force Base.
  - Additional strategies for creating a connected community may include the use of pedestrian only alleyways and bikeshare programs, increased public transit options to fill gaps, and sidewalk improvements.
- Revive Loockerman Street so it is a pedestrian and activity corridor with wider sidewalks, narrower roads, room for outdoor dining and sidewalk planters, improved lighting systems, and a tree preservation program. The pedestrian experience will be improved with



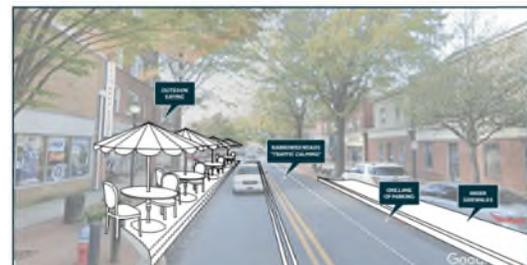
*Figure 8: Capital City 2030 Plan Monumental Signage*



*Figure 9: Painted Crosswalks*



*Figure 10: Capital City 2030 Plan Rendering of the Intersection of East Loockerman St. and Park Dr*



*Figure 11: Capital City 2030 Plan Rendering of Recommended Streetscape Typologies on W. Loockerman St.*



extended store hours and engaging consumer experiences that encourage visitors to spend time in the area.

- Adjust the intersection design at State Street, Kings Highway, and Lookerman to improve safety and pedestrian access.
- Address parking issues by creating a mobility hub with structured parking, bike or car share access, travel information, and more.
- Preserving the architecture and historical character of downtown. Provide clear design standards that clarify which design elements should be encouraged or discouraged in renovations and in new construction.
- Develop a community density plan that seeks to add residential units at various price points.

### Key Projects

*Capital City 2030* identifies sites where implementing targeted strategies will have the greatest impact in the “Our Plan: Project Sites” section beginning on page 74. This section includes a financial framework to achieve the plan’s goals. Each project is important in realizing the vision for downtown Dover. As the first decade of the DDD program comes to an end, several key projects are taking shape. Three major projects are expected to begin development within the next couple of years and will serve as catalysts for additional redevelopment activity. Other key projects are expected to move forward within the next five years, once the initial projects are underway. The incentives provided by DDD designation have been instrumental in getting the initial projects off the ground and will remain critical to the feasibility of all key projects.

Initial projects expected to launch shortly include the 120 and 129 South Governors Avenue projects and the Old Dover Post Office project. Figure 12 on page 21 includes images of current sites on Governors Avenue and the project renderings from the *Capital City 2030 Plan*. This figure also includes the former Dover Post Office location (The Old Post), and the rendering created by the private developer who is working to redevelop the space. With investment from the state, the City of Dover also has plans to replace aging water and wastewater infrastructure to support the proposed high-density, mixed-use development. Appendix F features the Governor’s Press Release on the investment as well as subsequent news articles about the forthcoming investments.

The following list includes the key projects which will be the catalyst projects for transforming downtown Dover. The aim of these projects is to increase density downtown and grow amenities in a manner that is equitable, sustainable, and in line with the goals and values of the City and its stakeholders. The City understands that properties owned by the City of Dover and/or the Downtown Dover Partnership (DDP) are not eligible for the State DDD rebate. As part of the development of sites currently owned by the City and DDP, properties will be transferred to non-governmental entities eligible for the State rebate prior to development.

- 120 S. Governors Avenue- With support from the State, a multi-level building with parking, residences, a grocery store, and outdoor space will be constructed to increase downtown amenities.



- 129 S. Governors Avenue and other adjacent parcels- A parking deck and multi-modal transit hub will be constructed to replace the existing surface lot. This project may not be eligible for State DDD rebates because the principal use is a parking structure; however, it is a key project in Dover’s downtown revitalization.
- The Old Post - The City is currently working with a private developer on a proposal to create a 4-story mixed-use building with space for 2 retail establishments, parking, office space, and 30 apartment units.



- Railroad Avenue- These parcels on the western edge of Downtown Dover are currently owned by the DDP and used as an auto shop and hair salon. The proposed use for Railroad Avenue is a structure with residential apartments above a two-level parking structure. This area will also serve as a major gateway to the City.
- W. Loockerman Street & S. Queen Street- This parcel is currently vacant despite being one of the first seen when entering Downtown Dover from the west. The proposed use for this parcel is a 5-story apartment building with ground floor retail space and parking.



- W. Loockerman Street and S. New Street- This site is vacant following a fire in March 2022 that destroyed the building. The proposed use is a new 3-story apartment building with retail space on the first floor.



- Loockerman Way Plaza- This site, located in the Downtown core, is primarily comprised of undeveloped open space with a few paved paths and surface parking. The proposed use is a series of buildings with first floor retail and restaurant space and apartments on upper floors. The goal is to create a central gathering space at this location.



- Priscilla Block Building- This is a historic building that currently sits vacant at the gateway to Loockerman Street. The proposed use is a food hall, which would serve as a community gathering space and attract visitors from nearby Delaware State University (DSU).
- 27-231 W. Loockerman St.- While not included in the *Capital City 2030 Plan*, this project is expected to renovate the existing structures to create commercial units on the first floor with apartments and offices on upper levels. This project will provide needed investment into the block between Governors Avenue and New Street.



**Figure 12: Current Lots and Renderings**

**The Old Post: 555 Loockerman Plaza**



**Site of future mixed-use building.**

**129 S. Governors Avenue and Adjacent  
Parcels:**



**Site of future parking garage.**

**120 S. Governors Avenue:**



**Site of future mixed-use building.**

# Appendix A

Please see the Transforming Downtown Dover Capital City 2030 Master Plan: [https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/zot7m23o8us1b4rzd4edh/DOVER\\_Masterplan\\_January.pdf?rlkey=fy132lnwpvwmfohyxiyiebkdy&dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/zot7m23o8us1b4rzd4edh/DOVER_Masterplan_January.pdf?rlkey=fy132lnwpvwmfohyxiyiebkdy&dl=0)

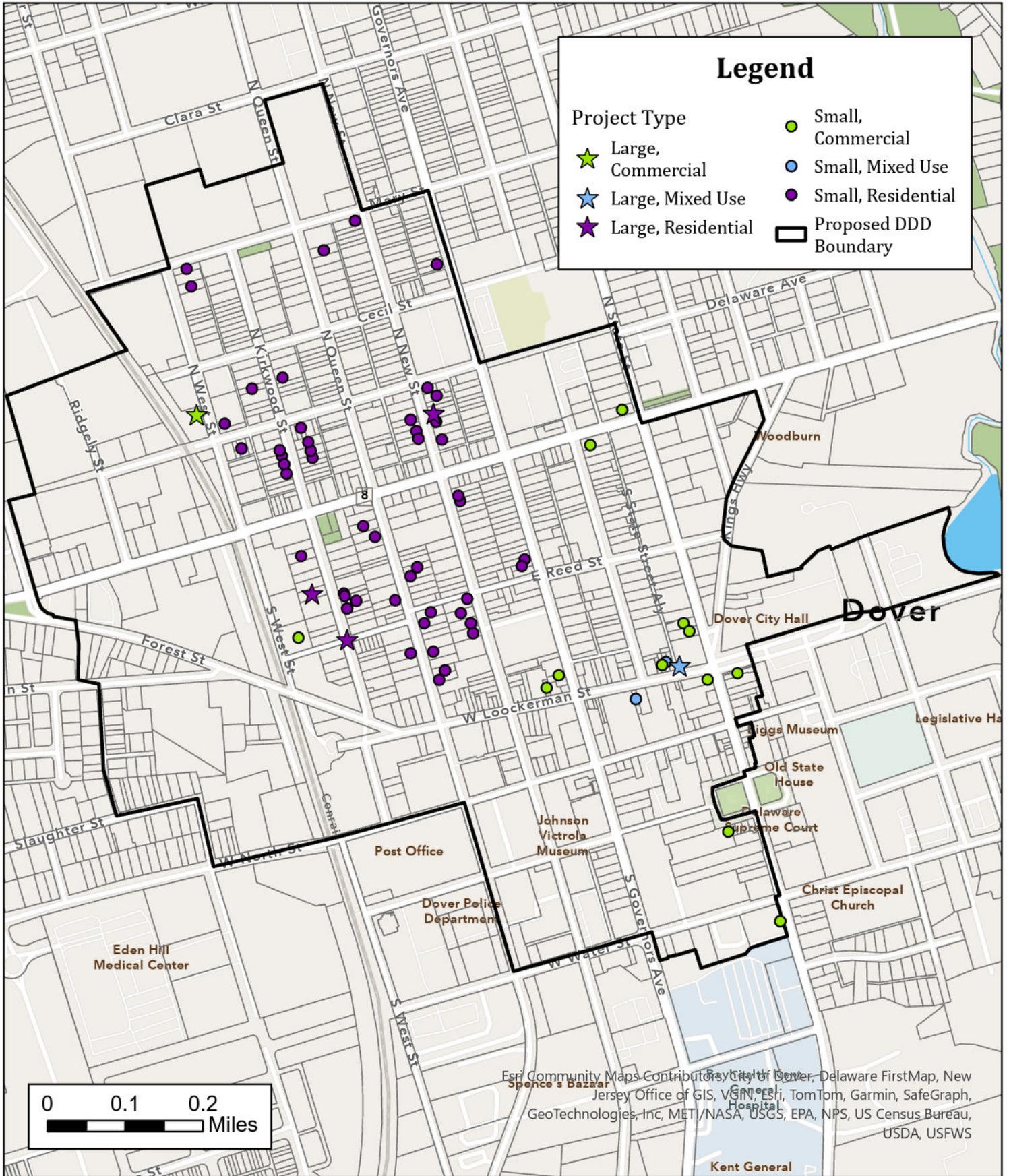


# Appendix B



## Appendix B: Maps

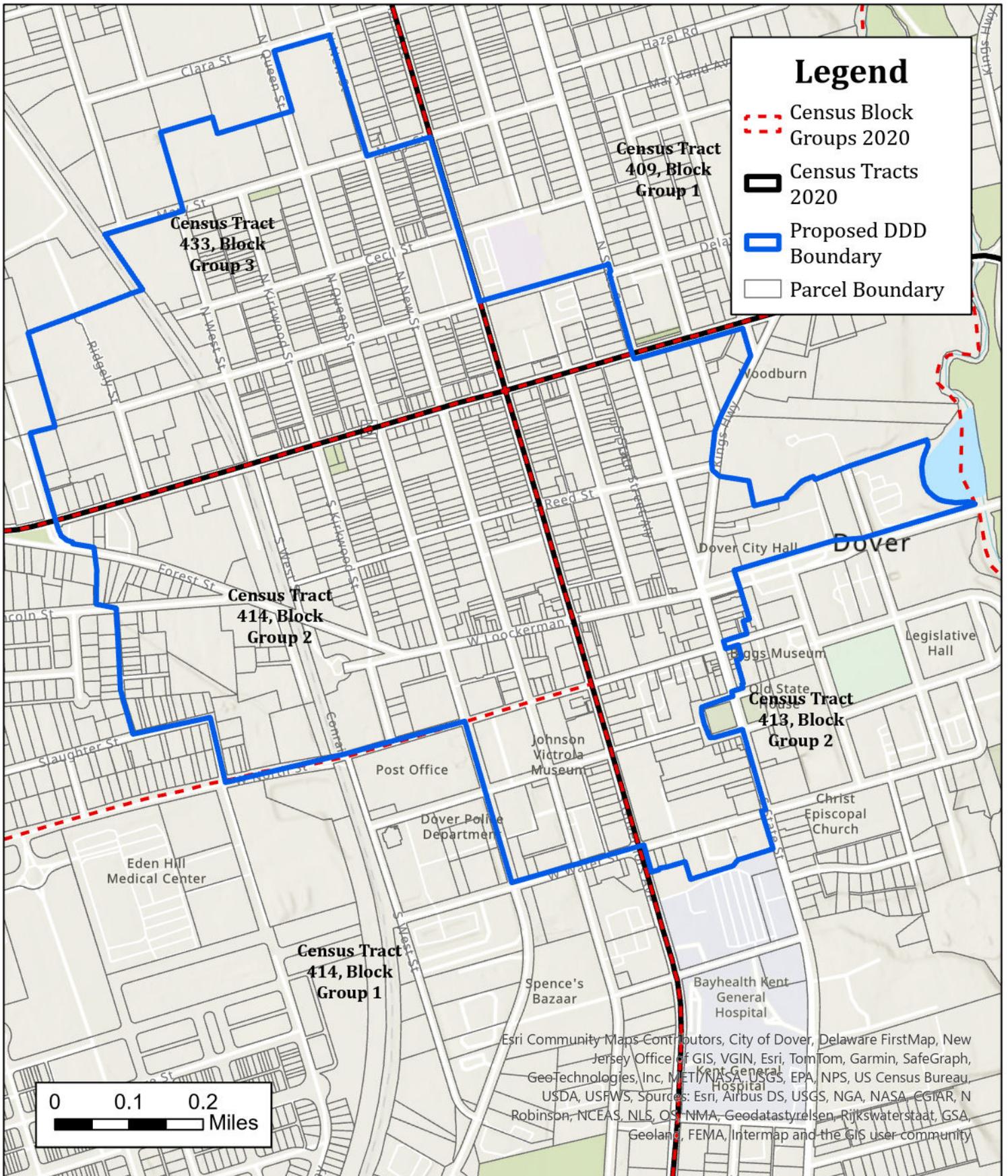
1. Completed Project Locations
2. CDHH and NeighborGood Partners Completed Project Locations
3. Census Tracts & Block Groups
4. Census Blocks
5. Census Tract Changes
6. Census Block Group Changes
7. Percent Homeownership (2010)
8. Percent Homeownership (2020)
9. Percent Vacant Units 2020
10. Vacant Building Locations as of April 25, 2024
11. Dangerous Building Locations as of May 3, 2024
12. Total Crime
13. Violent Crime
14. Drug Crime
15. Property Crime
16. Proposed Boundary (with Key Projects)
17. Proposed Boundary (with Acres)
18. Zoning
19. Current Land Use
20. Planned Land Use
21. FEMA Floodplain
22. National Register of Historic Places Historic Districts



# Downtown Development District Completed Project Locations (2024)



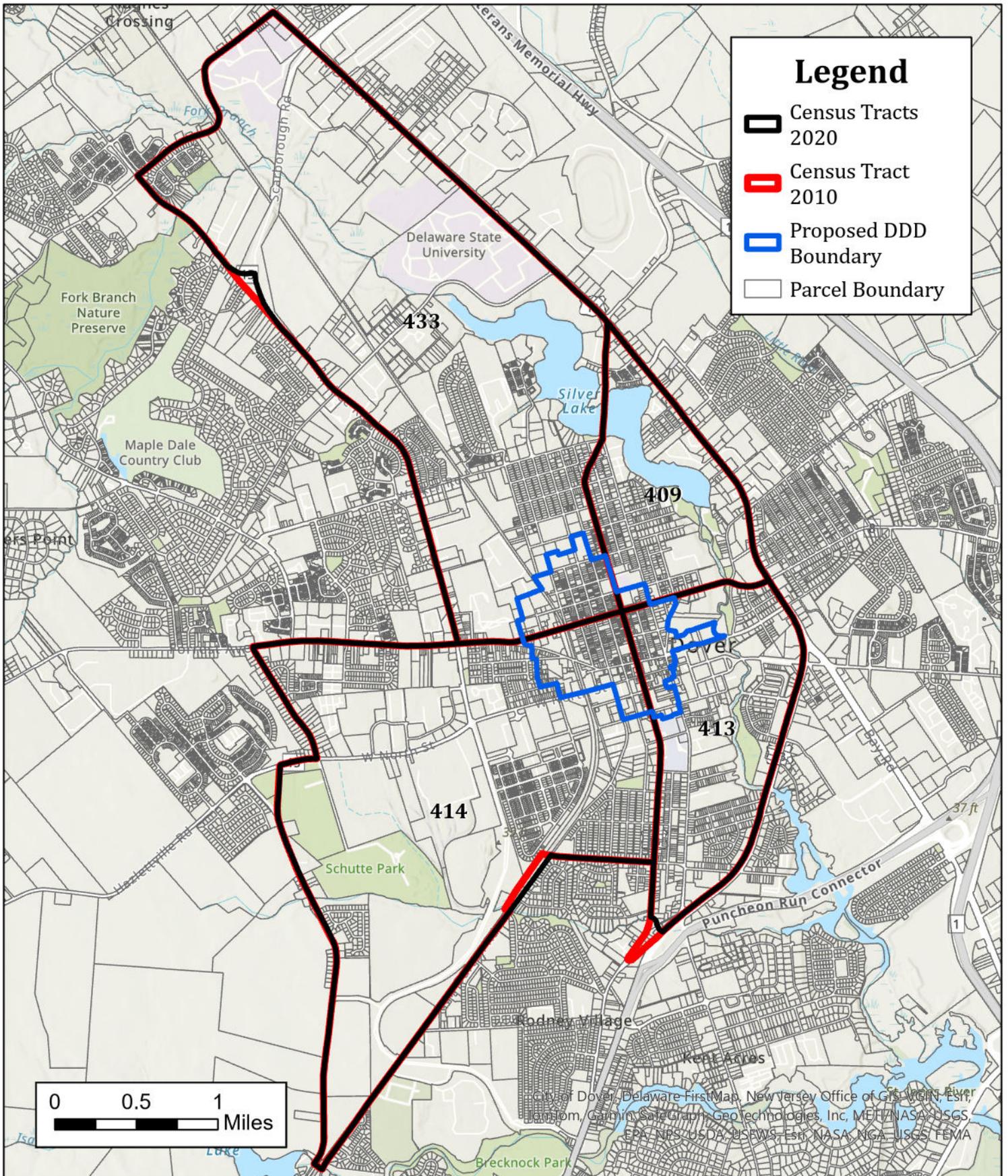




# Downtown Development District Census Tracts & Block Groups

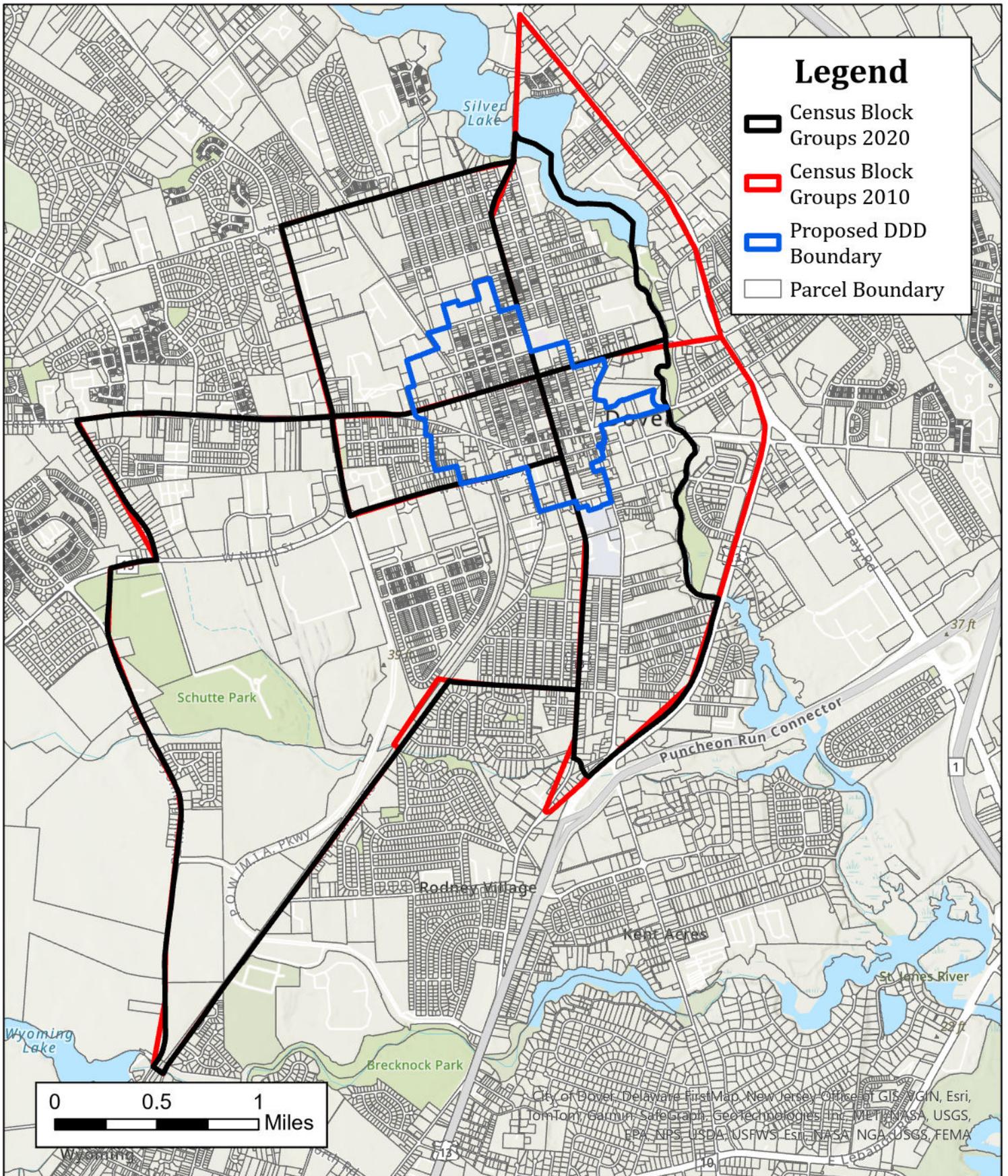






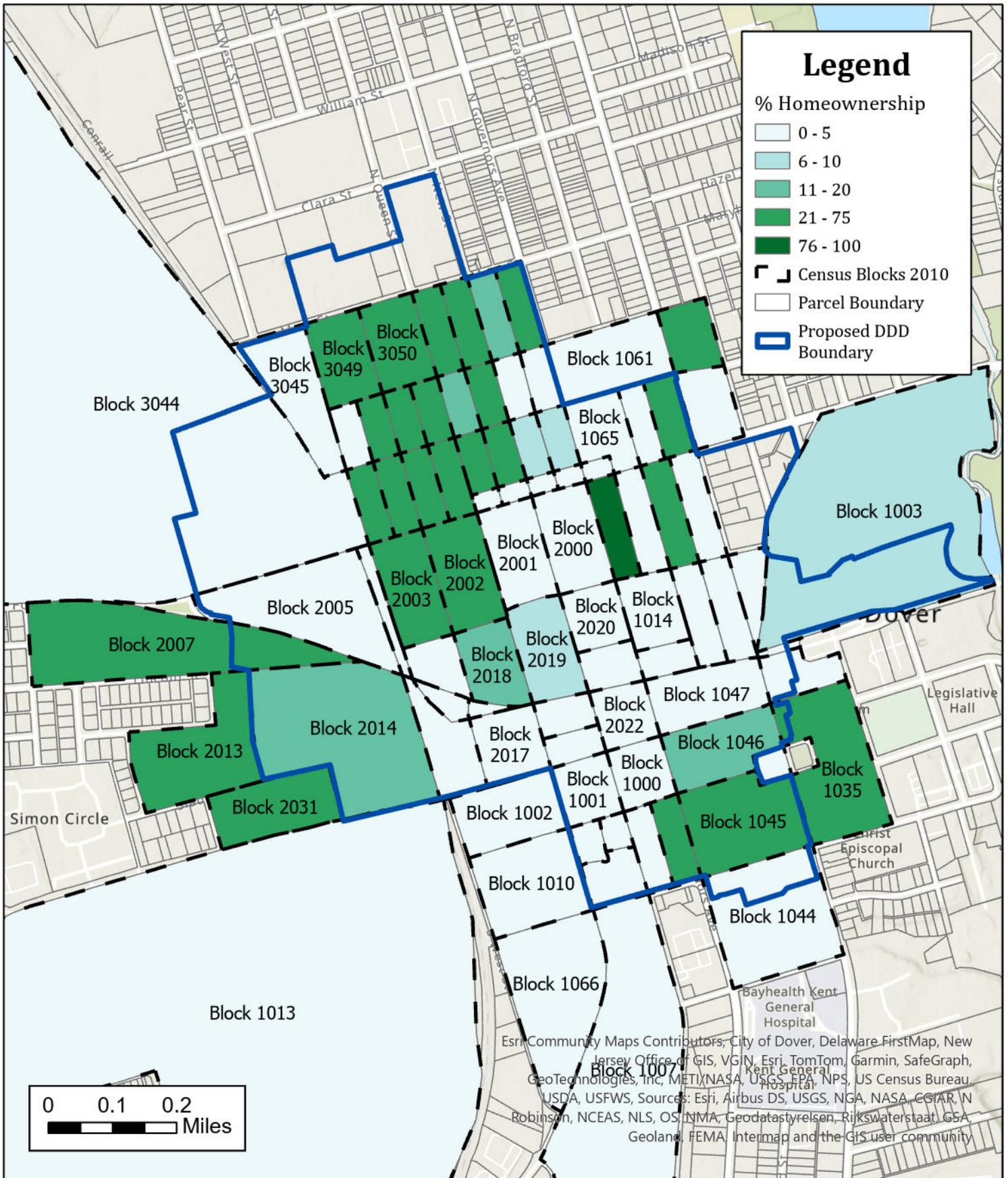
# Downtown Development District Census Tract Changes





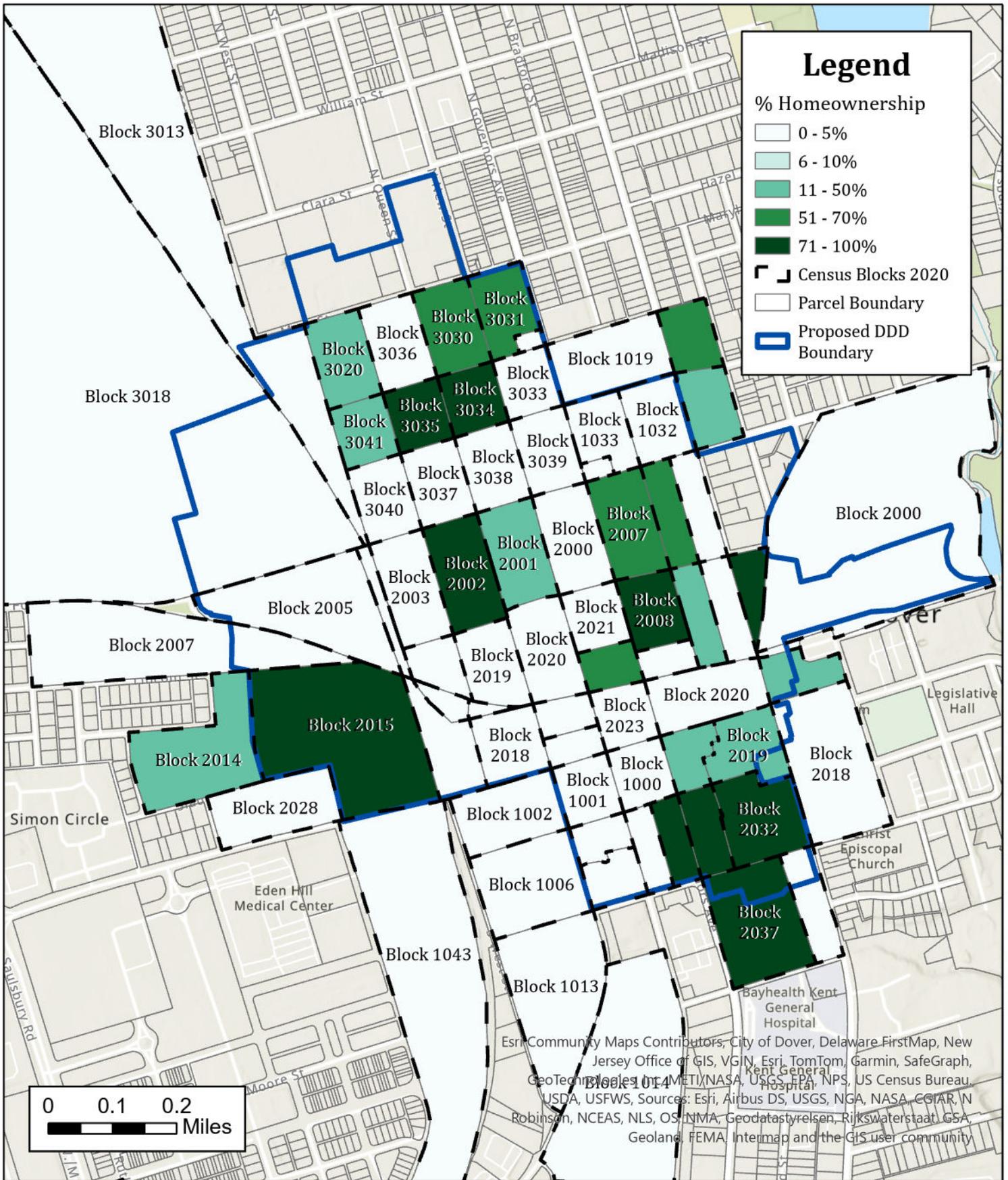
# Downtown Development District Census Block Group Changes





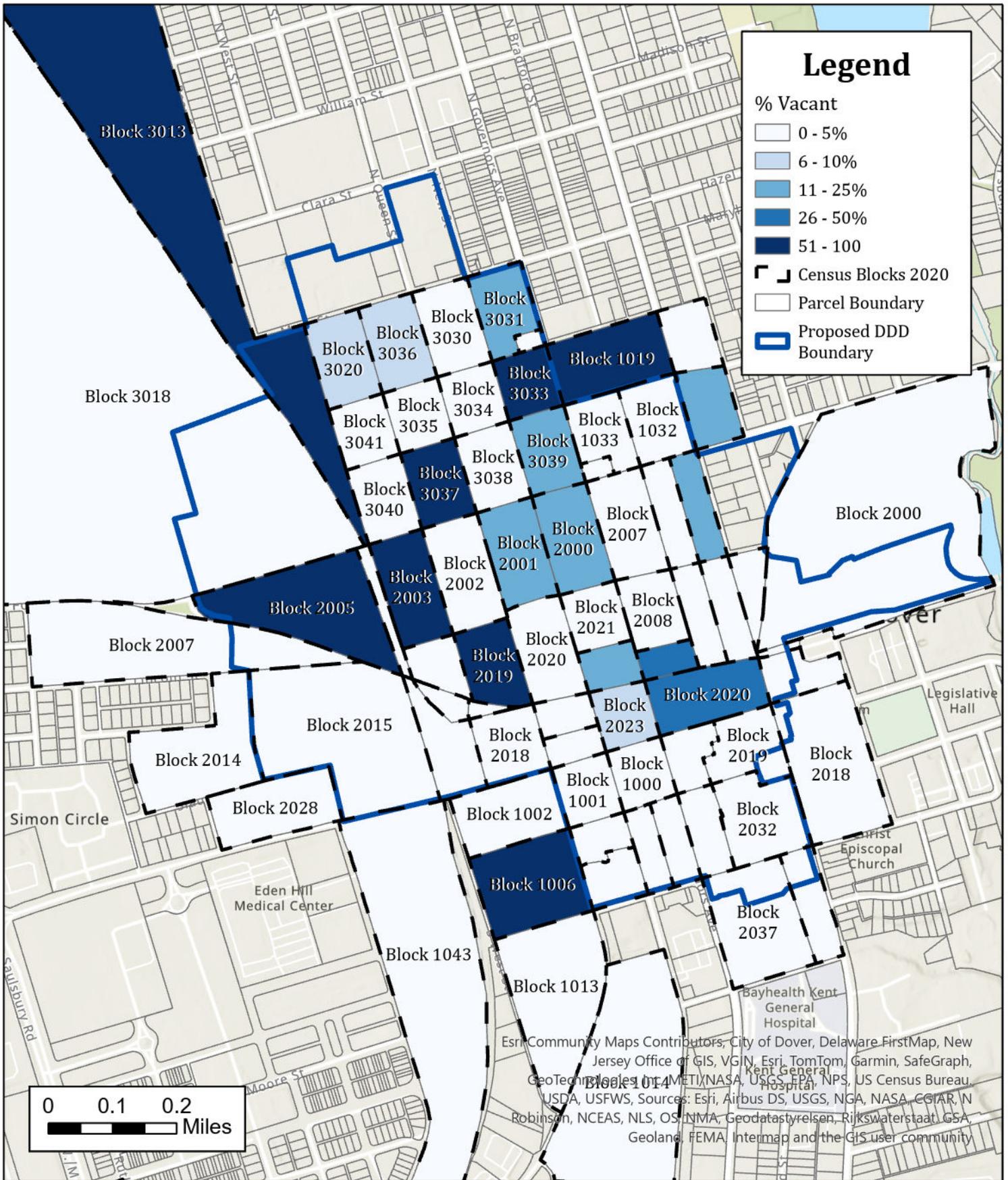
# Downtown Development District Percent Homeownership (2010)





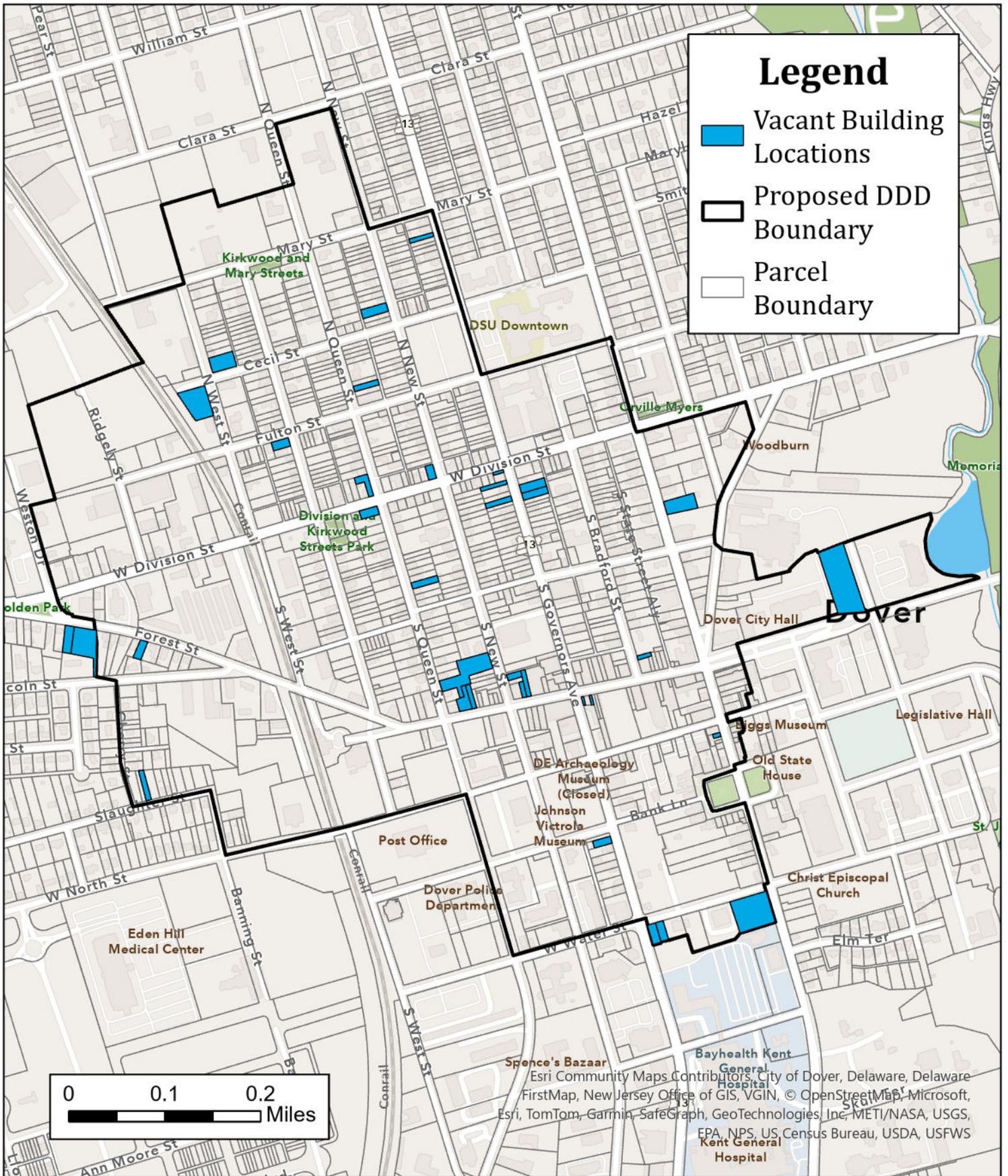
# Downtown Development District Percent Homeownership (2020)





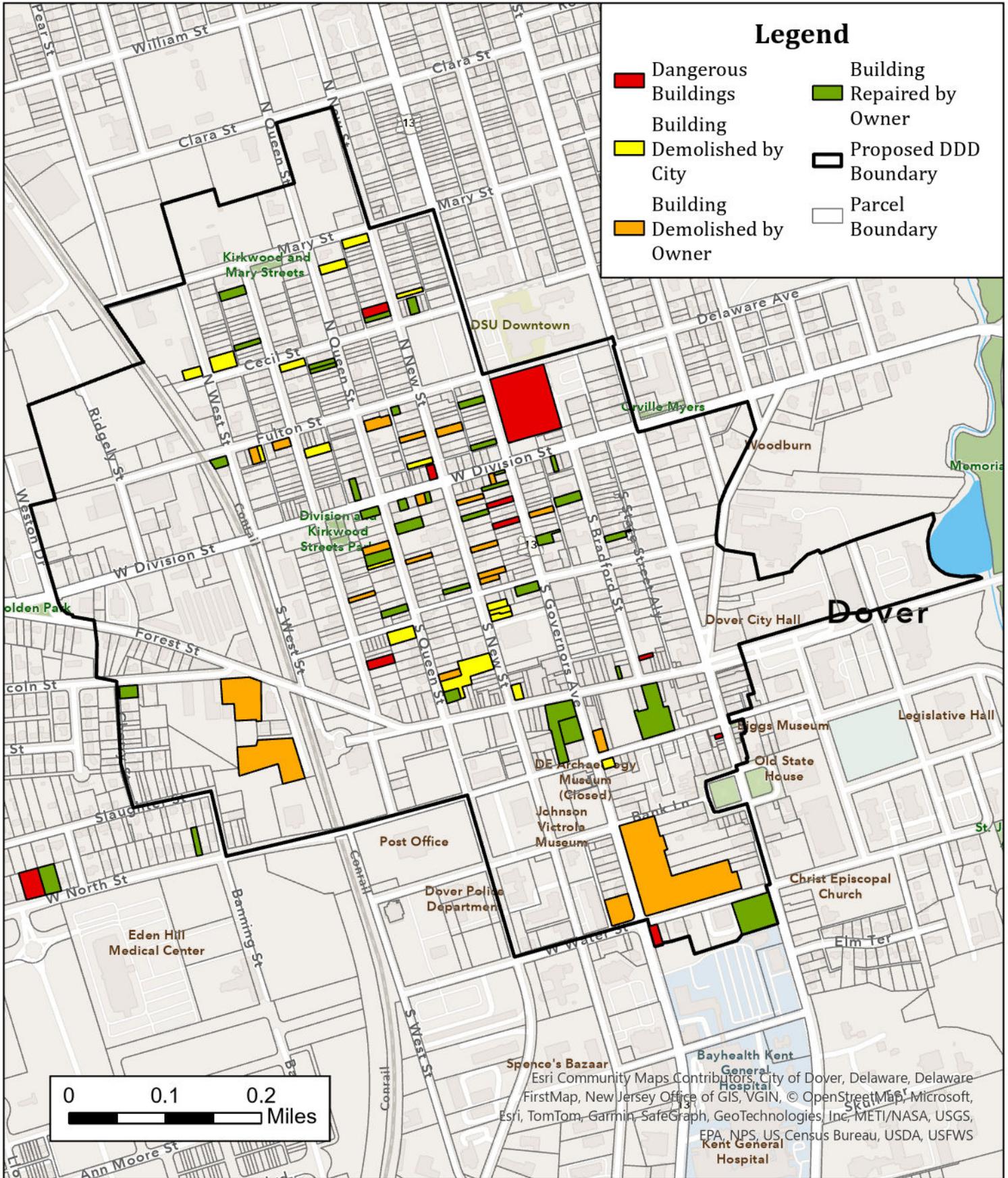
# Downtown Development District Percent Vacant Units 2020





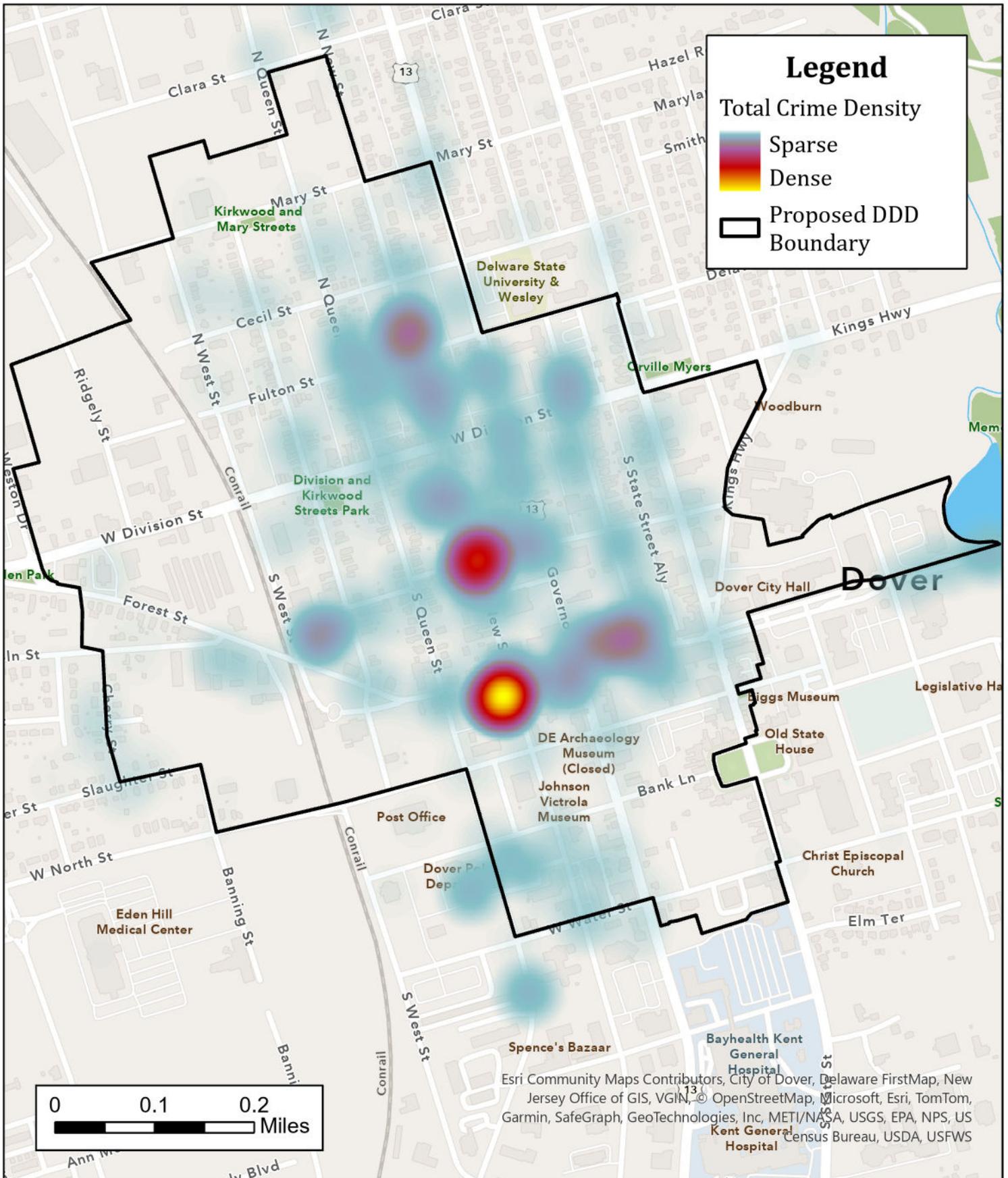
# Downtown Development District Vacant Building Locations as of April 25, 2024





# Downtown Development District Dangerous Building Locations as of May 3, 2024





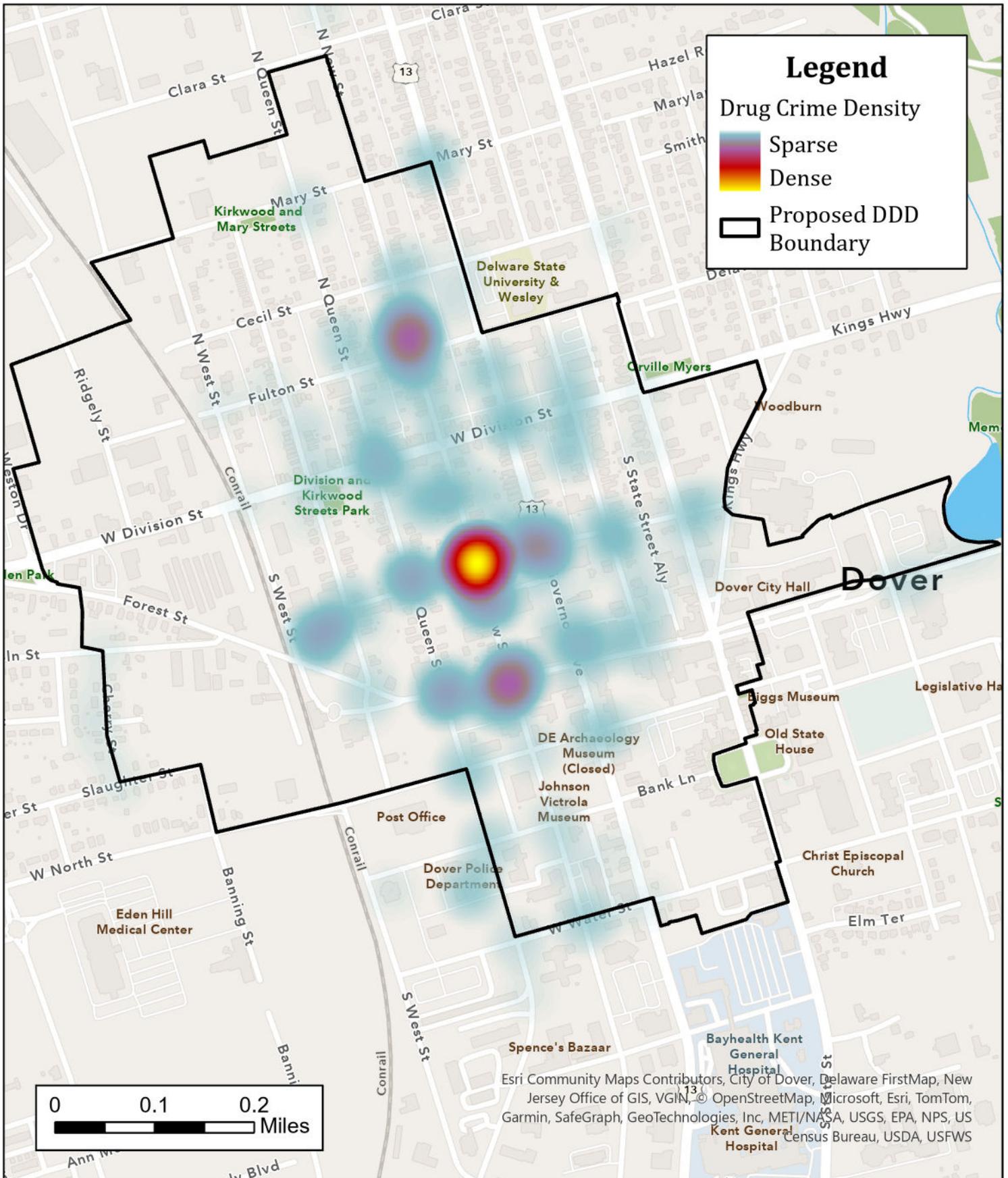
# Downtown Development District Total Crime

June 2019 to December 2023



Map 12 of 21



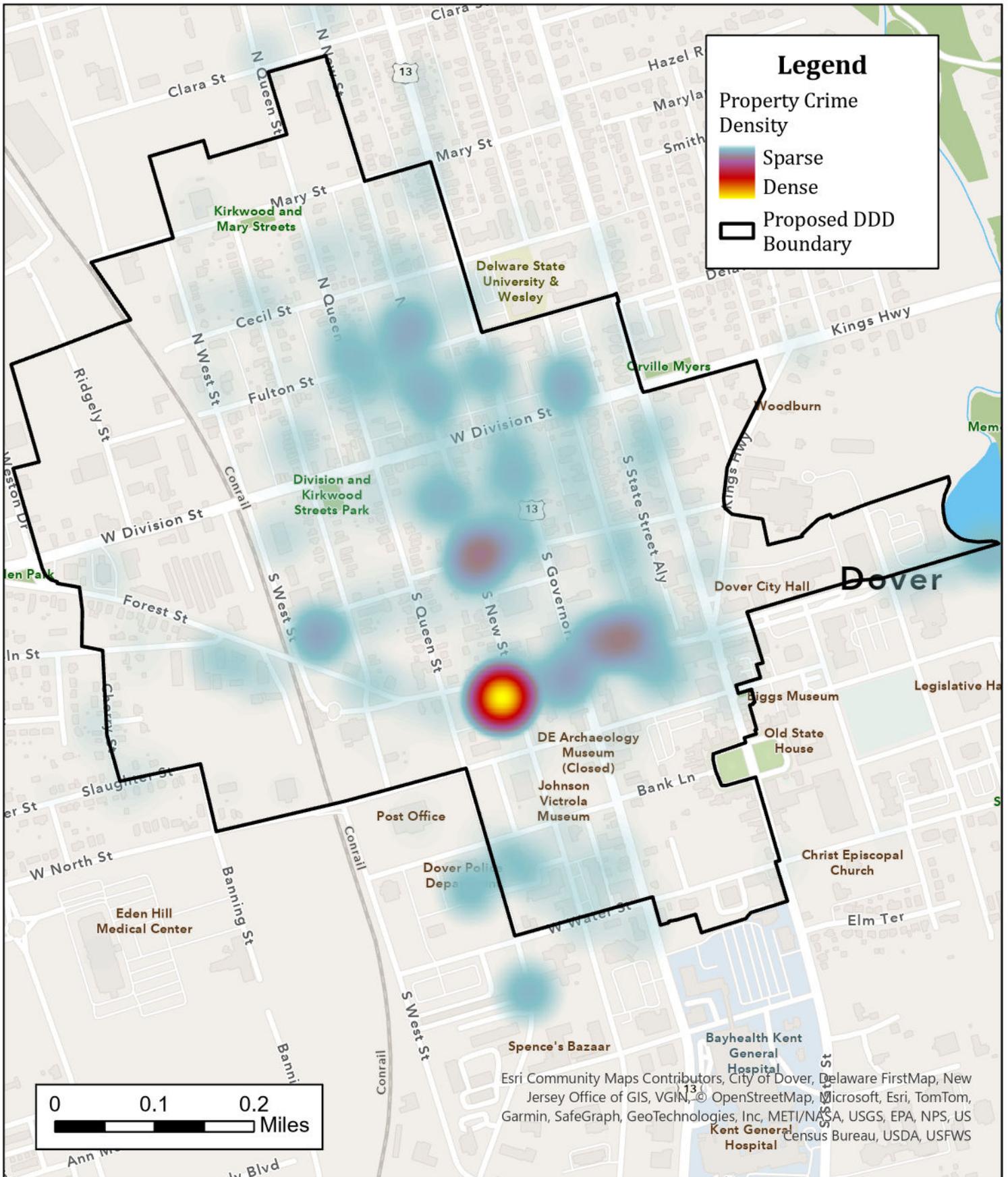


# Downtown Development District Drug Crime

June 2019 to December 2023



Map 14 of 21

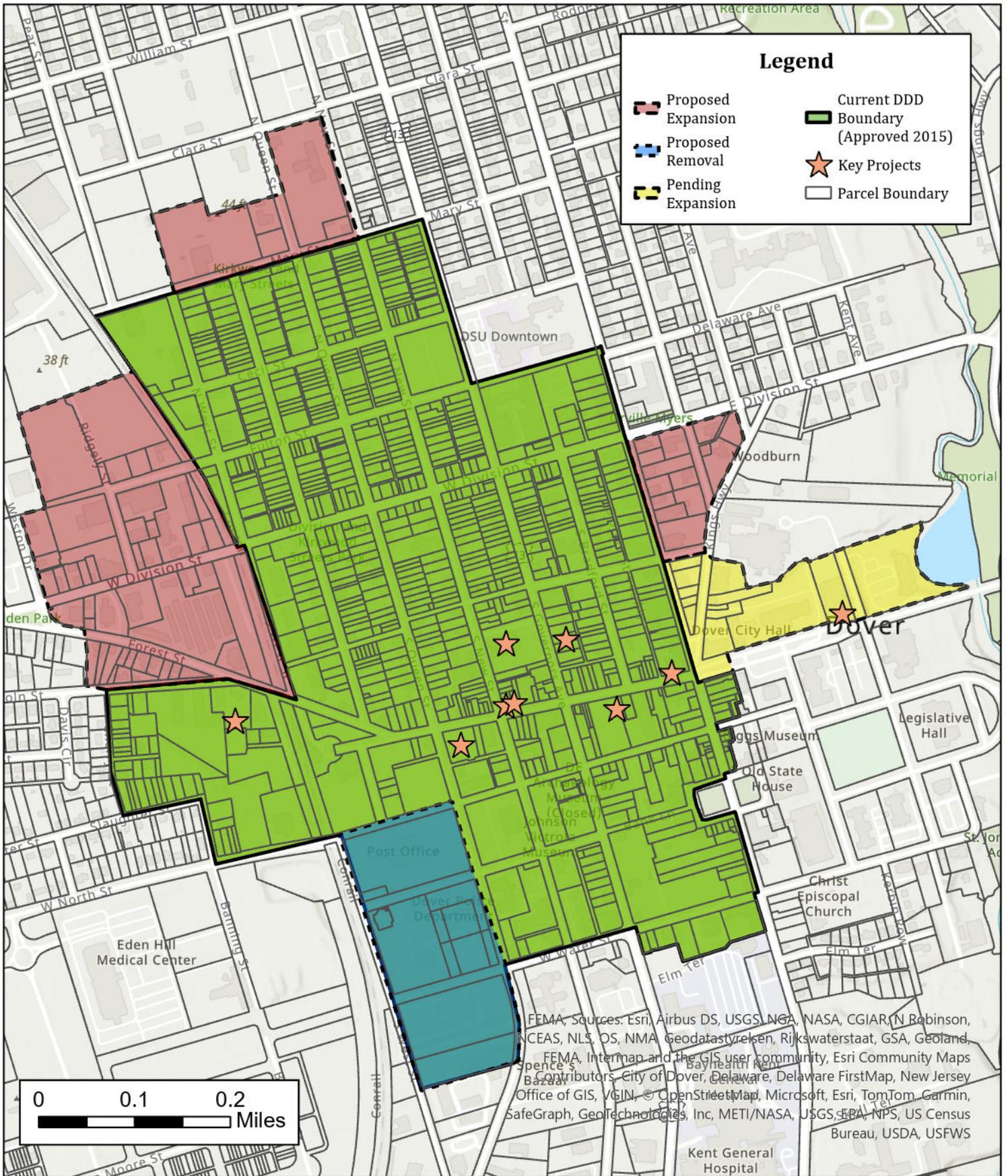


# Downtown Development District Property Crime

June 2019 to December 2023

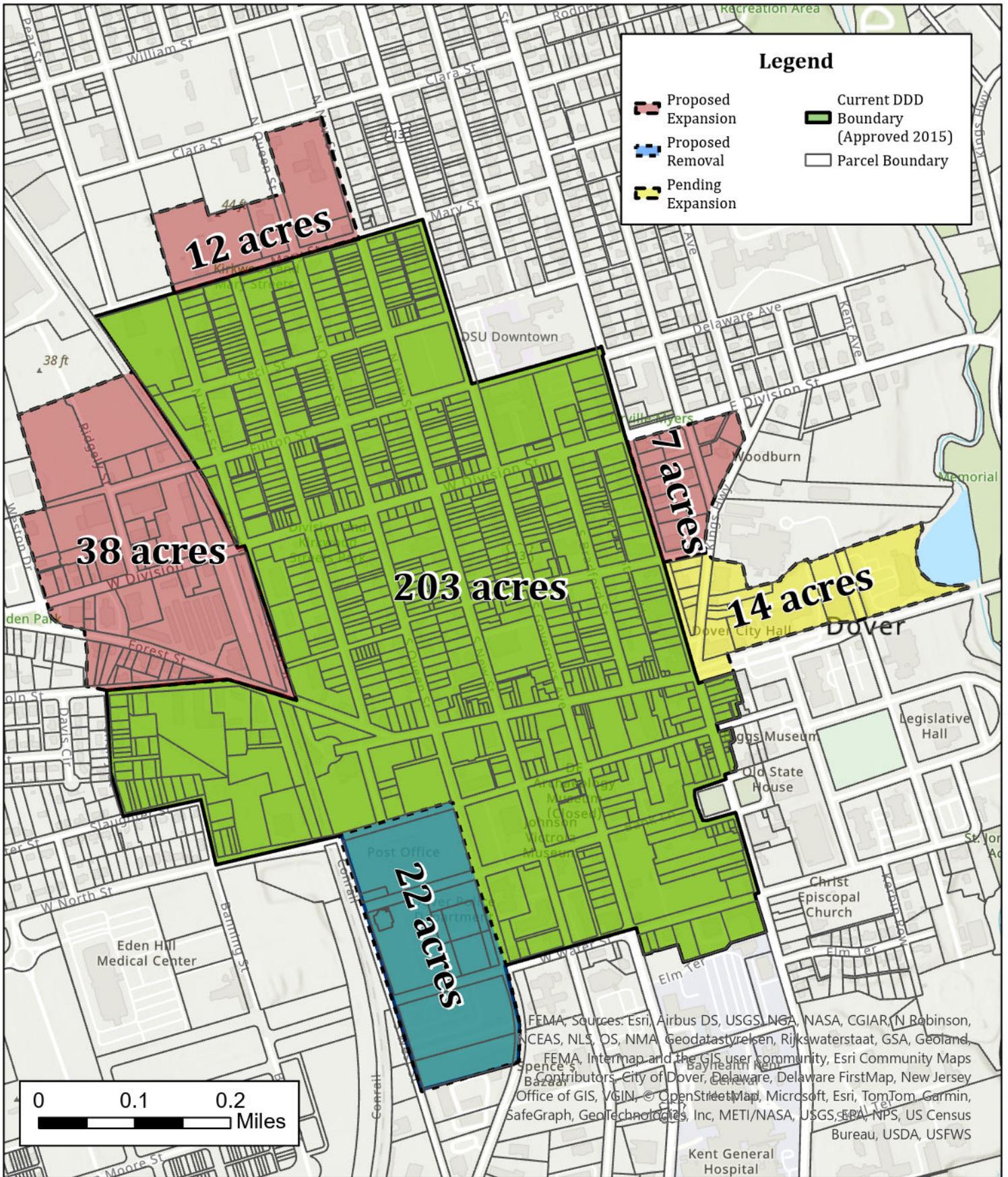


Map 15 of 21



# Downtown Development District Proposed Boundary

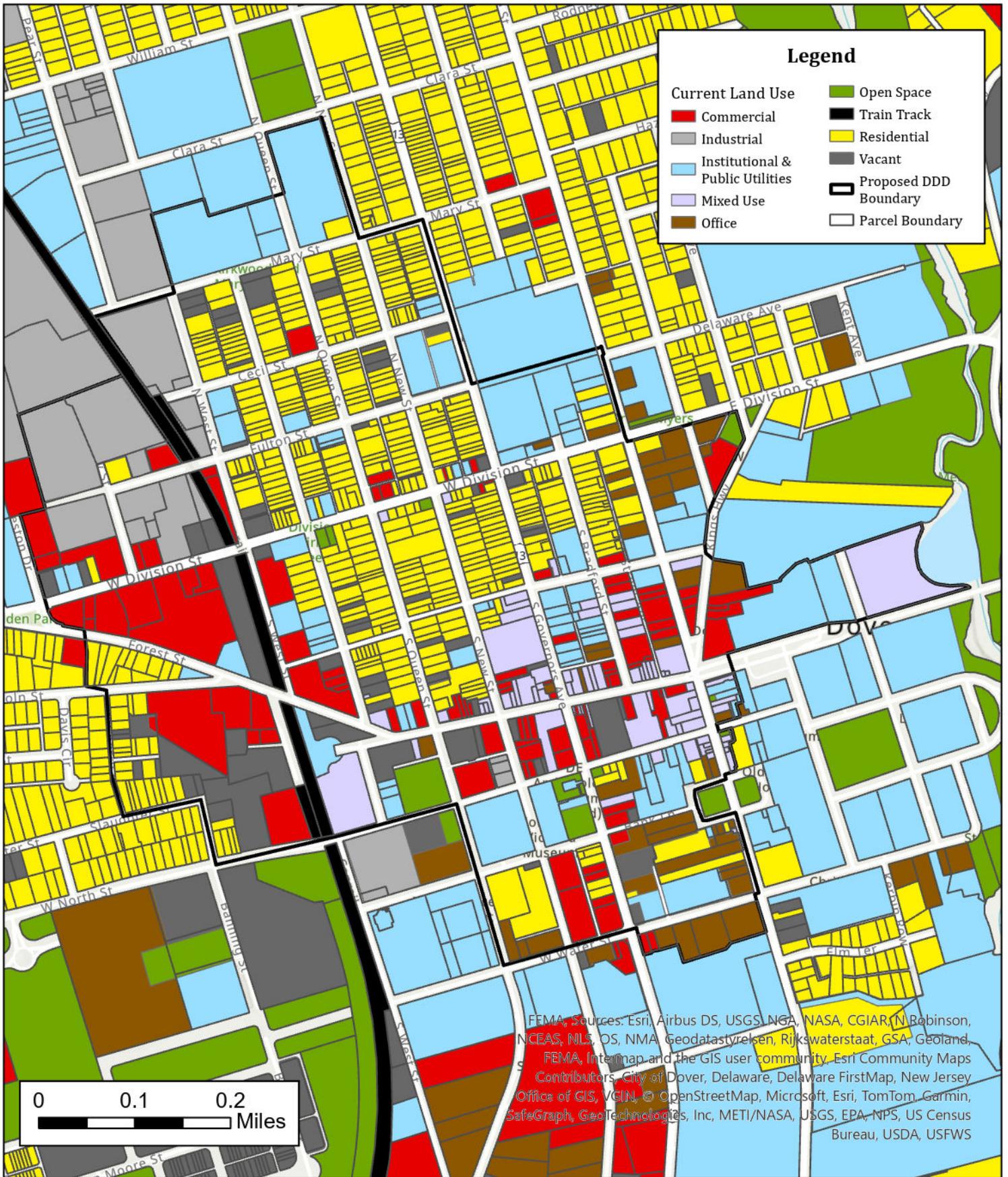




# Downtown Development District Proposed Boundary



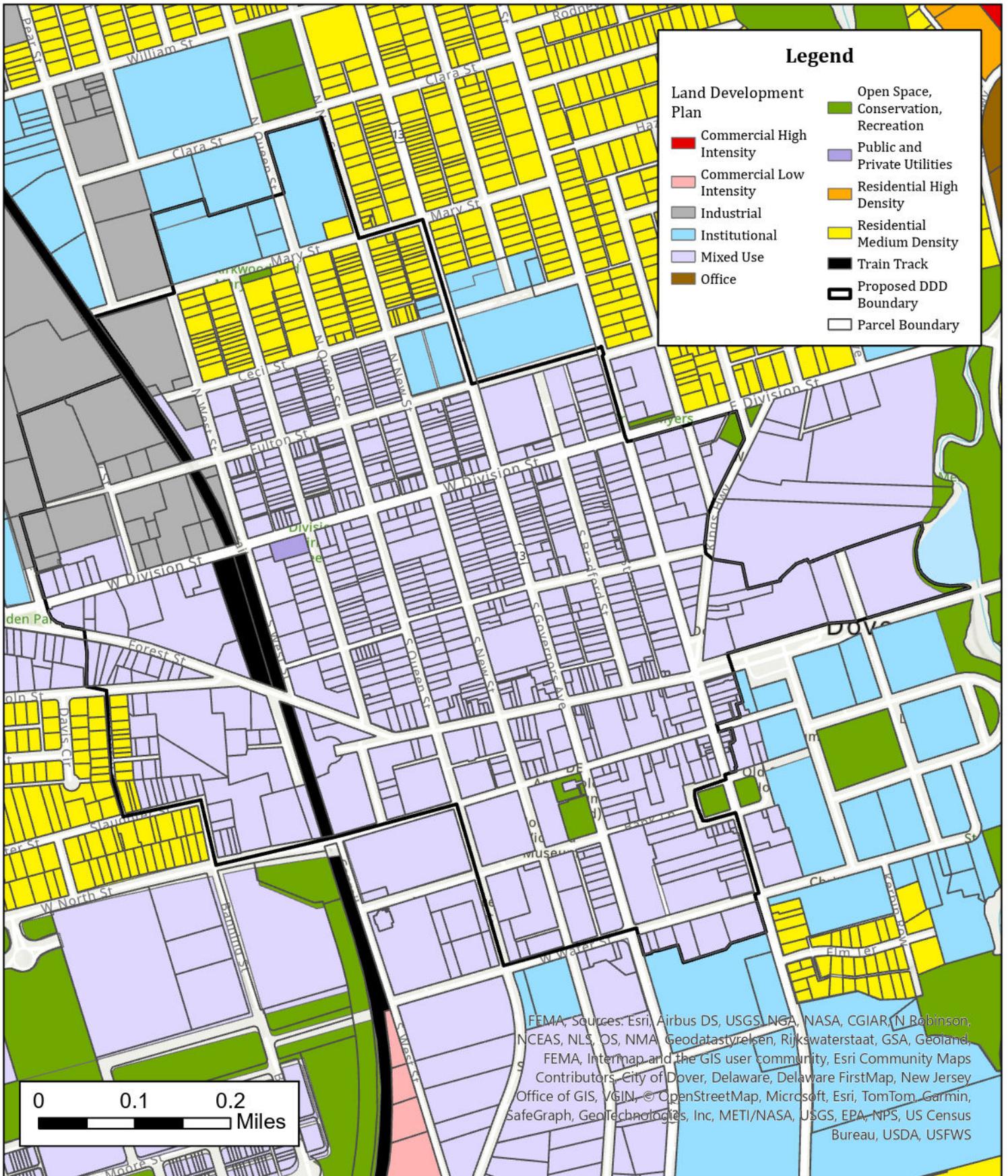




**Downtown Development District  
Current Land Use (2019 Comprehensive Plan  
Map 2-2: Existing Land Use\*)**



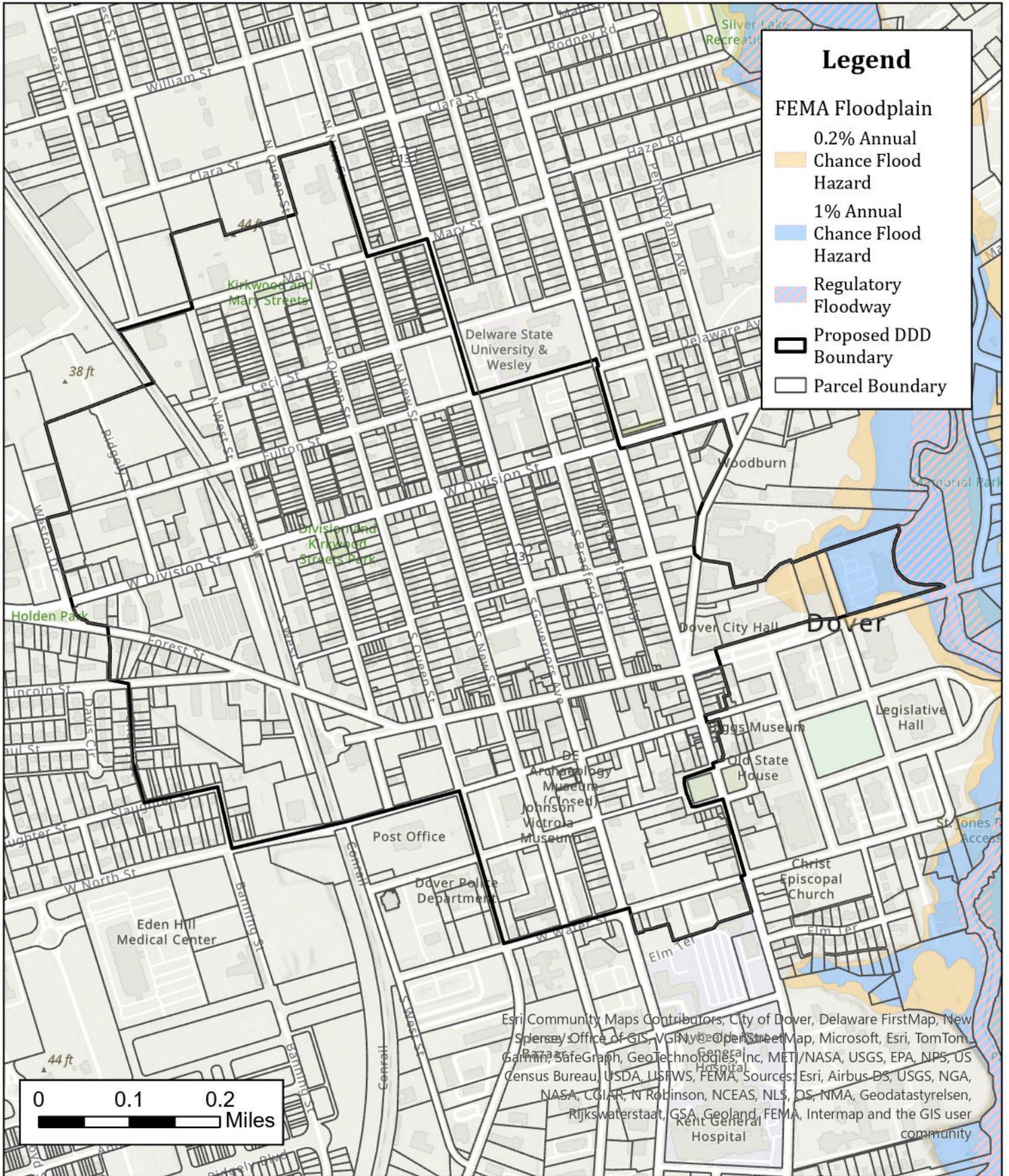
\*As Adopted on January 13, 2020



**Downtown Development District  
Planned Land Use (2019 Comprehensive Plan  
Map 12-1: Land Development Plan\*)**

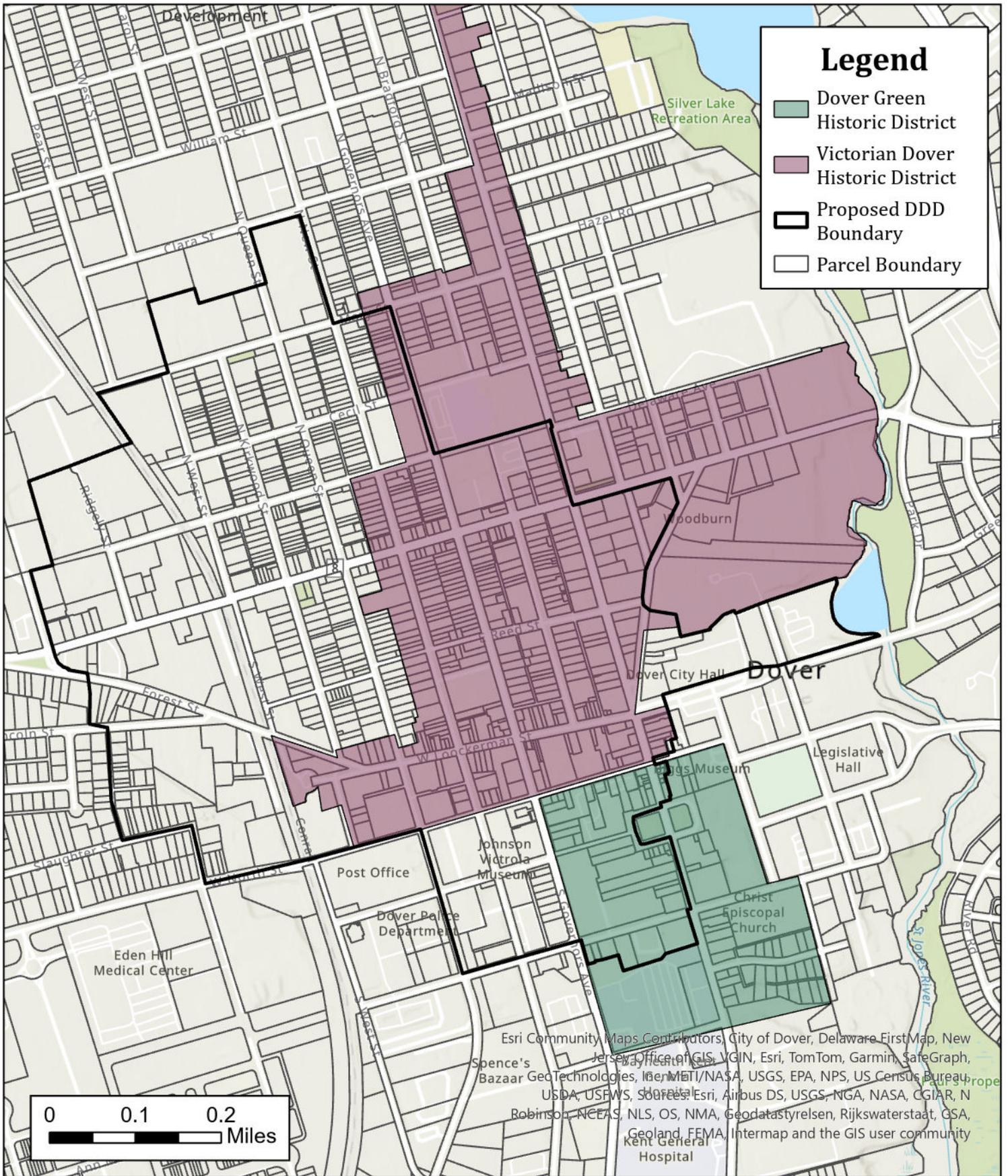


\*As Revised on June 14, 2021



# Downtown Development District FEMA Floodplain





# Downtown Development District National Register of Historic Places Historic Districts



# Appendix C



## Appendix C: Interview Summaries

A series of interviews were conducted as a part of the program evaluation, to gain insight into stakeholder perspectives on the implementation of Dover's DDD program. Conversations were guided by general interview questions and tailored to the experiences of different stakeholders. Interviews were conducted January 11 and February 7, 2024, and detailed notes were collected to document responses.

### **General Questions:**

1. How would you rate the success of Dover's DDD program?
2. What do you think has gone well with the program?
3. What do you wish had gone better? What suggestions do you have for enhancing the program?
4. The City currently offers several incentives to support redevelopment in the DDD and the larger downtown area. These include: permit fee waivers, impact fee waivers, tax abatement on the value of the improvement, business license waivers, and a transfer tax rebate at the completion of the project. Would you support additional waivers or financial investments on the part of the City to help spur downtown redevelopment? If yes, are there other ideas you could share?
5. The Mosaic plan calls for higher density development in the downtown core. This is something that past planning efforts have also encouraged. Investment in upgrading the infrastructure would be needed to support this. Is this investment something you believe the City could take on and your constituents would support?



Name:	Tim Bailey
Title:	CEO
Organization:	Central Delaware Habitat for Humanity
Interview Date/Time:	January 18, 2024 3:00 PM

What do you hear from the Habitat homeowners?

- Habitat has built more than 38 homes in downtown Dover under the program. In some areas homeownership increased from 20% to 80%. There is not a clear answer about how homeowners feel. They are a very tight knit community.

How helpful was the 20% rebate offered by the State in helping Habitat complete its goals and build homes in downtown Dover?

- It is very challenging to fund a single home. We generally lose about \$50,000/home. The approximately \$1 million in DDD rebates has been a critical and dependable source of funding.

How helpful were the City incentives to the success of the program?

- 95% of their units were developed in south Dover because of the incentives. We would not be able to do this work without those funding sources.

Was the City's development review and permitting process straight forward and easy to understand? If not, what specifically did you find difficult?

- There are aspects of it that are challenging. City requirements change, meaning we need to upgrade things like pipe size. Curb cuts and sidewalks are especially difficult. Public Works is reliably challenging. There have been times when a failed inspection required improvements costing \$10k per house. This is not exclusive to Dover and we do get a lot of support from the City.

What are Habitat's plans in the next five years in downtown Dover?

- We plan to remain in Dover so long as we have access to DDD rebates, incentives, the DDD housing fund, and permitting and impact fee rebates. We have had a hard time with the increasing property values from COVID as vacant lots are considerably more expensive.

Additional notes:

- There are times where we have a home right across the street from the DDD boundary and are then ineligible. We would like a hassle-free process.
- We are the organization serving this [low] income range. The expenses would be crippling for organizations like HFH without the incentives. Having DDD support is imperative and has a major impact.



Name:	Rob Pierce
Title:	Planning Director
Organization:	City of Milford, DE
Interview Date/Time:	January 29, 2024 1:00 PM

- Milford initially mirrored Dover’s incentives, foregoing all revenue on any investment downtown. The state went from a \$15,000 minimum threshold to \$25,000. Rather than update the language, the City eliminated the minimum investment threshold to qualify for local incentives. Now, any investment over \$0 qualifies for incentives, which include waivers for building permit fees, review and inspection fees, and City sewer and water impact fees. This makes up around two-thirds of permit charges on new construction. We don’t waive the electric impact fee, County sewer fee, or the fire and police fund fees. New construction gets a 5-year City property tax abatement. There is a tiered system with partial abatements for renovations based on increased value.
- Rob and Sarah Bloom in business relations work together to promote DDD. We rely on the City Manager as well. Code enforcement is involved. As we write violations up, we inform property owners about the program. Building inspectors are not as involved. We have three code enforcement officers, and 2 permit techs with a general understanding of the program.
- Milford provides permit fee waivers for homeowners but haven’t done much to push people towards the rebate.
- There is an online Map with Milford’s DDD projects. We estimate having issued about 189 permits, and that 66 have gotten state rebates. Having the DDD boundary on the zoning map helps. Rob shares it widely, so everyone including the front desk is aware of it. We even try to inform those just outside the boundary of the program to gauge interest.
- We get a lot of repeat customers and have noticed that word spreads once a contractor has had success. People take advantage of the program when they realize there’s not red tape.
- The Riverwalk plan focused mainly on the central business district but most of the projects have been done in surrounding neighborhoods. Some elements of the plan weren’t quite thought out. We are trying to do some relevant streetscape projects and building rehab.
- The code enforcement website periodically publishes all outstanding violations, so investors are aware, and it is clear which properties are condemned. There is an owner information map with zoning as well.
- The Milford Main Street program wasn’t too involved with DDD. The Chamber of Commerce is aware of it, more so on the residential side. We have had lots of infill and rehab projects, and some mixed-use rehab projects. Rite Aid has 10 apartments above it at 3 stories/35 feet tall. There is concern about destroying character.
- The personal touch of meeting and talking with people is important. We do this well, taking time with people and looking for every opportunity to champion the program.
- We have a tracking form with a cover sheet where they collect investor information. Then the City fills out the DDD application for them. It’s all in one agreement but the applicant never really sees it. This is because mistakes were holding up permits.
- Building permits take 1 to 2 weeks. We provide waivers of land use application fees for bigger developments, though there are not many of those.
- Milford on-street parking is free.



Name(s):	David Anderson & Andre Boggerty
Title(s):	Council Members: 4 <sup>th</sup> District Council & At-Large
Organization:	City of Dover
Interview Date/Time:	January 22, 2024 3:00 PM

- On a scale of 1-10, I would rate the success of the DDD as a 7 overall. 10 out of 10 on residential. I have seen positive things north of Division Street with increased homeownership and are starting to see S. Kirkwood and S. Queen St. improve. On the commercial side, maybe a 4 out of 10, though that will change with the plan implementation.
- Homeownership is a vital part of what is going on. Holding landlords accountable and raising the standard on the rental properties has helped. People are watching the downtown and seem more invested. I am cautiously hopeful about the plans for downtown but concerned about managing expectations. We don't want to price our community members out.
- Suggestions include adjusting zoning to allow people who live downtown to have access indoor amusement and recreation such as gyms. In looking at building height and signage, we need to manage the old and embrace the new.
- I don't think Loockerman St. beyond Governors Avenue should be in the Historic District. We need to have a conversation about reforming the historic district boundary.
- Downtown needs to be more walkable and ADA accessible.
- Landlords need to be active in managing their buildings. We have a lot of vacant buildings downtown. Hopefully we will see better stewardship and participation.
- I am in favor of adding incentives. With financing becoming more challenging, we can do conduit bonds. We would be the conduit and would not be liable. This could be paired with a TIF district, especially if we could get the County on board.
- I would like to see us be more aggressive in helping direct people and promote the layering that can happen with DDD, opportunity zones, etc.
- Would like more information about the projects up north have been able to access state and federal money (Wilmington, New Castle County).
- In terms of investment in upgrading the infrastructure, the City could supplement state funds, even if it involves borrowing ARPA funds. Hotel tax money goes into an infrastructure fund. The City could increase the hotel tax to 3%.
- There needs to be a cautious approach to investments because we must justify projects.



Name(s):	Todd Stonesifer, Diane Laird, & Tina Bradbury
Title(s):	Board President, Executive Director, & Operations Manager
Organization:	Downtown Dover Partnership
Interview Date/Time:	January 22, 2024 1:30 PM

- I would rate the success of the DDD as rather poor on the commercial side. 10/10 on the residential side. The impact of NCALL, Habitat, and Milford Housing has been transformative. While the DDD has not solved everything, it is imperative to have the ability to use money on a large scale. DDD is essential in completing the projects in the master plan.
- DDD hasn't been a priority for the City and hasn't been promoted.
- The City should always be a contact for application assistance with DDP as an additional.
- DDP was awarded \$1.2 million for critical improvements. All but \$15,000 has been allocated. We prioritize Loockerman, ADA compliance, safety/security, commercial kitchens, and filling vacant buildings. We require people to look at DDD, historic tax credits, and other incentives so they use those funding sources first. We require there to be a tenant in place before distributing funds. There's some wiggle room for priority projects. It will amount to a \$5.7 million investment including DDD.
- In terms of what could go better, there is still great need. If we don't have the support of DDD, we cannot complete the projects on queue. Most projects are due to the DDP.
- The City website does not really help applicants. DDP has picked up the slack. The administration on the City side is a little lacking, largely due to staff turnover.
- Some improvements don't need to be monetary, such as process upgrades. We are handholding businesses through the process because the next steps are not always clear.
- We understand that the City is understaffed and believe they mean well as a partner.
- It may be beneficial to formalize DDP's involvement to demonstrate how crucial we've been in facilitating these projects. We provide well above the \$150,000 that they get.
- An overwhelming majority of projects would not go ahead without the incentives.
- Navigating the startup process, utility allowance, and a check list for city requirements. If there is an immediate need to get buildings up to code, an allowance would help.
- People still get charged for vacant buildings while renovating, which doesn't sit well. The City could waive those charges for people trying to improve buildings.
- State funding is needed for infrastructure. The responsibility for utility relocation should be clearly defined. There are broadband and trash management issues.
- C2 zoning is on the table. It looks that they were removing requirements. They should because there is need, especially with commercial kitchens.
- We saw 3 projects that needed additional accommodations to connect to gas. We saw this with water connections too.
- First floors should not be vacant. There is a need for more personnel.



Name(s):	Anas Ben Addi , Marlena Gibson, and Bernard Pratt
Title(s):	CFO/VP of Finance, Director of Financial Analysis, and AVP Facilities Management, Planning & Construction
Organization:	Delaware State University
Interview Date/Time:	January 19, 2024 10:30 AM

Have you seen a benefit to DSU from the DDD as it related to the downtown campus?

- Not really. Higher Education is ineligible for DDD so it doesn't serve the university well. We can only take advantage if we sell parcels to folks who can utilize it.

Are there indirect benefits?

- There has been quite an improvement, generally, based on the DDD and other incentives but they can do better. Nobody has figured out the magical formula for Dover to get a bigger share of DDD benefits. Dover is not attracting investors. It's mainly affordable housing investments, and that shouldn't be the main driver.

Are there areas identified to date that we should look at including in the District?

- We're having a meeting next Friday and may circle back about parcels on the list like the old Dover Library as well as parcels inherited from Wesley, and the athletic complex by the synagogue. Johnston Hall is unlikely to become private any time soon. We're starting to invest in that building for DSU development.

Any other thoughts to share?

- We want to see the benefits. The Wesley acquisition provided needed assets for growth. The person in charge of the campus has been engaging the community. We are indirectly invested. We want to make sure we're utilizing our assets and learning how we can encourage growth.
- There is a push for staff and students to be involved in supporting growth. The way to encourage engagement could be improved.
- Get real about what could attract people to an area and make them feel safe. Students mainly stay on campus. If parents come to visit their kids, their inclination is to drive out rather than go downtown. They need to create environments to encourage downtown engagement.



Name:	Frank Datillo
Title:	Housing Specialist/Construction Manager
Organization:	NeighborGood Partners
Interview Date/Time:	January 23, 2024 2:30 PM

- I've not quite had the partnership with the City I had hoped for. Turnover at the City has had an impact. City Planning, Inspections, and Public Works are disconnected from one another. Getting permits is challenging because they will sit at public works for several weeks. The City claims that they have a 5 day turnaround but this is not the case. It varies from 2 to 6 weeks. It has taken 6 weeks a handful of times over the past 9 years. There have been times where we have had to go up the chain of command to get permits. The most recent one took 3-4 weeks and was delayed in Public Works.
- It would be nice to have a website that provides updates on the permit, i.e. where it is in the process and how long it should take so I don't have to call. No other municipality in the state has a wait time as long as Dover.

Has the City been helpful and responsive when you apply for local incentives?

- They have been fairly quick. 7-10 days is typical.

Is closing out projects smooth?

- The last couple have been pretty good. Their builder works with their point of contact at the City on rebates. The processing related to the DDD goes relatively smoothly, though they have lost a key player and there is some uncertainty.
- They seem to change the requirements within the Planning Department every time I submit. I usually pull the Public Works permit, even when we're not sure if we need it, because it is requested at the same time. There have been issues with parking, curb cuts, and water and sewer that add costs. We had a project at 110 S. New where there were curb cuts the City had put in were not up to code and we had to install new ones.
- It's helpful when somebody from Public Works meets onsite to look at sidewalks, trees, etc. so I can find out what the requirements will be in advance, because I have reached CO inspection and had things pop up.

Have the walkthroughs made a difference?

- It does seem to go smoother when we verify locations of water and sewer in advance with public works. We have had them scope sewer lines to avoid discovering issues after the approval to tie in has been granted.
- With recent demos, the only issue has been with requests for termination of sewer and water. I don't always get a response. I had an experience where I got no response for a month and found that the water was still on. Terminology creates confusion i.e. 'retire' versus 'turn off' or 'terminate.'
- On N. Kirkwood we had to repave 200 ft of an alleyway, which added 28k in costs.

What has gone well in terms of areas where the City is helpful and responsive?

- Building inspections.

We want to provide constructive feedback and ideas. Do you have anything else to add?

- We are slated to do an energy efficient housing project on N Kirkwood, just outside of the DDD.
- Our experiences haven't all been negative. We have monthly development committee meetings, and the City has been working to improve crime/security, which has been an issue.



Name(s):	David Edgell & Joshua Thomas
Title(s):	Director & Principal Planner
Organization:	Office of Management and Budget: Office of State Planning
Interview Date/Time:	January 25, 2024 10:00 AM

- Dover was a great start to the DDD program and spurred a lot of initial interest. The DDD came along at a good time in Dover’s development with the downtown master plan, which included a transit center, and there being a Restoring Central Dover effort on the residential side.
- What has gone very well is the housing aspect: The neighborhood revitalization, new owner-occupied homes, and the partnerships. Dover has transformed whole streets/blocks and provided affordable home ownership opportunities. Dover probably has created the greatest number of affordable housing units of any DDD.
- Nonresidential projects have tended to be small. They haven’t seen mixed use commercial projects like we have in other districts. Wilmington’s focus has been Market St. with mixed-use catalytic projects. Dover has struggled to get the first one going. They have tried and had a couple on the books that never went through (Loockerman Way Plaza). That is the missing piece.

Do you think there’s any kind of placemaking element missing?

- All the elements for it are there (history, available land, arts/culture, etc.) Something has caused investors to be less attracted to those opportunities than they have been in other places. Seaford & Georgetown have had bigger developments. It should be possible in Dover.
- Dover needs an anchor destination. There’s not enough to do downtown.
- The adoption of the master plan will hopefully be a catalyst for the next 5 years. The Old Post project is exciting, and we need to see more of that.
- Don’t be discouraged because redevelopment takes time. It is not necessarily the fault of the City that it hasn’t happened faster. DDD’s are really designed to be a 20-year effort.

As the overseer of all DDDs, you have a unique glimpse at the diversity of programs, including the diversity of incentives offered by municipalities. Are there incentives and/or strategies that you see other DDDs employing that you believe Dover should consider?

- The incentive package is meaningful and effective in Dover with something for everyone, especially first-time homebuyers, tax exemptions, etc.
- Good examples for Dover include Milford and Wilmington: Milford gives incentives to all projects in the DDD regardless of whether they meet the threshold because they want to attract investment and improve properties. Their council is supportive of these efforts and willing to forego revenue. Dover’s package could have higher dollar amounts.
- Wilmington has effectively attracted large projects. They take a one-on-one approach and come up with a customized incentive package for each large project. They may expedite processes, offer a loan service, etc. Bigger projects need different treatment.

Do you know Wilmington’s staffing for administering the program?

- It is a joint effort through the Mayor’s office of Economic Development. Dover staffing is a challenge. The Downtown Dover Partnership is an asset.

Are there specific towns that you think we should look at that have been strong in their administration and promotion of the program?



- Smyrna, Milford, Georgetown, and Seaford are all very successful in their own ways. They have seen some larger projects and have good incentive and outreach structures that are each unique. Georgetown hasn't seen as much success but are working with the community and developers on a restaurant district. They are doing good outreach and building trust. They have developers that are good with DDD programs and can layer incentives effectively. It is good to find those developers and cultivate their interest in other DDDs. Dover could be marketing itself among developers who do DDDs. Clayton and Harrington have a different level of smaller scale development.

Have you worked with DE Prosperity Partnership?

- Regularly. They have a focus on bigger logistic centers, office buildings, biotech pharma, etc. but do help prospects find available sites. They call OMB to get ideas and maps. They promote DDD and are aware of the incentives and opportunity zones, etc. It is good to have a relationship with Kurt Foreman, Chris Kelly, Becky Harrington and their team. They don't get a lot of prospects that are the right fit and scale for DDD, but there might be businesses that want office space in a downtown walkable area.

Any words of wisdom or thoughts that are important for Dover to consider as they prepare for the second phase of the program?

- It is important for Dover to present their vision for how the program will be administered and promoted going forward. They need to build confidence that they are a stable partner who can administer the program effectively. DDP is a big part of that. So far, their focus has been on Loockerman, but the DDD is a big area and housing is not in the DDP wheelhouse. Who is promoting neighborhood revitalization and who is City point person for that?
- Questions that reviewers will have will be related to how this moves forward, who is taking charge when a prospect comes in, and who can we call. We don't want calls going to DSHA. The program administrators should know the details of projects and be able to answer questions.
- It would be good to have an economic development function that will be a real partner.
- Messaging and branding are key. They need to increase community awareness for folks outside of the business community. Engage homeowners in the process. There should be more branding and signage as a part of a homegrown campaign. Public statements don't currently promote DDD incentives.
- The Mosaic plan is a good effort and should be the foundation of where Dover goes. The plan doesn't mention DDD much. It's not highlighted or promoted. The plan should be about revitalizing the DDD using ideas from the plan.
- Showcasing a successful DDD project on the local news would be great.
- Some people probably don't know that the program expires. The idea is that this is a catalyst so the city can support ongoing development without the program.
- Big projects take multiple years from idea through fruition and rebate. Understanding timing is important for the City and investors to be aware of.



Name(s):	Sharon Duca, Dawn Melson-Williams, Jason Osika, Eddie Kopp & Greg Akers Call with Kristen Mullaney
Title(s):	Interim Director of Planning & Inspections, Principal Planner, Fire Marshal, Code Enforcement Supervisor, Chief Building Inspector, Permitting Supervisor
Organization:	City of Dover Planning & Inspection
Interview Date/Time:	January 29, 2024 10:00 AM

- The DDD program has been successful in the residential realm. Commercial successes are fewer. There have been several successful businesses. Big projects have yet to be seen except for the Rail Haus project.
- The Planning Office is the administrator for the DDD program. They review the applications and obtain appropriate signatures. They communicate incentives to applicants and determine eligibility. Kristen is the administrator for permit waivers. Greg and Jason do walk throughs. They refer people to Tina regarding incentives. Their biggest struggle is with the realtors who don't always understand zoning or the process of getting things up to code, so it's not communicated to sellers.
- There have been around 22 projects over the past 20 years, at 1-5 per year. The Governors Club applied for renovations. Walkthroughs generally help when there is a change of use or occupancy, which changes the codes they need to adhere to and depends on the project.
- In terms of what could have gone better, part of the issue is staffing. There isn't a consistent point of contact. It's a challenge getting information to those who need help applying for incentives. It's not clear what is a DDD incentive vs DDP and it's confusing with DDP not being a City entity. It would help to have a consistent source of information. A flow chart or list would be helpful to guide individuals on the steps they need to take.
- It is difficult to track who has used DDD. Entities know how to use the program (Habitat and NCALL) but there have probably been individuals who have missed out because they didn't know about it or found it too complicated. Not many architects and designers are versed in the program and how to utilize incentives. If DDP had an architect to help folks, it would help. No cost onsite walkthroughs are beneficial, and people generally like it.

Your department has been on the front line of this program. Do you feel that the administration of the program has been successful? Do staff understand the objectives of the program? Have the staff been kept informed of updates and changes, and have they been trained on what the incentives are and how to qualify?

- The Planning Office is the traditional administrator of the program. The code is hard to explain because of how it's written, and some incentives are complicated. I'm not sure we've done a great job explaining it because it's beyond our expertise. Having a go-to person who can share the information and explain it to folks would help. If people knew how easy it is to participate in the program, more would use it. More people in my office need to know the DDD boundary and benefits. Staff need a basic knowledge, especially with turnover. Training opportunities would be useful. There are a lot of different organizations that are helpful downtown, but they need to act in coordination. Previously the city had an economic development office and did the administration in early years.



The Mosaic plan includes the recommendation, “Accelerate approval for aligning design to the plan.” What is the capacity of the Department to accelerate approvals?

- From a building code standpoint, plan submission is key to expediting. If folks do not submit adequate site plans, the process is longer and more difficult. Plan submission must have a detailed code summary. If applicants do research first, the process is faster.
- The Mosaic plan is not realistic with the regulatory processes and the City’s zoning ordinance. Certain projects may require more review and certifications, like the historic district. There needs to be a change in the review process. It must be a coordinated effort. Subjectivity will not go away. Certain project processes involve the public as well and I’m not sure how that can be balanced with expedited approval. There needs to be a different way to think about zoning and administration.

Some of the downtown redevelopment partners have expressed concern about delays in the permitting process and surprise costs at or near the end of a project. Do you have ideas that could help resolve these concerns? What is the turn-around time for a building permit application?

- It takes 7-14 business days to review permits. I don’t know how to expedite it. There are things that can delay the process. For example, you can’t begin work without site approval. If the other pieces are not ready, then it’s going to sit.
- The process can be quicker depending on how much homework you do before applying. There are certain times that are more optimal to apply, depending on when meetings occur. Projects that move quickly have been planned out before the application and they understand how it is likely to turn out. Staff are required to expedite but the current staffing is not sufficient to handle that pace. They handle all permits.
- People are so focused on building permits they forget about the others involved. They are unable to prioritize permits without playing favorites. First come first served. If everyone wants to pay for expediated service, it results in the same time frame.
- When we do walkthroughs, we inform individuals about fees they are unaware of. Impact fees are often a surprise. We have no control over County fees and can only waive City fees.
- If they want to expediate their review, they need to document their existing fixtures. There are multiple areas where continuity is broken.

What strategies do you think could be implemented to facilitate a quicker, more user-friendly approval process?

- Utilizing a waiver for architectural and design fee.
- That incentive that deals with fees is offered by the DDP. It would be useful for them to have a pamphlet. Fillable forms and improvements on the backside here in terms of what happens to a new application.
- We need a list of every possible outcome to guide people so there are no surprises. People should contact other people who have already used the program as a resource.
- Forms need to be clear, and it would be huge if architects could walk people through it.

Additional Notes from Call with Kristen:

- We need to keep people up to date, especially with the staff turnover. A point of contact would be helpful. I can’t inform people about the program and its goal. I send people to the Planning Office, but the point of contact has left. Impact fees surprise people because they must pay the county portion, which doesn’t get conveyed in the beginning, and it increases annually. I support a flow chart but know that it may take a while to make. I keep track of what fees have been waived and when.



Name(s):	Mark Nowak, Paul Waddell, & Jason Lyon
Title(s):	Director of Public Works, Director of Electric, and Director of Water/Wastewater
Organization:	City of Dover Public Works
Interview Date/Time:	January 22, 2024 10:00 AM

- I'm neutral about the success of the DDD program and unsure if anything has been affected. I am limited on the improvements that can be done because of the design.
- DDD has been effective with regards to developers. They're able to avoid impact fees, but this doesn't affect my team. It benefits developers, not utilities.
- There is a trash issue downtown. There's a dumpster we pick up twice a week and it's always full. If you bring more businesses to the area, it will contribute to the problem. We get complaints when people put stuff out early, particularly the hand trash.
- I can't add anything else in terms of what has gone well. The subgroups in the City need to be on the same page about the direction they want to go in and their plan. There is a gap in knowledge and groups don't know what others are doing.
- In terms of investment in infrastructure, we got \$1.5 million for that last year and applied for more. We have an RFP for the design of utility infrastructure. We don't have a choice as it's a part of the project that we're working on.
- It can be folded into the construction. It would give them the ability to provide their service, consolidate, and place infrastructure more appropriately. It would be good to get rid of the overhead electricity and install more dependable, underground electric.
- The basic scope includes water upgrades and wastewater rehab. It has nothing to do with Mosaic. We're bringing everything up for future development. It's maintenance on this end and not much more than what's been done.

The Mosaic plan includes the recommendation, "Accelerate approval for aligning design to the plan." What is the capacity of the Department to accelerate approvals?

- We review aspects of water and wastewater of public works in the DAC plan. We have no control over DNREC approval to external orgs. The team reviews plans within 5 days and it can be much faster. The constraint is outside agencies. We are at the mercy of the developer. Some complaints are about surprise costs of upgrading with the current, evolving standards.
- Relating to water stuff, in the handbook, there is a requirement for renovations that could be clearer. "Current code" is a blanket statement. They try to avoid specific instructions in case they forget a requirement. For example, when people are concerned about vandalism with parking in the rear and want to move it up front, it could require them to relocate utilities and repave. Standards could be clearer. We have coordinated with Habitat about what is needed.
- The City paying for the upgrade costs would be helpful as a well-thought-out policy specific to DDD.
- Another issue is space. People want private services, but there's nowhere to put the dumpster. As large-scale projects are evaluated, finding a place to put the trash is important.



Name:	Tom Kramedas
Title:	President
Organization:	Axia Management
Interview Date/Time:	January 24, 2024 10:00 AM

What made you and your partners want to invest in that site?

- Others began to develop early. We liked the property and felt that something should be done in the area. We knew there were incentives available and wanted to see locals invest.

What exactly is envisioned for the location?

- We will be using the existing building and adding 34-35 loft apartments as an addition in the back, perhaps with parking. We are exploring ways to add more housing. The existing space will be used for retail space: about 10,000 SF could be used for restaurants. There will be patio space and the upstairs will include offices. For this area, it made sense to try something in the range of \$5-19 million. This project should not exceed \$7-8 million. It would be great to see more restaurants in the area.

Do visitors to Home 2 Suites go downtown?

- Yes, to the Governors' Club, but not many other places as there are limited late night options.

As it relates to your decision and that of your partners to invest in the post office property, how important was the availability of DDD to the viability of your product, since you would have to be added into the district?

- It was a huge plus, though I likely would have done it anyway.

Did you apply for a critical infrastructure grant?

- I think Mike Glick did mention applying.

Are there other incentives that you think are important?

- I would like to see a tax rebate or 10-year tax abatement. The riverfront is getting abatements.
- I have interest in doing a second project in the area. All apartments around are filled and there is need for housing.

Do you know what happened with Loockerman Plaza?

- I can't give specifics, but they had a tenant fall through. There may have been some city issues with homelessness and not getting enough support.

Any other words of wisdom?

- The Mosaic plan sounds great but it is hard to envision. It needs to be cool to go downtown. It is currently hard to get entrepreneurial people to invest in projects. How do we get more people with good ideas and the ability to pull them off? Dover could use a good gourmet restaurant.



Name:	Dina Vendetti
Title:	President
Organization:	Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce
Interview Date/Time:	January 24, 2024 9:30 AM

Dina has been with the Chamber for 5 years but has been engaged with the community for a long time. Over the last year she has become involved in the working group for the implementation of the master plan.

- I would probably give the DDD a 7 or 8 out of 10. My only reservation is that I'm not sure that everyone who needs to know about it does.
- In terms of what has gone well, I think the DDD program has enabled development and helped people downtown. It has helped walk people through the development process.
- Suggestions would be that getting in front of the right audience is important. Bringing bigger organizations like the DDP, Kent Economic Partnership, and the Chamber and making sure that we're at the table so we can continue to spread information.
- I think we have a very robust package of incentives. I'm not sure if this is possible, but timing is important for developers. If there was a way to bump those participating in the program closer to the front of the line, or offer an expedited review/permitting process it would help. Some kind of time element would be a really big incentive. There would need to be some kind of coordination with the state agencies to get that process expedited as well. That's something that we've certainly heard and I think it's an issue bigger than the City. This is a State program so it's something we can identify in the report to work on.
- I do think investment in infrastructure is viable. They've done a good job of chasing down grants and identifying funds to help, like remediating Brownfields. If groups like the DDP remain diligent about tracking down funds, then I think it is doable.
- This has been a good program. It does make a difference in terms of people being able to do development. Keep up the good work with it. Just make sure that the right players know what's available. If the process for being part of this can be streamlined or simplified so applicants are not overburdened, that is helpful too. Time is money.



Name:	Trish Kelleher
Title:	Director of Real Estate and Community Development
Organization:	NeighborGood Partners
Interview Date/Time:	January 11, 2024 10:00 AM

Restoring Central Dover (RCD) was the centerpiece of the initial DDD application. How helpful was the DDD program in making RCD’s efforts a success?

- There was the 20% rebate from the State. We built 18 homes and only one outside of the DDD. There are 9 planned for the upcoming year. Mautiste built 4 homes, Central Delaware Habitat for Humanity built 38, Milford HDC built 2 but had a hard time selling them. There have been a few small renovation projects as well. The house on West St. across from Teal was purchased in 2018 for \$165,000 and sold recently for over \$300,000. The same thing happened with an early home built on Queen Street. 245 N. West was purchased in 2018 for \$165,000 and sold in 2021 for \$325,000. 231 N Queen was purchased in 2017 for \$165,000 and sold in 2021 for \$325,000. There is concern about long-term affordability.
- The City incentives were very helpful, particularly impact fee waivers.
- DDD incentives were important in deciding where to invest. It is a small footprint. They are running out of places. Lincoln Park is in the DDD and hasn’t had much investment. We are looking to invest there.
- City incentives were easy to navigate.

What other funding sources were leveraged to make the projects viable?

- DSHA has been instrumental. We’ve stopped using Housing Development Fund (HDF) because it was difficult. There were 4 rounds of Strong Neighborhood Housing Funds. We spent funds from rounds 1-3 and are still active in round 4. These have helped. Construction costs are soaring.
- We just finished 3 homes on S. New Street. The cost was \$1.2 million with the average being \$299,857. The most expensive was \$327,000. This includes the purchase of the property, construction, demolition, environmental testing, and abatement, before the rebate. Sewer and water lateral upgrades were \$10,000 each and driveway upgrades were \$5,300 each.

Was the City’s development review and permitting process straight forward and easy to understand? If not, what did you find difficult?

- It takes forever. It’s frustrating how long it takes to get a permit. It takes a couple of months. When I talk to Frank I hear a lot of frustration about Public Works and the permitting process. With the 4 homes on N. Kirkwood, the City required we repave the back alley because it was damaged by the construction vehicles. The specs were unreasonable. At times it has felt like the City was not a partner. There is no cohesion among the departments. One department can hold things up.

What happened with the plans for the building at 223-225 W. Division Street?

- It’s underway. It was originally designed as 3-story and was ready to go in 2020 but, with material costs being so expensive, their architect advised them to wait. Then it was held up by DSU who is leasing the second floor. It should break ground any day.
- We have developed partnerships with Project Safe Neighborhoods, the US Attorney’s office, and Network Connect. There are formerly incarcerated individuals working with people who have experienced the same issues to reduce recidivism and gang activity.



- There's the Scoop ice cream store and Project Safe Neighborhoods project. There's workforce development project hiring and training local youth and the Hub. That block of Loockerman has seen challenges with homelessness and drug use, which is a huge issue. PD has been helpful but they are about 17 officers down.
- We had to put security cameras onsite with the last 4 houses built at the corner of Reed and New. This drove up cost of the construction. Things are bad in this area right now.
- The code enforcement notice for 54 S. New Street was total junk. The property was just purchased and we needed to request an extension for the cleanup of the property. When we clean it up, it will be just as bad the next day. According to DE Online, New and Reed is the most dangerous location in Delaware.



# Appendix D



## Appendix D: Block Level Census Data

### Population & Housing Data Blocks that intersect with the Dover DDD: 2010

Block	Block Group	Census Tract	Total Population	Total Housing Units	Occupied	Vacant	Owned with a mortgage or a loan	Owned free and clear	Renter occupied	% Vacant	% Owned
Block 1000	Block Group 1	041400	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Block 1001	Block Group 1	041400	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Block 1002	Block Group 1	041400	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Block 1003	Block Group 1	041300	61	49	41	8	2	1	38	16%	6%
Block 1003	Block Group 1	041400	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0%	0%
Block 1004	Block Group 1	041400	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Block 1005	Block Group 1	041400	7	5	4	1	0	2	2	20%	40%
Block 1007	Block Group 1	041400	202	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Block 1008	Block Group 1	041400	64	60	60	0	0	0	60	0%	0%
Block 1009	Block Group 1	041400	67	50	50	0	0	1	49	0%	2%
Block 1010	Block Group 1	041300	38	25	23	2	1	0	22	8%	4%
Block 1010	Block Group 1	041400	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	100%	0%
Block 1011	Block Group 1	041300	37	20	15	5	5	4	6	25%	45%
Block 1012	Block Group 1	041300	57	38	34	4	0	2	32	11%	5%
Block 1013	Block Group 1	041300	41	24	17	7	0	1	16	29%	4%
Block 1013	Block Group 1	041400	27	15	15	0	12	1	2	0%	87%
Block 1014	Block Group 1	041300	2	2	2	0	0	0	2	0%	0%
Block 1015	Block Group 1	041300	23	19	12	7	1	0	11	37%	5%
Block 1016	Block Group 1	041300	3	3	2	1	0	0	2	33%	0%
Block 1017	Block Group 1	041300	3	2	2	0	0	0	2	0%	0%
Block 1033	Block Group 1	041300	2	2	2	0	0	0	2	0%	0%
Block 1034	Block Group 1	041300	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Block 1035	Block Group 1	041300	10	7	5	2	0	2	3	29%	29%
Block 1044	Block Group 1	041300	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Block 1045	Block Group 1	041300	11	6	6	0	2	2	2	0%	67%
Block 1046	Block Group 1	041300	21	14	13	1	1	1	11	7%	14%
Block 1047	Block Group 1	041300	35	49	30	19	0	1	29	39%	2%
Block 1048	Block Group 1	041300	26	21	19	2	0	0	19	10%	0%
Block 1058	Block Group 1	040900	91	87	84	3	0	0	84	3%	0%
Block 1059	Block Group 1	040900	39	16	14	2	4	2	8	13%	38%
Block 1061	Block Group 1	040900	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Block 1063	Block Group 1	040900	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Block 1064	Block Group 1	040900	5	2	2	0	0	1	1	0%	50%
Block 1065	Block Group 1	040900	237	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Block 1066	Block Group 1	040900	2	1	1	0	0	0	1	0%	0%
Block 1066	Block Group 1	041400	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Block 1103	Block Group 1	041300	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Block 2000	Block Group 2	041400	140	70	60	10	3	0	57	14%	4%
Block 2001	Block Group 2	041400	117	53	43	10	0	2	41	19%	4%
Block 2002	Block Group 2	041400	73	28	28	0	7	0	21	0%	25%
Block 2003	Block Group 2	041400	6	2	2	0	0	1	1	0%	50%
Block 2004	Block Group 2	041400	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Block 2005	Block Group 2	041400	8	4	4	0	0	0	4	0%	0%
Block 2007	Block Group 2	041400	112	36	32	4	6	16	10	11%	61%
Block 2013	Block Group 2	041400	114	37	35	2	9	8	18	5%	46%
Block 2014	Block Group 2	041400	52	27	23	4	4	1	18	15%	19%
Block 2015	Block Group 2	041400	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Block 2016	Block Group 2	041400	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Block 2017	Block Group 2	041400	3	2	2	0	0	0	2	0%	0%
Block 2018	Block Group 2	041400	49	17	16	1	2	0	14	6%	12%
Block 2019	Block Group 2	041400	106	52	44	8	3	1	40	15%	8%
Block 2020	Block Group 2	041400	34	23	19	4	1	0	18	17%	4%
Block 2021	Block Group 2	041400	19	13	10	3	0	0	10	23%	0%
Block 2022	Block Group 2	041400	3	2	2	0	0	0	2	0%	0%
Block 2023	Block Group 2	041400	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Block 2024	Block Group 2	041400	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Block 2031	Block Group 2	041400	58	34	27	7	7	2	18	21%	26%
Block 2034	Block Group 2	041400	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Block 2035	Block Group 2	041400	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Block 3035	Block Group 3	043300	34	12	11	1	3	3	5	8%	50%
Block 3036	Block Group 3	043300	64	22	18	4	3	1	14	18%	18%
Block 3037	Block Group 3	043300	38	16	14	2	4	0	10	13%	25%
Block 3044	Block Group 3	043300	242	90	84	6	1	3	80	7%	4%
Block 3045	Block Group 3	043300	12	1	1	0	0	0	1	0%	0%
Block 3049	Block Group 3	043300	56	22	20	2	4	4	12	9%	36%
Block 3050	Block Group 3	043300	23	11	10	1	4	2	4	9%	55%
Block 3051	Block Group 3	043300	18	13	11	2	1	2	8	15%	23%
Block 3052	Block Group 3	043300	15	7	7	0	0	1	6	0%	14%
Block 3053	Block Group 3	043300	17	6	6	0	1	1	4	0%	33%
Block 3054	Block Group 3	043300	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Block 3055	Block Group 3	043300	143	3	0	3	0	0	0	100%	0%
Block 3056	Block Group 3	043300	36	16	13	3	1	0	12	19%	6%
Block 3057	Block Group 3	043300	38	12	11	1	1	0	10	8%	8%
Block 3058	Block Group 3	043300	36	15	13	2	4	1	8	13%	33%
Block 3059	Block Group 3	043300	8	3	3	0	0	1	2	0%	33%
Block 3060	Block Group 3	043300	20	13	9	4	3	1	5	31%	31%
Block 3061	Block Group 3	043300	12	5	4	1	2	0	2	20%	40%
Block 3062	Block Group 3	043300	8	4	2	2	1	0	1	50%	25%
Block 3063	Block Group 3	043300	24	8	8	0	5	0	3	0%	63%
Block 3064	Block Group 3	043300	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	100%	0%
Block 3065	Block Group 3	043300	24	6	6	0	1	3	2	0%	67%
Block 3066	Block Group 3	043300	45	16	14	2	4	0	10	13%	25%
Block 3067	Block Group 3	043300	25	12	11	1	3	0	8	8%	25%
Block 3068	Block Group 3	043300	4	7	2	5	0	0	2	71%	0%
Block 3069	Block Group 3	043300	3	1	1	0	0	0	1	0%	0%
Block 3071	Block Group 3	043300	6	7	3	4	0	0	3	57%	0%
Block 3072	Block Group 3	043300	1	2	1	1	0	0	1	50%	0%
		SUM	2958	1252	1084	168	116	75	893		



City of Dover, DE  
 Updated District Plan: Appendix D  
 Downtown Development District

Population & Housing Data

Blocks that intersect with the Dover DDD: 2020

Block	Block Group	Census Tract	Total Population	Total Housing Units	Occupied	Vacant	Owned with a mortgage or a loan	Owned free and clear	Renter occupied	% Vacant	% Owned
Block 1000	Block Group 1	041400	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Block 1001	Block Group 1	041400	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Block 1002	Block Group 1	041400	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Block 1006	Block Group 1	041400	8	1	0	1	0	0	0	100%	0%
Block 1007	Block Group 1	041400	61	51	51	0	0	0	51	0%	0%
Block 1008	Block Group 1	041400	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Block 1009	Block Group 1	041400	14	9	9	0	9	0	0	0%	100%
Block 1012	Block Group 1	041400	68	61	58	3	0	0	58	5%	0%
Block 1013	Block Group 1	041400	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Block 1014	Block Group 1	041400	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Block 1017	Block Group 1	040900	66	72	62	10	26	0	36	14%	36%
Block 1018	Block Group 1	040900	25	18	18	0	0	10	8	0%	56%
Block 1019	Block Group 1	040900	15	1	0	1	0	0	0	100%	0%
Block 1032	Block Group 1	040900	15	2	2	0	0	0	2	0%	0%
Block 1033	Block Group 1	040900	50	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Block 1034	Block Group 1	040900	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Block 1043	Block Group 1	041400	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Block 2000	Block Group 2	041300	64	51	51	0	0	0	51	0%	0%
Block 2000	Block Group 2	041400	102	60	51	9	0	1	50	15%	2%
Block 2001	Block Group 2	041400	98	50	38	12	5	15	18	24%	40%
Block 2002	Block Group 2	041400	49	24	24	0	23	0	1	0%	96%
Block 2003	Block Group 2	041400	21	7	0	7	0	0	0	100%	0%
Block 2004	Block Group 2	041400	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Block 2005	Block Group 2	041300	23	20	15	5	0	0	15	25%	0%
Block 2005	Block Group 2	041400	12	1	0	1	0	0	0	100%	0%
Block 2006	Block Group 2	041300	52	20	20	0	6	8	6	0%	70%
Block 2007	Block Group 2	041300	85	58	55	3	0	1	54	5%	2%
Block 2007	Block Group 2	041400	105	37	35	2	14	6	15	5%	54%
Block 2008	Block Group 2	041300	11	3	3	0	0	3	0	0%	100%
Block 2009	Block Group 2	041300	17	17	17	0	6	0	11	0%	35%
Block 2010	Block Group 2	041300	3	1	1	0	0	0	1	0%	0%
Block 2011	Block Group 2	041300	8	2	2	0	0	2	0	0%	100%
Block 2012	Block Group 2	041300	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Block 2013	Block Group 2	041300	8	2	2	0	1	0	1	0%	50%
Block 2014	Block Group 2	041400	74	39	39	0	18	0	21	0%	46%
Block 2015	Block Group 2	041400	36	25	25	0	24	1	0	0%	100%
Block 2016	Block Group 2	041400	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Block 2017	Block Group 2	041400	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Block 2018	Block Group 2	041300	8	6	6	0	0	0	6	0%	0%
Block 2018	Block Group 2	041400	16	1	1	0	0	0	1	0%	0%
Block 2019	Block Group 2	041300	2	2	0	2	0	0	0	100%	0%
Block 2019	Block Group 2	041400	44	18	18	0	0	7	11	0%	39%
Block 2020	Block Group 2	041300	55	48	34	14	0	0	34	29%	0%
Block 2020	Block Group 2	041400	72	39	38	1	0	0	38	3%	0%
Block 2021	Block Group 2	041300	27	21	13	8	0	0	13	38%	0%
Block 2021	Block Group 2	041400	26	12	12	0	0	0	12	0%	0%
Block 2022	Block Group 2	041400	22	10	8	2	6	0	2	20%	60%
Block 2023	Block Group 2	041400	84	51	47	4	0	0	47	8%	0%
Block 2024	Block Group 2	041400	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Block 2025	Block Group 2	041400	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Block 2028	Block Group 2	041400	63	32	32	0	0	0	32	0%	0%
Block 2029	Block Group 2	041400	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Block 2030	Block Group 2	041400	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Block 2031	Block Group 2	041300	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Block 2032	Block Group 2	041300	8	4	4	0	0	4	0	0%	100%
Block 2033	Block Group 2	041300	7	1	1	0	1	0	0	0%	100%
Block 2034	Block Group 2	041300	10	7	7	0	0	2	5	0%	29%
Block 2037	Block Group 2	041300	11	1	1	0	1	0	0	0%	100%
Block 3013	Block Group 3	043300	24	7	0	7	0	0	0	100%	0%
Block 3018	Block Group 3	043300	244	90	90	0	0	0	90	0%	0%
Block 3020	Block Group 3	043300	44	23	21	2	10	0	11	9%	43%
Block 3030	Block Group 3	043300	68	28	28	0	0	16	12	0%	57%
Block 3031	Block Group 3	043300	59	33	28	5	17	0	11	15%	52%
Block 3032	Block Group 3	043300	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Block 3033	Block Group 3	043300	103	1	0	1	0	0	0	100%	0%
Block 3034	Block Group 3	043300	23	13	13	0	13	0	0	0%	100%
Block 3035	Block Group 3	043300	42	8	8	0	0	8	0	0%	100%
Block 3036	Block Group 3	043300	10	12	11	1	0	0	11	8%	0%
Block 3037	Block Group 3	043300	43	25	10	15	0	0	10	60%	0%
Block 3038	Block Group 3	043300	40	25	25	0	0	0	25	0%	0%
Block 3039	Block Group 3	043300	64	27	23	4	0	0	23	15%	0%
Block 3040	Block Group 3	043300	52	19	19	0	0	0	19	0%	0%
Block 3041	Block Group 3	043300	20	8	8	0	0	4	4	0%	50%
		SUM	2,381	1,204	1,084	120	180	88	816		



# Appendix E

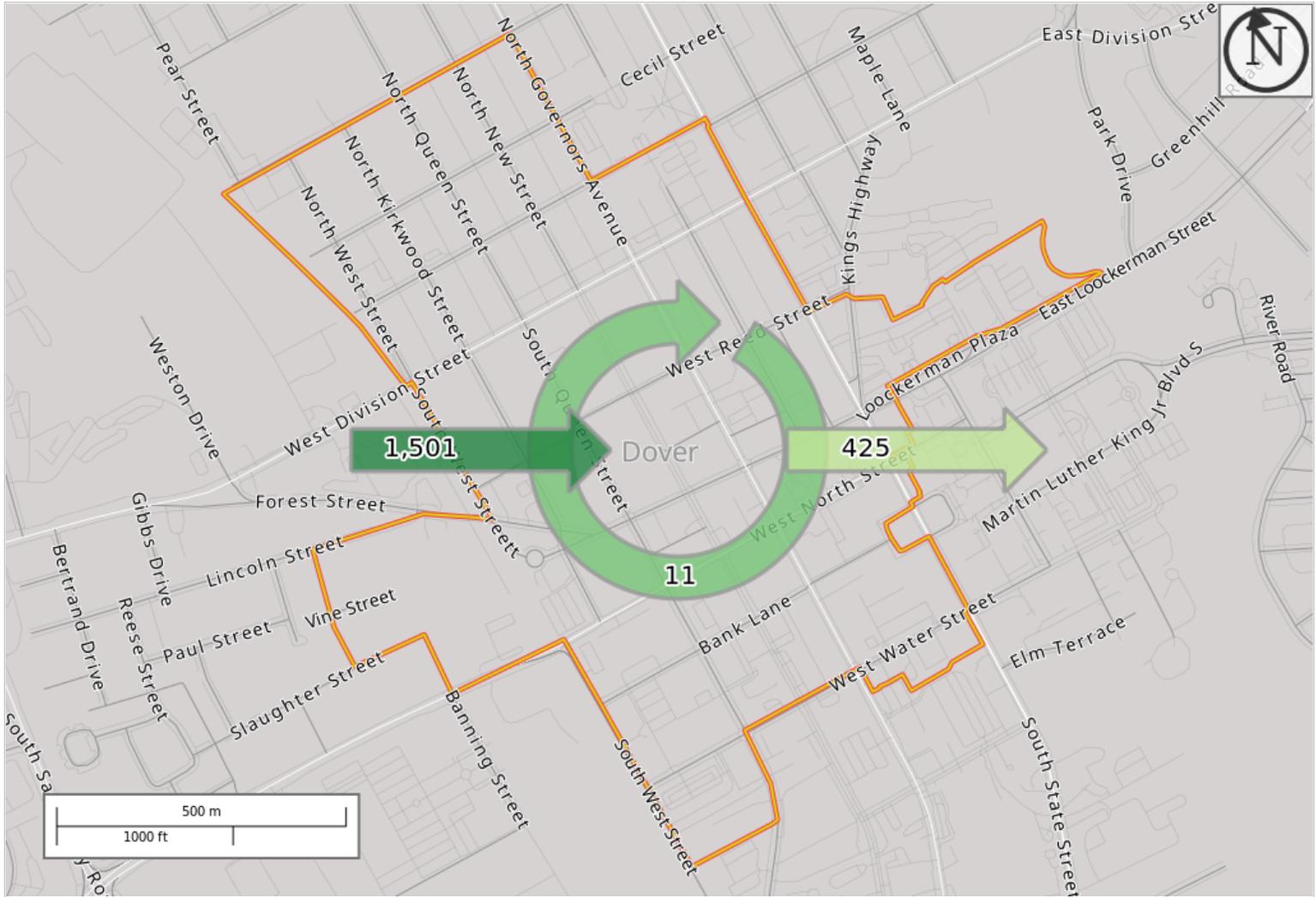
## Inflow/ Outflow Analysis

*Worker Flows In, Out, and Within the Custom Area*

Created by the U.S. Census Bureau's OnTheMap <https://onthemap.ces.census.gov> on 03/06/2024

### Inflow/ Outflow Counts of Private Primary Jobs for Selection Area in 2021

All Workers



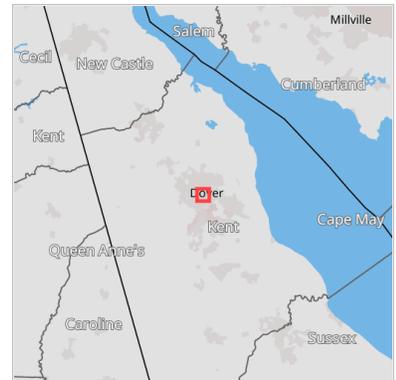
### Map Legend

#### Selection Areas

Selection Area

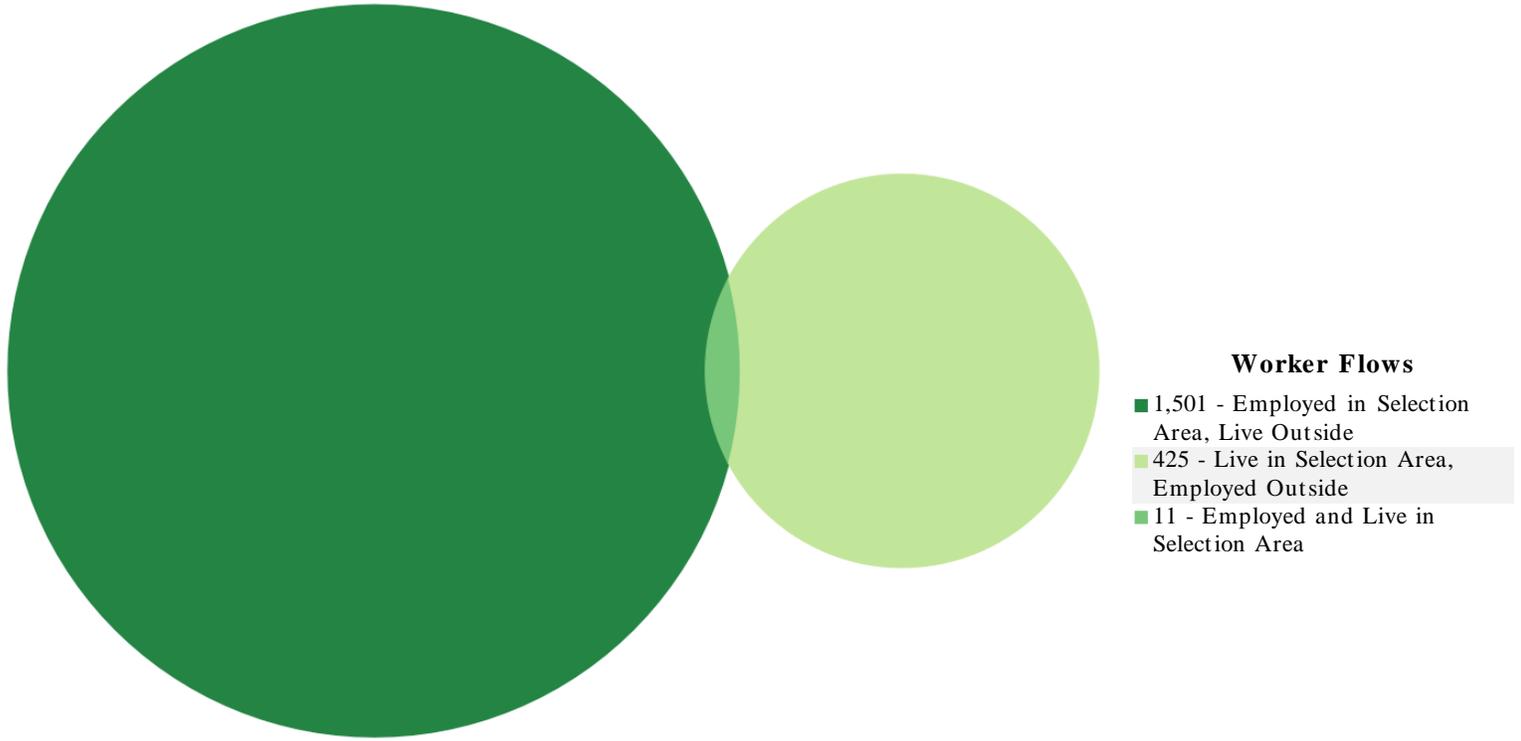
#### Inflow/ Outflow

- Employed and Live in Selection Area
  - Employed in Selection Area, Live Outside
  - Live in Selection Area, Employed Outside
- Note: Overlay arrows do not indicate directionality of worker flow between home and employment locations.



# Inflow/ Outflow Counts of Private Primary Jobs for Selection Area in 2021

## All Workers



# Inflow/ Outflow Counts of Private Primary Jobs for Selection Area in 2021

## All Workers

Worker Totals and Flows	2021	
	Count	Share
<b>Employed in the Selection Area</b>	1,512	100.0%
<b>Employed in the Selection Area but Living Outside</b>	1,501	99.3%
<b>Employed and Living in the Selection Area</b>	11	0.7%
<b>Living in the Selection Area</b>	436	100.0%
<b>Living in the Selection Area but Employed Outside</b>	425	97.5%
<b>Living and Employed in the Selection Area</b>	11	2.5%

## Additional Information

### Analysis Settings

<b>Analysis Type</b>	Inflow/ Outflow
<b>Selection area as</b>	N/ A
<b>Year(s)</b>	2021
<b>Job Type</b>	Private Primary Jobs
<b>Selection Area</b>	Selection Area Shape from DDD_ Boundary_ Proposed2023.shp
<b>Selected Census Blocks</b>	57
<b>Analysis Generation Date</b>	03/ 06/ 2024 10:15 - OnTheMap 6.23.5
<b>Code Revision</b>	61ba66adb1494f11636f474452a03e1039f6f3a0
<b>LODES Data Vintage</b>	20231016_ 1512

### Data Sources

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap Application and LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (Beginning of Quarter Employment, 2nd Quarter of 2002-2021).

### Notes

1. Race, Ethnicity, Educational Attainment, and Sex statistics are beta release results and are not available before 2009.
2. Educational Attainment is only produced for workers aged 30 and over.
3. Firm Age and Firm Size statistics are beta release results for All Private jobs and are not available before 2011.

# Appendix F

# Downtown Dover Revitalization to Get Boost With \$25 Million in State Funding

*Investments from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and Bond Bill will fund new residences, businesses, parking*

**DOVER, Del.** – Governor Carney and Dover-area legislators on Thursday announced the State’s plan to invest more than \$25 million in three priority projects for revitalizing downtown Dover.

“The State of Delaware has a vested interest in the success of downtown Dover, not only because it is our capital city, but because it is where thousands of state employees work and where many would like to live,” said **Governor Carney**. “The current downtown Dover revitalization plan builds on years of ideas about how to breathe new life into the area, with specific projects laid out by an experienced redeveloper to attract residents and businesses. This is the jumpstart downtown Dover has been waiting for, and we are proud to be a part of it.”

The proposed funding is an investment in the Capital City 2030 strategic plan completed in 2023 for transforming downtown Dover with new residences, businesses, parking and infrastructure. With \$10 million proposed in the Fiscal Year 2025 recommended Bond Bill and \$15.1 million allocated by the Governor from the state’s American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds, the City of Dover and Downtown Dover Partnership will be able to proceed with:

- Critical water and wastewater infrastructure upgrades necessary to support downtown development, with a projected cost of \$1.7 million;
- A six-story retail and residential building at 120 South Governors Avenue, envisioned to have a community grocery store, daycare and retail space along with 140-180 residential units, with a total projected cost of around \$80 million; and
- A multilevel transportation center between South Governors and South Bradford Street with more than 300 parking spaces, bus stop, bike share and electric vehicle charging, to serve downtown businesses and provide parking for the new retail-residential building across the street, with a projected cost of about \$14 million.

Mosaic Development Partners, the team selected by the Downtown Dover Partnership to create the strategic plan, has also been selected by the Partnership to develop the two properties. Mosaic has a track record of successful redevelopment projects, largely around Philadelphia, including at the Philadelphia Navy Yard. Colonial Parking Inc. is also a partner in the project.

The state funding will be split between the city and the Partnership and is expected to fully fund the utility work and the parking garage construction. A portion of the state funding will be added to private loans and investment, housing tax credits and grants to finance the retail-residential building. As with revitalization efforts in other cities in recent years, state funding is needed to match and encourage private investment at the early stages.

“This incredible investment in downtown Dover represents a potential game changer in our ongoing efforts to revitalize the heart of Kent County,” said **State Senator Trey Paradee**. “On behalf of my constituents, I want to thank Governor John Carney for his unwavering commitment to the Capital City, from the redevelopment projects unlocked by the Downtown Development Districts program to his personal involvement in facilitating a smooth hand-off of the former Wesley College campus to Delaware State University. The investments being announced today will continue that work by bringing new housing, new shops and a new parking garage to downtown Dover.”

“I have been coming to downtown Dover my whole life, and have been advocating for its revitalization on city council and as a legislator,” said **State Representative Sean Lynn**. “I hope this state investment will help return the community and vitality the area had when I was a kid, while also making it an affordable and diverse place to live.”

“This \$25 million investment represents a powerful commitment to our community, effectively addressing so many of our constituents’ most pressing issues – ranging from housing to transportation to infrastructure. Additionally, it’s these sorts of investments that will help us attract talented and sought after workers in the fields of education and healthcare,” said **State Representative Kerri Evelyn Harris**. “I appreciate all that Governor Carney has done to secure this new funding, which will open doors to new opportunities for individuals of all backgrounds and foster a city that thrives on inclusivity and prosperity.”

“The City of Dover has a solid roadmap for its revitalization, building on efforts the city and its partners have been making over the last several years, and this state funding will make those plans a reality” said **Dover Mayor Robin Christiansen**. “Combining the Governor’s Avenue projects with the city’s recent selection of a redeveloper for the old post office and construction on the new Family Court building and parking garage, the key building blocks for downtown’s future are coming into place.”

“All I can say is wow! The pieces of the puzzle that form Capital City 2030 are coming together. The plan truly spells out the direction for revitalization of our downtown that is so needed,” said **Todd Stonesifer, Downtown Dover Partnership Chair and downtown business owner**. “With the Governor’s and Dover-area legislators’ support, I believe the first of many projects are now a reality and the dominoes will begin to fall rapidly toward fulfilling our goal of a truly transformed Capital City!”

Governor Carney and Dover leaders will tour the development sites next week.

*Visit Governor Carney's website to view the Fiscal Year 2025 Recommended Budget.*

## Dover Downtown Investments Press Coverage:

- Bay to Bay 'Gov. Carney tours Dover a week after supporting revitalization efforts' (SUBSCRIPTION ONLY) [Start your shovels: Gov. Carney tours Dover a week after supporting revitalization efforts | Bay to Bay News](#)
- Bat to Bay 'Downtown Dover to tear down, then build back up' [Downtown Dover to tear down, then build back up | Bay to Bay News](#) free on DDP website [Downtown Dover to tear down facility- then build back up Finney DE State News 1-30-24.pdf \(downtowndoverpartnership.com\)](#)
- WHYY 'Plans to transform downtown Dover launched with \$25 million in state funding' [Downtown Dover gets \\$25 million to revitalize the area - WHYY](#)
- Delaware Public Media 'Downtown Dover Partnership hosts tour of new development lots in transformation project' [Downtown Dover Partnership hosts tour of new development lots in transformation project | Delaware First Media \(delawarepublic.org\)](#)
- Delaware Public Media 'Downtown Dover revitalization project poised to receive \$25 million in funding' [Downtown Dover revitalization project poised to receive \\$25 million in funding | Delaware First Media \(delawarepublic.org\)](#)
- Delaware.gov 'Downtown Dover Revitalization to get boost with \$25 million in state funding' [Downtown Dover Revitalization to Get Boost With \\$25 Million in State Funding - State of Delaware News](#)
- Delaware business Times 'Downtown Der plan now fueled by \$25 million in state funds' [Downtown Dover Revitalization to Get Boost With \\$25 Million in State Funding - State of Delaware News](#)



**Capital City 2030: Transforming Downtown Dover**  
Revitalization Walking Tour  
with Governor John Carney 2/9/24



Images from Delaware Senate Democrats  
Flickr



# Appendix G

GIS Pin	Map ID w/ Link	Owner	Location	Owner Mailing Address	Owner Address Mailing Label	Location Address Mailing Label
2-05-07612-04-3201-00001	<a href="#">2 05 07612 04 3201 000</a>	UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE	445 BANK LN, DOVER, DE 19904	ATTN: RB & A PO BOX 27497 GREENSBORO, NC 27498	United States Postal Service ATTN: RB&A PO BOX 27497 Greensboro, NC 27498	United States Postal Service 445 Bank Ln. Dover, DE 19904
2-05-07612-04-3300-00001	<a href="#">2 05 07612 04 3300 000</a>	SKIPJACK, INC.	451 BANK LN, DOVER, DE 19904	500 ENERGY LN STE 400 DOVER, DE 19901	Skipjack, Inc. 500 Energy Ln., Suite 400 Dover, DE 19901	Skipjack, Inc. 451 Bank Ln. Dover, DE 19904
2-05-07612-04-3400-00001	<a href="#">2 05 07612 04 3400 000</a>	DOVER, CITY OF,	619 S WEST ST, DOVER, DE 19904	PO BOX 475 DOVER, DE 19903	City of Dover PO BOX 475 Dover, DE 19904	City of Dover 619 S. West St. Dover, DE 19904
2-05-07612-04-3401-00001	<a href="#">2 05 07612 04 3401 000</a>	DELAWARE STATE OF,	480 BANK LN, DOVER, DE 19904	DEPT OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICE PO BOX 1401 DOVER, DE 19903	State of Delaware Department of Administrative Service PO BOX 1401 Dover, DE 19903	State of Delaware 480 Bank Ln. Dover, DE 19904
2-05-07612-04-3500-00001	<a href="#">2 05 07612 04 3500 000</a>	DOVER, CITY OF,	415 W WATER ST, DOVER, DE 19904	PO BOX 475 DOVER, DE 19906	City of Dover PO BOX 475 Dover, DE 19906	City of Dover 415 W. Water St. Dover, DE 19904
2-05-07612-04-3600-00001	<a href="#">2 05 07612 04 3600 000</a>	DOVER, CITY OF,	400 BANK LN, DOVER, DE 19904	PO BOX 475 DOVER, DE 19904	City of Dover PO BOX 475 Dover, DE 19907	City of Dover 400 Bank Ln. Dover, DE 19904
2-05-07612-04-3700-00001	<a href="#">2 05 07612 04 3700 000</a>	DOVER, CITY OF,	400 BANK LN, DOVER, DE 19904	PO BOX 475 DOVER, DE 19903	City of Dover PO BOX 475 Dover, DE 19908	City of Dover 400 Bank Ln. Dover, DE 19904
2-05-07612-04-3800-00001	<a href="#">2 05 07612 04 3800 000</a>	DOVER, CITY OF,	400 S QUEEN ST, DOVER, DE 19904	PO BOX 475 DOVER, DE 19903	City of Dover PO BOX 475 Dover, DE 19909	City of Dover 400 S. Queen St. Dover, DE 19904
2-05-07612-04-3900-00001	<a href="#">2 05 07612 04 3900 000</a>	DOVER, CITY OF,	401 W WATER ST, DOVER, DE 19904	PO BOX 475 DOVER, DE 19905	City of Dover PO BOX 475 Dover, DE 19910	City of Dover 401 W. Water St. Dover, DE 19904
2-05-07612-04-4000-00001	<a href="#">2 05 07612 04 4000 000</a>	DOVER, CITY OF,	S QUEEN ST, DOVER, DE 19904	PO BOX 475 DOVER, DE 19907	City of Dover PO BOX 475 Dover, DE 19911	City of Dover S Queen St. Dover, DE 19904
2-05-07713-01-2701-00001	<a href="#">2 05 07713 01 2701 000</a>	MICHEL REAL ESTATE PARTNERSHIP,	550 S QUEEN ST, DOVER, DE 19904	1 R E MICHEL DR GLEN BURNIE, MD 21061	Michel Real Estate Partnership 1 R.E. Michel Dr. Glen Burnie, MD 21061	Michel Real Estate Partnership 550 S. Queen St. Dover, DE 19904
2-05-07713-01-0800-00001	<a href="#">2-05-07713-01-0800-00001</a>	DELAWARE STATE OF,	426 W Water St, Dover, DE 19901	PO BOX 778 Dover, DE 19903	State of Delaware PO BOX 778 Dover, DE 19903	State of Delaware 426 W Water St, Dover, DE 19901

City of



Dover

CITY OF DOVER  
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Dover City Council will hold a public hearing on Monday, May 13, 2024, at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 15 Lookerman Plaza, Dover, Delaware, to receive citizen input regarding the removal of certain parcels from the Downtown Development District.

The Subject parcels are as follows:

445 Bank Lane	ED-05-076.12-04-32.01-000
451 Bank Lane	ED-05-076.12-04-33.00-000
619 S West Street	ED-05-076.12-04-34.00-000
480 Bank Lane	ED-05-076.12-04-34.01-000
415 W Water Street	ED-05-076.12-04-35.00-000
400 Bank Lane	ED-05-076.12-04-36.00-000
400 Bank Lane	ED-05-076.12-04-37.00-000
400 S Queen Street	ED-05-076.12-04-38.00-000
401 W Water Street	ED-05-076.12-04-39.00-000
S Queen Street	ED-05-076.12-04-40.00-000
550 S Queen Street	ED-05-077.13-01-27.01-000
426 W Water Street	ED-05-077.13-01-08.00-000

You are receiving this notice, as you are the owner of one or more properties proposed for removal from the Downtown Development District

The Downtown Development District Application is available for review at Dover City Hall during the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, or electronically upon request.

For further information, please contact the City Clerk's Office at 302-736-7008 or by email to [cityclerk@dover.de.us](mailto:cityclerk@dover.de.us).

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APPROVED  
650119 DSN 5/3/2024



**SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL**

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

The following Ordinance was proposed at the regular meeting of the Sussex County Council on April 30, 2024:

**"AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF UP TO \$1,225,000 OF GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS OF SUSSEX COUNTY IN CONNECTION WITH THE WARWICK PARK PHASE I PROJECT AND AUTHORIZING ALL NECESSARY ACTIONS IN CONNECTION THEREWITH"**

Copies of the Proposed Ordinance are available in the Office of the Clerk of the Sussex County Council, County Administrative Offices, 2 The Circle, Georgetown, Delaware and on the County's website at [www.sussexcountydela.gov](http://www.sussexcountydela.gov).

A Public Hearing thereon will be held in the Chambers of the Sussex County Council Administrative Offices, 2 The Circle, Georgetown, Delaware, on June 4, 2024, at 1:30 p.m. or as soon thereafter as is practicable. At that time and place, all persons interested will have a reasonable opportunity to be heard. The public will be able to comment in person or via teleconference.

Any member of the public that seeks to submit comments electronically can send them to [tracy.torbert@sussexcountydela.gov](mailto:tracy.torbert@sussexcountydela.gov). All comments shall be submitted by 4:30 p.m. on Monday, June 3, 2024.

650200 DSN 5/3/2024

Reading a newspaper helps you understand the world around you. No wonder newspaper readers are more successful people!

Time to clean out the attic, basement and/or garage? Advertise your yard sale in the classifieds and make your clean up a breeze!

**CITY OF DOVER  
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

Dover City Council will hold a public hearing on Monday, May 13, 2024, at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 15 Loockerman Plaza, Dover, Delaware, to receive citizen input regarding the removal of certain parcels from the Downtown Development District. The Subject parcels are as follows:

- |                    |                           |
|--------------------|---------------------------|
| 445 Bank Lane      | ED-05-076.12-04-32.01-000 |
| 451 Bank Lane      | ED-05-076.12-04-33.00-000 |
| 619 S West Street  | ED-05-076.12-04-34.00-000 |
| 480 Bank Lane      | ED-05-076.12-04-34.01-000 |
| 415 W Water Street | ED-05-076.12-04-35.00-000 |
| 400 Bank Lane      | ED-05-076.12-04-36.00-000 |
| 400 Bank Lane      | ED-05-076.12-04-37.00-000 |
| 400 S Queen Street | ED-05-076.12-04-38.00-000 |
| 401 W Water Street | ED-05-076.12-04-39.00-000 |
| S Queen Street     | ED-05-076.12-04-40.00-000 |
| 550 S Queen Street | ED-05-077.13-01-27.01-000 |
| 426 W Water Street | ED-05-077.13-01-08.00-000 |

The Downtown Development District Application is available for review at Dover City Hall during the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, or electronically upon request.

For further information, please contact the City Clerk's Office at 302-736-7008 or by email to [cityclerk@dover.de.us](mailto:cityclerk@dover.de.us).

ANDRIA L. BENNETT  
CITY CLERK

650196 DSN 5/3/2024

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# Appendix H



AFFORDABLE HOUSING | LENDING | FINANCIAL EDUCATION

May 14, 2024

Dear Mr. David Edgell:

I am writing on behalf of Neighborgood Partners to express our enthusiastic support for the renewal of the Downtown Development District (DDD) Program in the City of Dover. As a proud participant in this program, Neighborgood Partners has experienced firsthand the transformative impact it has had on our efforts to revitalize Central Dover.

Since the City of Dover was designated a Downtown Development District, Neighborgood Partners has greatly benefited from the incentives and support provided by the program. These incentives have been instrumental in our initiative to breathe new life into the heart of Central Dover, resulting in tangible improvements and positive outcomes for our community.

One of the key achievements facilitated by the DDD Program is the creation of 13 new homes within Central Dover. These homes not only contribute to the revitalization of the area but also provide much-needed housing options for residents, thereby enhancing the overall livability and attractiveness of the neighborhood.

In addition to residential developments, Neighborgood Partners is currently in the process of completing a new commercial building. This building will serve as a hub for additional office space and will provide local entrepreneurs with access to an array of expanded business resources. By fostering entrepreneurship and supporting small businesses, we aim to stimulate economic growth and create opportunities for prosperity within Central Dover.

The DDD Program has been instrumental in empowering Neighborgood Partners to undertake these impactful projects and initiatives. The incentives and resources provided by the program have enabled us to make significant strides towards our goal of revitalizing Central Dover and creating a vibrant, thriving community for all residents.

In light of the positive outcomes achieved thus far, we wholeheartedly endorse the renewal of the Downtown Development District Program in the City of Dover. We believe that the continuation of this program will not only sustain the momentum of revitalization efforts but also pave the way for further progress and transformation within our community.

Thank you for considering our input and for your ongoing commitment to the revitalization and development of Dover's downtown area. We look forward to continuing our partnership with the City of Dover and contributing to the continued success of the DDD Program.

Sincerely,

*William Grimes*

Will Grimes  
Director of Operations  
Neighborgood Partners





Tax ID # 51-0376650

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Chief Executive Officer

**Board of Directors**  
**Donna Kiscaden**  
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**Jim Wilson**  
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**Karen Lechner**  
Director

**Monique Wannamaker**  
Director

**Jessica Jackson**  
Director

**Kelly Pitts**  
Director

**Chris Redd**  
Director

**Justin Smith**  
Director

***“Seeking to put God’s love into action, Central Delaware Habitat for Humanity brings people together to build affordable homes, communities and hope.”***

May 15, 2024  
Mr. David Edgell  
Director of the Office of State Planning Coordination  
122 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. South  
Dover, DE 19901  
RE: DDD Renewal, City of Dover

Dear Mr. Edgell,

On behalf of Central Delaware Habitat for Humanity, I want to extend our full support of renewing the Downtown Development District in the City of Dover.

As one of the leading affordable housing producers in Kent County, DE, DDD funding has played a vital role in our ability to build affordable housing units for low-income individuals and families in need. To date, DDD rebates have helped build more than 30 homes in Central Dover which has helped to revitalize neighborhoods burdened by blight and divestment for many years.

Property values have increased, crime reduced, and overall quality of life improved for residents in Central Dover thanks to DDD funding. With constantly rising land and construction material prices, these subsidies help to make each affordable home project feasible.

We strongly encourage the state to renew the DDD in Central Dover so we have the ability to continue this vital work in our precious communities desperate for rehabilitation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "T. Bailey", written over a white background.

Timothy M. Bailey  
Chief Executive Officer  
Central Delaware Habitat for Humanity



**Downtown Dover Partnership**  
**Main Street Dover**  
**101 W. Loockerman Street, Ste 2B**  
**Dover, DE 19904**  
**(302)678-2940**

May 14, 2024

Mr. David S. Hugg, III, City Manager  
15 Loockerman Plaza  
Dover, DE 19901

Dear Mr. Hugg:

I write in full support of the City of Dover's request to Delaware State Housing Authority to extend the City's eligibility for the Downtown Development Districts (DDD) program. As you are aware, the first ten years of Dover's including strongly supported qualified and much-needed residential improvements in the district. But it is only in the past two- to three years that commercial redevelopment has begun to increase exponentially.

The *Capital City 2030: Transforming Downtown Dover!* master plan has set the stage for considerable reinvestment into the downtown, including multiple large-scale, mixed-use, mixed-income projects, with a target of attracting 2000 new resident to Dover's DDD in the next six to eight years. In addition, the Downtown Dover Partnership's Critical Improvements Program (CIP) is encouraging property owners on existing Loockerman Street and nearby streets to make improvements, especially including life-safety, ADA, and commercial kitchen improvements/additions. These improvements will make properties more competitive alongside the new development to come, while allowing central Dover's historic landscape to largely remain in tact.

All of the projects in the CIP are required to utilize DDD funds, in addition to City, DDP and other incentives available. In all, we have approximately five large-scale projects and +/- 14 additional small-scale projects recently completed or in queue. A high majority of these projects are commercial, including large-scale, mixed-use.

In order to continue this very successful CIP program as well as encourage redevelopment of downtown, based on recommendations in the master plan, projects must have access to DDD funding as well as the City's, DDP's, and other related incentives. Without the DDD rebate and associated incentive programs, gaps in funding are just too high to complete these exciting and critical projects that, together, will revitalize the commercial district and associated residential neighborhoods within our Capital City for years to come.

Please provide the City of Dover with full consideration for continuing this vital opportunity for property owners to access these funds. Thank you.



Sincerely,  
  
Diane Laird, Executive Director

  
Todd Stonesifer, Board President

CC: Tina Bradbury  
Ken Anderson

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# RAIL HAUS

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10 May 2024

92 N West St  
Dover DE 19904

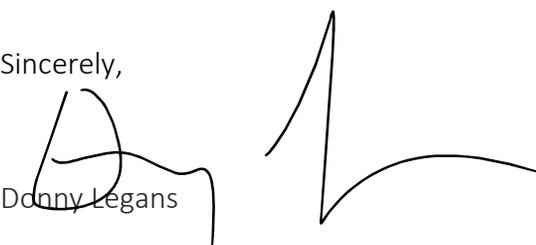
I am writing to support the Downtown Development District's (DDD) request for continued funding. We applied for and received the large grant funding from the DDD this year for Rail Haus Beer Garden in Downtown Dover. The project itself has been nothing short of amazing for our residents and guests in town visiting Dover. Our reward was \$311,000. This funding was the number one reason we chose to locate downtown on this parcel of land.

The number one remark from guests has been "this was needed in Dover!" The only way this project happens at this scale was due to the funding from the DDD. I believe the strong emotional response to Rail Haus is due to the project looking and feeling different than anything else on the market. Their expectations were blown away upon setting foot on the property.

The DDD funding made it possible to go all in on the design and build the space we wanted for Delaware's first year round beer garden. As you can imagine we needed this funding to make this remarkable project happen! I want other property and business owners to have the advantage of this additional source of funding. Together we will greatly expand the business offerings in downtown Dover (and other downtowns) and make this the place to live, work and play!

I ask that you respond favorably to continuing the DDD program.

Sincerely,



Donny Legans

Owner – Rail Haus Beer Garden

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# RAIL HAUS



Rossi Transportation Group, Inc.  
555 E. Loockerman Street, Suite 220  
Dover, DE 19901