



2025 Downtown Development Plan Update:

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

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

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

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

Goals of the Update

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

Need for more restaurant options

Concern for misperception of crime

Homeless population creates a deterrent for businesses and visitors

Hard to compete with businesses on Rt. 13

Lack of parking downtown

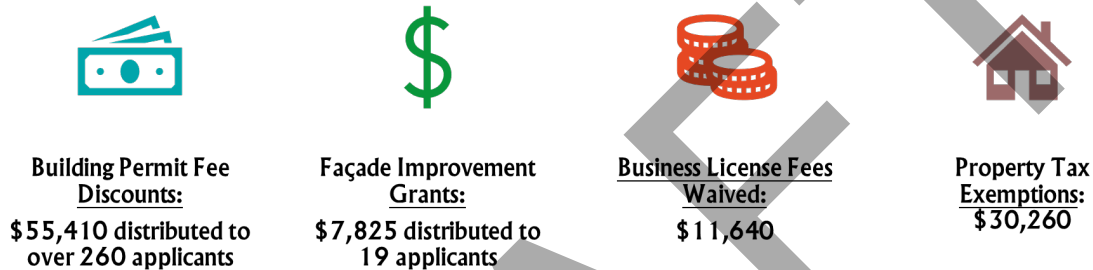
While public perceptions are not always rooted in fact, it is a common misconception that crime is an issue in the downtown area. In addition to crime, homelessness is also a deterrent that was mentioned several times in conversations about challenges of operating a business downtown.

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

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

Implementation

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



Key Priority Recommendations

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

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

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

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

Downtown District Boundary Update

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

