

## **“Delaware Commercial District Affiliate” Application**

### **What is Delaware Commercial District Affiliation?**

In Delaware, towns and communities statewide are invited to learn strategies for downtown revitalization and business development so that growth in their commercial district is “by choice” and not “by chance.” “Affiliation” is for communities that are exploring downtown revitalization, that are preparing for Main Street designation, and for those that may not desire or be eligible for Main Street designation. It is an opportunity for communities to plan proactively for a viable mix of retail goods and professional services.

### **What are the Benefits of being a Delaware Commercial District Affiliate?**

A core feature of the service to Affiliates is access to training by state and national downtown development experts. Previously, this training was limited to fully designated Main Street communities. Now Affiliates have the opportunity to learn about best practices in the field of revitalization and to network with peers from around the state, particularly in the area of business development. Affiliates are offered an opportunity to plan proactively for a vibrant, synergistic downtown commercial business district.

### **What are the Eligibility Requirements of an Affiliate?**

While Affiliate communities are not required to have a traditional, historic Main Street commercial district, the community must possess a pedestrian-oriented commercial area with a concentration of locally owned businesses and/or opportunities for commercial use.

There are several requirements of an Affiliate:

- Form a local Economic Development Task Force or Revitalization Committee that has active backing by the municipal government (as indicated by a resolution and active participation by a municipal representative on the task force/committee) and includes several downtown stakeholders. (A community may already have a revitalization committee, a merchants group, or other similar committee that may choose to take on the responsibilities of a Delaware Commercial District Affiliate.)
- The Task Force/Revitalization Committee must be willing to convene on a regular basis, attend several DEDO-coordinated training sessions annually, and have the intent to seriously consider, develop, and implement strategies learned through training opportunities.
- While Affiliates are not required to form an independent nonprofit organization at this time, it should be recognized that formation such is an effective component of furthering revitalization efforts.

Communities that complete the Affiliates application will be referred to as Delaware Commercial District Affiliates and the term “Affiliate” describes the *relationship* between a community and the Delaware Economic Development Office. It is only intended for use in public relations or educational communication, but not for marketing materials, public displays, signs or similar promotional tools, as this use could misleadingly convey that the community has achieved full Delaware Main Street designation – a hard won benefit of competitively selected communities.

## Submission Instructions

- **Applications for “Delaware Commercial District Affiliate” status may be submitted at any time throughout the year**, and should be submitted on this form. Please answer questions in the space provided.
- **Applications, including attachments and maps, can be submitted electronically or by mail.**
- **Questions and applications should be submitted to:**

[Diane.Laird@state.de.us](mailto:Diane.Laird@state.de.us)

Diane Laird, State Coordinator  
Delaware Main Street/Delaware Downtowns  
Delaware Economic Development Office  
99 Kings Hwy.  
Dover, DE 19901  
(302)672-6834

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## **Applicant Information**

**Date:**

**Town/City/Community applying for Delaware Commercial District Affiliate status:**

**Town/City/Community Population:**

Use: <http://factfinder.census.gov/> (Fact sheet)

**Designated Contact Person for Correspondence with Affiliate Town**

**Name:**

**Title/affiliation:**

**Street Address:**

**City/Town/Community:**

**Zip:**

**Phone:**

**Fax:**

**E-mail:**

**Town Website:**

**Please also fill in the names of the following personnel, if your town/city has them:**

**Town/City Mayor:**

**Town/City Planner:**

**Town/City Council member (\*please list two):**

**1.**

**2.**

**Town/City Economic Development Official:**

**Town/City/Community Historic Preservation Contact:**

**Other:**

**Name of Private Sector Organization** (if applicable, such as a downtown revitalization organization) **or committee** (economic development, merchants, etc.):

**Purpose/mission of Private Sector Organization or primary purpose of committee** (if applicable):

*Use only the space provided to answer the following questions*

**Briefly describe the economic and physical characteristics of your downtown or commercial district** (provide an 8½” X 11” map (with parcels or building footprints) showing district boundaries; include an aerial photo, if available).

**Approximately how many commercial buildings are located in your commercial district?**

**An Economic Development Task Force or Revitalization Committee is necessary for Affiliate status. Who will comprise the membership of the community’s Task Force or Committee?** (One must be a staff/representative of the Town, and communities should target a committee of at least 3 members):

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
Name Title/Affiliation
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
Name Title/Affiliation
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
Name Title/Affiliation
4. \_\_\_\_\_  
Name Title/Affiliation
5. \_\_\_\_\_  
Name Title/Affiliation

**Briefly outline several of the efforts made to improve the downtown or commercial district over the past five years.**

**Check (and optionally, briefly describe) several commercial business district activities your town would like to accomplish in the next three- to five years:**

- \_\_\_\_\_reduce vacancy
- \_\_\_\_\_recruit new businesses (Approximately how many current vacancies? \_\_\_\_\_ )
- \_\_\_\_\_develop program of retention
- \_\_\_\_\_improve visual appeal
- \_\_\_\_\_encourage building/business owners to make improvements
- \_\_\_\_\_create signature events/promotions
- \_\_\_\_\_create a 501/c3 (non-profit) organization to guide revitalization activities
- \_\_\_\_\_ other

**Briefly describe what you hope to achieve by participating as an Affiliate.**

**Regarding training opportunities, please indicate the time of day and location that most members of your ER task force or revitalization committee could attend training (check as many as apply):**

- \_\_\_\_\_morning      9 – 11 AM
- \_\_\_\_\_afternoon      1 – 3 PM
- \_\_\_\_\_late afternoon 3 – 5 PM
- \_\_\_\_\_evening      6 – 8 PM

## Commercial District Affiliate Commitment Statement

The Town/City of \_\_\_\_\_ agrees to meet the requirements

of a Delaware Commercial District Affiliate as outlined below:

1. Form a local Economic Development Task Force or Revitalization Committee that has active backing by the municipal government (as indicated by a resolution and active participation by a municipal representative on the task force/committee) and includes several downtown stakeholders. (A community may already have a revitalization committee, a merchants group, or other similar committee that may choose to take on the responsibilities of a Delaware Commercial District Affiliate.)
2. Convene the Task Force/Revitalization Committee on a regular basis, attend DEDO-coordinated training sessions on a regular basis, and have the intent to seriously consider, develop, and implement strategies learned through training opportunities.
3. Fully complete and submit a Delaware Commercial District Affiliate Application.
4. Review *10 Criteria for Acceptance as a Delaware Commercial District Affiliate* (attached)

**Please attach a resolution adopted by the local government -- and by the private sector partner(s) or organization, if applicable -- authorizing this application. (*Sample Attached*)**

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Signature of Authorizing Agent from Local Government (please print name and title)

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Signature of Authorizing Agent from Private Sector Organization, if applicable (please print name, title, organization)

# *Downtown Delaware*

Building Business Opportunity in Delaware's Commercial Districts

## **What's new? Downtown Delaware!**

**20<sup>th</sup> Delaware Institute for Local Government Leaders**  
October 20, 3008

**Diane Laird**  
State Coordinator & Small Business Outreach Specialist  
Delaware Economic Development Office



### **10 Criteria for Acceptance as a Delaware Commercial District Affiliate**

1. Supports proactive downtown business development as illustrated by the partnering of several active, committed members of both the private sector and Town/City government
2. Willingness to commit to taking a leading role within the community to positively shape downtown business opportunities and offerings.
3. With assistance of the Delaware Economic Development Office (DEDO), develop and, to the best of our ability, implement strategies to affect downtown business retention, expansion and recruitment.
4. Maintain a historic preservation ethic where historic downtown assets exist.
5. Establish and maintain an active committee (such as an Economic Development, Merchants, or Revitalization), with ongoing representation from the municipality, that meets six to eight times per year to address the community's business development issues.
6. Voluntarily devise an operating budget and raise funds, as needed, to sustain initiatives that are selected as those of "primary importance for the well-being of the downtown business community". (Many initiatives require human resources rather than actual funding.)
7. Maintain paid OR voluntary administrative support to sustain initiatives that are selected as those of "primary importance for the well-being of the downtown business community".
8. Attend at least four to six of the annual state-offered training sessions related to downtown economic development and create of three initiatives resulting from the training.
9. Report upon request of the DEDO basic statistics to the DEDO (such as number of businesses that open and close in the community and related jobs) and provide information on outcomes of initiatives.
10. Consider maintaining a membership with the National Main Street Network. ([www.mainst.org](http://www.mainst.org)). (This is optional, yet recommended.)

SAMPLE RESOLUTION

**A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING PARTICIPATION IN THE DEDO DOWNTOWN DELAWARE COMMERCIAL DISTRICT AFFILIATE PROGRAM**

WHEREAS, the Delaware Economic Development Office has established the Downtown Delaware Commercial District Affiliate status to assist localities in developing public/private efforts to revitalize their downtown commercial areas, and

WHEREAS, interested Delaware cities, towns, and communities that are that are exploring downtown revitalization, those that may not be eligible for designation or those that do not wish to meet Main Street requirements may participate as an Affiliate, and

WHEREAS, Affiliate communities will have access to all Downtown Delaware training and limited on-site assistance, as resources permit, and

WHEREAS, the Town/City of \_\_\_\_\_ desires to participate in the DEDO Downtown Delaware Commercial District Affiliate Program and has completed the necessary application.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TOWN/CITY COUNCIL OF \_\_\_\_\_

SECTION 1. That the Town/City of \_\_\_\_\_ applies for selection to participate in the DEDO Downtown Delaware Commercial District Affiliate Program with the specific goal of economically revitalizing the designated downtown district within the context of historic preservation using the Main Street Approach as a model;

SECTION 2. The Town/City of \_\_\_\_\_ recognizes that the Main Street model is considered one of many economic and community development tools used by a locality and that successful downtown revitalization requires an on-going commitment, continuous attention and a full public-private partnership. Thus the Town/City has full intent to actively support and implement the initiatives developed as a result of Commercial District Affiliate status, resources permitting.

SECTION 3. The Town/City of \_\_\_\_\_ understands that participation as an DEDO Downtown Delaware Commercial District Affiliate Program does not guarantee selection as a Designated Main Street Community, and that the Town/City will be eligible to receive Affiliate Community services from Downtown Delaware as long as the requirements stated in the Program Guidelines are met.

ADOPTED THIS \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2008

\_\_\_\_\_ Mayor, \_\_\_\_\_ Council

\_\_\_\_\_  
ATTEST

\_\_\_\_\_  
CLERK OF COUNCIL

For information, Contact Diane Laird of the Delaware Economic Development Office: 302-739-4271 or Diane.Laird@state.de.us