

Governor's Weekly Message Transcript: Growing the Economy by Strengthening Our Downtowns

We recognize that much of our economy's future growth must be driven by the vibrancy of our downtowns. More Americans are seeking dynamic and exciting urban environments and our ability to continue to create opportunities for Delawareans will depend, in large part, on whether we meet these demands. That's the motivation behind the Downtown Development District program, which celebrated the designation of its first three districts this week.

After receiving impressive proposals from cities and towns across the state, we selected Seaford, Dover and Wilmington to have their downtowns and surrounding areas designated for economic development incentives. Each city's plans demonstrates the impact that development incentives can have and the tremendous potential of downtown revitalization. While Seaford has many abandoned properties, it has shovel-ready projects waiting for just a little extra financial boost to get started. Dover has lined up an impressive array of partners: developers, realtors, not-for-profits, a sustainable utility, and banks, as well as affordable housing and social service providers to support their efforts. And Wilmington's plan would effectively build on downtown revitalization efforts underway, not only through projects proposed for the Market Street Corridor, but also by investing in neighborhoods on the east and west sides.

We remain focused on ways to give our cities the best chance to thrive and we see Downtown Development Districts as a key

part of the solution. With the support of leadership in each of these districts, along the residents, businesses, and not-for-profit communities who live and work there, we can generate a surge of real estate, cultural and business activity to jumpstart progress in areas that have long been overlooked. And that will keep Delaware moving forward.

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