

Building and Sustaining a Stronger, More Prosperous Delaware

Revitalizing Delaware Downtowns

Dover, DE – In the weeks ahead, the Governor's office will release a series of videos highlighting the progress the state has made over the past eight years through the voices of Delawareans. They will address ways in which the lives of Delawareans today, and generations to come, are being affected by efforts to strengthen our schools, develop cleaner and more efficient energy, make the state a safer and more welcoming place for all people, improve recreational and cultural options, and create more economic development and opportunity.

In conjunction with today's event recognizing Homeownership Month, the below video addresses the impact of one initiative: the Downtown Development Districts program, which has leveraged almost \$10 million into \$160 million in private investment across all three counties. Through the DDD program, the state is encouraging private developers to re-invest in Delaware's downtown areas. In Downtown Dover, as you'll see below, the program already is helping support new, affordable homeownership opportunities.

In addition to improvements as a result of the DDD program, the Delaware State Housing Authority has continued to promote homeownership through low-cost mortgage loans, its down payment assistance programs and first-time homebuyer tax credits. Since 2009, more than 5,500 Delaware families have purchased a home with DSHA assistance, and growth of Delaware's homeownership rate has outpaced regional and national trends. Access to low rates and settlement assistance through DSHA's programs helped sustain demand through the

economic recovery.

Excerpts from the video:

“As we start to transform some of the neighborhood blocks, bring in homeownership and provide affordable housing that helps to stabilize the area makes the business investment more attractive,” **Ann Marie Townshend, Director of Planning and Community Development for the City of Dover**, said. “We’re working equally as hard to work with the business community to bring in additional businesses to get some of the commercial properties renovated and built.”

“What we’re able to do is create that affordable homeownership by keeping the cost of construction down and by also raising funds to use the DDD funds and leveraging those to other organizations, so we can make this affordable homeownership possible,” **Jonathon Gallo, Executive Director of Central Habitat for Humanity**, said.

“I think the state should always invest in their communities. This isn’t a bad place,” **Alicia Jarvis, Kirkwood Street Homeowner**, said. “Dover is a great place and what I see what’s coming along on this street alone is an awesome experience.”

The video series will be released via email as well as on the Governor’s YouTube channel. This week’s video is available on:

YouTube: <https://youtu.be/pixtyz0xLsA>

Delaware.Gov: http://governor.delaware.gov/podcast_video.shtml

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