

Governor Carney Announces Strategic Plan to Restructure Delaware's Economic Development Efforts

Plan will create new public-private entity and new economic development division at the Department of State

WILMINGTON, Del. – Governor John Carney announced a plan on Wednesday to create a public-private partnership and strategically realign Delaware's economic development efforts, with a new focus on promoting innovation, supporting Delaware's entrepreneurs, and leveraging private sector resources to create jobs and grow Delaware's economy.

Governor Carney – who signed [Executive Order #1](#) on his first full day in office to explore a new economic development strategy – will work closely with members of the General Assembly to approve the concept and funding for the public-private entity, as well as a new division at the Department of State to oversee responsibilities for small business development and tourism.

The plan will reorganize Delaware's economic development efforts by early 2018.

“We can and should do more to promote innovation, support our entrepreneurs, build and retain a talented workforce in Delaware, and strategically partner with the private sector to grow the state's economy,” said **Governor Carney**. “This plan will position Delaware to create good-paying jobs, build an entrepreneurial ecosystem, and keep our state a competitive place to do business.”

Governor Carney's plan calls for the creation of the *Delaware*

Prosperity Partnership – a jointly funded public-private entity that will lead statewide business marketing efforts to recruit and retain businesses, including early-stage technology-based ventures, as well as large employers. The partnership also would provide support for startup businesses, with a focus on high-growth industries, and work closely with employers and education institutions to build and retain a talented workforce in Delaware.

Governor Carney's plan calls for \$2 million in annual state funding for the partnership, and \$1 million in annual funding from private business. Contributions from the state would remain contingent on an ongoing, annual financial commitment from the private sector.

The Delaware Prosperity Partnership would be led by a Chief Executive Officer and governed by a 15-member board with members from the public and private sectors.

Governor Carney's plan also would eliminate the Delaware Economic Development Office (DEDO), and shift responsibilities for small business development and tourism to a new division at the Department of State.

"This is about positioning Delaware to be competitive for good jobs moving forward," said **Jeff Bullock, Delaware's Secretary of State**. "By strategically partnering with the private sector, we can leverage business resources to strengthen the state's economic development efforts, while continuing to support small business owners and promote our state's \$3 billion tourism industry."

The new division at the Department of State will maintain a strong focus on supporting small business – especially women, minority, and veteran-owned businesses. It will help business owners identify available resources and navigate local, state and federal rules and regulations.

Division leaders also will administer Delaware's publicly-

funded economic development incentive programs, such as the Strategic Fund, the Main Streets program, and the Blue Collar Workforce Training grant program.

Governor Carney's plan builds on [recommendations last month](#) from the Economic Development Working Group, a committee created by Executive Order #1 to study a new economic development strategy. Exploring a new model for economic development that includes a public-private partnership, and an emphasis on innovation and entrepreneurship, also was a recommendation of the [Action Plan for Delaware](#).

Reaction to Governor Carney's Plan:

"Even with the strongest economy in this region, Delaware can do better," said **Senator Jack Walsh, D-Stanton**, a member of the Economic Development Working Group. "Bringing leaders from the private sector to the table adds a valuable new perspective to our economic development strategy and will help make our economy more dynamic over time. At the same time, Delaware is maintaining its firm commitment to empowering women, minority, and veteran-owned small businesses. Not all public-private partnerships are created equal, but the balance that we've struck here not only protects existing businesses and jobs, but also gives us a leg up in attracting promising new industries to our state."

"There were two specific things I was looking for in considering this public-private partnership: One was there be a high level of transparency with the intermingling of public and private funds. I was concerned that it be as transparent as possible so the public would have every confidence that things were being done above board," said **Senator Brian Pettyjohn, R-Georgetown**, a member of the Economic Development Working Group. "The second was to be sure this was not a New Castle County only solution for business development and that both Kent and Sussex Counties also had opportunities to reap the benefits of this new structure, proven to work very well

in other states. I am satisfied both those conditions will be met.”

“This venture will put Delaware in a position to leverage the best that the public and private sectors have to offer to continue to strengthen and improve our economic climate,” said **Representative Bryon Short, D-Highland Woods**, a member of the Economic Development Working Group. “I look forward to working with this new partnership going forward.”

“This is not an end, it is a beginning,” said **Representative Lyndon Yearick, R-Dover South**, a member of the Economic Development Working Group. “Bringing the pragmatic knowledge of entrepreneurs into the process of creating a better business environment is a major step forward. Now we need to do realize the promise this concept holds for creating new, dynamic employment in Delaware.”

“We know that bringing additional, private-sector resources to Delaware’s economic development efforts can help strengthen our state’s ability to create jobs, grow the economy, and equip our workforce with the skills necessary to succeed in our new economy,” said **Mark Brainard, President of Delaware Technical Community College**, and co-chair of the Economic Development Working Group. “We are excited to support Governor Carney’s plan and look forward to making Delaware even more competitive moving forward.”

“This plan offers a real chance to dramatically re-think the way Delaware does business – by leveraging additional resources, and bringing more ideas to the table as we seek to grow our economy, attract talent to our state, and create good-paying jobs for all Delawareans,” said **Rod Ward, President of Corporation Service Company**, and co-chair of the Economic Development Working Group. “Private businesses are ready and willing to be a full partner in this effort, and help create the kind of entrepreneurial, innovation-based economy that will lead to real growth.”

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