



Preface

The purpose of the Delaware CEDS Summary document is to provide a clear, easily readable version of the essential elements (process, action plan, projects, path forward) of the Delaware Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy so that it can be easily understood and utilized by members of the public, Delaware CEDS committee members, elected officials, the private and nonprofit sectors, and state and local government officials.

The Delaware CEDS Summary was written by Maria Aristigueta, William McGowan, Lisa McIlvaine, Troy Mix, Marcia Scott, and Julia O’Hanlon of the University of Delaware’s Institute for Public Administration. Alain Noghiu, Raheemah Jabbar-Bey, and Steven Peuquet of the University’s Center for Community Research and Service (CCRS) contributed text for the Wilmington component. The writing was coordinated by Troy Mix.

The overall Delaware CEDS project was managed by IPA’s Bernard Dworsky, and the Wilmington component was managed by Steven Peuquet of CCRS.

Funds to support the Delaware CEDS were provided by the Economic Development Administration of the U.S. Department of Commerce, the Delaware Economic Development Office, and the University of Delaware.



Delaware CEDS Summary

Committee Participants

The Delaware CEDS could not have been completed without the concerted effort of all the Delaware CEDS committee members. Their thoughtful deliberations on the future of economic development in Delaware have resulted in the drafting of visions and action plans intended to bring about sustainable economic development in Delaware through the ongoing CEDS process. The membership of the State CEDS Committee and the four regional CEDS committees are listed below.

State CEDS Committee Membership

Name and Title	Affiliation/Interest Represented
Joseph Corrado, <i>Co-Chair</i>	CEO, Corrado American, Inc.
Michael Parkowski, <i>Co-Chair</i>	Attorney, Parkowski, Guerke, & Swayze
Robert Baker	State President, Delaware Farm Bureau
Lisa Blunt-Bradley	President and CEO, Metropolitan Urban League
Kimberly Brockenbrough*	Represented Delaware State Housing Authority in Sandra Johnson's absence
Patricia Cannon	Former Executive Director, Delaware Workforce Investment Board
Marty Campanello	Bayhealth Medical Center
E. Andrew DiSabatino	CEO, EDiS Company
Gerald Esposito	President, Tidewater Utilities
Jeff Flynn	City of Wilmington
Jeffrey Fried	President/CEO, Beebe Medical Center
Michael Haley	Director of Employment, Arc of Delaware
John Hollis	Director of Community Relations, Nemours Health & Prevention Services
Sandra Johnson	Executive Director, Delaware State Housing Authority
Paul Lakeman	Main Street Dover, Inc. / Bayhealth Foundation
Sam Lathem	President, Delaware State AFL-CIO
Wanda Lopez	Executive Director, Governor's Advisory Council on Hispanic Affairs
John McMahon	Delaware Contractors Association
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Jaime Rivera	Director, Delaware Division of Public Health
Brett Sadler	President, Claymont Renaissance Development
Debbie Singletary	CEO, Delmarva Rural Ministries
Stephen Thompson	Senior Vice President, Chesapeake Utilities Corporation
Clinton Thymes	State Director, Delaware Small Business Development Center
Richelle Vible	President/CEO, Citizens Bank



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Jeffrey Fried, *Co-Chair*

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Mayor, City of Rehoboth Beach

Deputy Director, CHEER, Sussex County Senior Services

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President/CEO, Rehoboth Beach-Dewey Beach Chamber of Commerce

Discover Bank

Senior Vice-President, Freeman Communities

Director, Sussex County Economic Development Council

Nanticoke Indian Community, Sussex County

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Governor's Advisory Council on Hispanic Affairs

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Vice-President/Campus Director, Delaware Technical & Community College, Owens Campus

Vice-President/General Manager, Dentsply Caulk

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President, Ellendale Community Civic Improvement Association

Vice-President, Marketing and Member Services, Delaware Electric Cooperative

*Designated Representative

Kent CEDS Committee Membership

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Debbie Singletary, *Co-Chair*

John Austin

Marty Campanello

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Cheswold Planning Commission

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Director, Career Services, Goodwill Industries

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Wilmington CEDS Committee Membership

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*a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
for the State of Delaware*



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The Wilmington component of the CEDS Project was carried out by a team of individuals from the University of Delaware and the city of Wilmington. This team comprised Steven Peuquet, Raheemah Jabbar-Bey, and doctoral student Alain Noghiu of CCRS, Jeff Flynn of the Wilmington Office of Economic Development, and Rosalind Kotz of the city's Department of Real Estate and Housing.

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Introduction

Historically, Delaware has benefited from a robust economy. Residents have enjoyed relatively higher levels of income and lower levels of unemployment than those of most other states, and many large corporations call Delaware home. However, not all of Delaware's residents have enjoyed the fruits of a strong economy. Additionally, continuing economic trends such as globalization and the shift to a more service- and knowledge-oriented economy have challenged all states, including Delaware, to constantly reassess their approaches to maintaining a vigorous economy.

A Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is the result of a local planning process designed to guide the economic growth of an area. The goal of the Delaware CEDS is to foster sustainable improvement in regional and statewide economic conditions by producing higher-wage and higher-skill jobs for all Delaware residents. The Delaware CEDS was developed through a participatory public process involving stakeholders representative of Delaware's various community, business, government, and industrial interests and the social, economic, racial, and ethnic diversity of Delaware's residents.

The Delaware CEDS Summary provides a brief overview of the Delaware CEDS process including the major statewide economic development issues, the vision and goals of the Delaware CEDS, the priority economic development projects identified through the process, and the ongoing nature and path forward of the Delaware CEDS process.



Overview of the Delaware CEDS Process

The University of Delaware's Institute for Public Administration (IPA) and Center for Community Research and Service assisted the Delaware Economic Development Office (DEDO) in the preparation of this CEDS in accordance with the guidelines of the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration (EDA). The partnership resulted from a series of mutual discussions. The Delaware CEDS process was developed and carried out through steps described in the "Draft Plan for the Development of a State of Delaware Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy," which was developed by IPA. The following chronology highlights the activities leading up to the completion and submission of the Delaware CEDS.

May 2005: Agreement to Prepare a Delaware CEDS

An agreement was reached between the partnering organizations for IPA to assist DEDO in the preparation of a Delaware CEDS. The primary role of IPA was to organize, convene, and facilitate a series of committee meetings and public events and prepare a report documenting the activity in accordance with EDA guidelines.

May–August 2005: Selection of Delaware CEDS Committees

Members of the three regional county-based CEDS committees were appointed based on their ability to represent Delaware's diverse business and industries as well as the diverse racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds of Delaware's residents. Formal committee-member nominations were made by DEDO. Governance of the Delaware CEDS process reflected a "bottom-up, committee-driven" approach, with each of the committees determining local priorities and providing recommendations to the State CEDS Committee. The State CEDS Committee comprised approximately 25 members representing the diverse cultural, professional,



and socioeconomic backgrounds and interests of the citizens and community groups of the state. The State CEDS Committee was designated as the executive, final decision-making body charged with governing the development of the initial CEDS plan, crafting subsequent annual plan updates, and facilitating the long-term Delaware CEDS planning and implementation process.

The three regional committees included approximately 15–20 members each and, like the state committee, were representative of a variety of state and local interests and backgrounds. Committee members were appointed to serve one-year appointments with reinstatement to be determined annually.

To adhere to the “bottom-up” approach and ensure the inclusion of identified local interests and priorities at the state level, the State CEDS Committee reviewed priorities and recommendations presented by the regional committees and formulated final action-plan recommendations for statewide economic development initiatives. In addition, county committee co-chairs, as well as representatives from the Wilmington CEDS Committee, were appointed to the state committee. This regional representation further ensured that local interests and priorities were advocated at the statewide level.

September 7, 2005: Delaware CEDS Kickoff

A kickoff event was held at the Schwartz Center in Dover to introduce the public and appointed committee members to the Delaware CEDS process. Committee members were provided with project notebooks and encouraged to network with other appointees, officials, and individuals involved in the process.



October 2005: City of Wilmington Agreement with CCRS

A professional services agreement between the city of Wilmington's Office of Economic Development and CCRS was finalized in October. A review of the strategies and recommendations made by the stakeholders who participated on the 2003 and 2004 committees of the Wilmington CEDS was the initial focus. Following that review, efforts were made to research and identify a chairperson for the 2005–06 Wilmington CEDS planning committee.

September–November 2005: State and Regional CEDS Committee Meetings

Over the course of several months, the committees met to identify economic development strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) and develop visions, goals, and objectives meant to address these issues. Concurrently, a project-proposal process was initiated to solicit local governments and their partners for economic development project ideas.

December 2005: CEDS Co-Chairs Meeting and Schedule Readjusted

An aggressive fall timetable was relaxed to allow more time for deliberations among committee co-chairs, IPA, DEDO, and EDA on the status of the Delaware CEDS process and to formalize an appropriate path forward. Based on committee-member and organizational schedules resulting from holidays and other work priorities, it was decided that committees would reconvene in January to complete their work.

January–March 2006: CEDS State and Regional Committee Meetings and Workshops

The state and the three original regional committees continued to work on refining their action plans for economic development. In March, each



committee held public workshops to gain public feedback on their work. The committees' work was finalized by the end of March, with appropriate changes made to reflect public feedback obtained at the workshops. On February 24, 2006, the Wilmington region rekindled its previous CEDS planning process by holding a major half-day public forum to identify strategic economic development issues and obtain ideas for projects and programs. After this forum a new Wilmington CEDS Committee was formed consisting of several volunteers who participated in the Wilmington CEDS Public Forum and others who had been involved in CEDS planning for Wilmington in 2003 and 2004. This new Wilmington CEDS Committee then began a series of meetings to refine the information and ideas obtained from the Wilmington forum.

April–May 2006: State and Counties CEDS Document Completed and Forwarded to DEDO and EDA

IPA staff produced a report summarizing the Delaware CEDS activities for submission to DEDO and EDA.

April–August 2006: Delaware CEDS Report Completed and Forwarded to DEDO

CCRS project staff produced the city of Wilmington CEDS component and integrated it into IPA's work, creating a complete report of Delaware CEDS activities for submission to DEDO for its subsequent submission to EDA.



Delaware's Economic Development Action Plan

The Delaware CEDS' regional and state committees put forth substantial efforts to develop economic development action plans designed to accomplish sustainable, statewide economic improvements. These action plans, complete with detailed goals, objectives, and recommendations, are presented in the following section of this summary. Issues of statewide significance, identified by the committees throughout the Delaware CEDS process are also identified in the following section.

Issues of Statewide Significance

As a result of their considerations, the committees delineated the goals, objectives, actions and priority projects appropriate and pertinent to enhancing economic development in their respective geographic areas. While the discussions targeted economic development opportunities specific to each area, matters of more general concern to the state as a whole were produced also. Several issues of common concern among the committees emerged from the discussions and were identified as critical to the implementation of the Delaware CEDS. The issues are public education, transportation and infrastructure, affordable housing, and economic development collaboration and coordination.

PUBLIC EDUCATION

There was universal agreement among the committees that the status of K-12 public education in Delaware is a critical economic development factor. According to the committees, the perception of public education is that students are not being adequately prepared to succeed in today's work environment and that continued efforts to improve public education are necessary to ensure a well-prepared workforce that is able to thrive in an increasingly competitive, global economy. The primary recommendation related to public education is that there must be a serious commitment to continual quality improvement of Delaware's public education and workforce-development curricula.

TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

The movement of people and goods by road, rail, air, and water is an essential component of economic development. Each committee independently raised transportation-related issues as an area of continuing concern for Delaware's future economy. The congestion of the state and interstate road system in New Castle County, the increasing congestion and inadequate road system in Sussex County, and the lack of funding support for the Kent County road system were seen as weaknesses bearing on future economic development and quality of life. The concern also focused on the need for improved public transportation options, particularly in Sussex County, to support a growing population, relieve demands on current road systems and, provide better home-to-work access.



General infrastructure provisions that would foster better access to basic living needs and business growth were also highlighted as an economic development concern. Discussion involved topics such as information technology, Wi-Fi and high-speed internet connectivity, and the regulation of drinking-water and sanitary-sewer services. While discussions on infrastructure varied to some degree among the committees, all committees agreed that infrastructure improvements were needed to continue to attract businesses and industries to Delaware, provide Delaware residents with basic, necessary services, and keep pace with the infrastructure demands accompanying the rapid growth and development of the region.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

While the state enjoys a relatively strong economy overall, including the real estate market, the rapid escalation of housing prices has reduced the availability and accessibility of affordable housing throughout Delaware. The lack of affordable owner- and renter-occupied housing may discourage new workers, especially young people, from coming into the state or moving within the state, and may prompt others to leave the state entirely. Eventually, high cost housing can retard the growth of household wealth and borrowing capacity, which in turn limits household purchasing and investment capacities.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COLLABORATION AND COORDINATION

The committees recognized the increasingly competitive and challenging nature of sustaining a strong and diverse economy. Likewise, they noted Delaware's geographic position and size as key to maintaining and improving competition. These competitive advantages are best employed by working toward a common economic development vision through collaboration and coordination among the state's various stakeholders and economic development agents. Building a collaborative network was recognized by the committees as essential to preserving and capitalizing on the unique attributes of Delaware. To this end, a recommendation was made to establish a private-sector-based oversight council, appointed by the Governor, to work with DEDO in determining long-term economic development priorities consistent with CEDS recommendations and other statewide initiatives.



Sussex Action Plan

The Sussex Action Plan sets forth a series of goals, objectives, and recommendations that the Sussex Committee feels are appropriate to address economic development in Sussex County and achieve their vision for the future. The Sussex CEDS Committee's vision, goals, objectives, and recommendations are recounted in this section and collectively comprise the Sussex Action Plan.

VISION

Sussex County will excel in a highly competitive world and remain a destination of choice for residents, businesses, and visitors. Sussex County will promote and protect

- The region's unique culture, natural beauty, and quality of life
- Sustainable wage jobs
- A diverse economic development framework
- Necessary infrastructure, including transportation and affordable housing
- An experienced and ethnically diverse workforce

INFRASTRUCTURE

Goal 1: To provide incentives and the necessary infrastructure for individuals to live, visit, invest, and work in Sussex County

Objective 1-1: Provide incentives and the necessary infrastructure for individuals to live, visit, invest, and work in Sussex County.

Objective 1-2: Promote tourism by marketing the county's natural resources and quality of life (proximity to beach as well as metropolitan areas, tax structure).

Objective 1-3: Improve local and regional transportation circulation.

Objective 1-4: Improve utility-infrastructure capacity.

Objective 1-5: Improve information-technology availability (Wi-Fi).

Recommendation 1: Provide incentives for promoting density.

- Update county and municipal zoning and comprehensive plans.
- Ease restrictions on developers that build low- and middle-income housing.

Recommendation 2: Create and promote loan assistance programs.

- Create public-private partnerships to provide affordable-loan assistance programs.



Recommendation 3: Provide more rental-housing opportunities.

- Provide more incentives for private industry to establish land trusts.
- Offer tax relief and building-permit preference to developers that provide more rental opportunities.

Recommendation 4: Tourism Commission creates a local and regional marketing strategy.

- Southern Delaware tourism alliance, chambers of commerce, Nanticoke Indians, historic preservationists, and agrarian-based industry representatives meet and discuss over-arching strategy for Sussex County.
- Tourism Commission develops niche-marketing strategies to capitalize on individual sectors.

Recommendation 5: Identify ways of improving accessibility to buses, rail, limited-access highways, and airport to and from Sussex County.

- Conduct survey research to collect public opinion regarding needs for improved transportation.
- Analyze data to recognize future trends for transportation-infrastructure development.

Recommendation 6: Identify ways of improving options for circulation of local transportation through bike paths, tram and rail systems, and taxi services to and from destinations within Sussex County.

- Focus research on typically congested areas (e.g. Route 24, Route 1, Route 26, Route 54).
- Develop state and municipal support for tram and rail system that extends through all beach towns (Lewes-Rehoboth-Dewey-Bethany).
- Develop safe bike paths throughout municipalities.
- Support establishment of competing taxi and bus services.

Recommendation 7: Ensure that water, sewer, electric, and gas are accessible to and affordable for residents.

- Appoint county representative to identify problem areas.
- County and municipalities support the development of a plan to address residents who lack basic living needs.
- Provide opportunity for private and nonprofit sectors to efficiently and effectively assume a more responsible role.

Recommendation 8: Build upon basic systems to provide incentives for new or existing businesses.

- Municipalities, county, and state provide funding to initiate infrastructure improvements.
- Solicit local, regional, and national companies to relocate to Sussex County and capitalize on infrastructure improvements.

Recommendation 9: Develop public-private sector-sponsored sanitary sewer and water-distribution system in Coverdale Crossroads area.

Recommendation 10: Educate communities on importance of accessible Wi-Fi.

- Hire professional consultant to provide public workshops throughout Sussex County.



Recommendation 11: Ensure that potential hubs of economic activity and education have Wi-Fi accessibility (business centers, industrial parks, public schools, town centers).

- Areas of high population and economic activity take initiative and develop first Delaware municipality-wide Wi-Fi network.
- Invite companies and organizations interested in potential municipality-wide Wi-Fi access to discuss strategies of implementation and deployment.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND CULTURAL PROTECTION

Goal 2: To protect the county's natural resources and cultures that makes it unique and appealing

Sussex County's appeal is well known and documented. The Sussex CEDS Committee observes that the character and charm that make the area an attractive and comfortable place to live and work are threatened by the substantial growth that has occurred and continues to occur within the county. The Committee believes that in order to keep Sussex County an attractive and appealing region, its natural resources and history should be better promoted and protected through the following objectives, strategies, and recommendations.

Objective 2-1: Improve and protect the air and water quality.

Objective 2-2: Preserve open space.

Objective 2-3: Maintain and increase wildlife habitat.

Objective 2-4: Support historic preservation.

Objective 2-5: Coordinate and promote cultural programs throughout Sussex County.

Recommendation 1: Establish regulation that will enforce compliance with state and federal guidelines.

- Update comprehensive plans to reflect increased interest in preserving and improving air and water quality.
- Develop countywide initiative to increase participation of municipalities, private organizations, and farmers.

Recommendation 2: Educate businesses and public about economic and health benefits of clean air and water.

- Provide public workshops throughout Sussex County that address the need and importance (economically and aesthetically) of clean air and water for future generations.
- Solicit local companies to participate and become stakeholders in cleaner air and water.



Recommendation 3: Publicize test results at local forums and through local media outlets.

- Encourage the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC) and private environmental consultants to publicize results of air and water quality through local and state news outlets such as WBOC, *Sussex Countian*, *Delaware Wave*, and the *Cape Gazette*.

Recommendation 4: Create voluntary benchmarks exceeding federal and state guidelines that offer incentives for recycling, safe fertilizer use, and stormwater drainage.

Recommendation 5: Increase regulation and incentives for property owners to preserve open space.

- State, county, and municipal supported programs reward preservation of private land.
- Statewide program supports the preservation of meaningful open space in rapidly developing areas.

Recommendation 6: Identify meaningful open space.

- State and county organizations identify potential areas of land preservation.
- Municipality-supported programs focus on and offer support for land acquisition.

Recommendation 7: Update comprehensive plans to reflect a priority on preserving meaningful open space.

Recommendation 8: Increase regulation and incentives for property owners to maintain and increase wildlife habitats.

- DNREC provides public workshops throughout Sussex County to educate public about necessity for wildlife preservation.

Recommendation 9: Create parks and protected lands near Inland Bays for wildlife habitats.

- Offer private landowners incentives to create protected lands.

Recommendation 10: Establish a land trust for wildlife.

- State, county, municipal, and private funds support a land trust that ensures protection of wildlife habitats.

Recommendation 11: Streamline activities among various historic-preservation groups.

- Collaborate between municipal historic-preservation groups and statewide programs to ensure efforts are combined and focused.
- Establish one historic-preservation group comprising representatives from all areas of Sussex County.

Recommendation 12: Educate public about commercial and cultural values of historic preservation.

- County works in conjunction with University of Delaware's Center for Historic Architecture and Design (CHAD) and local historic-preservation groups to educate public on importance of historic preservation.



Recommendation 13: Provide tax incentives.

- State and municipalities offer incentives to private owners to rehabilitate historical buildings.

Recommendation 14: Raise revenue for historic preservation through tours, festivals, and research grants.

Recommendation 15: Explore the creation of a historic-land trust.

- County convenes meeting among all historic groups and private organizations interested in creating a historic-land trust.

Recommendation 16: Sussex assumes greater responsibility in promoting countywide cultural programs.

- Convene a steering committee in Sussex County comprising all cultural groups.
- Combine efforts between nonprofit organizations and cultural groups.
- Identify current and potential programs.

Recommendation 17: Develop marketing strategy to promote Sussex County.

- Steering committee promotes collaboration and advertisement among all cultural groups.

Recommendation 18: Build and develop an “Arts & Culture Center.”

DIVERSIFICATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Goal 3: To maintain, expand, create, and attract a diverse economic base

Diversity of business is recognized by the Sussex CEDS Committee as a key to maintaining and expanding the county’s long-term economic vitality. Creating incentives and strategies for people to invest and establish business through formal public and private coordination is considered important in achieving this goal.

Objective 3-1: Maintain a favorable tax climate, offering startup, relocation, and employment tax credits and incentives.

Objective 3-2: Create initiatives to grow new business and encourage entrepreneurship.

Objective 3-3: Coordinate efforts between counties to attract business and ensure efforts are additive.

Objective 3-4: Create a diverse business consortium to broadly address economic expansion and sustainability and recommend economic priorities for the county.



Recommendation 1: Develop a lobbying group comprising area chambers of commerce and existing business groups.

- Representatives from participating chambers of commerce and existing businesses lobby state and municipal officials.

Recommendation 2: Establish a county economic development steering committee that includes a representative from DEDO.

- DEDO provides a list of potential businesses and individuals to participate in countywide steering committee.
- Define “favorable tax climate” for county.
- Identify market needs.
- Recruit legal assistance to help draft legislation in support of county economic development.

Recommendation 3: Launch and promote entrepreneurship-education opportunities in Sussex County.

- Convene meeting among Delaware Technical and Community College, Sussex County representatives, and local businesses to address workforce needs.
- Create educational programs through Delaware Technical and Community College based upon identified needs.
- Identify business sectors and industries needed for increasing and changing demands of the county.

Recommendation 4: Implement and promote a virtual business portal to provide resources for entrepreneurs.

- Create steering committee to address needs of community and provide resources through the virtual business portal.
- Actively promote and emphasize to the local business community the time- and money-saving benefits of a virtual business portal.

Recommendation 5: Appoint or hire a chief recruiter to administer and foster new business for each county.

- Recruiter will work in coordination with Governor’s liaison and other established parties.
- Recruiter will recruit and attract interested businesses to relocate to Delaware.
- Programs will be implemented to provide incentives to compete with regional states.
- Host business-and-industry orientation conference or forum.

Recommendation 6: Refine Industry Cluster Initiative and identify which ones should be better addressed in Sussex or statewide.

Recommendation 7: Develop quality resource center for workforce development.



Recommendation 8: Appoint liaison to Governor to create and lead steering groups and work with parties such as DEDO, other state agencies, and area chambers of commerce.

- Enlist support and cooperation among all levels of government in partnership with private sector, local planning agencies, and Congressional delegation.

Recommendation 9: Institute a tri-county new-business orientation or forum.

Recommendation 10: Develop business-to-business online, Web-based directory.

Recommendation 11: Implement County CEDS.

- Create consortium modeled after Delaware Business Roundtable that will assume responsibility of current CEDS committee.

Recommendation 12: Establish Sussex County Business Roundtable group.

EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Goal 4: To grow and nurture a well-trained workforce that supports higher paying job opportunities – thus supporting a higher standard of living

Education and workforce capacity is a key component of economic development. As the Sussex CEDS Committee notes, the education and training of students should reflect the workforce demands of the county, which will lead to increased opportunities and incentive for long-term residents while attracting new businesses. The following objectives and recommendations were identified as necessary in achieving this goal.

Objective 4-1: Grow and nurture a well-trained workforce that supports higher paying job opportunities – thus supporting a higher standard of living.

Objective 4-2: Align educational offerings and workforce-development programs with the evolving needs of the marketplace.

Recommendation 1: Review and address current educational achievement gaps in Delaware.

- Combine statewide group efforts to improve education, allowing representation from both public and private organizations as well as parents of school-age children.

Recommendation 2: Interview businesses about funding opportunities and training opportunities.

- Department of Education and Delaware Economic Development Office conduct surveys and interviews of current businesses about present and future educational and training needs.
- Determine the types of jobs that need to be filled.



Recommendation 3: Evaluate labor-market statistics and conduct a SWOT analysis.

- Delaware Economic Development Office develops a vision for the future of labor in Delaware and conducts an internal SWOT analysis.
- Distribute questionnaires and informational surveys to local businesses to determine training needs.

Recommendation 4: Develop a consortium of business leaders to develop a workforce-training program and identify resources to offset financial investment needed to maintain highly skilled workforce.

- Create consortium to address the current problem of “brain-drain” in Sussex County and reverse its effects by developing high-skilled jobs.
- Apply for federal and state grants that will help defer the costs for high school and community-college work programs.

Recommendation 5: Develop customer-care/better-standards organization for expanding training opportunities for variety of industries.

Recommendation 6: Expand current health-education programs with marketplace demands.

- Align nursing and allied health education to address critical shortage and thereby create new jobs paying in the \$48,000 range.



Kent Action Plan

The Kent Action Plan sets forth a series of goals, objectives, and recommendations that the Kent Committee feels are appropriate to address economic development in Kent County and achieve their vision for the future. The Kent CEDS Committee's vision, goals, objectives, and recommendations are recounted in this section and collectively comprise the Kent Action Plan.

VISION

While capitalizing on and preserving its small-town, agricultural, and historic characteristics and its status as the home of major government and higher-education facilities, Kent County will, through

- Infrastructure improvement
- A diverse, qualified workforce
- Unified public and private stakeholders

support an economy that fosters and maintains a diverse set of industries, providing residents with quality jobs.

DIVERSITY OF BUSINESSES

Goal 1: To maintain and attract a diverse business and industrial base in Kent County

The Kent CEDS Committee recognizes the need for a diverse set of businesses and industries in order to remain economically competitive nationally and internationally. Major economic drivers including the Dover Air Force Base, higher-educational facilities, and state and local government are present in Kent County, and the Committee wishes to ensure the continued presence of these drivers while diversifying the economy. The Committee feels that action on the following objectives and recommendations should be taken to address key business diversity issues in Kent County.

Objective 1-1: Market Kent County to those industries that can diversify the economy.

Objective 1-2: Enhance business-retention and -expansion efforts.

Recommendation 1: Complete Kent County Economic development Plan that defines desired industry targets and plans for advertising to and recruiting target industries.

Recommendation 2: Make direct business contact to assess current business climate and potential improvement.

Recommendation 3: Support Delaware Economic Development Office (DEDO)/Delaware State University (DSU) high-tech research incubator with increased funding.



Recommendation 4: Generate funding devoted to assessing and expanding the number of “shovel-ready” business and industrial parks within the county.

Recommendation 5: Coordinate with Dover Air Force Base and its supporting businesses to protect and support the mission of the Dover Air Force Base.

EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Goal 2: To maintain and foster the development of a workforce with the resources to maintain high-paying jobs

Workforce development and education initiatives are essential to economic development. The Kent CEDS Committee recognizes that preparing the state’s students and workforce for existing and future opportunities will help Delaware to retain and attract new businesses. The Committee feels that action on the following objectives and recommendations should be taken to address key educational and workforce issues in Kent County.

Objective 2-1: Provide training necessary to stabilize and expand the labor pool available for higher-paying jobs.

Objective 2-2: Create incentives for recent high school and college graduates to stay and work in Delaware.

Objective 2-3: Graduate work-ready students from high school.

Recommendation 1: Focus efforts on the creation of jobs with wages equal to or greater than 130% of the median wage in Kent County.

Recommendation 2: Align curriculum with needs of targeted industries identified in Kent County Economic development Plan and develop new curriculum, as needed.

Recommendation 3: Evaluate and refocus job-placement programs, as needed, to reflect targeted industries.

Recommendation 4: Conduct a study to investigate the reasons that recent graduates are leaving Delaware and develop baseline data on the rate of retention of recent graduates.

QUALITY OF LIFE



Goal 3: To ensure that economic development activities respect those characteristics that make Kent County a unique place to live and work

The Kent CEDS Committee recognizes the importance of protecting, preserving, and marketing the county's unique attributes in order to demonstrate that Kent County is a desirable place to live, work, and visit. The Committee feels that action on the following objectives and recommendations is necessary to address key quality-of-life issues in Kent County.

Objective 3-1: Target economic development activities in a manner that ensures that the intensity and use of the activity is consistent with the character of the area.

Objective 3-2: Plan for and target growth to those areas most appropriate to accommodate it.

Objective 3-3: Preserve Kent County's rural character in the form of farmland and open space.

Objective 3-4: Maintain and increase the economic viability of agriculture in Kent County.

Recommendation 1: Protect and further the tourism industry as a target industry for economic development in Kent County.

Recommendation 2: Build and enhance facilities, including the Delaware Civic Center, to support the hosting of major events, conventions, and conferences for the state.

Recommendation 3: Create plans that respect local, unique characteristics.

Recommendation 4: Continue legislative appropriations for farmland preservation in Kent County.

Recommendation 5: Utilize transfer-of-development rights or other regulatory mechanisms to preserve farmland in Kent County.

Recommendation 6: Ensure state support and funding of university research aimed at increasing the productivity of Delaware's agricultural industry and diversifying and expanding markets for Delaware's agricultural products.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Goal 4: To provide Kent County residents with access to a sound and affordable housing stock

The provision of affordable housing is recognized as a key component of Kent County's economic development strategy. Affordable housing is a key ingredient necessary to attract and maintain a viable workforce and business and industrial base. The Kent CEDS Committee feels that



action on the following objectives and recommendations should be taken to address affordable housing issues in Kent County.

Objective 4-1: Increase the availability of affordable rental and owner-occupied housing to Kent County residents of all income levels.

Recommendation 1: Define the target markets for affordable-housing programs in Kent County.

Recommendation 2: Evaluate regulatory methods to provide affordable housing through the Kent County comprehensive-planning process and implement those methods, as appropriate. Methods to evaluate include, but are not limited to, moderately-priced-dwelling-unit ordinances, inclusionary zoning, and permitting higher-density development in appropriate areas.

Recommendation 3: Ensure the creation of federal, state, local, and nonprofit partnerships to assure the creation of affordable housing.

Recommendation 4: Explore and expand the use of nonprofit approaches, including Community Land Trusts, to provide access to affordable housing.

Recommendation 5: Create incentives for builders and developers to construct housing within determined target markets and price-points.

Recommendation 6: Support the increased development of live-near-your-work projects.

PARTNERSHIPS

Goal 5: To bring public and private stakeholders together for work on economic development

Collaborative networks are essential in economic development in order to maximize the limited resources available. The Kent CEDS Committee feels that partnerships are an important component of a strategy to improve the economy, and that action should focus on the following objectives and recommendations to address partnership issues.

Objective 5-1: Allocate government resources to specific economic development action steps.

Objective 5-2: Enable coordination between private, state, county, and local economic development stakeholders.

Objective 5-3: Establish consistent policies across public entities.



Recommendation 1: In coordination or partnership with the Central Delaware Economic Development Council, ensure that dedicated funding for economic development activities and a process to annually evaluate projects for funding are in place in Kent County.

Recommendation 2: Coordinate with Dover Air Force Base and its supporting businesses to protect and support the mission of the Dover Air Force Base.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Goal 6: To provide Kent County with adequate infrastructure and transportation resources to support economic development

Quality infrastructure is essential to any area's economic vitality. The Kent CEDS Committee recognizes the importance of providing a variety of infrastructure types, including, but not limited to, transportation, telecommunications and Internet connectivity, water, sewer, and educational infrastructure. The Committee feels that action should focus on the following objectives and recommendations in order to address infrastructure issues.

Objective 6-1: Provide adequate utilities to meet the needs of business centers, residential growth areas, and existing communities that need infrastructure improvements.

Objective 6-2: Provide an adequate vehicle, bicycle, pedestrian, freight, and public transportation network to meet the needs of business centers and residential growth areas.

Objective 6-3: Provide adequate education infrastructure.

Recommendation 1: Identify infrastructure deficiencies by utilizing the work of existing organizations such as the Dover/Kent MPO, where feasible, and further study where needed.

Recommendation 2: Utilize public-private partnerships and intergovernmental coordination mechanisms to fund needed infrastructure improvements.

Recommendation 3: Advocate that Kent County receive its fair share of state resources.

Recommendation 4: Ensure adequate public facilities are in place for both new and existing development.

Recommendation 5: In coordination or partnership with the Central Delaware Economic Development Council, establish a committee to prioritize most needed infrastructure improvements and seek EDA and other funding for these improvements.



Recommendation 6: Generate funding devoted to assessing and expanding the number of “shovel-ready” business and industrial parks within the county.

Recommendation 7: Coordinate with Dover Air Force Base and its supporting businesses to protect and support the mission of the Dover Air Force Base.



New Castle Action Plan

The New Castle Action Plan sets forth a series of goals, objectives, and recommendations that the New Castle Committee feels are appropriate to address economic development in New Castle County and achieve their vision for the future. The New Castle CEDS Committee's vision, goals, objectives, and recommendations are recounted in this section and collectively comprise the New Castle Action Plan.

VISION

The New Castle County region will maintain its excellent quality of life, characterized by its affordable cost of living, diverse populace, attractive physical environment, geographically compact size, and key mid-Atlantic location with accessibility to major metropolitan areas. While preserving and protecting assets, New Castle County will continue to develop its top-notch environment for both large and small businesses. Through strong partnerships among governments, industries, businesses, and academia, this environment will nurture diverse business development, foster entrepreneurship to create high-quality, high-skill jobs, and enhance excellent post-secondary education supported by strong public schools and responsive vocational programs that prepare a workforce able to compete in the new economy.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Goal 1: To create and maintain infrastructure to support economic development, target growth, and preserve a high quality of life

The New Castle CEDS Committee recognizes that, in order for economic development to be successful, infrastructure must be available in locations targeted for growth. To attract and sustain business and industry in New Castle County, issues and opportunities related to the physical components of economic development, such as water supply and quality, wastewater, transportation, energy, roadways, and telecommunications, need to be identified and addressed. Upgrading aging infrastructure and building capacity to support new growth opportunities, redevelop existing properties, and restore brownfields is essential. While infrastructure upgrades and maintenance are critical, the New Castle CEDS Committee also understands that preserving and enhancing a region's quality of life is paramount to its economic viability.

Objective 1-1: Make appropriate infrastructure improvements/expansions and secure necessary funding to attract diverse industries to New Castle County.

Objective 1-2: Target economic development activities in areas that are designated for growth while allowing for economic diversification and retaining the region's quality of life.



Objective 1-3: Aggressively market assets of the region, including geographic location, accessibility, cost of living, quality of life, and business-friendly climate.

Recommendation 1: Secure adequate funding for infrastructure planning, improvements, and expansions.

- Create a public-private partnership to fund transportation, water, sewer, and telecommunications infrastructure.
- Support infrastructure expansion and improvements with sufficient government funding of capital-improvement programs.

Recommendation 2: Moderate energy-rate increases.

- Enhance electric-transmission capacity on the Delmarva Peninsula to limit, insofar as possible, significant electric power-rate increases in the future for commercial and industrial customers.

Recommendation 3: Expand the telecommunications infrastructure to provide Delaware residents and businesses with affordable access to broadband connections.

Recommendation 4: Enlist support and cooperation among all levels of government in partnership with the private sector, local planning agencies, and Delaware’s Congressional delegation.

Recommendation 5: Develop a statewide urban policy and reinvestment plan in concert with Livable Delaware initiatives.

Recommendation 6: Create and/or promote new investment programs.

- Develop public-private investment programs, especially for new business startups and business retention/expansion.
- Streamline the permitting process and provide comprehensive liability relief for brownfield redevelopment.
- Establish a comprehensive website resource to identify “shovel-ready” economic development sites and provide a site-selection database of commercial properties.
- Identify underutilized/vacant non-residential sites greater than five acres and provide ownership contact information on state, county, and private-sector websites.

Recommendation 7: Increase coordination and cooperation.

Recommendation 8: Develop marketing plan.

- Define assets and create and implement a comprehensive marketing plan.

Recommendation 9: Obtain funding support.

- Obtain federal, state, and private funding to support the development of New Castle County–area marketing plan(s).



- Develop collaborative partnerships to launch a one-stop online business portal with site-selection tools and programs.

ACCOUNTABLE AND RESPONSIVE GOVERNMENT

Goal 2: To maintain pro-business, responsive, and accountable government to support existing business and attract entrepreneurial ventures

Delaware has been able to capitalize on its small size and is known for its business-friendly and responsive government. The New Castle CEDS Committee acknowledges that Delaware's governmental entities will need to continue to quickly respond to economic change, through new legislation and strong incentives, in order to enhance the competitiveness of existing businesses, nurture emerging businesses, and recruit new entrepreneurial ventures.

Objective 2-1: Prepare legislation to accommodate an improved and responsive land-use system.

Objective 2-2: Develop additional public-private incentives to promote start-up businesses, invest in workforce development, and link academic resources to industry.

Objective 2-3: Develop legislation to provide funding for local government economic development plans and initiatives that can be used to leverage public dollars and stimulate private investment.

Recommendation 1: Streamline local government land-use review and permitting processes.

- Convene a countywide committee to examine county and municipal land-use systems with respect to being more flexible and responsive to accommodate economic development initiatives while maintaining a high quality of life.
- Identify which brownfield sites are priorities for revitalizing an area and work with state agencies to develop enhanced management approaches to hasten brownfield redevelopment.

Recommendation 2: Increase coordination and cooperation.

- Enlist support and cooperation among state and local governments and nonprofit agencies.

Recommendation 3: Provide assistance and incentives to promote start-up business and workforce development.

Recommendation 4: Prepare legislation to support local government economic development initiatives that provides a funding program supportive of local government economic development planning and project implementation.



BUSINESS DIVERSITY

Goal 3: To develop a diversity of businesses, both large and small, that supports cluster-based economic development

In the past, business giants such as The DuPont Company and MBNA America have dominated New Castle County's economic landscape. Unfortunately, these dominant employers have been impacted by downsizing and corporate buyouts and no longer drive the state's economy. Today, New Castle County is home to a diverse business community and is within the region's growing pharmaceutical and biotechnology corridor. Some of New Castle County's largest employers include AIG Marketing, Inc., Agilent Technologies, Inc., AstraZeneca, AstroPower, Avon Products, Inc., Christiana Care Health System, Ciba-Geigy, Delaware Racing Association, DuPont, First USA, Greenwood Trust Company, Household International, Motiva Enterprises, LLC, PFPC, Inc., PNC Bank, St. Francis Healthcare Services, Verizon of Delaware, Inc., W.L. Gore & Associates, Inc., Wilmington Trust Company, and the Wilmington Savings Fund Society. Strengthening the competitiveness of existing economic drivers while increasing business diversity will be the key to New Castle County's continued economic vitality.

Objective 3-1: Develop strategies and expand partnerships to support and grow existing businesses, both large and small.

Objective 3-2: Develop competitive strategies to respond to threats of outsourcing, loss of employees, business consolidation, out-migration of workforce, and global competition.

Objective 3-3: Expand and improve infrastructure to both support existing and create new clusters of high-skill, high-income economic activity.

Recommendation 1: Host an economic development policy forum.

Recommendation 2: Promote and support an entrepreneurial culture.

- Create unified, statewide entrepreneurship institute to work with nonprofits that assist potential entrepreneurs.

Recommendation 3: Increase coordination and cooperation.

- Enlist support and cooperation among all levels of government, public- and private-sector businesses, DelDOT, and transportation management associations.

Recommendation 4: Ensure that existing economic development incentives are effective and utilized as intended.

- Assess and evaluate effectiveness of existing economic development incentives.
- Determine need for incentive disclosure legislation requiring that Delaware disclose and post online all firm-specific incentives.



Recommendation 5: Develop new economic development incentives as needs are identified.

- Establish new tax breaks and incentives to respond to business threats.
- Increase the percentage amount of research-and-development tax credits.
- Establish wage-based incentives tied to the development of higher-paying jobs.
- Target incentives to support growth industries (companies with 20% or more annual sales revenue growth for four straight years).

Recommendation 6: Ensure adequate private funding and investment in infrastructure to support sustainable economic activity.

- Encourage private-sector investment in infrastructure.

Recommendation 7: Ensure adequate public funding of capital-improvement programs to support infrastructure expansion and improvements.

- Ensure adequate funding to draft and implement infrastructure, transportation, and urban plans.

EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE TRAINING

Goal 4: To continuously improve the educational system and workforce-training programs to respond to changing employment needs

The New Castle CEDS Committee recognizes that, in order to gain a competitive advantage in today's global economy, more rigorous educational and workforce-training programs are needed. School and training institution curricula must be better aligned with industry demands to create higher-wage, higher-skill jobs. Improvements to the educational system and workforce-training programs that better prepare students for technology-oriented jobs, the knowledge-based economy, and higher education are needed.

Objective 4-1: Develop the human resources necessary to optimize workforce effectiveness through support of job-oriented educational programs.

Objective 4-2: Utilize institutions of higher learning to support the attraction, creation, enhancement, and incubation of businesses.

Objective 4-3: Assist educational and training institutions to better align curricula and programs to industry demands, from entry-level to higher-skill occupations.

Recommendation 1: Support job-oriented education programs.

- Seek federal, state, and private funding to support statewide, job-oriented education programs.
- Continue to provide state incentives to businesses offering job-specific training.

Recommendation 2: Align high school curricula with industry demands.



- Develop high school courses based on industry skill needs.
- Provide industry-recognized certification for high-skill, high-need vocations at the high school level (e.g., electronics or auto mechanics).

Recommendation 3: Enhance opportunities for educational achievement.

- Continue to demand more rigorous high school math and English achievement standards.
- Make GED and remedial programs more accessible.
- Offer dual-enrollment/expand AP course offerings for college-bound HS juniors and seniors.
- Utilize state-lottery revenue to provide higher-education incentives (e.g., stipends for in-state college students regardless of income).

Recommendation 4: Increase coordination and cooperation.

- Establish a consortium consisting of representatives from industries, state chamber, business leaders, public/private (K-12) education institutions, DEDO and DOE, private-sector and nonprofit organizations, the Metropolitan Wilmington Urban League, and the business roundtable.

Recommendation 5: Expand co-op programs.

- Determine which industries would benefit most from co-op programs and establish incentives for businesses to implement new and expanded co-op programs to link higher-ed resources with industry needs.

Recommendation 6: Provide incentive programs for high-need job areas.

- Establish incentives for science and technology college majors (e.g., in-state tuition rates for high-achieving, non-residents).
- Provide incentives and funding for teacher and faculty training in high-need job areas.

Recommendation 7: Build support for entrepreneurship.

- Provide resources to expand the Delaware State Enterprise Center and encourage partnerships with SBDC and colleges with entrepreneurship classes.
- Incorporate entrepreneurship into high school curricula.

Recommendation 8: Enhance workforce-training programs.

- Expand workforce-training programs to meet industry skill-demand needs.

COLLABORATIVE NETWORKS

Goal 5: To cultivate productive and collaborative networks, foster leadership, and forge alliances to sustain and direct economic growth



Collaborative networks between government, academia, and businesses need to be nurtured to respond to and leverage economic opportunities. In New Castle County, successful partnerships have already been established to attract and grow start-ups in high-technology fields at the Delaware Technology Park, help Delaware's small- and medium-sized manufacturers improve their global competitiveness through the Delaware Manufacturer Extension Partnership, and leverage Delaware's New Economy Initiatives. Economic development stakeholders need to be mobilized to formalize partnerships work cooperatively on regional economic development strategies.

Objective 5-1: Promote statewide coordination and cooperation on economic development to match the needs and capabilities of high-growth businesses and industry clusters.

Objective 5-2: Participate in the development of a state economic development plan that allocates government resources to specific economic development action steps.

Objective 5-3: Support the creation of active, cooperative, public and private partnerships for work on economic development projects.

Recommendation 1: Convene economic development stakeholders.

- Schedule state-sponsored and -funded economic development policy forum to bring stakeholders together.
- Identify possible outcomes for economic development coordination and cooperation.

Recommendation 2: Organize stakeholders to guide economic development policy development.

- Form public-private Economic Policy Council to foster economic and community development.

Recommendation 3: Provide one-stop, business-friendly online information and resources about doing business in Delaware.

- Assess comprehensiveness of DEDO's website.
- Develop an economic development clearinghouse/repository website.

Recommendation 4: Continue the CEDS process.

- DEDO takes pro-active role in developing plan to allocate resources.

Recommendation 5: Increase coordination and cooperation.

Seek input and representation from all levels of government in concert with public-private partners and academia.



Wilmington Action Plan

The Wilmington Action Plan sets forth a series of goals, objectives, and recommendations that the Wilmington Committee feels are appropriate to address economic development in Wilmington and the surrounding area and achieve their vision for the future. The Wilmington CEDS Committee's vision, goals, objectives, and recommendations are recounted in this section and collectively comprise the Wilmington Action Plan.

VISION

As the state's largest city, Wilmington seeks to be an increasingly vibrant and culturally diverse city composed of neighborhoods that are attractive and inviting to a broad range of residents, workers, employers and visitors. Through the careful development and management of its waterfront, port, neighborhoods, civic and educational institutions, infrastructure, commercial and industrial districts, parks, transportation and information networks, and historical assets, the city will reduce poverty and create new and expanded economic opportunities that benefit the entire metropolitan area and state.

RESPONSIVE GOVERNMENT AND COLLABORATIVE NETWORKS

Goal 1: To pursue economic development policies and programs that directly and effectively address the concerns and needs of the residents and businesses located within the city and metropolitan area, with a strong focus on poverty reduction.

The Wilmington CEDS Committee recognizes that the Wilmington area economy is increasingly connected to and affected by the global economy and that future economic development plans and programs need to be increasingly creative and sophisticated. To compete effectively in our increasingly competitive environment, local and state government in Delaware will need to collaborate more with a variety of actors in the public, private, and nonprofit sectors. These collaborations need to be done in a manner that allows Wilmington to capitalize on its strengths and competitive advantages, address the needs and concerns of its residents and businesses, and create new and expanded economic opportunities for all residents, especially those who have had limited opportunities in the past.

Objective 1-1: Establish an ongoing economic development planning process that is broadly inclusive of the community.

Objective 1-2: Strengthen coordination of economic development policies and activities across city offices and departments.

Objective 1-3: Enhance coordination for economic development between the city of Wilmington and New Castle County.



Objective 1-4: On a continuing basis, obtain and analyze data that describe economic conditions and trends within the Wilmington area and the state, and make these research findings available to the public.

Objective 1-5: Enhance awareness in the minds of residents, employers, and visitors about the quality of life in the Wilmington area and the many cultural, recreational, residential, and business resources that exist in the area.

Recommendation 1: In the near term, the Wilmington CEDS Committee should meet on a regular basis to advance the CEDS planning process. As necessary, the Committee should enlist the support and involvement of the city, New Castle County, and state leaders from the public, private, and nonprofit sectors.

Recommendation 2: Study the desirability and feasibility of establishing a “Wilmington Area Economic Development Council” that would engage in planning and coordination across city and county government agencies, DEDO and other state agencies, as well as nonprofit and private-sector organizations and developers. This council would eventually assume the planning responsibilities of the Wilmington CEDS Committee and have the capacity to help implement economic development activities that are of mutual interest to the city and county.

Recommendation 3: Seek grant support for the staffing of the Wilmington CEDS Committee and, if established, the proposed Wilmington Area Economic Development Council from EDA and other sources on a continuing basis.

Recommendation 4: Design and carry out a public-relations campaign that highlights the positive characteristics of the Wilmington area.

Recommendation 5: Create an ongoing economic-analysis program, in cooperation with the University of Delaware, which obtains and analyzes data that describe economic conditions and trends within the Wilmington area and the state and makes these research findings available to policy-makers and the public.

EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE TRAINING

Goal 2: To continuously enhance K-12 education and workforce-training programs so that present and future workers possess the knowledge and skills needed by employers in all sectors

The Wilmington CEDS Committee understands the central importance of a well-educated and highly trained workforce. If our community is to build and sustain a vibrant local economy that allows all its



residents to achieve a decent quality of life, it must provide affordable education and training that is of the highest quality.

Objective 2-1: Increase the involvement of a cross-section of employers in the planning of education and training programs.

Objective 2-2: Increase the use of experiential learning opportunities in K-12 education and workforce-training programs.

Objective 2-3: Increase the supply of job-training and workforce-development opportunities, especially for persons between the ages of 16–24.

Objective 2-4: Establish innovative programs that enhance the ability of ex-offenders to obtain needed training that enables them to re-enter the workforce.

Recommendation 1: Identify and match secondary-education and workforce-development curricula to the specific needs of local industry.

Recommendation 2: In all education and training initiatives, make more extensive use of experiential learning techniques, such as field trips, apprenticeships, internships, and service learning.

Recommendation 3: Place a stronger focus on entrepreneurship in the curricula of our schools and training programs.

Recommendation 4: Establish a “prison to work” initiative that provides job-skill and entrepreneurial training to ex-offenders.

Recommendation 5: Promote the use of the “Workforce Opportunity Tax Credit Program.”

BUSINESS DIVERSITY AND DEVELOPMENT

Goal 3: To transform the local economy into one which offers a greater diversity of small, medium, and large employers that provide good paying jobs in a variety of employment sectors

The Wilmington CEDS Committee recognizes that a high percentage of Delaware’s largest employers are located in Wilmington and in New Castle County. Given the dynamics of the global marketplace that result in corporate restructuring, downsizing, and mergers that cannot be controlled locally, the Committee strongly recommends that sustained efforts be made to make the local economy as industrially diverse as possible by incubating and growing the city’s own businesses and attracting outside firms.



Objective 3-1: Expand the supply of good paying jobs in sectors other than the FIRE sector.

Objective 3-2: Increase financial and technical support to small businesses.

Objective 3-3: Increase the availability and access of mainstream retail financial services across neighborhoods to reduce use of payday-lending services.

Objective 3-4: Expand the availability of retail and entertainment services in the central portions of Wilmington.

Objective 3-5: Expand employment opportunities for ex-offenders.

Objective 3-6: Attract the cruise industry to the Port of Wilmington.

Recommendation 1: Work with financial institutions to establish a “Small Business Development Fund” that is specifically tailored to the needs of businesses that do not have access to traditional sources of capital.

Recommendation 2: In addition to the provision of training, the proposed “prison to work” initiative should also include a special loan fund that provides start-up capital to ex-offenders who seek to establish a small business.

Recommendation 3: Adopt a “neighborhood corridor” planning approach that adds and integrates retail businesses into neighborhoods through the use of tax and other incentives.

Recommendation 4: Expand the city of Wilmington’s “flex space” redevelopment program to make older warehouse space available at low cost to small- and medium-sized businesses and encourage them to hire Wilmington residents and graduates of manpower-training programs.

HOUSING AND QUALITY OF LIFE

Goal 4: To create safe and livable neighborhoods that are socially and economically diverse that respect and preserve the historical character of the city

While creating and maintaining decent and affordable homes in pleasant and safe neighborhoods is a moral imperative, it’s also central to any successful economic development strategy. Adequately housed individuals and families living in decent neighborhoods who have access to affordable health and child care constitute a stable and dependable workforce. This also produces an environment that attracts new residents and businesses. The Wilmington CEDS Committee strongly supports efforts that ensure an adequate supply of housing of various styles, sizes, and prices.



Objective 4-1: Increase the supply of moderately priced housing in the central business district.

Objective 4-2: Strengthen the enforcement of housing quality standards in a uniform manner throughout the city.

Objective 4-3: Enhance the supply of good quality and affordable childcare and healthcare services.

Objective 4-4: Enhance the aesthetic quality of neighborhoods.

Recommendation 1: Expand the use of the “community policing” model of public safety.

Recommendation 2: Expand programs that improve the aesthetic quality of neighborhood streetscapes through façade improvement, tree planning, and enhanced street lighting.

Recommendation 3: Expand cooperation among city government departments, the Delaware State Housing Authority, the Wilmington Housing Partnership, and nonprofit and for-profit housing organizations to maintain the supply of affordable units and increase the supply of moderately priced units throughout the city.

Recommendation 4: Actively attract childcare and healthcare services to neighborhoods through the use of financial incentives and the elimination of regulatory barriers.



State Action Plan

The State CEDS Committee is tasked as the overall planning group for CEDS activities in Delaware and, as such, developed a statewide action plan for economic development in Delaware. The development of Delaware's economic development action plan required the State CEDS Committee to work on prioritizing those economic development approaches the committee members felt would best advance the goals of achieving sustainable economic development in Delaware and including all of the state's citizens in Delaware's economic prosperity. Economic development approaches were generated from the state committee's work, the regional CEDS committees' work, and a variety of previous and ongoing economic development initiatives that have been pursued in Delaware.

Delaware's economic development action plan is provided in this section of the Summary and comprises the state's vision and a series of goals, objectives, and recommendations for advancing Delaware's economy. Additionally, the state's action plan comprises a series of priority and pipeline projects that will be necessary to advance economic development in the state. These projects are listed and described in the economic development projects section of this Summary.

VISION

Delaware will excel in building economic prosperity and continue to be a destination of choice for residents, business, and visitors by promoting and protecting

- Diverse cultures, quality of life, natural beauty, location, and clean environment
- High-quality, high-skill, and family-sustaining job opportunities
- Diverse economic strategy that includes business retention, expansion, investment, and entrepreneurship
- Infrastructure (including transportation)
- Essential public services and information technology
- Superior educational system at all levels
- Strong public, private, and community partnerships and collaborations
- Experienced, skilled, educated, and ethnically and culturally diverse workforce
- Affordable housing (rental and owned)

DIVERSITY OF BUSINESSES

Goal 1: To maintain, attract, and expand a diversity of businesses, both large and small, that support economic development, including cluster-based initiatives



In order to remain economically competitive both nationally and internationally, Delaware needs to continuously monitor its diversity of businesses. The state is currently working on business-diversification activities including the cluster-industries approach and Venture Capital, Delaware Competitiveness Fund, Strategic Fund, Technology-Based Small-Business Seed Funds, and Virtual Emerging Technologies initiatives. Delaware should focus on the following objectives to address key diversity of business issues.

Objective 1-1: Market to industries that can diversify the state and local economies.

Recommendation 1: Coordinate state and county economic development efforts in addition to cluster-based and geographic initiatives.

- Match expansion and recruitment prospects with compatible regional assets.
- Appoint liaison to the Governor to create and lead steering groups and work with other parties such as DEDO, other state agencies, and area chambers of commerce to ensure the coordination of efforts.

Recommendation 2: Identify business sectors and industries needed for the increasing and changing demands of the state.

- Create a formal mechanism that aggressively evaluates current and future trends and develops action-oriented recommendations.

Recommendation 3: Create and implement a comprehensive marketing plan with federal, state, and local governments and private-sector coordination.

- Make state funding available to support development of marketing plan.
- Host business and industry conference(s) or forum(s).
- Continue to heavily market the state's public transportation access to New York and Washington, D.C., via rail and most of the global financial centers via nearby airports.
- Support minority business development.
- Transition the Delaware brand away from "the bargain state" toward "a place of innovation and excellence."

Objective 1-2: Enhance business retention and expansion efforts.

Recommendation 1: Develop baseline data to measure business expansion and retention.

- Develop a sample of Delaware businesses.
- Measure business longevity from sample.
- Measure average workforce size from sample.

Recommendation 2: Develop public-private partnerships to identify needed skills, tools, and resources.

- Adequately fund the Delaware Competitiveness Fund that makes one-time investments to preserve jobs at existing Delaware companies in the face of global competition.



- Work with the State Treasurer’s office to develop a strategy to identify and expand potential sources of venture capital. Consideration should be given to raising at least \$50 million from pension funds and other sources.
- Establish a fuel-cell research center in partnership with the private sector and the University of Delaware, furthering the goal of making Delaware a center for the evolving fuel-cell industry.
- Support the Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR) in Delaware. EPSCoR is a National Science Foundation program that provides states with the opportunity to significantly improve their respective scientific infrastructure by providing two dollars in federal funds for every dollar in funds committed by the states.
- Provide \$150,000 to support a coordinated effort between the University of Delaware, the Delaware Biotechnology Institute, the Delaware State University High Technology Incubator, Christiana Care, A.I. du Pont Children’s Hospital, and Delaware Technical and Community College. The funds would be used to create a staff position to develop a strategic plan, coordinate implementation, and secure additional funding.
- Establish an advisory board, in collaboration with the Delaware Biotechnology Institute, to identify opportunities that will enhance Delaware’s existing life sciences research endeavors as well as identify and assist new start-up operations.

Recommendation 3: Coordinate and support existing business expansion and retention efforts.

- Continue the investment of state revenue and resources in the development of biotechnology, specifically in the areas of agriculture, marine sciences, and human health.
- Identify financial holding companies with recruitment potential for executive visits, led by Governor.
- Market Delaware’s attributes to new web-based banks.

Recommendation 4: Identify annual growth trends of new business start-ups, retention, and expansion.

- Create an industry cluster knowledge-development program that will expand public- and private-sector knowledge of the importance and role of industry clusters in focusing and differentiating the growth strategy of Delaware’s economy.
- Seek opportunities to expand the growth of financial-service jobs that require higher-skill levels and command higher pay.
- Make direct contacts to assess the current business climate and potential for improvement.

Objective 1-3: Encourage and support the creation of entrepreneurial enterprises.

Recommendation 1: Expand and promote entrepreneurship educational opportunities available in Delaware.

- Implement and promote a virtual business portal to provide resources for entrepreneurs.
- In cooperation with nonprofits, develop a unified statewide entrepreneurship institute that assists potential entrepreneurs.



Recommendation 2: Coordinate and access existing incentives and efforts.

- Adequately fund Technology-Based Small-Business Seed Funds.
- Create a Virtual Emerging-Technologies Incubator.
- Identify and access funds to support DSU/DEDO high-tech research incubator.



Recommendation 3: Identify and develop needed resources, including funding.

- Attract, support, and develop innovative, gazelle-like businesses.
- Develop support systems that can respond to the rapid life cycle of business innovation, development, growth, and collapse of gazelle-like businesses.

Objective 1-4: Promote tourism.

Recommendation 1: Create a local and regional tourism-marketing strategy.

- Develop tourism commission.
- Develop or upgrade existing destination drivers—such as historical attractions and recreational resources to increase the number of visitors during off-peak seasons.
- Foster the creation of a formalized, resident-based crafts industry by linking and leveraging the power of craft artists already living and working in Delaware. “Handmade in Delaware” products would be of superior quality and capitalize on Delaware’s colonial, nautical, and agricultural traditions as well as Native American and Amish cultures.
- Develop and support a consistent and cohesive tourism message.

Recommendation 2: Enhance tourism-related development throughout Delaware, including an exploration of ways to develop new tourism attractions.

- Create a Delaware Tourism Fund of \$500,000 to \$1 million that would provide seed money to improve the attractiveness and functionality of destinations in the state.
- Enhance and build facilities to support the location of major conventions and conferences in Delaware.

Recommendation 3: Encourage activities and facilities that celebrate Delaware’s rich cultural heritage.

- Develop a statewide heritage-tourism program.
- Foster statewide support for historic preservation.
- Streamline activities among various historic-preservation groups and markets.
- Educate the public about both the commercial and cultural importance of historic preservation.
- Provide tax incentives (individual credits for structural rehabilitation projects).
- Raise money for historic-preservation cause through tours, festivals, and research grants.
- Explore the creation of a historic-land trust.

Recommendation 4: Coordinate and promote cultural programs throughout Delaware.

- Identify current and potential programs.
- Allow counties to assume leadership role in coordinating and promoting cultural programs.
- Convene steering committee.
- Develop marketing plan.

Objective 1-5: Maintain and increase the economic viability of agriculture in Delaware.



Recommendation 1: Practice diverse, high-value agriculture.

- Strengthen and create links between emerging research and agriculture practice.
- Direct the Department of Agriculture to prepare a set of recommendations, with appropriate funding requirements, to create a Farm Asset Revolving Fund to assist Delaware's farm community.
- Establish a crop insurance cost-share program, with an investment of \$500,000, to assist farmers in managing production risks.
- Increase conservation district incentives for farmers to utilize environmental stewardship practices.
- Support educational programs for farmers to enhance skills such as business planning, financial management, marketing, and risk management. Programs to educate the farm community and general public on the benefits of biotechnology should also be incorporated.
- Direct the Department of Agriculture to work with industry leaders, researchers, and the cooperative extension services of the University of Delaware and Delaware State University to develop a strategic plan and pilot program for the creation and commercialization of Delaware-grown specialty crops. Explore the potential establishment of a development farm to implement this initiative.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Goal 2: To provide and maintain necessary infrastructure to support economic development and make Delaware an attractive place to live, visit, and work

Quality infrastructure is essential to any area's economic vitality. Delaware needs to ensure that its infrastructure is maintained, improved, and expanded to allow for economic stability and growth. The state is currently working on several infrastructure initiatives including the Strategic Fund, a foundation for Delaware's economic development efforts that includes public infrastructure improvement; a Commuter Rail Task Force; and regional transportation improvements including Route 40 and Route 113 North/South. Delaware should work on the following objectives to address infrastructure issues.

Objective 2-1: Identify state, federal, and other funding sources for infrastructure improvements.

Recommendation 1: Provide sufficient government funding of capital improvement programs to support infrastructure expansion and improvements.

- Provide adequate funding for infrastructure planning.
- Increase one or more of the Transportation Trust Fund (TTF) revenues.
- Increase the TTF's borrowing program.
- Hedge costs where possible, utilizing techniques such as buying fuel supplies well in advance of anticipated price hikes.
- Approve legislation to create programs to leverage resources for infrastructure, transportation, and urban planning.



Objective 2-2: Increase the availability of affordable renter- and owner-occupied housing to residents of all income levels.

Recommendation 1: Define affordable housing.

- Establish a public-private group to develop uniform methodology in determining what constitutes affordable housing.
- Direct DSHA to determine what is deemed affordable for each region of the state and ensure information is widely distributed.

Recommendation 2: Provide incentives for promoting density.

- Input considerations into county/municipal zoning and comprehensive plans.

Recommendation 3: Establish funding mechanisms.

- Develop cooperative-ownership models.
- Create and/or promote loan assistance programs.
- Increase funds available to assist first-time homebuyers in purchasing a home through partnerships with the financial-services industry.
- Secure funding to develop and expand the use of community land trusts to create housing affordable to working families.
- Ensure availability of adequate state resources to leverage available federal funds for affordable housing.
- Form partnerships between governments, developers, and nonprofits to construct affordable housing.
- Recruit businesses to participate in “Live Near Your Work” program by sponsoring employer-assisted housing.
- Ensure sustained affordability through increased emphasis on energy-efficient building practices.

Recommendation 4: Review and implement appropriate regulatory methods to encourage development of affordable housing.

- Review and evaluate inclusionary housing practices in other areas.
- Work with county planning offices to identify potential regulatory changes.
- Work with elected officials to implement effective policies as appropriate.

Objective 2-3: Provide adequate utilities to meet the needs of business centers and residential growth areas as well as existing business centers and communities that need infrastructure improvements.

Recommendation 1: Implement stronger limits on sprawl to encourage the cost-effective expansion and use of infrastructure.

- Provide incentives to promote density.
- Input considerations into county/municipal zoning and comprehensive planning.



Recommendation 2: Establish baseline measure for major infrastructure deficiencies.

- Create a public-private work group to establish the baseline.
- Identify the areas in the state that have the greatest deficiencies.
- Assign the responsibility for coordinating the above activities to a state agency.

Recommendation 3: Ensure basic utilities are accessible and affordable.

- Develop benchmark for basic utilities.
- Identify areas that are below benchmark for basic utilities.
- Provide incentives to developers to build energy-efficient homes.
- Provide incentives to homebuyers to purchase energy-efficient homes.
- Continue to discourage development in areas not served or awaiting service by public utilities.

Recommendation 4: Expand basic systems to foster economic growth.

- Develop a collaborative model of infrastructure financing that spans either groups of towns or the entire rural, small-town network to lessen the heavy burden infrastructure has on small towns' limited resources.
- Utilize GIS to map the location of infrastructure and target development accordingly.
- Determine the feasibility of a comprehensive website resource to identify "shovel-ready" economic development sites and provide a site-selection database of commercial properties.

Objective 2-4: Provide adequate vehicle, bicycle, pedestrian, freight, and public transportation network to meet the needs of business centers and residential growth areas as well as existing business centers and residential areas that need transportation improvements.

Recommendation 1: Identify ways of improving accessibility to and improving circulation options for local transportation.

- Consider alternative solutions to managing commuter traffic, including the expansion of bus routes, development of a north/south network using existing unused rail lines, as well as exploration of needed east-west public transportation routes in Sussex and Kent Counties.
- Conduct a survey and analysis of current regional public transportation modes/possibilities.

Objective 2-5: Improve information technology.

Recommendation 1: Increase the availability, affordability, and quality of IT access to citizens and businesses throughout Delaware.

- Work with the Department of Technology and Information to conduct a study and, based on the findings, create a plan to ensure that Delaware is at the leading edge of the IT industry.
- Review the initiatives being undertaken by other states to develop technology centers.
- Review the availability of the current IT infrastructure to both large and small businesses and identify any gaps in service.



- Evaluate the potential for the state's IT infrastructure to be marketed as a competitive advantage for businesses.
- Explore the opportunity for a shared-infrastructure resource.
- Leverage the state's broadband as a geographic entity to support and expand Delaware's major technology-industry segments.
- Implement a strategy that will build on the national reputation of Delaware's Court of Chancery by extending that reputation to include IT litigation.
- Build on Delaware's IT infrastructure to develop the state as a center for logistics and e-commerce industries.

EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE

Goal 3: To continuously improve the educational system and foster the development of a well-trained workforce that supports high-quality, high-skill, and family-sustaining job opportunities thus creating a higher standard of living

Workforce-development and education initiatives are essential to economic development. Preparing the state's students and workforce for existing and future opportunities will help Delaware to retain and attract new businesses. The state is currently working on some educational and workforce initiatives including the Delaware Seed Scholarship and Teacher Mentoring. The recommendations found in this section are meant to complement the existing education/workforce programs and services currently underway. Delaware should focus on the following objectives to address key educational and workforce issues.

Objective 3-1: Align educational offerings and workforce-development programs with the evolving and immediate needs of the marketplace.

Recommendation 1: Utilize institutions of higher learning to support the attraction, creation, enhancement, and incubation of businesses.

- Determine which industries would benefit from co-op programs and have training capabilities.
- Establish business incentives to implement new/expanded co-op programs to link higher-education resources with industry needs.
- Establish incentives for science/technology college students.
- Provide incentives and funding for teacher/faculty training in high-demand areas.

Recommendation 2: Form a consortium of business leaders to develop a workforce-training program and identify resources to offset financial investment needed to maintain a skilled workforce.

- Survey local businesses to determine training needs and the types of jobs that remain unfilled.
- Identify trade-certification needs for high-skill jobs and align with high school, vocational technology, and higher-education programs.



- Provide tax credits from company investments in basic skill training and remedial education.
- Identify procedures to attract and train a strong financial workforce.
- Interview and educate businesses about funding and training opportunities.
- Develop a leadership academy that will focus on fostering collaborative leadership skills, engagement of youth in both economic and community development, expansion of industry-cluster research and management expertise, and integration of community-development assets and issues into comprehensive economic strategies.

Recommendation 3: Conduct a SWOT analysis of workforce and education systems within Delaware.

- Evaluate labor market statistics.
- Survey local businesses.

Objective 3-2: Improve existing educational opportunities and workforce-training programs.

Recommendation 1: Review and address current educational and workforce gaps in Delaware.

- Graduate work-ready students from high school.
- Develop curriculum for targeted industries.
- Continue to demand higher math & English high school achievement standards.
- Make AP, GED, and remedial programs more accessible.
- Incorporate entrepreneurship into high school curriculums.
- Establish standards and reimbursements to community colleges for non-credit career prep programs.

Recommendation 2: Provide training necessary to stabilize and expand the labor pool available for higher-paying jobs.

- Evaluate and refocus job-placement programs, as needed, to reflect targeted industries and market appropriate training.
- Determine the types of jobs that remain unfilled.
- Continue and, where appropriate, expand workforce-development training grants.

Objective 3-3: Create incentives for recent high school and college graduates to stay and work in Delaware.

Recommendation 1: Develop and implement action plan for graduate retention.

- Investigate reasons that recent graduates are leaving Delaware.
- Develop baseline data on the rate of retention of recent graduates.
- Develop incentives for graduates to stay and work in Delaware.
- Offer loan credits to graduates that stay and work in Delaware.



Goal 4: To ensure that economic development activities respect natural resources, character, and cultures that make Delaware a unique place to live and work

Delaware's natural resources, open space, rural character, and cultural heritage are attributes that make it unique and foster a high quality of life. It is important that Delaware works to protect, preserve, and market these attributes to demonstrate the state is a desirable place to live, work and visit.

Delaware should focus on the following objectives to address quality-of-life issues.

Objective 4-1: Target economic development activities in a manner that ensures that the intensity of activity is consistent with the character of the area and retains the region's quality of life.

Recommendation 1: Plan for and target growth to those areas most appropriate to accommodate it.

- Adhere to plans approved by Office of State Planning Coordination including county and municipal comprehensive plans and regional economic development plans.
- Prepare legislation to accommodate an improved, more responsive land-use system.
- Ensure that transportation planning and funding priorities for infrastructure improvements support the Livable Delaware initiative.

Recommendation 2: Develop a statewide urban policy and reinvestment plan in concert with the Livable Delaware initiative.

- Develop public-private investment programs especially for new business start-ups and business retention and expansion.
- Reach consensus between state, county, and municipal governments on coordination of future infrastructure needs and land use.

Objective 4-2: Preserve Delaware's rural character in the form of farmland and open space.

Recommendation 1: Preserve open space.

- Identify meaningful open space.
- Educate citizens, developers, and elected officials on the importance of open space.
- Develop plans and regulations that promote maintaining open space.

Recommendation 2: Preserve large, uninterrupted tracts of farmland.

- Produce a comprehensive state report to assess the adequacy of existing incentives for preserving farmland and open space and identify the need for additional resources and programs.
- Review Farmland Preservation Act.

Objective 4-3: Protect and preserve Delaware's natural resources and environment.

Recommendation 1: Improve and protect air and water quality.

- Increased regulation to protect Delaware's air and water.



- Educate citizens, developers, and elected officials on the importance of clean air and water.
- Publicize air- and water-quality test results.

Recommendation 2: Maintain and increase wildlife habitats.

- Develop regulations to preserve wildlife habitat.
- Educate citizens, developers, and elected officials on the importance of preserved wildlife habitat.

COLLABORATIVE NETWORKS

Goal 5: To cultivate productive and collaborative networks; create active, unified public- and private-sector partnerships, foster leadership, and forge alliances to improve business climate and quality of life

Collaborative networks are essential for economic development and maximizing the limited resources available. It is imperative that Delaware continues to form, foster, and advertise such partnerships in economic development projects in the future. Delaware should focus on the following objectives to address key collaborative network issues.

Objective 5-1: Promote tri-state and regional coordination and cooperation on economic development.

Recommendation 1: Host a state-sponsored and funded tri-state/regional economic development policy forum to include all stakeholders.

- Identify possible outcomes for economic development coordination.
- Form public-private Economic Policy Council to foster economic and community development.
- Reach consensus on competitive strategies at statewide/regional policy forum.

Objective 5-2: Develop, update, and implement a usable state comprehensive economic-development plan that allocates government resources to specific economic development action steps.

Recommendation 1: Provide government support for stated CEDS goals, priorities, and action items within CEDS plan.

- Establish a co-sponsored approach to strategy development and implementation of a comprehensive economic development initiative. This may require the use of an existing or new 501(c)(3) economic development authority at state and county levels.
- Develop legislation to provide funding for local governments' economic development plans and initiatives that can be used to leverage public dollars and stimulate investment.
- Allocate annual state funding support for viable economic development projects in order to leverage federal funds.



- Obtain agreement from Governor and legislature on acceptance of plan outcomes by end of 2009 legislative session.
- Develop a diverse business consortium (modeled after Delaware Business Roundtable) that will assume role of the State CEDS Committee to address economic expansion and sustainability.

Recommendation 2: Develop a strategic communications plan that links Delaware's regions.

- Create a website that seamlessly links the counties', towns', and state economic development policies, incentives, and initiatives.
- Create a hybrid and multi-faceted finance, business-incubation and skill-development resource network serving New Castle, Kent, and Sussex Counties.

Objective 5-3: Develop public-private partnerships to implement targeted economic development projects.

Recommendation 1: Create opportunities for and promote public-private partnerships for infrastructure.

- Explore all options for utilizing existing laws to encourage public-private partnerships that leverage existing tax dollars and encourage private investment in order to meet the funding requirements for a well-maintained transportation system.

Recommendation 2: Develop legislation to provide a funding program for local governments' economic development planning and project implementation that can be used to leverage other public and private dollars and stimulate investment.

- Draft appropriate legislation (DEDO, with input from the counties' economic development councils, chambers, Delaware League of Local Governments, and local economic development agencies).

Recommendation 3: Establish a task force led by the Governor, the Director of Economic Development, the Secretary of Finance, the Bank Commissioner, and legislative leaders to meet with the policy leadership of financial institutions to determine the agenda and identify issues that can be addressed on the state level.

Objective 5-4: Establish a system of public-private oversight for economic development.

Recommendation 1: Use CEDS committee process to solicit ongoing input from key economic development stakeholders.

RESPONSIBLE AND ACCOUNTABLE GOVERNMENT

Goal 6: To maintain pro-business, responsible, and accountable government to support new and existing businesses and attract entrepreneurial ventures



Cooperation and consistency across state government are monumental in developing a workable and executable economic development plan. Delaware should strive to achieve cooperation and consistency to provide businesses and citizens ease in business development.

Objective 6-1: Develop a one-stop customer service approach for citizens and businesses with clear written policies and procedures to replace relationship-based personal contacts.

Recommendation 1: Establish consistent policies across public entities.

- Bring together stakeholders on each identified inconsistent policy to explain its purpose and the way in which the policy may inhibit economic development.
- Develop joint solutions.

Recommendation 2: Improve intergovernmental coordination.

Objective 6-2: Maintain and create a favorable tax and regulatory climate offering start-up, relocation, and employment tax credits and incentives.

Recommendation 1: Identify market needs through identified parties and groups.

Recommendation 2: Develop competitive strategies to respond to threats of outsourcing, loss of employees, business consolidation, out-migration of workforce, and global competition.

- Evaluate the effectiveness of existing economic development incentives.



Delaware's Economic Development Projects

The first year of the Delaware CEDS process resulted in the designation of five projects as priorities for economic development in Delaware. These projects represent the highest-ranking project from each of the four regional CEDS committees and one from the State CEDS Committee. The State CEDS Committee approved the priority projects for submission to the EDA for funding consideration and to other state, local, and private economic development funding sources for priority consideration. Delaware's priority economic development projects are briefly summarized below. Additional projects that were reviewed and considered by the committees, but not included in the list of priority projects, will remain in a separate list of "pipeline" projects. The pipeline projects will be included in the long-term CEDS process for further review and consideration in the next two to five years.

Delaware's Priority Economic Development Projects

DELAWARE CIVIC CENTER ARENA

The proposed project would provide an arena facility in the City of Dover that is capable of seating up to 9,100 spectators. The arena is expected to host a variety of events including professional minor league sports, local high school events and commencements, and large-scale trade shows and conferences. It is projected the arena will offer approximately 146 events annually. The study conducted in support of the proposal forecasts that the economic impact of the civic center would result in the creation of 450 jobs locally, 368 in the county, and 270 in the state. The Kent CEDS Committee rated the Delaware Civic Center Arena project as its highest priority. The project is consistent with Delaware CEDS goals related to diversity of businesses, infrastructure, collaborative networks, and quality of life.

NORTH DELAWARE SANITARY SEWER INTERCEPTOR PROJECT

New Castle County currently has no available sanitary sewer capacity in the eastern half of Brandywine Hundred. The area is subject to frequent sewer malfunctions during heavy rainfall events, and the North Delaware Interceptor has had several failures that required emergency repairs. The Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC) has approved a long-term plan to correct these problems. The proposed North Delaware Interceptor project will (1) restore available sewer capacity to the eastern half of Brandywine Hundred, (2) allow proposed commercial and residential projects to be approved that were denied previously due to sewer-capacity limitations, (3) support the Claymont Community Redevelopment Plan that cannot move forward without adequate sewer capacity, and (4) provide specifically for the redevelopment of the Brookview Apartment Complex, the CitiSteel, and the Stockdale Plaza projects. It is estimated the proposed project would generate approximately 200 permanent industrial, retail/commercial, and office jobs. The New Castle CEDS Committee rated the project as its highest priority. The project is consistent with Delaware CEDS goals related to diversity of businesses, collaborative networks, and infrastructure.

LAUREL CENTRAL AVENUE COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT



The proposed project is part of an overall plan for an economic development and beautification project in downtown Laurel, Delaware. The plan is to link downtown Laurel's public-access, creek-side parks and greenways with an adjacent mix of new commercial and residential buildings. The proposed Central Avenue Block community-development project will replace an underused, derelict city block on the central thoroughfare with an 8,000-square foot commercial facility for commercial and professional businesses. This project is expected to generate approximately 42 permanent health service, retail trade, and personal service jobs. The Sussex CEDS Committee ranked this proposal as its highest-priority project. The proposed project is consistent with the Delaware CEDS goals related to diversity of businesses and collaborative networks.

DELAWARE MAIN STREET TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROJECT

The proposed project would provide a variety of technical assistance opportunities focused on economic development to the five certified "Main Street" towns in Delaware. The project proposes to utilize funds to broaden the scope of existing economic development services and training opportunities beyond that which the Delaware Main Street Program can provide normally over the course of a year. Areas addressed by the project would include creating new jobs and businesses, marketing and promoting downtown business districts, increasing profits for small businesses, and creating organizational capacity to facilitate a program of economic development activities in several locations throughout Delaware. The proposed project is consistent with Delaware CEDS goals related to diversity of businesses, infrastructure, quality of life, and collaborative networks.

WILMINGTON FLEX SPACE BUSINESS PARK

The dominant FIRE and legal sectors within Wilmington's central business district create a market for small businesses through the procurement of goods and services. The Wilmington Office of Economic Development consistently receives inquiries from small businesses serving Wilmington-based customers and seeking flexible and clear-span space in increments as small as 2,000 square feet. While Wilmington has a healthy supply of varying classes of office space, there is an under-supply of light industrial or "flex space" to accommodate these users within the city. As a result, Wilmington residents are by-passed by "blue collar" job-generating opportunities when these businesses locate in the surrounding counties or southern New Jersey. The City of Wilmington proposes the acquisition and development of a new flex-space park in South Wilmington or the redevelopment and expansion of the Todd's Lane and/or Larchmont industrial areas in northeast Wilmington. The project proposal estimates about one job for every 250 square feet of new flex space with a weighted-mean hourly wage of \$10.25. The project is consistent with Wilmington's business diversity and workforce-development goals.



Delaware's Pipeline Economic Development Projects

GARRISON OAK TECHNOLOGY PARK

In 2000 the State of Delaware approved a \$500,000 grant for infrastructure improvements in Garrison Oak Technology Park. This is required to make the park a “shovel-ready” park to accommodate tenants. The project proposal requests additional funding to make the necessary improvements required for developing the property. Its 389 available acres make it a prime property to facilitate economic growth for the City of Dover and Kent County. It is estimated that the proposed project would generate approximately 1,900 permanent jobs in the production occupations. The project was ranked as the second highest-priority proposal by the Kent CEDS Committee and is consistent with the Delaware CEDS goals related to diversity of businesses, collaborative networks, and infrastructure.

SMALL BUSINESS RESOURCE CENTER

A small business resource center is being planned as part of the construction of a new public library facility that will be centrally located in New Castle County on Kirkwood Highway. This initiative is the outgrowth of a developing partnership with other agencies that support small businesses such as the Delaware Small Business Development Center and the Delaware Manufacturing Extension Partnership. These organizations have identified the need for physical space, electronic access to information, and a collection of materials to support the needs of small businesses. The small business resource center would be developed with the goal of promoting entrepreneurial infrastructure in response to corporate restructuring, which would result in the anticipated movement of displaced employees from the corporate environment into small business. This project was ranked second by the New Castle CEDS Committee and is consistent with Delaware CEDS goals related to diversity of businesses and collaborative networks.

LAUREL BUSINESS PARK

The Town of Laurel proposes the development of a business park to provide employment opportunities and better-paying jobs. The business park would serve local entrepreneurs, small manufacturing plants, and distribution centers. The anticipated location for the business park is in either the town's southeast or northwest growth and annexation area. The project proposal estimates about 100 permanent “incubator and small manufactured-distribution warehouse” jobs would be generated as result of the project. The project was ranked second by the Sussex CEDS Committee and is consistent with Delaware CEDS goals related to diversity of businesses and collaborative networks.

DOVER WEST SIDE REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT

The proposed project is a result of a strategic development plan for the west side of Dover. It provides specific recommendations to redevelop the area. One of the recommendations is to purchase parcels of land and make them available for development. This would allow for the development of new office and multi-use buildings that will attract employment and provide employment opportunities for residents living on the west side of downtown Dover. It also puts brownfields back into productive use, enhancing the overall aesthetics of downtown Dover. It is anticipated that the proposed project would



generate approximately 170 permanent office/administrative support and retail jobs. The Kent CEDS Committee ranked the project as its third-highest priority. The Dover West Side Redevelopment Project is consistent with Delaware CEDS goals related to diversity of businesses, quality of life, and collaborative networks.

EXTENSION OF WATER AND WASTEWATER SERVICE

The Town of Laurel has completed a \$1.8million water distribution-improvement project and is currently undertaking an \$11million investment in a new wastewater treatment plan. The proposed project will extend the town's water distribution and wastewater collection lines along the Route 13 corridor to serve properties that have been underdeveloped due to water and septic problems. The expansion would allow for greater commercial development and employment opportunities. The project proposal estimates that about 750 permanent manufacturing, wholesale, retail, and service industry jobs would be generated as result of the project. The Sussex CEDS Committee ranked the project as tied for its third-highest priority. The extension of water and wastewater service in Laurel is consistent with Delaware CEDS goals related to diversity of businesses, infrastructure, and collaborative networks.

ROSS BUSINESS PARK INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

The proposed project would extend infrastructure into the northern part of the Ross Business Park to encourage the relocation and development of light-industrial manufacturing and distribution-style businesses to Seaford. The goal is to extend the road, water, and sewer lines into the northern part of the park to encourage immediate growth. As a result of the project, it is estimated that approximately 500 permanent production-occupation jobs would be generated. The Sussex CEDS Committee ranked the project as tied for its third-highest priority. The project is consistent with Delaware CEDS goals related to diversity of businesses, infrastructure, and collaborative networks.

MAIN STREET DOVER ECONOMIC RESTRUCTURING NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The goal of the proposed project is to conduct a comprehensive market analysis to develop findings and realistic recommended solutions that would be directed toward the long-range improvement and vitality of downtown Dover. The project is the second phase of a Technical Assistance Project, which was completed on November 3, 2005. Specific goals include identifying opportunities and barriers to downtown Dover's success, identifying solutions from other venues, evaluating current incentive programs, identifying needed changes in the mix of core uses, and identifying ways to better coordinate efforts of stakeholders. The project was ranked as the fourth-highest priority by the Kent CEDS Committee and is consistent with Delaware CEDS goals related to diversity of businesses, quality of life, and collaborative networks.

NORTH SEAFORD LIFT STATIONS

The proposed project would provide lift stations to connect to the City of Seaford's sewer system to service lands in northern Seaford that are planned for development. The project would benefit both residential- and commercial-wastewater customers. The project is expected to generate approximately 500 permanent production-operator jobs. The Sussex CEDS Committee ranked the project as its fourth-



highest priority, and the project is consistent with Delaware CEDS goals related to infrastructure and diversity of businesses.

LAUREL MARINA

The Town of Laurel proposes to develop a marina after it closes its largest wastewater pond, which will no longer be needed once a new wastewater treatment plant is developed. While the marina project would create limited job opportunities, it would attract businesses and potential residents to invest in the town, provide water-based recreational activities, draw tourists, and highlight Laurel's developing greenway along Broad Creek. The project is expected to generate approximately 3.5 permanent jobs. The Sussex CEDS Committee ranked the project as its fifth-highest priority, and it is consistent with Delaware CEDS goals related to infrastructure and quality of life.

SEAFORD REGIONAL WATER TOWER

The goals for the project are to provide more efficient water service at a greater capacity to the growth area in northern Seaford. The water tower would service residential, commercial, and industrial customers, including light-industrial clients in Ross Business Park. It is estimated that, as a result of the project, approximately 500 permanent retail positions and commercial/industrial jobs would be generated. The Sussex CEDS Committee ranked the project as its sixth-highest priority, and it is consistent with Delaware CEDS goals related to infrastructure and diversity of businesses.

SEAFORD WASTEWATER EXPANSION

The proposed project would upgrade Seaford's current wastewater-treatment facility (currently at one-half capacity) to direct growth within the municipality and help attract potential manufacturing employers to the city's new business park. An unknown number of permanent commercial and industrial jobs would be generated as a result of the project. The Sussex CEDS Committee ranked the project as its seventh-highest priority. The project is consistent with Delaware CEDS goals related to diversity of businesses and infrastructure.



The Path Forward

The Delaware CEDS is an ongoing process requiring consistent effort by community stakeholders to accomplish sustainable economic improvement. The first year of the Delaware CEDS has culminated in the completion of this report for submission to the EDA. Future work is needed to ensure that the CEDS committees' action plans are implemented. This work will require both a continued life for the Delaware CEDS committees and the allocation of staffing resources to help the committees carry out their duties. In concluding their deliberations, each committee addressed the necessity of continuing action and the future governance of the CEDS process. The results of these deliberations are presented in the remainder of this section, reporting the ongoing responsibilities, staffing arrangements, and composition of the Delaware CEDS committees.

State CEDS Committee

The State CEDS Committee will continue in accordance with EDA guidelines as an affiliate of DEDO in collaboration with the Office of State Planning Coordination (OSPC). The committee will oversee the Delaware CEDS process while DEDO will assume responsibility for implementing the proposed projects recommended by the regional committees. DEDO will continue to serve as the primary liaison with EDA. OSPC will ensure consistency of the Delaware CEDS process with other state planning initiatives. Both DEDO and OSPC will provide necessary staffing resources to support the ongoing responsibilities of the State CEDS Committee.

While EDA reviews the Delaware CEDS, DEDO will poll current members of the State CEDS Committee regarding their intentions to continue serving on the committee. DEDO will invite new members as required to maintain a diverse and representative process.



The reconstituted State CEDS Committee will meet on a quarterly basis. It is anticipated that the current practice of including regional CEDS committee co-chairs on the State CEDS Committee will continue so that communication can be facilitated among the regional and state CEDS committees. The ongoing responsibilities of the State CEDS Committee will be as follows:

- Submit an annual report to the EDA that summarizes Delaware CEDS activities and
 - Adjusts the Delaware CEDS, as needed.
 - Reviews the previous year’s economic development activities and any significant changes in regional economic conditions.
 - Evaluates the Delaware CEDS effectiveness in meeting goals.
 - Schedules achievable goals for the coming year.
- Review, prioritize, and advocate for appropriate economic development projects and programs to be funded and implemented.
- Produce a new, updated, or revised CEDS document every five years, as required by EDA.

Delaware Regional CEDS Committees

Each regional CEDS committee will continue to play a role in the Delaware CEDS process by representing its unique regional character and the various economic conditions present throughout Delaware. The coordination of regional and state CEDS committees’ activity and work will be carried out by DEDO and OSPC. Each regional committee decided to continue its efforts under the guidance of existing regional economic development entities in Delaware, which the committees believe will be important in preventing a duplication of efforts and initiatives within the regions. DEDO will reconstitute the membership of the regional committees in the same fashion it plans to determine the continuing membership of the state committee. It is anticipated that the regional committee co-chairs would continue to serve as members of the State CEDS Committee. The particular governance



arrangements for the regional committees are reported in the remainder of this section. The ongoing responsibilities of Delaware's regional CEDS committees will be as follows:

- Review regional action plans to ensure consistency with changing conditions and report needed changes to the State CEDS Committee.
- Annually report on the accomplishment of regional economic development goals to the State CEDS Committee.
- Solicit and develop economic development programs and projects appropriate to implementing regional economic development goals.
- Recommend regional economic development programs and projects for priority consideration by the State CEDS Committee.

Kent CEDS Committee

The continuing Kent CEDS Committee will operate as a functional component of the Central Delaware Economic Development Council, which includes many members of the current Kent Committee. It is anticipated that the continuing Kent CEDS Committee will serve as a subcommittee of the Council and meet regularly as part of the Council's schedule.

New Castle CEDS Committee

The New Castle CEDS Committee will continue its efforts as a component part of the New Castle County Economic Development Council. Similar to the Kent Committee, it is anticipated that the continuing New Castle Committee will serve as a subcommittee of the Council and meet regularly as part of the Council's schedule.

Wilmington CEDS Committee

The Wilmington CEDS Committee will coordinate its activities with Wilmington city government and continue to work to bring together a variety



of for-profit and nonprofit organizations and associations that have a well-established interest and track record in promoting economic development in the Wilmington metropolitan area. This committee will seek to encourage, facilitate, and provide objective economic analysis, an open dialogue for the exchange of ideas and concerns, and an ongoing economic development planning process for the Wilmington area. It is recommended that the Wilmington CEDS Committee eventually transform itself into a permanent “Wilmington Area Economic Development Council” and that it cooperate closely with the existing New Castle County Economic Development Council.

Sussex CEDS Committee

Similar to the Kent and New Castle Committees, the Sussex CEDS Committee will continue its efforts as a subcommittee of the Sussex County Economic Development Office.