



DELAWARE STATE HOUSING AUTHORITY NEWS RELEASE

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DSHA Announces Release of the 2008-2012 Statewide Housing Needs Assessment

Delaware State Housing Authority Director Sandy Johnson has announced the release of the updated Statewide Housing Needs Assessment. The study, undertaken by Mullin & Lonergan Associates, Inc., of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, enables DSHA and other affordable housing providers to direct their resources towards meeting Delaware's housing needs through 2012.

Governor Ruth Ann Minner commented, "This study is vital to the State and other housing providers. We must first understand the crucial issues surrounding affordable housing so that we can plan how to best direct scarce state resources."

DSHA Director Sandy Johnson said, "The Statewide Housing Needs Assessment is Delaware's comprehensive housing study. It enables us to structure our strategy for housing and housing-related services in Delaware, particularly the needs of low-income households, throughout the next five years."

Johnson continued, "There is no question that we have a big job ahead of us—but it's certainly doable when we work together. Without a doubt, preserving the housing stock we

have and creating new housing are essential. However, we have to look at the big picture. Many of Delaware's families are cost burdened—living on the edge, paycheck to paycheck. Many face eviction or foreclosure. On any given night, about 2,000 Delawareans are homeless. We must create a continuum of housing, which includes a well-coordinated system for helping families get off the street and provides adequate affordable rental housing and homeownership opportunities.”

Key findings of the 2008-2012 Statewide Housing Needs Assessment include:

- Between 1995 and 2006, median home prices in Delaware appreciated by 177%—the fastest rate in the nation.
- Home prices in all three counties are well over three times the median household income, the common threshold of housing affordability.
- More than 18% of Delaware's homeowners and 43% of Delaware's renter households were cost burdened in 2005, paying more than 30% of their income for housing.
- A full-time childcare worker, preschool teacher, or retail salesperson earning their occupation's median wage cannot afford the fair market rent for a one-bedroom apartment in Delaware.
- Employment growth through 2014 is projected to be fastest among industry sectors with lower average wages. Two of the three top industries projected to create the most new jobs in Delaware from 2004-2014 had 2006 average annual wages of less than \$26,000.
- From 2000 to 2015, the number of households in Delaware is projected to increase four percent faster than the population.
- Kent and Sussex Counties will both experience growth in the number of households twice that of New Castle County.
- Approximately 25,000 existing Delaware renter households are “at risk,” and there is a need for at least 1,500 new affordable rental housing units—the majority of which are needed for households with extremely low incomes.
- There is a need for over 600 new supportive housing units and 1,000 rental subsidies to meet the housing needs of Delawareans who are chronically homeless or at risk of becoming chronically homeless.

- From 2008-2012, 6,333 first-time, affordable home buyers are projected to be in the market to purchase homes. Approximately 15% of new construction homes will need to be affordable to these buyers.
- 4,604 assisted rental housing units face expiring subsidy contracts and/or use restrictions from 2008-2012. An additional 2,259 units are estimated to be in need of substantial rehabilitation. Together, these 6,863 units represent half of Delaware's assisted rental housing stock.
- Backlash against new development can have the unfortunate consequence of stifling even well-designed, mixed-income, mixed-use and environmentally responsible developments.

For more information on the 2008-2012 Statewide Housing Needs Assessment or affordable housing programs available through DSHA, please visit our website at www.DeStateHousing.com or contact the Public Information Office in Dover at (302) 739-4263 or toll-free at (888) 363-8808.

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