



DELAWARE STATE HOUSING AUTHORITY NEWS RELEASE

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Governor Hosts 2007 Conference on Housing, New Needs Assessment Released

Governor Ruth Ann Minner kicked off the 2007 Governor's Conference on Housing today, which brought together regional, state and local perspectives on today's affordable housing climate, and provided strategies to address current and future housing needs. The conference also marked the official release of the 2008-2012 Statewide Housing Needs Assessment.

Governor Minner noted, "The Governor's Conference on Housing brings everyone together to exchange information that is vital to the creation and preservation of affordable housing in the First State. We are excited about this opportunity to build partnerships and make progress toward a truly 'Livable Delaware.' The new Statewide Housing Needs Assessment is an essential tool for helping us to meet that goal."

Lt. Governor John C. Carney said, "Delaware has seen a 59% increase in foreclosure filings and foreclosures between 2000 and 2006. The discussion of housing needs to be a conversation connected with jobs, health care and economic development. The strategies for preservation and

creation of affordable housing must also include a comprehensive plan to prevent foreclosures in our state.”

DSHA Director Sandy Johnson said, “There is no doubt that we have a big job ahead of us—but it’s certainly doable when we work together. Certainly, creating new housing and preserving the housing stock we have is essential. 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, 1,800 Delawareans are homeless. Here in Delaware we must continue our work and expand our continuum of housing; which includes a coordinated system for helping get families off the street and provides adequate affordable rental housing and homeownership opportunities. ”

More than 300 attendees, representing 130 organizations, participated in the daylong conference. Regional, state and local housing professionals shared their expertise on a wide range of issues affecting Delaware’s affordable housing industry. Topics included the unveiling of the new 2008-2012 Statewide Housing Needs Assessment, the Ten Year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness, foreclosures, creating and preserving affordable rental housing, supportive housing, housing for the baby boomer generation, keeping homeownership affordable, legislative updates, new technologies, tools for developers, and successful neighborhood redevelopment.

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, in Wilmington at (302) 577-5001, or toll-free at (888) 363-8808.

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