

NCSHA 2015 Annual Awards Entry Form

(Complete one form for each entry)

Deadline: Wednesday, June 10, 2015

Visit ncsha.org/awards to view the Annual Awards Call for Entries.

Instructions: Type entry information into the form and save it as a PDF. Do not write on or scan the form. If you have any questions contact Matt Cunningham at mcunningham@ncsha.org or 202-624-5424.

Fill out the entry name *exactly* as you want it listed in the program.

Entry Name:

HFA:

Submission Contact: (Must be HFA Staff Member)

 Email:

Please provide a 15-word (maximum) description of your nomination to appear on the NCSHA website.

Use this header on the upper right corner of each page:

HFA:

Entry Name:

Select the appropriate subcategory of your entry and indicate if you are providing visual aids.

Communications	Homeownership	Legislative Advocacy	Management Innovation
Annual Report	Empowering New Buyers	Federal Advocacy	Financial
Creative Media	Encouraging New Production	State Advocacy	Human Resources
Promotional Materials and Newsletters	Home Improvement and Rehabilitation		Operations
			Technology
Rental Housing	Special Needs Housing	Special Achievement	Are you providing visual aids?
Encouraging New Production	Combating Homelessness	Special Achievement	Yes
Multifamily Management	Housing for Persons with Special Needs		No
Preservation and Rehabilitation			

Innovative

The Delaware State Housing Authority (DSHA) has historically conducted comprehensive five-year housing needs assessments as part of the State's Consolidated Plan process. These needs assessments, completed using outside consultants, also inform the agency's strategic plan, Low Income Housing Tax Credit Qualified Allocation Plan, local Consolidated Plans and Comprehensive (land use) Plans. DSHA's last needs assessment was completed in the fall of 2007, just before the housing market collapse. We entered the project of engaging in a new needs assessment in 2013 in a radically different market and very different community expectations of our role in that market.

As we sought community feedback on the last needs assessment to inform planning for the new study, improved understanding of local markets to better target interventions and respond to needs was a consistent theme. We sought the development of a set of community indicators to gauge housing needs and market conditions, at no higher than the census tract level, that could be used as a basis for program planning and as a reference in funding application processes.

Replicable

DSHA engaged with GCR Incorporated, a New Orleans-based firm, and The Reinvestment Fund (TRF) to conduct a traditional housing needs assessment and develop a statewide Market Value Analysis (MVA). Typically conducted at the city level, the MVA methodology has provided other jurisdictions with a data-driven framework for planning and investment. The MVA methodology was originally designed in 2001, and since that time it has continued to evolve to help government and private investors target investments, develop frameworks for action and prioritize programs in ways that can leverage private resources and revitalize neighborhoods.

To develop the 2014 Delaware MVA, TRF used a statistical technique known as cluster analysis that uncovered patterns in the data. A cluster analysis does this by forming groups of areas that are similar along a set of selected variables that describe those areas. While the groups form to be as uniform as possible as to the components of each group, the groups are also as dissimilar as possible from each other. Using this technique, the 2014 Delaware MVA was able to reduce vast amounts of data for the universe of all properties in the state to a manageable, meaningful typology of market types. The results can now inform local, county and state decisions regarding the allocation of resources and necessity for specific programmatic intervention strategies.

While TRF has conducted some county-wide MVAs, the MVA for Delaware is the first statewide MVA intended for use in informing state policy. In addition to the report to DSHA and the written report, the MVA and needs assessment results have also been made available on an online reporting portal. This includes the MVA market types as well as component data that went into developing the MVA.

Improvements in Agency Operations

Integrating the MVA into our statewide housing needs assessment process has helped to change the conversation around how and why and where investments are made in Delaware and what type of

projects are likely to have the most and most efficient impact in which areas. We see the nonprofit development community interested in neighborhood change approaching this type of housing work much more strategically. It gave them the ability to determine if this is the right activity to be successful in this neighborhood, both from a market perspective (i.e. not developing homes that will be extremely difficult to market and sell) and a neighborhood change perspective.

DSHA first implemented the use of MVA in target geographies for committing funding through the Strong Neighborhoods Housing Fund and the Housing Development Fund, and we are engaging in the process to integrate it into other programs' target areas where appropriate.

Respond to a Management Challenge

In the time leading up to the needs assessment and MVA process, traditional funding sources such as Delaware's housing trust fund the Housing Development Fund (HDF) had also increasingly been called upon to fund community development and neighborhood revitalization-oriented development projects. With an emphasis on increasing affordability, these sources and their funding priorities were increasingly inadequate for addressing complex and severe community needs where affordability is not necessarily the primary concern or goal, but rather market recovery. Projects in distressed neighborhoods with low market values may need more flexibility in how funds may be used, for example. Areas that have not recovered from housing crisis, or neighborhoods that even in the housing market boom were struggling, are now highly distressed. They suffer from severe crime problems, distressed sales, vacancy and abandonment and in some areas total absence of a housing market.

DSHA sought to target those resources more effectively, and to allow that flexibility when it is needed without sacrificing the continued importance of those other sources like the HDF to meet affordability needs.

The Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) 1, 2, and 3 has given DSHA, local subgrantee jurisdictions, and nonprofit developers experience with this type of work and better understanding of successful strategies and best practices. The NSP similarly targeted distressed neighborhoods, successfully turning vacant and foreclosed houses into rehabbed homes for sale.

Benefits Outweigh the Costs

Overall, the completion of the statewide MVA was an affordable component of the housing needs assessment project, and the legitimacy of it as a reference point for targeting resources has been important. Geographic and programmatic priorities can be based on a transparent, clearly described source.

The Strong Neighborhoods Housing Fund also heavily prioritized projects in areas where public/private and community partnerships are acting on comprehensive community development plans. These projects are all being combined with other substantial investments in the communities, from targeted crime efforts to infrastructure, pedestrian and transportation improvements, community programs, and catalytic investments in neighborhood assets like libraries. Additionally, the MVA ensures we are investing resources in projects that are appropriate for the markets where they are located. Combining

these two features in the prioritization and investment of the SNHF is ensuring that these investments will have the maximum possible impact.

Achieve Strategic Objectives

In 2014, Delaware received \$19.7 million from JPMorgan Chase to settle allegations stemming from conduct that helped cause the greatest economic downturn since the Great Depression. Approximately \$7.4 million went to fund the Neighborhood Building Blocks Fund and the Strong Neighborhoods (SNHF) Housing Fund, which support community revitalization programs as well as the acquisition, renovation and sale of vacant, abandoned and foreclosed properties throughout the state.

Unlike the previous National Mortgage Settlement, which emphasized consumer relief and prevention of additional foreclosures, the JPMorgan Chase Settlement was targeted to addressing community impacts of the foreclosure crisis. The cash payment to Delaware was allocated by the General Assembly, where, in a challenging budget year, the incentive to use Settlement funds for general budget needs was high. A concerted advocacy effort and strong partnership between the Department of Justice and DSHA succeeded in over half the Settlement being allocated to community development-oriented activities, including the establishment of a Strong Neighborhoods Housing Fund. That the MVA was underway was part of DSHA's advocacy for creation and initial funding of the SNHF – that DSHA was ready to distribute the SNHF quickly and effectively to meet the goals of the Settlement.

Demonstrate effective use of resources

The pilot round of the SNHF was the first funding process incorporating the MVA results into its planning and application process. SNHF applications were limited to only two of the eight market types identified in the MVA, or approximately 35 census tracts in the State. Over \$8 million in requests were received for the \$2.7 million available, and ultimately four projects were funded and estimated to affect approximately 55 homes after funds revolve. Establishing the SNHF makes it more possible to fund it again in the future, and indeed there is a current proposal to invest an additional \$10 million from a subsequent bank settlement in the SNHF.

In addition, local policy has also referred to the MVA. In 2014, New Castle County, home to almost half the state's population, engaged in an evaluation of its Workforce Housing Program. Launched in the housing market boom years, this is a voluntary inclusionary zoning program to create homes affordable to moderate-income households. It was a highly contentious program when created and has continued to be the source of much attention and dissatisfaction. Due to the housing market collapse and other issues, few homes have been created through the program. In late 2014, a reworking of the program was introduced and passed by County Council. One of the changes to the program allows offsite development of the affordable units in certain circumstances, and refers to the MVA to ensure that units are created in similar markets.

Please visit the Reporting Portal: http://demo.gis.gcr1.com/Delaware_GIS/

Affordable housing assessment sparks discussion

By Nichole Dobo

The News Journal

A new report outlines the state of affordable housing needs in Delaware, and it suggests trends that are to be used to shape public policy discussions over the next five years.

The Delaware Housing Needs Assessment, a report that spans more than 200 pages, was released Monday. The report was discussed by state and local leaders, including Gov. Jack Markell and Delaware State Housing Authority director Anas Ben Addi,

who attended an event at the Dover campus of Delaware Technical Community College.

The report is available online at the housing agency's website at destatehousing.com. It includes graphics, data analysis and predictions for challenges the state will face from 2015-20 in regards to affordable housing.

Among the topics covered:

» Much of the growth in the state has come from older residents, who are buying properties in southern Delaware.

» About 51 percent of renters in Delaware have "housing chal-

lenges," such as overcrowding, quality or affordability issues. About 21 percent of homeowners have these types of challenges.

» Neighborhood level statistics on affordability of housing. Maps show local-level information is useful for getting a look at where the needs are greatest in the state.

The report was prepared by "GCR Incorporated of New Orleans, Louisiana and The Reinvestment Fund (TRF) of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania," according to a statement released Monday by the housing authority.

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Delaware State Housing Authority Releases Delaware Housing Needs Assessment 2015-2020

Date Posted: Monday, September 8th, 2014

Categories: [DSHA \(http://news.delaware.gov/category/dsha/\)](http://news.delaware.gov/category/dsha/)

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Press Contact: Christina M. Hardin-Dirksen Chief of Community Relations, DSHA Phone: (302) 739-4263 Email: Christina@destatehousing.com DELAWARE STATE HOUSING AUTHORITY RELEASES DELAWARE HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT 2015-2020



(<http://news.delaware.gov/files/2014/09/Governor-small.jpg>) Governor Jack Markell

September 8, 2014 (Dover) - Stakeholders, including government, nonprofit and for-profit partners and service providers, joined DSHA at Delaware Technical and Community College's Terry Campus in Dover, Delaware to hear the key findings. Governor Jack Markell noted, "Housing is a critical part of our economy and our communities, and our homes and neighborhoods are also the center of family life. Affordable housing needs affect so many of the other outcomes we care about – in health, education, economic growth, land use, and downtown revitalization."

DSHA Director Anas Ben Addi added, "While DSHA's mission is affordable housing, it is inseparable from broader housing trends. We need to understand housing demand and the housing market as a whole in order to work within it to advance affordable housing and community development, which is exactly what this needs assessment and market value analysis help us do."



(<http://news.delaware.gov/files/2014/09/Anas-cropped.jpg>)

DSHA Director Anas Ben Addi

Rebecca Rothenberg, Planning Manager at GCR Incorporated, which led the project team, stated, "This study illustrates the current housing climate in Delaware and the challenges many families face in finding quality housing that is affordable to them. Some of the bigger trends – including a drop in homeownership rates, an increased demand for rental housing, shrinking household sizes, and the needs of aging homeowners – reflect issues relevant today. It also discusses the persistent affordability challenges for low-income households, particularly the working poor and very low-income families, who have difficulty finding rental housing they can afford. Oftentimes, these families reside in distressed neighborhoods with high poverty rates."

Affordable housing pressures have increased in recent years, with stresses on household incomes and increased demand for rental units both as a result of demographic changes and the foreclosure crisis. Statewide, 44,000 renters have housing challenges (paying more than 30% of their income for housing or living in overcrowded or deeply substandard living conditions), equal to 51% of renter households. Needs are most severe for those with very low incomes (50% of Area Median Income depending on location and household size; about \$25,000/year), where 18,400 households are severely cost burdened, paying more than 50% of their income for housing costs.

Delaware has fared better than many of its neighbors in the recent recession and its economy remains strong for the region. Projected steady job growth will support household growth and subsequently new housing demand, although there remains some excess inventory in some areas. Home prices are also recovering, but slowly; on a positive note, this has made homeownership a more affordable option for many households who were priced out in the housing boom. The new construction market is responding to changing demand with smaller, more affordable units closer in to towns and cities.

Ira Goldstein, President of Policy Solutions at The Reinvestment Fund, which completed the Market Value Analysis section of the research, stated, "TRF is gratified to have contributed to Delaware State Housing Authority's understanding of the needs of its housing markets. We look forward to the state using this analysis to make impactful, evidence-based decisions about its housing programs and resources."

The Governor added, "Successful community development, neighborhood revitalization, and downtown development initiatives must recognize and work in concert with their local housing market. This research helps us all to better understand those forces in order to shape the most effective responses."

To view the Delaware Housing Needs Assessment, visit: <http://www.destatehousing.com/FormsAndInformation/needs.php>

About the Delaware State Housing Authority The Delaware State Housing Authority (DSHA), formed in 1968, is dedicated to providing quality, affordable housing opportunities and appropriate supportive services to low- and moderate-income Delawareans. In addition to its role as the State's Housing Finance Agency, DSHA is unique in that it is also serves as a Public Housing Authority and acts as a Community Development and Planning Agency. As a Public Housing Authority, DSHA receives funding from HUD to build, own and operate public housing in Kent and Sussex counties, two of Delaware's three counties. For more information about the Delaware State Housing Authority, please call: (302) 739-4263 or visit our website at: www.destatehousing.com.

About The Reinvestment Fund (TRF) TRF is a national leader in rebuilding America's distressed towns and cities and does this work through the innovative use of capital and information. TRF has made \$1.3 billion in community investments since 1985. As a CDFI, TRF finances projects related to housing, community facilities, food access, commercial real estate, and energy efficiency. It also provides public-policy expertise by helping clients create practical solutions and by sharing data and analyses via www.PolicyMap.com. To learn more about TRF, visit trfund.com. Follow us on Twitter @trfund or Facebook at facebook.com/TRFund. To learn more about TRF, visit www.trfund.com.

About GCR GCR, a multi-disciplinary consulting firm with a focus on the aviation industry, has delivered solutions to airports for over 35 years. GCR's staff uses an in-depth understanding of the aviation industry, coupled with technological expertise, to develop and implement comprehensive solutions that address operational complexities in airport and aviation organizations. GCR delivers consulting services and technology solutions in aviation, disaster assistance recovery, nuclear power, public safety, and urban planning. For more information, visit www.gcrincorporated.com.

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(<http://governor.delaware.gov>)

Governor Markell's Website (<http://governor.delaware.gov/>). Journalists contact our press team (<http://smu.governor.delaware.gov/cgi-bin/mail.php?pressinquiry>) with inquiries. Also, feel free to use photos posted on Flickr. (<http://www.flickr.com/photos/delawaregovernor/collections>)



(<http://destatehousing.com/DirectorsOffice/news.php>)

Delaware State Housing Authority Website (<http://destatehousing.com/DirectorsOffice/news.php>)

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DSHA Releases Del. Housing Needs Assessment 2015-2020

Posted: Sep 08, 2014 5:15 PM EST

DOVER, Del. - Delaware Governor Jack Markell released the Delaware Housing Needs Assessment for the years 2015-2020 on Monday. The report will drive planning for housing resources at the Delaware State Housing Authority (DSHA) and in communities around the state.

Stakeholders, including government, nonprofit and for-profit partners and service providers, joined the DSHA at Delaware Technical and Community College's Terry Campus in Dover Monday to hear the key findings. Governor Jack Markell noted, "Housing is a critical part of our economy and our communities, and our homes and neighborhoods are also the center of family life. Affordable housing needs affect so many of the other outcomes we care about - in health, education, economic growth, land use, and downtown revitalization."

The report was prepared by GCR Incorporated out of New Orleans, Louisiana and The Reinvestment Fund (TRF) of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The DSHA says, with this new analysis of housing needs and market conditions in the state for years 2015-2020, DSHA will be identifying priorities for the next five years and evaluating its programs and strategies.

"While DSHA's mission is affordable housing, it is inseparable from broader housing trends. We need to understand housing demand and the housing market as a whole in order to work within it to advance affordable housing and community development, which is exactly what this needs assessment and market value analysis help us do," said DSHA Director Anas Ben Addi.

Rebecca Rothenberg is the Planning Manager at GCR Incorporated and she led the project team. She said the study shows the current housing climate in the First State and the challenges the many families face in finding quality housing at a reasonable rate.

"Some of the bigger trends - including a drop in home ownership rates, an increased demand for rental housing, shrinking household sizes, and the needs of aging homeowners - reflect issues relevant today," said Rothenberg. "It also discusses the persistent affordability challenges for low-income households, particularly the working poor and very low-income families, who have difficulty finding rental housing they can afford. Oftentimes, these families reside in distressed neighborhoods with high poverty rates."

The DSHA says affordable housing pressures have increased in recent years, with stresses on household incomes and increased demand for rental units both as a result of demographic changes and the foreclosure crisis. Statewide, 44,000 renters have housing challenges (paying more than 30% of their income for housing or living in overcrowded or deeply substandard living conditions), equal to 51% of renter households. The DSHA says needs are most severe for those with very low incomes (50% of Area Median Income depending on location and household size; about \$25,000/year), where 18,400 households are severely cost burdened, paying more than 50% of their income for housing costs.

The DSHA says Delaware has fared better than many of its neighbors in the recent recession and its economy remains strong for the region. The housing authority says projected steady job growth will support household growth and subsequently new housing demand. The DSHA says home prices are also recovering, but slowly. It says on a positive note, this has made home ownership a more affordable option for many households who were priced out in the housing boom. The new construction market is responding to changing demand with smaller, more affordable units closer in to towns and cities.

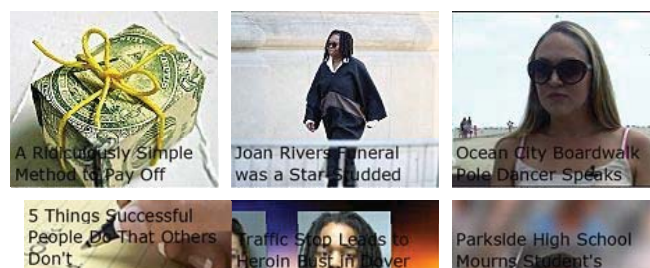
Ira Goldstein, President of Policy Solutions at The Reinvestment Fund, which completed the Market Value Analysis section of the research, stated, "TRF is gratified to have contributed to Delaware State Housing Authority's understanding of the needs of its housing markets. We look forward to the state using this analysis to make impactful, evidence-based decisions about its housing programs and resources."

"Successful community development, neighborhood revitalization, and downtown development initiatives must recognize and work in concert with their local housing market. This research helps us all to better understand those forces in order to shape the most effective responses," said Governor Markell.

To view the Delaware Housing Needs Assessment, visit: <http://www.destatehousing.com/FormsAndInformation/needs.php>

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\$2.7M tapped for housing projects



JASON MINTO/THE NEWS JOURNAL

Anas Ben Addi, director of Delaware State Housing Authority, speaks at the Delaware Strong Neighborhoods Housing Fund Award at the Dover Police Department.

Money from JPMorgan Chase mortgage settlement

JON OFFREDO THE NEWS JOURNAL

Almost \$3 million from last year's JPMorgan Chase mortgage settlement will go toward acquiring, renovating and selling vacant, abandoned and foreclosed property in Dover, Wilmington and the rest of the state.

The \$2.7 million will be split between four different organizations whose applications to the Strong Neighborhoods Housing Fund were selected from seven applicants. The program was established last year with money from the mortgage settlement.

"This fund is about zooming in, in tough areas and working with partners who have a plan and a vision to create a transformation," said Anas Ben Addi, director of the Delaware State Housing Association.

State officials said they are hopeful another \$10 million from a \$36 million settlement with Bank of America and Citigroup will go toward replenishing the fund,

"This fund is about zooming in, in tough areas and working with partners who have a plan and a vision to create a transformation."

ANAS BEN ADDI

Director of the Delaware State Housing Association

though the decision ultimately rests with the budget writing committee in Dover.

Attorney General Matt Denn said Thursday afternoon that the program will do a lot to help cities and towns across the state, not just Wilmington.

"Crime and violent crime are not limited to Wilmington, even if you are looking at homicides," Denn said. "What having affordable housing and eliminating vacant and abandoned housing does is to create strong communities where crime is less prevalent."

Central Delaware Habitat for Humanity received \$672,191 to inject into downtown Dover. Their application was a collaborative effort with other Dover-area

agencies, like the National Council on Agricultural Life and Labor and Milford Housing Development Corp.

The funds will be used to purchase land and turn it into affordable housing opportunities aimed at boosting home-ownership rates in Dover, said Jocelyn Tice, executive director of Central Delaware Habitat for Humanity.

Projects in Wilmington and New Castle County also received money. Wilmington Housing Partnership received \$840,000 to develop and inject opportunity in Wilmington's Eastside, and the Interfaith Community Housing of Delaware received \$742,809 to develop housing specifically for artists in the city's emerging creative district.

"We are so over the moon," said Gary Pollio, executive director of the Interfaith Community Housing of Delaware.

Steven Martin, executive director of the city housing partnership, said the money will help develop a project at the 800 block of Bennett Street that would provide home-ownership opportunities and decrease crime in the area.

The money has given stakeholders in the city a unique opportunity to create partnerships, Martin said.

"This is the first time you have found a number of nonprofits come into a room, checking their egos at the door and doing what's best for the city," he said.

New Castle County also received \$500,000 to reinvigorate and tackle blight along Del. 9's innovation district. It represents some of the hardest-hit areas affected by the mortgage foreclosure, said Sophia Hanson, of the New Castle County Department of Community Services. The money to reinvest and fortify the area gets right to the heart of the matter, she added.

Contact Jon Offredo at (302) 678-4271, on Twitter @jonoffredo or at joffredo@delawareonline.com.


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Thursday, February 12, 2015 - 5:55pm

AUDIO: Over \$2M Awarded for Strong Neighborhoods

 By **Joe Irizarry**

Updated Friday, February 13, 2015 - 5:47am



Four organizations are splitting \$2.755 million from the Strong Neighborhoods Housing Fund.

Delaware 105.9's Joe Irizarry has more.

The Central Delaware Habitat for Humanity, Wilmington Housing Partnership, New Castle County Department of Community Services and Interfaith Community Housing of Delaware, Inc are the organizations chosen.

The funds are from the JPMorgan Chase Settlement last year. The General Assembly allocated the money to the Delaware State Housing Authority to create the Strong Neighborhoods Housing Fund.

Anas Ben Addi is the DSHA Director, and he explains the purpose of the fund.

Jocelyn Tice is the Executive Director at the Central Delaware Habitat for Humanity.


The funds will be used for the acquisition, renovation and sale of vacant, abandoned and foreclosed properties throughout the state.

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THE LATEST NEWS FROM THE STATE OF DELAWARE



(<http://news.delaware.gov>)

Article

\$2.755M AWARDED FOR STRONG NEIGHBORHOODS

Date Posted: Thursday, February 12th, 2015

Categories: [DSHA \(http://news.delaware.gov/category/dsha/\)](http://news.delaware.gov/category/dsha/)

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February 12, 2015 – (Dover, DE) – Governor Jack Markell today joined Delaware State Housing Authority (DSHA) Director Anas Ben Addi and Attorney General Matt Denn, along with other elected officials, to announce the recipients of \$2.755M from the Strong Neighborhoods Housing Fund. Governor Markell has laid out a bold vision for Delaware by implementing a comprehensive approach to strengthening communities and rebuilding neighborhoods. In conjunction with Downtown Development District designations, which gives access to financial assistance for real property improvements, the newly created Strong Neighborhoods Housing Fund (SNHF) is another incentive to invest in our future.





(<http://news.delaware.gov/files/2015/02/SNHF-Governor-Markell.jpg>)

Governor Jack Markell

Last year, Delaware received funds from the JPMorgan Chase Mortgage Settlement. The General Assembly allocated \$2.755M to DSHA as part of its FY 2015 appropriation to establish the SNHF. This revolving fund will support community development, address crime strategies, and transform neighborhoods that are experiencing blight or other forms of stress.

The funding was made available to organizations through a competitive application process in targeted Delaware areas. Applications were received from nonprofit organizations, local jurisdictions, and for-profit developers partnering with nonprofit organizations.

Today, Governor Markell and DSHA Director Anas Ben Addi announced the four applications which were chosen for funding:

- Central Delaware Habitat for Humanity \$672,191
- Interfaith Community Housing of Delaware, Inc. \$742,809
- New Castle County Department of Community Services \$500,000
- Wilmington Housing Partnership \$840,000

These funds will be used for the acquisition, renovation, and sale of vacant, abandoned, and foreclosed properties throughout the State.

Governor Markell said, "We talk a lot about teamwork and public-private partnerships. The Strong Neighborhoods program is the perfect example of what we mean by that. Each Strong Neighborhoods application is a collaboration of multiple partners, with each partner bringing a unique skill to the table, whether it be counseling, construction, labor, or financing. Alone, they are worthy agencies, with proven track records. By partnering together, they will make a greater, more visible impact in our communities."

Attorney General Matt Denn added, "This program is an excellent model of how my proposed plan to address the issues facing Delaware will work by using settlement funds to turn around our declining neighborhoods. Redevelopment not only creates safe and affordable housing, it also generates employment and financial stability—which reduces the root causes of addiction and crime."





(<http://news.delaware.gov/files/2015/02/SNHF-Group-Photo.jpg>)

Representative Sean Lynn, Representative Trey Pardee, Representative Andria Bennett, Attorney General Matt Denn, DSHA Director Anas Ben Addi, Dover Police Chief Paul Bernat, Kent County Commissioner Bradley Eaby, Dover Mayor Robin Christiansen, Dover Councilman Wallace Dixon, Central Delaware Habitat for Humanity Executive Director Jocelyn Tice, New Castle County Department of Community Services General Manager Sophia Hanson, Wilmington Housing Partnership Executive Director Steven Martin, New Castle County Council President Christopher Bullock, Interfaith Community Housing of Delaware, Inc. Executive Director Gary Pollio, HUD Regional Administrator Jane Vincent

"DSHA received seven applications requesting more than three times the amount of money we had available," stated DSHA Director Anas Ben Addi. "We were only able to award four applications. This demonstrates there is a real interest in investing in our communities. We hope that the success of the Strong Neighborhoods Housing Fund will allow us to expand the program in the future to positively impact more neighborhoods."

"This is an exciting time for the City of Dover, and I am thankful that we get to have an impact in a concentrated area by providing homeownership opportunities through Central Delaware Habitat, NCALL, and Milford Housing Development Corporation. Through our collaboration and commitment of others in the community, we will all work hard to create change in the downtown area," commented Jocelyn Tice, Executive Director of Central Delaware Habitat for Humanity.

"It's a good use of the settlement funds which will allow a lot of nonprofits to move forward with developments in at-risk areas. There's a big gap in funding that's missing. I applaud the Governor and DSHA for creating this pot of money. A lot of developers couldn't afford to create housing in these areas without the funds," said Steven Martin, Executive Director of Wilmington Housing Partnership.

To learn more about the Strong Neighborhoods Housing Fund, please visit http://www.destatehousing.com/Developers/dv_snhf.php (http://www.destatehousing.com/Developers/dv_snhf.php) or call DSHA's Public Information Office at (888) 363-8808.

View more photos of the event at: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/destatehousing/sets/72157650372377750/> (<https://www.flickr.com/photos/destatehousing/sets/72157650372377750/>).

About the Delaware State Housing Authority

The Delaware State Housing Authority (DSHA), formed in 1968, is dedicated to providing quality, affordable housing opportunities and appropriate supportive services to low- and

moderate-income Delawareans. In addition to its role as the State's Housing Finance Agency, DSHA is unique in that it also serves as a Public Housing Authority and acts as a Community Development and Planning Agency. As a Public Housing Authority, DSHA receives funding from HUD to build, own, and operate public housing in Kent and Sussex counties, two of Delaware's three counties. For more information about the Delaware State Housing Authority, please call: (888) 363-8808 or visit our website at: www.destatehousing.com.

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Strong Neighborhoods Housing Fund Recipients Announced

Posted: Feb 12, 2015 11:00 PM EST

By Ariel Barry [CONNECT](#)

DOVER, Del. – State officials announced the recipients of \$2.755M from the [Strong Neighborhoods Housing Fund](#).

Governor Jack Markell joined Delaware State Housing Authority Director Anas Ben Addi and Attorney General Matt Denn for the announcement on Feb. 12. In conjunction with Downtown Development District designations, the newly created Strong Neighborhoods Housing Fund is another incentive to strengthen communities and rebuild neighborhoods.

Last year, Delaware received funds from the JPMorgan Chase Mortgage Settlement. The General Assembly allocated \$2.755 million to establish the housing fund. This fund aims to support community development, address crime strategies, and transform neighborhoods that are experiencing blight or other forms of stress.

"It's a good use of the settlement funds which will allow a lot of nonprofits to move forward with developments in at-risk areas," said Steven Martin, Executive Director of [Wilmington Housing Partnership](#).

Applications for the funding were received from nonprofit organizations, local jurisdictions, and for-profit developers partnering with nonprofit organizations.

"DSHA received seven applications requesting more than three times the amount of money we had available," stated DSHA Director Anas Ben Addi. "We were only able to award four applications. This demonstrates there is a real interest in investing in our communities."

Today, Governor Markell and Addi announced the four applications which were chosen for funding:

- [Central Delaware Habitat for Humanity \\$672,191](#)
- [Interfaith Community Housing of Delaware, Inc. \\$742,809](#)
- [New Castle County Department of Community Services \\$500,000](#)
- [Wilmington Housing Partnership \\$840,000](#)

Markell explains these funds will be used for the acquisition, renovation, and sale of vacant, abandoned, and foreclosed properties throughout the State.

Governor Markell said, "We talk a lot about teamwork and public-private partnerships. The Strong Neighborhoods program is the perfect example of what we mean by that. Each Strong Neighborhoods application is a collaboration of multiple partners, with each partner bringing a unique skill to the table, whether it be counseling, construction, labor, or financing. Alone, they are worthy agencies, with proven track records. By partnering together, they will make a greater, more visible impact in our communities."

[Attorney General Matt Denn](#) added, "This program is an excellent model of how my proposed plan to address the issues facing Delaware will work by using settlement funds to turn around our declining neighborhoods. Redevelopment not only creates safe and affordable housing, it also generates employment and financial stability—which reduces the root causes of addiction and crime."

To learn more about the Strong Neighborhoods Housing Fund, please visit http://www.destatehousing.com/Developers/dv_snhf.php or call DSHA's Public Information Office at (888) 363-8808.

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Photo courtesy: DSHA

New state money takes aim at blighted neighborhoods

By James Dawson February 12, 2015

8+1

Nearly \$2.8 million dollars in state money is headed to nonprofits and government organizations to address blighted properties throughout Delaware.

Established last year with money from a JPMorgan Chase settlement, cash in the Strong Neighborhoods Revolving Housing Fund will be used to buy and renovate 55 abandoned and foreclosed homes.

If lawmakers approve a new plan from the governor and attorney general's office, another \$10 million would go toward the fund.

Delaware State Housing Authority Director Anas Ben Addi says he's hopeful that it will be approved, despite legislators saying the plan wouldn't remain intact.

"This fund is not about making everybody happy," said Ben Addi. "This is not about spreading it thin and turning off resources. This fund is about zooming in in tough areas and working with partners who have a plan and a vision to create a transformation."

Held at the Dover Police Department Thursday, many speakers including Gov. Jack Markell (D-Delaware), Attorney General Matt Denn (D-Delaware) and others highlighted the grants as part of their plan to reduce violence throughout the state.

"With the help of this grant and with the parties working together, we'll be able to help transform not just the way people live or where they live, but transform parts of Dover, parts of Delaware and individuals' lives will be impacted for the better," said Dover Police Chief Paul Bernat.

Over the past year, Markell has been making an effort to revitalize Delaware's cities and towns through his Downtown Development District initiative, which state lawmakers fully funded.

"It is great to see the money get on the street, to see some of these properties acquired, demolished and like a phoenix rising from the ashes, new things take hold," he said.

Another \$10 million would go toward the fund under a similar proposal to use bank settlement money now before the Joint Finance Committee. JFC has not given a timeline on how they'd allocate the money.

The Central Delaware Habitat for Humanity, Interfaith Community Housing of Delaware, the Wilmington Housing Partnership and New Castle County all received grants.

Seven organizations in total applied requesting \$8.2 million.



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Del. officials distribute Strong Neighborhoods Housing Fund

POSTED: 06:52 PM EST Feb 12, 2015

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DOVER, Del. - Governor Jack Markell joined the Delaware State Housing Authority and other Delaware officials to announce the recipients from the Strong Neighborhoods Housing Fund on Thursday.

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Over 2.77 million dollars were distributed and split amongst four chosen applicants including Central Delaware Habitat for Humanity, Interfaith Community Housing of Delaware, Inc., New Castle County Department of Community Services, and Wilmington Housing Partnership.

Officials say the fund will support community development and address crime strategies. Their goal is transform neighborhoods that are experiencing blight or other forms of stress.

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Central Del. Habitat for Humanity gets 'Strong Neighborhoods' funding

By Arshon Howard
Delaware State News

DOVER— It's an exciting time for Dover, said Jocelyn Tice, executive director of the Central Delaware Habitat for Humanity.

Habitat, along with Interfaith Community Housing of Delaware, Inc., New Castle County Department of Community Services and Wilmington Housing Partnership were recipients of the first round of funding made available through the Strong Neighborhoods Housing Fund Thursday afternoon.

Last year, Delaware received funds from the JPMorgan Chase Mortgage Settlement. The General Assembly allocated \$2.755 million to the Delaware State Housing Authority as part of its fiscal year 2015 appropriation to establish the SNHF.

Habitat will receive \$672,191, Interfaith will receive \$742,809, New Castle County Department of Community Services will receive \$500,000 and Wilmington Housing Partnership will receive \$840,000.

The funding was made available to organizations through a competitive application process in targeted Delaware areas. Applications were received from nonprofit orga-

nizations, local jurisdictions, and for-profit developers partnering with nonprofit organizations.

The funds will be used for the acquisition, renovation and sale of vacant, abandoned and foreclosed properties throughout the state.

"We hope to increase home ownership in the downtown area," Ms. Tice said. "We hope to continue to focus in on a more concentrated area for larger community development and achieving affordable home ownership."

NCALL is a nonprofit organization that helps in counseling low-income homeowners and would-be homeowners.

In January Gov. Jack Markell selected Dover as one of its first three designations for Downtown Development Districts, which gives access to financial assistance for property improvements.

Dover's proposed district includes the area bounded by Mary Street to the north, Water Street to the south, the railroad tracks to the west, and State Street and Governors Avenue to the east. It also includes the portion of Lincoln Park east of Cherry Street.

Habitat with the help of NCALL, a

The funding was made available to organizations through a competitive application process.

nonprofit organization that helps in counseling low-income homeowners and would-be homeowners hopes to construct and renovate 13 houses within the designated district.

"NCALL will help construct two new homes," said Karen Speakman, Deputy Director of NCALL. We're all working together to be strategic and target certain blocks, so we can make a difference."

Ms. Speakman said the organization hopes to get the community involved as well.

"We're going to be doing neighborhood watch groups and have social services go out and see what's provided in these communities and what aren't," Ms. Speakman said.

Delaware's Attorney General Matthew Denn said there's a proposal in the works that will allow them to use money from two additional

settlements that will go towards the SNHF.

"This is part one and we want there to be a part two," AG Denn said. "Together with the governor we made a proposal to the General Assembly to use part of the 36 million for more of this type of work."

"We want to invest money in this fund and create the opportunity to have more projects like this get underway. We're hopeful that this is the first chapter of what should be a very good story to tell about creating strong communities and affordable houses in our state."

Gov. Markell agreed.

"It's very exciting to see these communities transform," Gov. Markell said. "We can play a small role, but the only way this is going to be successful if a lot of the other money gets invested as well."

"When you think about improving the quality of life and think about reducing crime having a great improving housing stock is at the center of that."

Staff writer Arshon Howard can be reached at 741-8230 or ahoward@newszap.com.