

RESTORING CENTRAL DOVER



OUR VISION FOR VITALITY

**RESTORING CENTRAL DOVER
IMPLEMENTATION PHASE II
2020 TO 2025**

REFLECTION AND PURPOSE: The idea for Restoring Central Dover (RCD) was raised in 2012 by the CenDel Foundation’s Safety Committee. Wells Fargo Regional Foundation made a Planning Grant to NCALL and an 18-month planning process began in 2013. Interface Studio facilitated the effort to assess Central Dover, and work with the community to create a vision and a series of strategies. During the planning period, a Steering Committee was organized and NCALL applied to Wells Fargo Regional Foundation for a five-year Implementation Grant. A grant of \$750,000 was awarded and the initial five-years will be completed in June of 2020.

This planning document for Phase II of Restoring Central Dover, 2020 to 2025, was developed by the Steering Committee, residents, and NCALL. Key NCALL staff began by developing a draft of accomplishments and next step strategies at sessions held on June 25, July 7, and August 1, 2019. The Steering Committee - which includes residents - reviewed the draft and met on August 28, September 4, and September 18, 2019 to add strategies and make changes. Residents also reviewed the plan and provided input on September 30, 2019. Information gathered at a April 4, 2018 Steering Committee Planning Retreat led by Lamar Wilson was also incorporated.

All stakeholders voiced their belief that Restoring Central Dover has been a resounding success, achieving the kinds of impacts hoped for. The initial 5-years have resulted in a solid and accomplished foundation on which to build, taking the vision and strategies further and deeper towards the goal of transformational change. It is with excitement, that this plan for Phase II is presented as a blueprint forward.

PLANNING TEAM FOR PHASE II:

NCALL: Karen Speakman, Executive Director; Patricia Kelleher, Real Estate Development Director; Will Grimes, Neighborhood Revitalization Coordinator; Chanda Jackson, Community Engagement Coordinator, Sierra Green, Americorps Vista.

Restoring Central Dover Steering Committee Partners: Residents, Wesley College, City of Dover, Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance, Downtown Dover Partnership, City of Dover Police, Delaware State University, Bayhealth, CenDel Foundation, Capital School District, Dover Interfaith Mission for Housing, Dover Housing Authority, Central Delaware Habitat for Humanity, City of Dover Parks & Recreation, Delaware Health and Social Services/Public Health, HUD (Housing and Urban Development), HELP, Inc., Housing Alliance Delaware, Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce, Milford Housing Development Corporation, and Churches within the plan area.

Planning Facilitator: Joe Myer, Community and Organizational Development Consulting

FUNDERS FOR PHASE I: Wells Fargo Regional Foundation, JPMorgan Chase, Welfare Foundation, Bank of America, Potter Trust (CenDel), SPEER Trust, Chichester duPont Foundation, Delaware State Housing Authority, Delaware Community Foundation, Longwood Foundation, PNC Bank, Laffey-McHugh Foundation, Gilliam Foundation, Marmot Foundation, NeighborWorks America, City of Dover, and Delaware’s Downtown Development District and Neighborhood Building Blocks Fund programs.



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OUR VISION FOR VITALITY

ORIGINAL VISION AND GOAL AREAS: This plan represents our community’s vision for restoring the vitality of Central Dover. It offers a range of achievable strategies, implemented over a five-year period, designed to lay the foundation for future opportunities to fully realize Central Dover’s potential as a place to live, work, and play.

1. **A STRONG COMMUNITY:** Build community capital, increase public safety, engage youth in community, and expand adult and family services
2. **POSITIVE DEVELOPMENT:** Strengthen existing housing, support new development, reinvest in commercial corridors, and ensure equitable economic development
3. **AN INTEGRATED PUBLIC REALM AND INFRASTRUCTURE:** Improve transportation infrastructure, enhance open spaces and expand green infrastructure

VISION AND GOAL AREAS FOR PHASE II: The Vision is what we want the culmination of the Restoring Central Dover effort to achieve. Discussion emphasized that the vision should include “sustainable” or “resilient” and should build on the foundation of the first 5 years. The Original Goal Area #3 (An Integrated Public Realm and Infrastructure) was felt to be difficult to explain and understand; Quality of Life was chosen as an appropriate substitute.

New Vision for Phase II:

A resilient and thriving Central Dover community that continues to shape its own future.

Goal Areas for Phase II

1. **A STRONG COMMUNITY:** Build community capital, increase public safety, engage youth in community, and expand adult and family services
2. **POSITIVE DEVELOPMENT:** Strengthen existing housing, support new housing development, reinvest in commercial corridors, build community facilities, improve infrastructure, and advance economic and workforce development
3. **QUALITY OF LIFE:** Integrate the arts, improve health outcomes, offer recreation options, foster open and green space, and engage in public policy



CENTRAL DOVER

**PLAN
AREA**

THE PLAN AREA
IS MADE UP OF
75 BLOCKS
WHICH IS
APPROXIMATELY
393 ACRES
IN SIZE

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND THOUGHTS

HOUSING

CONTEXT: Significant progress was made in reducing blighted, vacant properties and replacing them with new, affordable homes. The plan area's initial 25% rate of homeownership (very low compared to 60+% rate in Dover and the State) caused this strategic reinvestment in Central Dover, while removing substandard conditions, which also positively impacts community safety.



HOUSING RELATED ACCOMPLISHMENTS THROUGH 2019

- Transformation through removal of blight, redevelopment of new housing, and preservation of existing homes.
- Atria Planning LLC developed the Central Dover Revitalization Strategies Plan to guide housing development.
- Eleven vacant, blighted properties acquired and demolished.
- Eight homes built by NCALL, 20 by Central Delaware Habitat, two by Milford Housing, and eight by Mautiste.
- Eight existing owner-occupied homes rehabilitated.
- Several blocks transformed by demolishing blighted properties, building new homes and attracting new homeowners.
- Homeownership counseling, financial education, resident training meetings, and landlord meetings were held.
- Architect designed new homes that reflect local character and styles.
- NCALL demonstrated that it could undertake sustained homeownership development.
- \$9.2 million leveraged through State's Downtown Development District and Strong Neighborhood Housing Fund programs, and private foundations such as Longwood and Welfare.
- 12 lots in inventory on which to build as we begin Phase II.
- Central Delaware Housing Collaborative is purchasing/leasing houses as affordable, shared rental housing.
- Small parcels are combined with adjacent ones and re-subdivided.
- The City of Dover has improved code enforcement.



ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND THOUGHTS

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

CONTEXT: Initially, Restoring Central Dover (RCD) recognized that the City of Dover's Economic Development efforts were insufficient. While pieces of the puzzle existed, more structure and creativity were needed. Efforts brought together key people into an economic development work group which resulted in many creative ideas and strategies. Some listed below have been implemented by RCD and its partners.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS THROUGH 2019

Launcher – Initiative helps potential entrepreneurs with business planning

- Two series of classes have graduated 35 participants and more classes are scheduled.
- Three businesses have opened in Central Dover and three outside the area.
- Marketed to Central Dover residents, and has a good synergy with the Unlock the Block initiative.

Unlock The Block – Phase 1 filled two vacant storefronts.

- RCD has injected a high level of creativity and innovation into filling empty storefronts. This idea came from RCD's Economic Development Work Group.
- 2nd phase of Unlock The Block commenced in the fall of 2019.

NCALL's 7,600 SF Commercial Building on Division Street

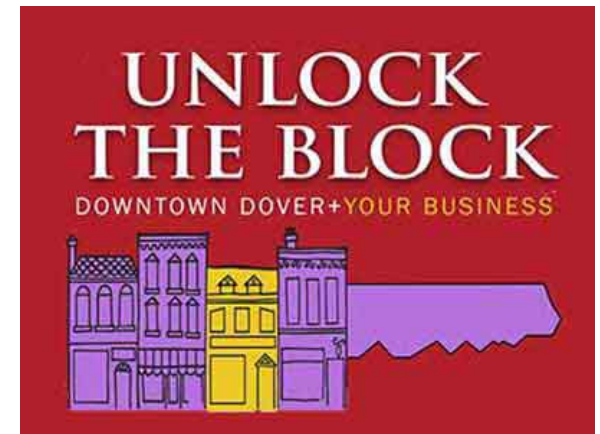
- \$1 million raised to date for construction.
- Economic and Workforce Development Hub where RCD staff will be located.
- Partnership with Delaware State University for business development.

First Fridays

- Partnership with DDP and D3.
- Has grown to be year-round and are now including arts and music.

Merchant Involvement

- Merchants are participating more with DDP, First Fridays, and events.
- There is more involvement from minority merchants on West Lookerman Street.



ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND THOUGHTS

SAFETY

CONTEXT: Efforts to improve safety included strategic work with the City of Dover's Police and Planning Departments, along with community advocacy, followed by positive investment to replace dilapidated conditions. Lights On Dover Strong was a successful effort that touched most in the community by lighting up Central Dover, and also being a source of hope and community building.



SAFETY ACCOMPLISHMENTS THROUGH 2019

- 350 Households served by Lights On Dover Strong with 700 lights on front/back of homes. This program is now being replicated in communities throughout Delaware.
- Established two well-functioning Neighborhood Watch groups (Downtown and Lincoln Park).
- Funded, purchased and installed four security cameras, with planned expansion.
- Community mobilized to close two nuisance properties.
- Collective action with the City and partners has resulted in the demolition of dangerous buildings. The acquisition and demolition of vacant, boarded-up properties increases safety for adjacent residents. Dramatically increased Police involvement (engaged in steering committee, involved at events and Open Streets, and establishment of Police Athletic League and Police Cadets).
- A new pilot Downtown Dover Ambassador Program has recently be launched.
- Kids are playing outside, toys are strewn on lawns, people are sitting on their front porches, and trust and positive feedback are reported instead of skepticism.



ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND THOUGHTS

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

CONTEXT: Real progress has been made towards the goal of achieving trust and developing resident leaders. Trust has been built within the community, residents are taking on increased leadership, and significant connections are bearing fruit with more and more resident volunteers.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & LEADERSHIP ACCOMPLISHMENTS THROUGH 2019

- Partnered with the Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance to make \$99,502 in Emergency Grants to 190 households in Central Dover over three years to help people keep a roof over their heads.
- Leaders are emerging, particularly when there are concerns. Residents have learned to trust the process and are now engaged in all of the initiatives. Forty eight residents attended National Community Leadership Institute training sponsored by NeighborWorks America.
- Committees are functioning for all types of events such as Youth Training Forums, Open Streets, Community Garden, and Neighborhood Watches.
- 10 Open Streets events were held in 2018/2019 involving health organizations, University of Delaware, and many more vendors and services. Bayhealth, is now involved going forward.
- The Community Garden partnership with Wesley College is doing well offering fresh produce, gardening fun, and special resident and volunteer get-togethers.
- Two major Community Clean-Ups are held each year with a strong cadre of volunteers.
- The Delaware Food Bank has been accessed for virtually all events and Restoring Central Dover partners participate in the Farmers Market every Wednesday at the Loockerman Street Plaza.
- Other events include Back to School, Community Dinners, Outdoor Movies, and a number of events in conjunction with the Dover Library.
- Strong corps of volunteer leaders supplemented by fraternities, sororities, and student groups with 580 resident volunteer hours in 2019 so far. An Americorp VISTA now assists with resident engagement.





ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND THOUGHTS

TRANSPORTATION/GREENSPACE/INFRASTRUCTURE

CONTEXT: Connecting Central Dover through transportation, assuring adequate infrastructure exists to serve residents, and providing options for greenspace were all deemed important by the Restoring Central Dover plan. Progress was made in several of these areas and enhanced Central Dover as a place to live, bringing it more on par with the balance of Dover.

TRANSPORTATION/GREENSPACE/INFRASTRUCTURE

ACCOMPLISHMENTS 2019

- A community walk through with residents, City Departments, public works, and elected officials was held in the Lincoln Park portion of the plan area. This resulted in a plan that was implemented to improve sidewalks, remove trash, improve lighting, and take action on blighted properties.
 - Student designed bicycle rack and repair station installed at Dover Library, funded by Restoring Central Dover.
- A Route 8 bicycle path was completed, and a sidewalk was added along the railroad track for safety.
 - Five outdoor movie nights were held in 2018 and 2019.
 - A downtown Parking Study was completed by the City offering strategies to make improvements.
 - A Dover Parks Assessment was completed by the City and two park masterplans are being implemented.
 - Developed and financed community facilities: Solid Rock Community Outreach Center, Sankofa Cultural Arts Center, and transitional housing serving homeless men.
 - Transportation discussions were held with DART/DELDOT about increasing bus stops and streamlining routes from the plan area. New routes are providing access from the Dover Air Force Base to Central Dover.
 - The Central Dover Transit Center was completed offering more transportation options.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND THOUGHTS

THE ARTS

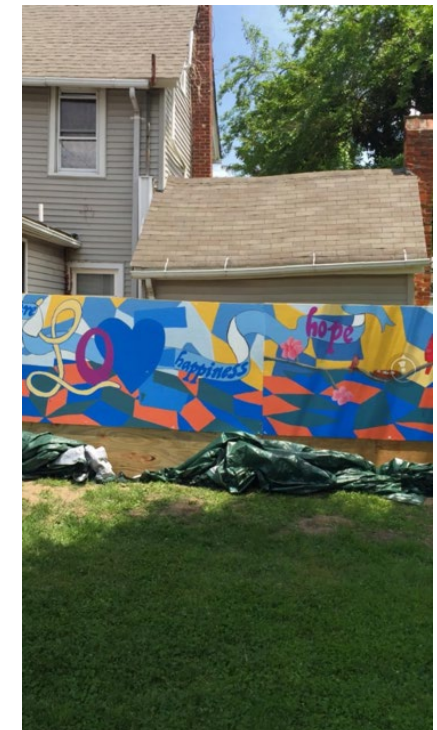
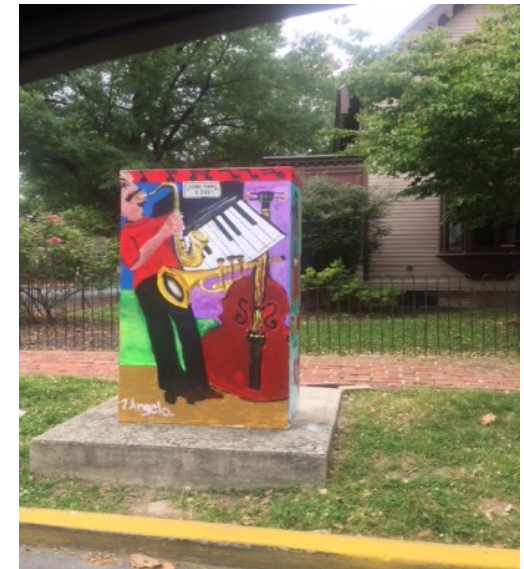
CONTEXT: The union of the Arts community with Restoring Central Dover which grew out of the 2017 Arts Convening is already bearing significant fruit. The Arts will play an even greater role in Phase II with specific goals and projects, along with having its own work group forward.

ARTS ACCOMPLISHMENTS THROUGH 2019

- An Arts Convening held September, 2017 brought more than 50 artists/arts organizations and RCD representatives together to discuss Arts and Community Development.
- One park mural was completed on Kirkwood Street by the community and Leadership Central Delaware. Two other murals are underway in the commercial district.



- 18 Traffic Boxes were painted by local artists, schools, and colleges throughout the plan area.
- First Fridays now features local musicians, plein air art, and busking.
- Local artists are more engaged with community residents.
- Arts representatives have been added to the Steering Committee.



LESSONS LEARNED

The following are some thoughts and lessons learned from Phase I that will be important to keep in mind over the course of Phase II.

- ✓ Clearly defined Steering Committee goals/expectations foster and strengthen implementation.
- ✓ Leadership takes many forms and it is important to foster it in different ways, using all available opportunities.
- ✓ How destructive BLIGHT and VACANCY is - causing crime, fear, vacancy, disinvestment, and negative quality of life.
- ✓ How valuable the Arts are to community development.
- ✓ Good intentions are not enough – a plan, resources, follow-through, and accountability are all necessary.
- ✓ The importance of telling the story, over and over again.
- ✓ With extensive daily work, how to build in the time and capacity for regular creative and forward thinking?
- ✓ Similarly, how to assess the overall work of RCD to assure all the parts result in dramatic, transformative change?
- ✓ The importance of incorporating residents in all aspects of Restoring Central Dover, creating ownership and impact.
- ✓ Challenges continue to exist at the City of Dover and state agency levels, regarding funding, incentives, and efficiencies.
- ✓ Educate local lenders about the State's Strong Neighborhood Housing Fund homeownership subsidies.
- ✓ Make sure as new action strategies are developed that we do not duplicate any existing efforts.
- ✓ The value of partnerships and collaboration can never be underestimated.
- ✓ How important it is for Restoring Central Dover to fully engage its government partners.
- ✓ There is more opportunity to engage in and advocate for improved public policy to impact Central Dover.
- ✓ There will be challenges of having enough people and financial resources.
- ✓ Good things take time!

NCALL CONTINUES AS THE BACKBONE ORGANIZATION

RESTORING CENTRAL DOVER STEERING COMMITTEE

- Establish goals and strategies, provide guidance and direction, and assess progress and accountability.
- Reassess member organizations and people to assure important and contributing partners are at the table.
- Establish agendas that fully engage the Steering Committee with strategy, planning, and decisions.
- Meet every other month.

WORK GROUPS BECOME PROJECT ACTION COMMITTEES

- The Work Group structure has generally worked well and accomplished much.
- Community Engagement utilizes a committee structure tied to events and goals that has worked well.
- Continue to draw from Steering Committee and add committee members from the outside.
- Organize an Arts Work Group to assure the arts are integrated into all aspects of Restoring Central Dover.
- The importance of building a pipeline of leadership for work groups and committees.
- The new Goal Areas: A Strong Community, Positive Development, and Quality of Life, will function with work groups/action committees as shown below:

NEW GOAL AREAS

A STRONG COMMUNITY

POSITIVE DEVELOPMENT

QUALITY OF LIFE

PROJECT ACTION COMMITTEES/WORK GROUPS

Community Engagement, Safety

Housing & Infrastructure, Economic and Workforce Development

Arts, Health Outcomes, Green Space and Recreation, Public Policy

THE STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Residents, Wesley College, City of Dover, Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance, Downtown Dover Partnership, City of Dover Police, Delaware State University, Bayhealth, CenDel Foundation, Capital School District, Dover Interfaith Mission for Housing, Dover Housing Authority, Central Delaware Habitat for Humanity, Delaware health and Social Services/Public Health, HUD (Housing and Urban Development), HELP, Inc., Housing Alliance Delaware, Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce, Milford Housing Development Corporation, and Churches within the plan area.

NEW DIRECTIONS & GOALS FOR THE FUTURE

This section presents new goals and action strategies designed for the next five-years of Restoring Central Dover, 2020-2025. Building on the highly successful Phase I, these were developed through multiple planning sessions with the Restoring Central Dover Steering Committee, residents, and staff with the goal of achieving the vision of *“A resilient and thriving Central Dover community that continues to shape its own future.”*

A STRONG COMMUNITY

1. BUILD CAPITAL THROUGH RESIDENT ENGAGEMENT

Further cultivation of resident skills and neighborhood groups will encourage people to take ownership and shape their futures in Central Dover, while addressing issues collectively.

Actions:

- a. Expand resident leadership team. Use AmeriCorps/VISTAs to organize and empower. Ensure residents, owners and renters, are represented at all levels, are heard, and their leadership skills are cultivated through training and engagement.
- b. Organize events such as Open Streets, Community Clean-Ups, Neighborhood Watches, Community Dinners, and Youth Forums, and seek other social and resident engagement opportunities to build cohesiveness.
- c. Increase presence and access to the Delaware Food Bank for Central Dover residents, and issue flyers and announcements highlighting food availability.
- d. Educate residents about the importance of advocacy and its use in engaging elected officials to provide necessary resources and support to ensure neighborhood sustainability.
- e. Continue Emergency Grants for rent/utilities to households in danger of losing their housing in Central Dover.

2. INCREASE PUBLIC SAFETY IN CENTRAL DOVER

Safety is a prerequisite for Central Dover becoming resilient and thriving. Without reducing crime, residents live at risk and attempts to attract investment, businesses, and new residents to buy homes may be greatly inhibited.

Actions:

- a. Expand community policing and stabilize the program for the long-term. Continue to build stronger and more effective relationships with the Dover Police Department.
- b. Provide more training for Neighborhood Watch groups via Project Safe Neighborhoods and See-Something Say-Something campaigns. Add a 3rd Neighborhood Watch group and have City lighting personnel attend meetings to discuss dark alleyways. Integrate community policing, cadets, and ambassadors into a safety strategy.
- c. Assess feasibility of a Block Stewardship program utilizing local churches to collectively impact Central Dover.
- d. Prioritize the removal of blighted, dangerous, and nuisance properties. Blight remediation efforts will be coordinated with the City of Dover and will focus on high-risk priority areas.
- e. Coordinate with Project Safe Neighborhoods, a collaborative of Peace by Piece, Dover Police Department, and Delaware State University. Revisit places where drug activity is occurring to undertake more effective efforts.
- f. Check effectiveness of current security cameras to see if newer technology, moving cameras should be installed.

POSITIVE DEVELOPMENT

1. STRENGTHEN EXISTING HOUSING AND BUILD NEW OPPORTUNITIES

Community building conditions shape the perception, character, and potential of neighborhoods. Distressed buildings must give way to a greatly improved housing stock, essential for long-term neighborhood vitality and reinvestment.

Actions:

- a. Build and sell 20 new single-family homes in an effort to provide homeownership opportunities and to increase the lagging homeownership rate.

Housing Actions Continued:

- b. Purchase multiple blighted, vacant, and dangerous properties in strategic locations to redevelop into new affordable housing opportunities.
- c. Rehabilitate 10 – 15 owner occupied homes to strengthen the existing housing for residents.
- d. Measure demand for affordable apartments by conducting a Market Analysis. If warranted, develop a 30 – 50 unit affordable rental complex for families and seniors using the Low Income Housing Tax Credit program.
- e. Organize a Homebuyers Club to offer support to new homeowners that are purchasing within the plan area.
- f. Develop an employer sponsored housing initiative with major employers adjacent to Central Dover participating and offering incentives, such as Wesley College, City of Dover, Bayhealth, etc.
- g. Advocate effectively for enhanced blight remediation and code enforcement policies and actions by the City of Dover, particularly for slumlord properties with on-going violations that show no improvement.
- h. Provide annual tenant training sessions about their rights.
- i. Examine shared housing models and other innovative solutions to housing needs serving a variety of incomes and the homeless, such as shared housing, housing for millennials, artist housing, etc.
- j. Assist Dover Interfaith Mission for Housing in securing an alternate location for its men’s homeless shelter when its lease expires in two years. Reduce loitering in commercial and residential areas.
- k. Host annual landlord education sessions about programs and funding to improve their properties.
- l. Interface with Dover Housing Authority and the Delaware State Housing Authority to make sure the HUD voucher program is well utilized and provides quality housing within Central Dover.

2. BE A CREATIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PRESENCE IN THE EFFORT TO RECAST CENTRAL DOVER'S COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS – Goal Statement

It is critical to unleash the unique character and great potential of Central Dover's commercial corridors by addressing property underutilization and corridor branding, so that they can become vibrant and bustling destinations.

Actions:

- a. Build on successful investments in the downtown commercial corridor with the Downtown Dover Partnership and have annual Unlock The Block competitions to seek new businesses and help existing businesses expand. Assess demand for the creation of a Corridor Investment Fund.
- b. Connect and provide technical assistance and mentoring for aspiring entrepreneurs through annual Launcher Program classes, and the Delaware State University Business Enterprise Department.
- c. Promote Workforce Development through employment related apprenticeship and training programs with local high schools and colleges serving Central Dover youth, young adults, and unemployed and underemployed residents.
- d. Ensure NCALL's new commercial building becomes a community asset and economic engine for Dover and a revitalizing force on Division Street.
- e. Strategize proactive public policy and economic development solutions for underutilized and marginalized commercial properties.
- f. Continue First Fridays and other events and festivals, with planning to assure they become sustainable.

3. IMPROVE CENTRAL DOVER'S INFRASTRUCTURE TO ASSURE RESIDENTS ARE WELL SERVED – Goal Statement

Infrastructure, while often taken for granted, represents the foundation for neighborhood well-being. Central Dover's infrastructure must be on par with that of all parts of the City. Upgrades and improvements are necessary to assure residents are well served.

Infrastructure Actions:

- a. Organize a community walk through of the downtown portion of Central Dover by all City Departments, residents, appropriate State agencies, and elected officials to walk and assess the streets, sidewalks, alleys, trash, and lighting needs. Develop an improvement plan to better serve residents of the RCD area.
- b. Advocate for new DART bus stops on Queen, Kirkwood, and North Streets, since buses drive through regularly.
- c. Increase downtown parking availability and signage, and support and impact efforts underway by the City/ DDP.
- d. Develop a vision for primary Central Dover streets using the DELDOT Map-It and Complete Streets Programs to include designs and streetscapes for future implementation.

QUALITY OF LIFE

1. ENHANCE ARTS AND CULTURE FOR RESIDENTS AND CENTRAL DOVER STAKEHOLDERS – Goal Statement

The intersection of art and culture with community development are critical to the vitality of Central Dover as it discovers its identity and develops a Creative Placemaking Plan.

Actions:

- a. Develop a Creative Placemaking Plan to enhance the intersection of art and community to make Central Dover a more desirable place to live, work, and visit. Implement the recommendations of the plan.
 - b. Expand current arts offerings such as First Fridays, murals, street art and music, and festivals.
 - c. As new housing is developed and rehabilitated, explore demand for artist housing and work-space options.
 - d. Seek the connection and restorative nature of art and community development to further resident engagement.
 - e. Articulate the rich history and identity of Central Dover in new and innovative ways.
- a. Improve the beauty, esthetics, and landscape of all neighborhoods for happiness and wellbeing of residents.

2. UNDERTAKE STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE HEALTH OUTCOMES AND HEALTHY LIFESTYLES FOR RESIDENTS – Goal Statement

A healthy community is made up of healthy residents and the following strategies are established to assure access to quality health related services to improve overall health outcomes for Central Dover.

Actions:

- a. Advocate to ensure residents of Central Dover live in a community served by clean water and air, access to fresh food, quality schools, and healthy homes.
- b. Strengthen collaborative relationships with major health providers and other local health organizations.
- c. Work to connect other important health services to underserved Central Dover residents such as women’s health, screenings, mental health, pre-natal care, dentistry, vision, etc.
- d. Continue Open Streets and similar projects accentuating health and healthy lifestyles.
- e. Implement a Healthy Homes Assessment and Remediation pilot, to improve energy efficiency and eliminate lead, asbestos, mold, and vermin, by linking to existing efforts where possible.
- f. Recognizing Central Dover’s “hot spot” status, seek solutions for substance abuse and opioid addiction and connect service providers to Central Dover households. Participate on Dover’s Opioid Community Response Team.
- g.
- h. Recognizing Central Dover is a Food Desert, investigate and implement methods of bringing quality and affordable food and fresh produce to Central Dover residents. Continue the current Community Garden and Farmers Market.
- i. In addition to offering emergency grants to residents so they can stay in their housing, make sure other emergency services connect with Central Dover such as the Delaware Food Bank, other food and shelter programs, Code Purple, etc.

3. ADVOCATE FOR RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES AND GREENSPACE TO PROVIDE RESIDENTS OF CENTRAL DOVER ACCESS TO HEALTHY ACTIVITY – Goal Statement

Increasing the opportunities for a variety of physical recreation types in Central Dover will help achieve health and well-being.

Actions:

- a. Advocate for the assessment of recreational and green space needs and sound master planning with the City of Dover and State to assure Central Dover residents and children have access to a variety of recreation types.
- b. Plan for and develop pop-up and pocket parks within the Central Dover boundaries.
- c. Engage with the City of Dover on pedestrian and bicycle safety, and improved walkability.
- d. Organize and host recreation activities in line with the goals of Open Streets.
- e. Advocate for the responsible care and improved maintenance of parks and green space serving Central Dover.

4. STRONG COMMUNITY-BASED PUBLIC POLICY WORK IS KEY TO CENTRAL DOVER SUSTAINABILITY – Goal Statement

As residents engage and leaders emerge, the opportunity to impact public policy on behalf of Central Dover is key to future community resilience.

Actions:

- a. Highlight non-partisan voter registration and census participation at all RCD activities and events to increase resident involvement in the political process.
- b. Advocate for efficiency, timeliness, and cost savings across all City of Dover Departments.
- c. Examine current zoning and land-use in the RCD plan area, and advocate for improved residential livability.

Public Policy Actions Continued:

- d. Encourage the City to enhance its structure and approach to Economic and Residential Development.
- e. Add knowledge and input from Central Dover into the City of Dover’s planning processes.
- f. Engage Dover’s higher education community (Delaware State University, Wesley College, University of Delaware, Delaware Technical & Community College, and Wilmington University) in order to see what can be brought to Central Dover collectively to benefit residents and prepare them and their community for sustainability and resilience.

IMPLEMENTATION PRINCIPLES

- 1. Ensure the RCD Plan is a living, responsive document that is updated and pivots to achieve Plan goals. Have a Planning Retreat at the mid-point of Phase II to assure goals, strategies, and implementation are relevant.
- 2. Assess progress, solve problems, and take advantage of opportunities over the plan period.
- 3. Work with the Community and City to develop a cohesive, consistent, and positive Community Branding and Marketing Campaign, and find new ways to tell our story.
- 4. Leverage private, state, and federal investment and resources into Central Dover for all goal areas in order to maximize the impact of the Wells Fargo Regional Foundation investment.
- 5. Apply what is learned, always think creatively, seek new approaches and best practices, and build on RCD’s strong foundation for transformative change.

MOVING THE NEEDLE – MAKING A DIFFERENCE

It is important to measure success, articulate accomplishments, and quantify change for the Restoring Central Dover effort. The following shows where we began, assesses progress as of 2019, and establishes ambitious goals for 2025.

Specific Measures	Plan Baseline	Current 2019	Future 2025	Value Discussion
Funds leveraged for RCD	-0-	\$9.2 million	+\$7.6 for \$16.8 million	Significant leverage of Wells Fargo grant showing state and private funding and investment into Central Dover.
New Homes Built & Sold	0%	38 for 14% Increase	+20 for 7% or 57	RCD increased the number of homes owned by 14% under Phase I. Phase II will increase it at least another 7%. Strong alliance with CDHFH and proof that quality homes will sell.
Homeownership Rate	25%	30%	40%	Homeownership stabilizes the community and new homes and investment replace blight/vacancy. The rate increase looks small because there are so many rental units – in reality, it is huge
CLI Attendees (Community Leadership Institute)	8	48	+32 for 88	Attendees at annual National Community Leadership Institutes by NeighborWorks – amazing venues for the latest revitalization training and peer networking.
Events and Forums Held	2	54	50	Evidences significant and on-going resident engagement efforts.
Blighted/vacant Properties	70	49	19	73% reduction of blighted and vacant buildings to address substandard conditions that breed crime, fear, and disinvestment for residents.

Specific Measures	Plan Baseline	Current 2019	Future 2025	Value Discussion
Commercial Vacancies	14	7	2	85% reduction of vacant properties in commercial corridor on or near Lookerman Street. The impact has stabilized the downtown.
Neighborhood Watch Groups	-0-	2	3	Neighborhood Watch Groups coordinating with Police and Code Enforcement for a safer community. Organized residents can make great improvements.
Lights On Dover Strong Residents making pledge	-0-	350	350	Improved lighting and resident pledges to call police when they see something suspicious, increases community safety. Demonstrates the importance of light and resident engagement. Being replicated all over Delaware.
# of Police Cadets	-0-	4	9	Build and maintain a visible presence of cadets downtown to enhance safety.
# of Ambassadors	-0-	3	15	Following current pilot, implement full Ambassador welcoming and information program for events and key times to enhance friendliness and safety.
Community Arts Projects	2	20	25	Increase many times over community arts projects by combining with community development efforts to enhance community beauty and vibrancy.

CRIME AND SAFETY

For the 3-year period, 2011-2013, Central Dover experienced a 400% spike in violent crime. This was an integral reason that Restoring Central Dover was first envisioned. The crime categories below are shown annually for Central Dover both in number of crimes and crimes per 1,000 persons in parentheses. Years 2013 and 2014 represent planning years. Years 2015-2018 represent implementation years of Restoring Central Dover, Phase I. Some statistics may result from greater reporting by organized Neighborhood Watches and residents.

<u>Crime Category</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>Trend</u>
Motor Vehicle Theft	60 (16.06)	8 (2.14)	8 (2.14)	6 (1.60)	8 (2.14)	8 (2.14)	Reduction in 2014, then constant.
Drugs/Narcotics	138 (36.95)	42 (11.24)	81 (21.68)	80 (21.42)	110 (29.45)	94 (25.17)	Initial reduction, then increases.
Burglary	54 (14.46)	19 (5.09)	20 (5.35)	17 (4.55)	11 (2.94)	12 (3.21)	Significant reduction.
Assault	45 (12.06)	139 (37.21)	188 (50.33)	173 (46.32)	140 (37.48)	178 (47.65)	Significant increase-major concern.
Robbery	40 (10.71)	16 (4.28)	13 (3.48)	12 (3.21)	12 (3.21)	11 (2.94)	Significant reduction.
Homicide	0 (0.0)	2 (.53)	3 (.80)	0 (0.0)	1 (.26)	0 (0.0)	Constant.

WHAT NCALL BRINGS TO THE TABLE

- A high capacity organization with an engaged staff and Board of Directors.
- All of lines of business are connecting with Restoring Central Dover – real estate development, homeownership counseling, community development lending, and financial coaching.
- HUD approved Housing Counseling Agency with Counselors certified and trained by HUD and NeighborWorks.
- A NeighborWorks America chartered organization rated Exemplary.
- Treasury certified CDFI lending capital for affordable housing, community facilities, and economic development.
- Successful in leveraging capital for Restoring Central Dover from Delaware’s Downtown Development District and Strong Neighborhood Housing Fund programs.
- Successfully leveraged private funding by Delaware foundations such as Longwood and Welfare Foundations.
- Strong, experienced senior leaders with longevity and Restoring Central Dover personnel who are extraordinary leaders with the necessary skills and passion.
- A well-respected organization demonstrating steady growth, financial stability, best practices, a collaborative spirit, and strong governance.



THE IMPACT OF PARTNERS

It is important to know that Restoring Central Dover is a unique and successful collaborative effort that engages numerous and important partners in its work. Without the knowledge, skills, and resources from each and all of the partners who make up the Steering Committee and Work Groups, the accomplishments shared within this plan document would simply not be possible.

RESEARCH, DATA, AND PUBLICATIONS

Throughout this unique community development effort, Restoring Central Dover will consider Evidence Based Action Research using real data, surveys, before/after photos, and testimonials to describe and share its transformative success. When possible, findings will be published and successful strategies shared with peers through various networks, in order to advance the overall community development industry.