



Exciting things are happening in New Castle, Pennsylvania!

With technical assistance from Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), New Castle recently completed the Capacity Needs Assessment (CNA) phase of the HUD DCTA program. The CNA revealed that New Castle was already making great strides to

facilitate economic and community development through stronger partnerships, coordinated planning, and increased staff capacity. City leaders are acknowledging issues and taking action with initiatives designed to enhance the vitality of the area by using a transformative approach focused on relationship-building and collaboration.

“New Castle seems to be in a renaissance period and is seeing the fruits of its labor over the past 10 years,” said Mayor Chris Frye. Although originally from Virginia, Mayor Frye says, “New Castle became my home.” The mayor is proud of the progress he sees. A higher level of communication and collaboration among the city, county, and regional areas, along with more coordination with local and regional non-profit organizations provides a solid foundation for the work ahead. Residents and civic leaders are building strong relationships, supporting each other’s needs, and working closer together as a community to achieve mutually beneficial results. This is putting New Castle on a path toward positive economic and community development outcomes and is capitalizing on partnerships such as Forward Lawrence, Recast City, and Pennsylvania’s Main Street Program.



Having recently revised its 5-year strategic plan, New Castle is in the final stages of receiving a Main Street designation from the Pennsylvania Downtown Center (PDC). This designation will open the door to Main Street Program technical assistance, board and committee support, and education, as well as access to funding opportunities through the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED).

As part of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative and in partnership with Recast City, New Castle is taking steps to revitalize downtown with light industry and expanded neighborhood assistance programming. Recast City helps communities invest in place in an inclusive and thoughtful way, focusing on short-term wins that build momentum for long-term economic growth. New Castle’s Economic Development Recast Initiative recently launched with an inaugural meeting, and the work begins in October.



In addition to a diverse population, excellent food diversity, and a great park system, the riverfront is one of the community's greatest assets. New Castle's Riverwalk development is an initiative designed to increase recreation access to the riverfront and create an outdoor festive environment where people want to gather and spend time. The Downtown Concert series is growing in popularity, attracting crowds of 700-900 people for some concerts last year. In addition, a grant from the state Department of Conservation and Natural Resources will help fund construction of a boat launch, fishing pier and other access to the Shenango River in New Castle. In addition, in partnership with 10 Thousand Friends of Pennsylvania, New Castle started a neighborhood cleanup and beautification project in the City's south end.

New Castle is growing too! The city has been identified as a hot spot for remote workers seeking less-urban areas where single-family homes are less expensive and offer more space. In December, a [New York Times article](#) highlighted New Castle as one of the nation's most popular areas for people between the ages of 21 and 40 years, citing data from Ellie Mae that showed this group accounted for a huge portion of home purchase loans in the area. A [New Castle News story](#) in February referenced the article, explaining the designation of New Castle as a "Zoom" town and how the popularity is increasing for communities like New Castle that enjoy a lower cost of living. The buzz generated by the New York Times article is sparking new interest from outside parties looking for places with high potential and growing populations



Mayor Frye has engendered cooperation among multiple sectors and is leading the charge to revitalize the Blueprint Communities Council. With the DCTA team's assistance, City leadership is forging stronger partnerships between city government and local civic leaders to move community development goals forward. With the CNA complete and the direct technical assistance phase of the DCTA program kicking off, New Castle leaders and partners are engaged and ready to build on New Castle's assets, strengthen partnerships, expand community engagement, attract new investors, and lead the way for innovation and positive growth for years to come.