

On behalf of our 540,000 residents, it is with great pride that I welcome you to New Castle County, the “*First County in the First State.*” Nestled on the coast of the Mid-Atlantic region, our County is located in the northern-most section of Delaware, just west of the Delaware River.

There is much natural beauty to experience and enjoy in New Castle County. The meadows and rolling hills of Chateau Country, the pristine Delaware River shore, and the expansive farmland of Middletown-Odessa-Townsend are just a few examples. We have worked with our partners in the State of Delaware to preserve farmland that, for years, has been part of the State’s \$1 billion agriculture industry.

New Castle County offers something for everyone. The County is home to over 16,000 acres of county and state parks, which attracts individuals and families for sports, biking, hiking and other recreational uses. For those who enjoy a chic, urban atmosphere, downtown Wilmington, Delaware’s largest city, has much to offer including theatre, the arts and fine dining.

Our local arts scene is extremely strong, and includes venues at the Delaware Symphony Orchestra, the Grand Opera House, the Playhouse Theatre, the Chapel Street Players, and the Everett Theatre. We have committed \$50,000 in grants to ensure the arts community remains strong in Greater Wilmington. Additionally, there is also an eclectic mix of college and residential life in the city of Newark.

For those who want to experience a little bit more, just a short drive away is Rehoboth Beach, Del., and other relaxing shore points. New Castle County is also the midpoint between New York City and Washington, D.C., which both are about two hours away by automobile.

New Castle County has an excellent education system that offers a competitive mix of schools at the elementary and secondary level. The University of Delaware is consistently ranked among the top colleges in national publications; Wilmington University has grown by leaps and bounds while Goldey-Beacom and Delaware Tech also sustain robust enrollments.

From a business perspective, nearly two-thirds of the Fortune 500 companies are located in Delaware with a majority of them based in New Castle County. Contributing to the economic stability of the County are the Port of Wilmington and the Delaware City Refinery, which both provide good jobs and livable wages. In the ever-growing field of quality health care, New Castle County is home to Christiana Care Health System, a major teaching hospital and one of the country’s largest, state-of-the-art health care providers.

We are extremely proud of our solid public safety efforts that provide for a secure environment in which business and commerce can thrive. Our “predictive policing” technology, as well as other technologically savvy law-enforcement techniques have contributed to the significant decrease in crime.

We have much to be proud of in New Castle County. However, we must be proactive in facing the challenges of the future. Therefore, I’ve ordered our Economic Development Office to create the first-ever, comprehensive economic development plan for New Castle County. In doing so, we shall identify future growth industries, formulate a strategy to attract them to New Castle County and devise a plan to retain them. We shall also focus our energy around growth-sector businesses that will rejuvenate the entrepreneurial spirit of the County.

I invite you to visit the “*First County in the First State.*”