

Catching up with Sussex County

BY WILLIAM PFAFF

» When it comes right down to it, it's all about jobs. Today's economic recovery approach must be more innovative than ever. And in every state and country, competition is fierce not only to create more places to work, but to retain existing jobs and create an environment that helps grow local businesses as well.

The good news locally is that we've shaped a number of initiatives supported by Sussex County Council to give our county a shot in the arm. And they are enabling results! Take for instance the low-interest loan program my office, Sussex County Economic Development, launched in spring 2018.

The county's public-private partnership with Discover Bank, the National Development Council and the Small Business Administration invested \$4 million in the ExciteSussex Loan Program to provide low interest, long-term loans, aimed at businesses that have at least 10 employees and have been in business for at least two years.

To create new interest in these areas, Sussex County identified three Economic Development Zones ripe for redevelopment and expansion. In addition to the new Economic Development Zones, Delaware has chosen 25 Opportunity Zones, five of which are in central and western Sussex County. Delaware's Opportunity Zone tracts, recently designated by the U.S.

Department of Treasury include areas in Georgetown, Laurel and three in Seaford.

These Opportunity Zone designations will assist ongoing community development efforts and encourage additional private investment. As a result, qualified investors in the zones will become eligible for federal tax incentives. As growth moves westward from the coastal areas, these new incentives help make central and

The second company to set up shop in the park will supply flooring materials.

Benefitting Sussex County in 2019 is our new economic development tool, a digital research software program providing geographically specific market information to empower entrepreneurs in their decision-making processes. The new program will be incorporated into the ExciteSussex website in May 2019 and will be free of charge to use, thanks to the county's investment.

Also, in July 2019, we will introduce a new program called "economic gardening." This program, national in scope, will be the first of its kind in Delaware. Developed by economic development experts Chris Gibbons, National Center Economic Gardening, economic gardening focuses on second-stage

companies that are ready to scale up. Employing strategic information, we will help companies overcome obstacles and identify pathways to growth. Five existing companies located in Sussex County will be chosen to participate in this program.

Whether you're a business owner, a resident, or perhaps interested in being a part of one of the fastest growing counties in America. Visit our website today www.ExciteSussex.com, or call our office (302-855-7770) to see how we can help you. Let's do business...in Sussex County!



western Sussex the new frontier.

But we're not stopping there. We're pleased to announce that two (with negotiations underway on a third) lots have been leased out of 12 available in the county's newly-developed Delaware Coastal Business Park (see center fold-out section) located in Georgetown. Today, Atlantis Industries – which manufactures plastic injection molding – is up and running with 35 full time workers in a 40,000-foot building. Also, in 2018, DGS Properties LLC, operating as Creative Floors South, Inc., leased a 2.24-acre parcel at the Business Park.