

## Developing Tourism Opportunities in Sussex County

As we like to say at Southern Delaware Tourism, “Everything Starts with a Visit.” Investing more to market Sussex County as a year-round destination leads to more visitors, more residential relocation and more business relocation. Sussex County’s coastal Mid-Atlantic location is within a 4-hour drive of close to 30% of the U.S. population. This has always been an advantage and will continue to be an even larger advantage as more individuals seek to escape and ultimately move from densely populated urban and suburban areas while having more opportunities to work remotely as a result of pandemic retooling. If you have the opportunity to work from any location, why wouldn’t you choose a place like Sussex County where taxes are low and (quality of) living is high?

Just as important as the destination marketing investment is the investment towards the visitor experience here in Sussex. As always, infrastructure reigns supreme from moving people to moving high-speed data. Creating new, unique experiences that capture the sheer beauty of our county will lead to more business, more jobs and more reinvestment. One area (but certainly not the only) that is gaining steam throughout the county is waterfront development. Projects such as the (soon-to-be-completed) Grove Park Dock in Rehoboth Beach and the Baywalk in Dewey Beach will get infrastructure in place to better connect our beach towns via the scenic intercoastal waterways of our canals, inland bays and rivers. Along with providing more safe recreational outlets, this will lead to more alternative, public water transportation whereby increasing pedestrian business in our downtowns while reducing vehicular traffic and parking needs. Other examples include the evolving Oyster House Park project in Seaford that will highlight the beauty of the Nanticoke River, Laurel’s Ramble plan to optimize all the natural assets of the Broad Creek and Milford’s vision of extending its Riverwalk to include more attractions.

Sussex County also has a distinct advantage of being home to a plethora of farms and restaurants. This farm to table evolution of rock star chefs and farmers has raised the bar for food experiences here. So much so that Southern Delaware is developing a reputation as “The Culinary Coast” and has trademarked that name. Being a premier culinary destination will not only attract more visitors, but it will set the stage for more training opportunities in the culinary and hospitality fields and cultivate more talent here.

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