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Betting On Atlantic City

Wednesday, March 20, 2013

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Governor Christie's Commitment To Atlantic City Is Helping Make It, Once Again, A Premiere Tourist Destination

"This Administration is deeply committed to making greater progress on the reform agenda we've laid out to turn around Atlantic City's gaming and tourism economy, make it a premier destination resort, and strengthen its role as an engine of economic growth and job creation for the state and region."

—Governor Chris Christie, September 7, 2011

WELCOMING MISS AMERICA HOME TO ATLANTIC CITY

Continuing to move forward in making Atlantic City a premiere tourism and entertainment destination, the Christie Administration has welcomed back the Miss America Pageant to New Jersey and the Atlantic City Boardwalk. This September, Miss America will return to her home with a 13 days of events, including three nights of Preliminary Competitions at Boardwalk Hall and Miss America's signature "Show Us Your Shoes Parade," held on the famed Atlantic City Boardwalk.

Since taking Office, Governor Christie has taken strategic, comprehensive efforts to ensure New Jersey continues to be a leading destination for sports and entertainment events. The Governor's actions will result in hundreds of millions of dollars in economic growth benefiting businesses – large and small – throughout New Jersey.

GOVERNOR CHRISTIE HAS MADE ATLANTIC CITY'S REVITALIZATION A KEY PRIORITY

Governor Christie has acted on a strong commitment to support the regional and state economies through the ongoing revitalization of Atlantic City's tourism and gaming industries. The Christie Administration has made clear advancements to revive growth and development in Atlantic City. This progress includes:

Atlantic City Tourism District: Launched in April 2011, the district is an area in which the Casino Reinvestment Development Authority (CRDA) is authorized to facilitate development by assuming planning, zoning and other land use functions and develop and implement a Tourism District Master Plan. These include:

Land Use Regulation & Enforcement: The CRDA processed more than 90 land use certification applications and approved most of them within 48 hours of receipt of all required materials. Hearings were held on two applications, which are advancing to the CRDA Board for approval.

Security and Cleanliness: A new police substation is being implemented in mid-town Atlantic City, while CRDA is assisting with converting a former visitor information center to a Boardwalk police substation. In the citywide Demolition Project, 21 structures have been cited for demolition, six have been demolished and 15 are in the hearing process.

Special Improvement Division: New Boardwalk and beach signs were created and all old signs were replaced, with 65 Boardwalk signs installed and 50 beach signs installed at the beach entrances. Thirty additional beach signs are being created for installation. Additionally, 90 flower boxes have been installed at each beach entrance, with 30 additional boxes being constructed. Throughout the beach and Boardwalk, trash collection and other cleanliness and maintenance functions have been increased.

Tourism Advisory Commission: The 10-member commission was appointed, met and formed four committees to address neighborhood cleanliness, safety, marketing/public relations and development.

District Master Plan: The CRDA adopted the Atlantic City Tourism District Master Plan in February as a blueprint to revitalize the district and position Atlantic City for sustainable, long-term economic growth and job creation.

Boardwalk Improvements: The first phase of installation of new lights has begun, Kennedy Plaza landscaping improvements are being installed and four landscaping areas at Boardwalk street ends are in the design phase.

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Construction of the Boardwalk façade for Ocean Club will begin this fall. Exterior lighting for Boardwalk Hall is being tested, with installation planned for 2012, which will provide dramatic lighting to show the building's iconic features.

Downtown Plan: The CRDA Board of Directors approved a contract for a Workforce Housing and Retail Market Analysis, which will lay the groundwork for new housing investment. Also, ArtSpace, which the CRDA engaged in 2010, released their market assessment for an artist community. Additionally, Stockton College now holds the lease for Dante Hall and is planning uses for the theater. CRDA is advancing negotiations with The Cordish Group for Atlantic City Live.

The Inlet: A public-private partnership formed between CRDA and Revel Entertainment is facilitating infrastructure improvements and development of new housing and retail projects. Relocation of the Jitney Association is scheduled to be completed in spring 2012. Discussions have begun with regulatory agencies to replace the seawall and repair the Boardwalk in the Inlet. Also, landscape improvements on New Hampshire Avenue have been completed.

CRDA Construction Activities: More than \$100 million is being invested by the CRDA in projects including widening and landscaping of Martin Luther King Boulevard, road improvements for improved access to the Revel site, construction of the Christopher Columbus Mixed Use Center (garage) opening early 2012 and Boardwalk façade improvements.

Strengthening New Jersey's Tourism Efforts: The Christie Administration is strengthening New Jersey's tourism efforts with a new role for the New Jersey Sports and Exposition Authority. Governor Christie has endorsed the recommendations of the New Jersey Gaming, Sports and Entertainment Advisory Commission to strengthen the state's tourism promotion efforts. The recommendations, detailed in a report released in March, outlined a series of common sense and aggressive reforms to streamline and centralize the state's patchwork of entities responsible for tourism promotion and advance and better promote New Jersey's tourism industry.

MAKING ATLANTIC CITY SAFER FOR TOURISTS AND RESIDENTS ALIKE

Public Safety Task Force: In furtherance of the Governor's initiative to revitalize Atlantic City, the Attorney General has developed a robust public safety task force in the city. This task force will focus the efforts of the State Police, the County Prosecutor, the Atlantic City Police Department along with Federal agencies including the ATF and FBI to ensure the safety of the entire city including the Tourism District.

The Task Force will include the development of law enforcement best practices, the procurement and deployment of new technology and equipment, and the development and implementation of a coordinated law enforcement strategy to address public safety concerns both inside and outside of the tourism district.

Increased Police Presence In The Tourism District: A new police substation is being implemented in mid-town Atlantic City, while CRDA is assisting with converting a former visitor information center to a Boardwalk police substation.

The district is patrolled by more than 50 regular officers of the Atlantic City Police Department who are trained for bike or ATV duty.

The police department has a 10-member "Tac Team" tactical unit that conducts quality-of-life enforcement patrols in and around the Tourism District.

The casinos have approximately 34 security personnel who conduct safety patrols around the casino perimeters, including bike patrols.

20 additional Special Police Officers who full police powers, but are paid by the hour and are subject to certain restrictions have also been assigned to the tourism district.

The Casino Reinvestment Development Authority also employs 60 "ambassadors" to provide guidance to visitors and serve as added eyes and ears for security.

The "Clean And Safe" Initiative: The "Clean And Safe" Initiative is a comprehensive package of safety and quality-of-life enhancements being implemented under Governor Christie's

Atlantic City Violent Crime Task Force: Comprised of members of the Division of Criminal Justice, State Police, Atlantic County Prosecutor's Office, Atlantic City Police Department, Atlantic County Sheriff's Office, and the State Parole Board, the Task Force will target organized criminal groups operating throughout the city.

Eyes on Atlantic City: The Atlantic County Prosecutor's Office, working with the ACPD, has mapped over 450 privately-owned surveillance systems in the city and is making data from those systems available to law enforcement.

Surveillance & Communication Enhancements: Along with the Division of Gaming Enforcement, in partnership with the casinos, the goal is to develop a consolidated system of surveillance and public safety communication. The CRDA has earmarked \$3.5 million dollars to support ACPD technology enhancements.

Tip411: "Tip 411" is a privately operated, Internet-based system that enables the public to text message a tip to police, and allows police to respond, creating a two-way confidential "chat."

Outreach at the Beach Initiative: Since December 2011, the ACPD, in conjunction with the Atlantic City Rescue Mission have implemented the Outreach at the Beach initiative to screen homeless and transient individuals in the Tourism District, connect them with social services, and, when possible, return them to their families or other support networks.

Zero Tolerance Crackdown: Since January 2011, the ACPD and the State Police's Casino Gaming Bureau have implemented a "zero tolerance" policy regarding prostitution, making hundreds of arrests in anti-prostitution details in casino lounges and along Pacific Avenue.

Demolition of Abandoned Buildings/Clean Parks & Neighborhoods: About two dozen abandoned buildings have been demolished or are slated for demolition thanks to efforts spearheaded by the CRDA. In addition, the ACPD has worked closely with the CRDA and Special Improvement District (SID) to clean up the Tourism District and surrounding neighborhoods, including parks and playgrounds.

GOVERNOR CHRISTIE'S FISCAL YEAR 2014 BUDGET CONTINUES THE COMMITMENT TO ATLANTIC CITY

Governor Christie is continuing his commitment to support the regional and state economies through the ongoing revitalization of Atlantic City's tourism and gaming economies. After historic reforms were signed into law in 2011, including the establishment of an Atlantic City Tourism District administered by the Casino Reinvestment Development Authority, and a Tourism District Master Plan, Governor Christie is continuing to provide the resources necessary to support Atlantic City's comeback.

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