

# Wolf Administration: West Philadelphia Neighborhood Can Achieve New Development Opportunities with Restore Pennsylvania

February 10, 2020

**Philadelphia, PA** – Today, Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) Deputy Secretary for Community Affairs and Development Rick Vilello joined local officials and representatives from **[ACHIEVEability](https://www.achieveability.org/)** [↗](#) (<https://www.achieveability.org/>) on a tour of a block of blighted residential and commercial properties and uninhabited areas in Haddington, West Philadelphia, to discuss how Governor Tom Wolf’s bipartisan Restore Pennsylvania plan will help communities eradicate blight.

“During today’s tour we’ve seen so much potential in property and spaces that could be repurposed and transform this neighborhood—embodying Governor Wolf’s objective of tackling blight through Restore Pennsylvania,” said Deputy Secretary Vilello.

“ACHIEVEability is an organization built by the community, for the community, so we are fortunate to hear and learn from them firsthand as they continue their decades-long efforts to improve the place that they call home.”

ACHIEVEability is a non-profit organization founded in 1981 by community members who were concerned about housing limitations for low-income, single parent families. Their mission is to break generational cycles of poverty through higher education, affordable housing, supportive services, community and economic development, and accountability. Since inception, ACHIEVEability has developed 210 housing units from abandoned homes and vacant lots in West Philadelphia.

“ACHIEVEability is excited to host Deputy Secretary Vilello on a tour of the Haddington neighborhood, where blight is a longstanding challenge along our corridor and beyond,” said Executive Director of ACHIEVEability Jamila Harris-Morrison. “Blight is an eyesore, fosters nuisance behaviors, and negatively impacts

health and safety. Working in partnership with residents and businesses, as well as with strategic investments from DCED, we are reclaiming these spaces to promote a healthy vibrant community.”

In Pennsylvania, more than 300,000 blighted properties exist, creating health and safety concerns for citizens and lowering property values and tax revenues. Restore Pennsylvania would fund blight remediation efforts at a level far beyond any existing funding mechanisms currently available and would allow municipalities to direct funding to other economic development projects as needed.

Restore Pennsylvania would invest \$4.5 billion over the next four years in significant, high-impact projects throughout the commonwealth. This will help move Pennsylvania forward by increasing financial resources at the local level to acquire and demolish blighted properties, create new development opportunities, and provide new green space. It would also help communities reach the “last mile” in broadband connectivity, mitigate flooding, build roads and bridges, and address other infrastructure needs.

Learn more about what critical infrastructure could be addressed in your community by visiting the **[Restore Pennsylvania website](https://www.governor.pa.gov/restore-pennsylvania/)** (**<https://www.governor.pa.gov/restore-pennsylvania/>**).

For more information about the Department of Community & Economic Development (DCED), visit the **[DCED website \(/\)](#)**, and be sure to stay up-to-date with all of our agency news on **[Facebook](#)** (**<https://www.facebook.com/PADCED>**), **[Twitter](#)** (**<https://twitter.com/PADCEDnews>**), and **[LinkedIn](#)** (**<https://www.linkedin.com/company/pennsylvania-department-of-community-&-economic-development/>**).

**MEDIA CONTACTS:**

J.J. Abbott, Governor’s Office, 717.783.1116  
Casey Smith, DCED, 717.783.1132

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