

ANNUAL REPORT

INDEX:

<i>Town Improvements</i>	2
<i>Business Center Fills</i>	2
<i>Development Proposed</i>	2
<i>Downtown Development</i>	3
<i>Embassy Happenings</i>	4
<i>Design Challenge</i>	4
<i>Business Developments</i>	4

DOWNTOWN LEWISTOWN, INC. YEARLY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

This past year, Downtown Lewistown, Inc. expanded the range and depth of services offered to business and property owners of the Downtown community. Specifically, marketing, business, and property development assistance has been accessed and is now available through the DLI office in cooperation and coordination with partners in the commercial and community sectors. The past year has been active with over 3/4 of a million dollars invested by the private sector and an equal amount earmarked by local and County governments in support of expansion and development in the Downtown area. The Downtown Lewistown, Inc. Design Challenge reimbursement grant leveraged a 5 to 1 ratio of private investment in the Downtown area for every dollar of "Main Street" public funds allocated.



Newly expanded and renovated location of ACS Business World hosts the Annual Meeting of Downtown Lewistown, Inc.

In addition to this direct support, DLI actively worked with business partners and community organizations to strengthen neighborhoods, enhance safety and increase economic opportunities for investors in the Downtown area.

As examples of this work, Lewistown Borough was awarded \$110,000 from the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources for the construction of a trail segment connecting Downtown with Rec Park. This project leverages monies from the Federal TEA 21 Montgomery Avenue Construction Project for the development of a trailhead/parking area at the corner of Montgomery Avenue and South Dorcas Street and the contribution of land from Omega Bank South of Kish Creek as the local match requirements. Construction including the rehabilitation of an abandoned railroad bridge, preparation of a 10' wide paved walking/biking surface, lighting and landscaping is expected to get underway late Fall or early Spring in conjunction with other developments in the southern part of Downtown Lewistown. DLI was awarded \$13,500 to coordinate a Feasibility Study focusing on linking Victory Park, Rec Park and Downtown with Kish/Derry Township Community Park and the County's Stone Arch Bridge with possible extensions through the former County Farm property. On a statewide level, these trails are intended to link with the Pittsburgh to Harrisburg Mainline Canal Greenway Project.

A \$10,000 Quality of Life grant award from PennDot will fund the enhancement of two Gateways into Downtown Lewistown. The "diamond" in the intersection of Juniata and West Market Streets will be enhanced with the planting of perennials adding all season interest and color and the addition of a welcome sign. PennDot has recently removed aggregate in the center of the diamond, added topsoil, and consolidated signing and related posts improving the intersection both from a visual and safety standpoint. The South Main Street Gateway at the Kish Creek Bridge will be enhanced with the addition of ornamental trees, shrubs and perennial plants on both sides of the Bridge with a sign welcoming persons to Downtown Lewistown. This planting is slated for Saturday, May 31st.

ACS Business World Expands in Downtown Lewistown

ACS Business World, representing the merger of 10 specialized businesses, offers an array of business services including internet, accounting, graphic design, office equipment and supplies, furnishings, floorcoverings and media services.

ACS Business World sought the advice of the DLI Design Consultant, Tom Grbenick, to rehabilitate a former 1950's era grocery store into a state of the art headquarters for their business.

Using this guidance, ACS chose to retain the original exterior character of the grocery store while transforming the interior to house the associated business services employing 45 persons in Downtown Lewistown.

Downtown Lewistown, Inc.

Historic Courthouse on the Square
One West Market Street, Suite 3
Lewistown, PA 17044

Phone: 717-248-9606
Fax: 717-248-7003
Email: downtown@lcworkshop.com



"Sharing Our Past While Building Our Future"

EMBASSY THEATRE MARQUEE TO SHINE

Aided by a \$40,000 grant from State Senator Jake Corman, the Friends of the Embassy Theatre have contracted with local manufacturer Metlmex to fabricate a replica of the original 1927 marquee which illuminated the corner of South Main Street and Monument Square for many years until it was removed due to advanced deterioration in 1992. The fabrication is well underway having received a favorable ruling from the Lewistown Borough Zoning Hearing Board allowing animated "chase" style lighting and posting for community events, etc. on the sign boards and message panels. This most enlightening project is expected to be completed later this summer.



Embassy Marquee letter panels under construction by local manufacturer Metlmex supported through a \$40,000 grant from State Senator Jake Corman.

DESIGN CHALLENGE GRANT

The Design Challenge Grant Assistance Program offers commercial property and business owners direct financial assistance to encourage investment in the Downtown Charter Plan area. A variety of exterior improvements may be eligible for grant funding based upon review by the Community Design Committee of DLI. As part of this program, DLI offers design and technical assistance to Downtown business and property owners through a contract with the SEDA-COG Community Resource Center. During the past year, five projects were awarded matching design grants from a low of \$849 to the maximum of \$2,500 per project. The five projects, of which three are completed with two under construction, are major facade and building investments leveraging a minimal amount of public funding for long term and visible improvement of properties in the downtown area.

The following properties/owners were awarded matching design grant assistance: Dr. George Dawe, 10 South Main Street; Wilson's Gifts & Jewelry, 13 East Market Street; American Express Financial Advisors, 21 South Wayne Street; Koontz Insurance Agency, 3 East Third Street; and ACS Business World, 101 West Third Street.



American Express Financial Advisors, 21 South Wayne Street.

DOWNTOWN BUSINESS DEVELOPMENTS

This past year we welcomed new businesses; Nennies Café, Subway, Drayer Physical Therapy Institute, Family & Friends Craft Shoppe, Shaffers Third Street Barber Shop, Mae Ganoë Alterations, Nazario Martial Arts Academy, The Dragonfly, SBC Skate Shop and Mid Penn Legal Services. Businesses that expanded this year included; ACS Business World, Juniata Valley Bank, Water Street Branch, Crider-Mitchell Construction, and the Mifflin County Model Railroad Club. In addition, the Mifflin County Offices of Domestic Relations and Children & Youth Services expanded into vacant space in the Regional Business Center (former Danks Department Store). Kish Travel continued their business investment in Downtown Lewistown, while Family Dollar, Lewistown Hospital, Healthsouth Outpatient Center, Beneficial Financial Services, Emily's Café, The Old Iron Gate, Wagners Café, Juniata River Center and Lee's Alterations are no longer in business or have discontinued their downtown business marketing venture.

DLI continued the commitment to aid the business community by offering Business Marketing/Promotion meetings once a month for the sharing of ideas, exploring cooperative marketing, and customer base research and offering referrals to the network of economic development organizations as appropriate.

DOWNTOWN LEWISTOWN, INC. YEARLY ACCOMPLISHMENTS (CONT.)

These community projects are made possible through the collective effort of a diverse array of organizations and individuals united by a common cause—the improvement of the Downtown area and community. Aided by the financial support of the PA Departments of Community & Economic Development, Conservation and Natural Resources, Mifflin County, Borough of Lewistown, Mifflin County Industrial Development Corporation, and contributors from private business and industry, these community projects are a symbol of the economic revitalization that is occurring in the Downtown area in combination with efforts to improve the region as a whole.

TOWN IMPROVEMENTS

Last year, Downtown Lewistown, Inc. partnered with Lewistown Borough to identify key organizations and groups who expressed an interest in supporting the development of a community center in the Borough. From those early meetings, a facility plan was devised incorporating the diverse interests of the partnering organizations and approved by Borough Council for implementation. The Borough engaged the services of LeFevre Wilk, Architects, along with in-house staff, to prepare the plans for construction. Recently, the bid was let and site preparation initiated for the \$1.12 million project.

The Parking Authority, Borough and DLI worked in partnership to implement the second phase of the North Plaza Drive step and retaining wall improvement project. In this phase, the original brick wall was repointed, with a "cap" to be poured along the top of the retaining wall supporting the parking area. A final touch of this project will be the installation of two decorative lamp posts, incorporating design features of the proposed Montgomery Avenue street lights, providing additional lighting & security to the North Mall/Plaza Drive parking area.

REGIONAL BUSINESS CENTER FILLS

The Regional Business Center, constituting the former Danks Department Store Building, is a good example of Economic Restructuring occurring in Downtown Lewistown. Faced with the closure of Danks in the Spring of 1995, community leaders, led by Greater Lewistown Corporation, formed a partnership with the owners to rehabilitate the building to house offices and services for an array of clients. During the past year, the Regional Business Center went through a second phase of renovation to house new facilities for Drayer Physical Therapy Institute and the relocated Mifflin County Offices of Children & Youth and Domestic Relations Services. With these developments, the building is over 95% occupied and houses over 100 employees.

FINANCIAL CENTER TO BE CONSTRUCTED

Kish Bank's announcement of an agreement of sale for the parcel south of Kish Creek promises the construction of a financial center to eventually house the addition of 20-25 new employees in the downtown area. Discussions are continuing to tie the financial center development into the proposed Riverwalk and existing pedestrian system while siting the center on a challenging parcel along Kishacoquilas Creek. Construction is expected to commence later this fall with completion targeted for mid-2004.



Kish Bank plans financial center employing 20 + persons.

"Buildings too, are children of Earth and Sun"

-Frank Lloyd Wright

Downtown Lewistown, Inc.

Historic Courthouse on the Square
One West Market Street, Suite 3
Lewistown, PA 17044

Phone: 717-248-9606
Fax: 717-248-7003
Email: downtown@lcworkshop.com

www.downtownlewistown.com

"Sharing Our Past While Building Our Future"



STAFF GOALS FOR 2002-2003

In order to attain the objectives outlined in the Charter Plan set forth by Downtown Lewistown, Inc. we plan to continue our commitments in the following key areas of our strategic plan. Design; improving community appearance, commercial structures, access and parking, pedestrian amenities, housing, and signage. Economic Restructuring; market research, reinvestment incentives, merchant training, and business recruitment. Promotion; community activities, community promotions, advertising, and business promotion.



In addition to our continuing commitment to the Strategic plan, the following is a specific listing of projects DLI hopes to implement or develop:

Submit three grants on behalf of the Borough for street tree planting/stewardship projects supporting Charter Plan initiatives/target areas e.g. gateways, and conduct plantings in Spring 2003.

To construct in concert with the Borough of Lewistown, the Montgomery Avenue Extended Streetscape Enhancement Project.

Prepare for construction of the Kish Riverwalk segment from Rec Park to Downtown Lewistown.

Submit Anchor Building application supporting the development of an underutilized/white elephant building for multi-use prioritized by all community leaders; County, Borough, MCIDC, Redevelopment Authority, DLI, private lenders, etc.

Develop a Low Interest Loan Program for interior and exterior improvements in concert with area banks.

Using trade area/demographic/market statistics, develop a business recruitment strategy targeting office, service, and select retail establishments to locate in the downtown area.

In conjunction with the Borough, develop a sidewalk enhancement plan integrating a town clock and appropriate landscaping.

Work with the Borough and area fire chief to establish regular building inspections.

Along with the SEDACOG Joint Rail Authority and Lewistown Borough, construct crossing improvements on Depot Street.

Apply for PA Partners in the Arts grants to fund concerts in the Park and Art in the Downtown programs.