

CITY OF HAGERSTOWN, MARYLAND

ANNUAL REPORT

DECEMBER 23, 2000

Major New Developments (Over \$500,000 of Building Permit Value)

South High	\$8,300,000
District Court	\$3,918,800
Dahbura Family Limited Partnership	\$3,500,000
Hamilton Nissan	\$2,700,000
Centre at Antietam (Retail Spaces)	\$1,900,000
TGI Friday's	\$1,000,000
Coffman Home for Aging	\$900,000
Cumberland Valley Retina Consultants	\$660,000
CVS (N. Cannon Avenue)	\$655,524
Bethel Assembly of God	\$600,000
	<u>\$24,134,324</u>
Centre at Hagerstown:	
McDonald's	\$488,000
IHOP	\$475,000
Arby's	\$470,000
KFC	\$447,902
Wendy's	\$320,000
Retail Spaces	<u>\$209,000</u>
	\$2,409,902
TOTAL	\$26,544,226

Year 2000 In Review

- Assist community with downtown revitalization planning and development projects
- Continue Brownfields program
- Continue to enhance preservation program
- Continue to develop Department GIS capabilities
- Continue to enhance Development Review Process
- Continue to work with Hagerstown/Washington County Economic Development Commission and DBED to attract quality businesses and industry

Performance Report For The Year 2000

- Worked with LDR and the A&E District Committee in planning for the implementation of the A&E District concept. The major idea generated was the Performing and Visual Arts Center around the Maryland Theatre.
- Worked with Greater Hagerstown Committee's Open Space Sub-Committee on planning for infrastructure enhancement projects downtown with emphasis on area adjacent to USM. Assistance provided with mapping, analyses, the virtual tour video, and public presentations. Staff goal was to ensure that work of the committee was compatible with the goals of the *1997 Comprehensive Plan* and the *1999 A&E District Plan*.
- Worked with URS (formerly Dames & Moore) and the Brownfields Community Stakeholders Committee on our Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot project. Site selection and receipt of owner agreements dominated work over the year.
- Worked with affected state agencies and City Council on an acceptable plan for the future of the Fairgrounds Entrance Building and Keeper's Residence. Resolution was achieved in the fall allowing acceptance of \$73,122 in grants for the stabilization of the buildings.
- Promoted available grant, loan and tax credit programs to residents and businesses in the downtown and the historic districts.
- Prepared visual aids for applicants when necessary to assist with preparation of materials for applications to Preservation Design District Commission.

Service Data

BZA CASES

1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
43	41	53	41	44

PDDC CASES

1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
23	37	39	31	38*

**Includes 4 sign and facade grants*

SITE PLANS

1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
48	32	32	49	41*

**Includes 11 staff-approved / 30 full review*

SUBDIVISIONS

1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
25	32	24	34	27

REZONINGS

1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
0	2	11	5	6

- Had historic sites inventory forms prepared for three of the Potential Landmarks. This on-going project will help to streamline the PDDC's review process if and when a Potential Landmark must be assessed for landmark status pending a demolition permit application. In addition, property owners could use the survey forms to support an application for landmark designation for their property, if so desired.
- Established a monthly Development Review Meeting to help expedite the review process. This process gives the review agencies an opportunity to share information with each other as it relates to development issues such as utility location.
- Enhanced presentations to the Mayor and Council, Boards and Commissions through the expanded use of GIS and visual aid equipment.
- Worked with the State of Maryland and University System as a facilitator in connection with the establishment of the University System Education Center in the Baldwin/Routzahn Buildings.
- Facilitated the acquisition of the Double T property closing an undesirable tavern in the A & E District.
- Continued to work with the Antietam Creek Coalition in an effort to develop a major National Civil War Museum in Downtown.
- Worked with the Board of Zoning Appeals to adopt Rules of Procedure.
- Staff worked with the Stadium Task Force to prepare a development plan for a new stadium to be located on the site of the existing Municipal Stadium.
- Worked with the City's consultant to prepare an RFP for renewal of a cable franchise currently granted to Antietam Cable.
- Conducted research into the important elements of an ordinance intended to manage all aspects of public and private use of the City's right-of-way.
- Prepared successful application for EPA funding of a community-based plan for reuse of the Central Chemical property.

Challenges and Opportunities

- Lack of resources and incentives to assist income-ineligible, potential owners with rehab plans for deteriorated housing.
- Private sector fear of government oversight prevents participation in Brownfield Assessment Demonstration Pilot project.

- Zoning Ordinance does not ensure that new development is compatible with the character of the affected area or the goals of the *1997 Comprehensive Plan*.
- Community-driven plans and new development projects on the horizon for the downtown have potential to create conflicts and infrastructure issues needing City attention.
- Do not have manpower to be pro-active in code enforcement, including zoning violations.
- Downtown revitalization continues at a stop and start pace without the aid and direction of a central coordinating entity or individual.
- Cable franchise renewal negotiations and related technology related issues will challenge the community's creativity and resourcefulness in addressing those issues for the betterment of the entire community.

Looking Ahead To The Year 2001

- Suggest creating a **“Convert Back to Single-Family” grant program**. Suggest having no income guidelines. Suggest restricting program to Revitalization Area and National Register historic districts (City Park and Oak Hill are the districts located outside the Revitalization Area), since these are the predominant areas possessing aging housing and multi-family conversions. Suggest restricting to conversions of multi-family or mixed-use houses back to single family residences and for home-ownership, since these would not be income-producing properties. Suggest having PDDC approve exterior work. Suggest giving grants up to \$25,000 on a 50%-50% match basis. Possible source of funds for program – Community Betterment Fund, income from Revolving Loan Fund, rebate on Water and Sewer allocation fees from the utilities for giving up allocation for the rental units to be abandoned (currently \$2,100 per unit).
- Suggest creating a **“Single-Family Rehab Tax Credit” program**. For reasons stated above, suggest restricting program to Revitalization Area and National Register historic districts and to home-ownership situations. Suggest having PDDC approve exterior work. Suggest having a \$5,000 minimum expenditure for rehab work, as is required in the State rehab tax credit program. Suggest requiring that exterior of house receive some attention in the rehab work to ensure that tax credits are given to a property which is improving the image of the area and potentially acting as a

catalyst for improvements to neighboring properties. Further study needed to determine pros and cons of abatement versus credit program.

- Suggest including one or two **city projects in Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot project to provide models for the private sector**. Possible projects could be related to Business Park expansion and Municipal Stadium expansion. EPA has revised the Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund pilot program to allow City receipt of loans from our pilot project. Proceeds from sale of properties could be used to repay loans.
- Staff will undertake a **comprehensive study of the zoning and subdivision ordinances** and recommend changes including design standards that are environmentally sensitive for review with the Planning Commission and the City Council.
- Staff will organize community resources in effort to **update 1993 Downtown Master Plan and Action Program**.
- Staff will continue to *develop good working relationships with the private and public sector*.
- Suggest *hiring an additional Code Enforcement Officer* who would be responsible for all code complaints including zoning violations.
- Staff will continue to *streamline the development review process*.
- Staff will continue to *encourage annexation and increase the City tax base*.
- Staff will continue to *work with the Hagerstown / Washington County Economic Development Commission to retain and attract quality businesses and industry*.
- Staff will continue to *work with the State of Maryland and DBED on marketing the City of Hagerstown*.
- Staff will continue with the assistance of the Economic Development Commission to work on *locating a site for the development of a new Business Park*.
- Staff will continue to *develop GIS that can be utilized by all staff in an easy to use format*.
- As a means of finding a mechanism to direct and coordinate downtown revitalization efforts, staff will explore the possibility of *establishing a Business Improvement District “BID” and Maryland Main Street Program in the Downtown*. In order to succeed, both programs would most likely require significant allocation of staff time. A new “Downtown Coordinator” position under the Economic Development Coordinator may need to be considered.
- Staff will develop an *inventory of downtown buildings and businesses* to assist with recruitment of new businesses and

developers. The inventory will provide data on the properties' physical characteristics, square footage, number of apartments (if any), commercial tenants, number of employees in businesses. Staff will explore adding this information in a GIS database on downtown properties.

- Staff will continue to promote *grant and loan programs*.