“Why Community Benefit Districts Will Sustain Downtowns in a Challenging Economy”
Graffiti Removal, Easton, PA
General Benefits vs. Special Benefits
Easton Ambassadors
Spring Cleaning
Why Community Benefit Districts will Sustain Downtowns

2010 APA PA Annual Conference
October 4, 2010

Presented by: Lisa Riggs, President
James Street Improvement District
The JSID promotes, plans and advocates to improve quality of life through a clean, safe and economically vibrant community.
JSID Quick Overview

Geography:

Northwest and Downtown Lancaster

Includes major residential of all income levels, two primary gateway corridors plus the Central Business District
JSID Quick Overview

• Formed in 2003 through the leadership of Franklin & Marshall College and Lancaster General Hospital; initial focus was just on the City’s Northwest
• Organized as a 501(c)3; budget funded primarily through corporate charitable contributions
• Expanded in 2007 at the Mayor’s request to include Downtown and to assume responsibility for Lancaster’s BID, the Downtown Investment District Authority
• Current stabilized budget is $1.1 - $1.2 million annually
JSID Core Strategic Priorities

- **Community Development**
  - Clean & Safe Services
  - Neighborhood Engagement
- **Economic Development**
  - Business Retention/Recruitment (office and retail)
  - Planning (real estate redevelopment and transportation)
  - Research/Data Collection
- **Resource Development**
  - Sustainable funding
  - Staff and volunteers
Why Improvement District’s Work

- Public-private partnership
- Luxury of a narrow geographic and programmatic focus
- Best practices from across the country (www.ida-downtown.org)
- Typically good at communication
- Often bring clarity of vision and can build confidence
Improvement District Challenges

• Sustainable funding at meaningful levels, particularly given the current environment
• Ability to hire qualified, professional staff
• Being all things to all people
• Navigating the current shift away from clean and safe as the impetus to business retention/recruitment
• Balancing the pace and demands of private and public sectors
Contact Information:

Lisa Riggs
President
James Street Improvement District
lisariggs@jsidlancaster.org
www.downtownlancaster.com
QUESTIONS?