

THE DOWNTOWN WESTFIELD CORPORATION, SERVING WESTFIELDERS FOR A DECADE

The Downtown Westfield Corporation (DWC), formed in 1996, is the management entity of the Special Improvement District. It is governed by a seven member board, has two full-time staff members including Executive Director Sherry Cronin and Executive Assistant Courtney Nemeck, a part-time website manager Beth Brenner, and numerous volunteers serving on design, promotion, economic development and organization committees.

The vision of the DWC is for Westfield to be a preferred destination where people want to live, work, and visit. Westfield is also honored to be one of 26 designated Main Street Communities in New Jersey, a pro-

gram of the National Trust's National Main Street Center.

Considered an extraordinary destination for a wide variety of venues, Westfield is home to numerous restaurants of all culinary distinctions. For the movie lover, The Rialto Theatre has been a downtown icon for decades. Westfield is also home to many brand name stores such as Victoria Secret, The Gap, Coach and Banana Republic.

For the latest happenings, event information, and promotional offers from Westfield businesses, check out WestfieldToday.com or contact the DWC at (908) 789-9444. Offices are located at 105 Elm Street, Westfield.

REPRINTED FROM THE WESTFIELD LEADER MAY 13, 2004 WESTFIELD RECEIVES AMERICAN MAIN ST. AWARD

ALBUQUERQUE, NM – Richard Moe, president of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and Kennedy Smith, Director of the National Trust's National Main Street Center, announced that Westfield has earned a 2004 Great American Main Street Award for its successful efforts in revitalizing its downtown area through historic preservation at the opening session of the Trust's national conference in Albuquerque.

"Westfield is a great place to be; with art shows, jazz bands, new stores in old buildings, and old stores with new visions. Westfield is about saving a treasured theater and restoring a tired train depot, about finding innovative solutions to that most persistent of problems parking," said Mr. Moe.

"The tireless volunteers who have invested almost 25,000 hours in the revitalization of their downtown have invigorated the heart of their community."

In the 1970's, family-owned stores began closing as Westfield's shoppers headed to malls. Moviegoers deserted the downtown theater in favor of a multi-plex in a neighboring community. By the late 1980's, downtown Westfield was on a downhill slide. The store vacancy rate steadily rose, reaching nearly 40 percent in the early 90's. Poor traffic flow hurt the downtown. Commuter parking at the train station was outpaced by steadily increasing demand. Recognizing the need for action, former Mayors Richard Bagger and Garland "Bud" Boothe, formed a committee of property owners, business leaders, and residents to investigate downtown's problems. The committee recommended Main Street. In 1993, Westfield became a New

Jersey Main Street community. With the passage of a city ordinance in 1996, Downtown Westfield Corporation (DWC) was born. It has brought 29 new retailers and 25 new restaurants to downtown.

Downtown's appearance has received equal attention: 75 of the district's 200 buildings have undergone major renovations; half of the 200 offices on upper floors currently remodeled; and 75 of the downtown's 175 apartments are now renovated. A façade incentive grant program has leveraged more than \$100,000 in private improvements to downtown storefronts. DWC also worked closely with the New Jersey Department of Transportation to revamp the town's historic train station.

In 2000, a study of the downtown parking revealed that demand exceeded supply by 20 percent. In 2001, Mayor Gregory McDermott established a citizen's committee, which conducted a commuter survey, studied traffic flow, and conducted a financial analysis. After many years of parking studies and debates, the town council is in the process of approving an innovative public-private partnership for construction of two parking decks, for shoppers, commuters, and employees. Current plans call for mixed use: retail space on the first floors combined with residential units.

The 2004 Great American Main Street Award winners are: Burlington, Iowa, Encinitas, California, Paso Robles, California, Rogers, Arkansas, and Westfield, New Jersey. Each winning community receives a \$2,500 cash prize to further its revitalization efforts, a bronze plaque commemorating its award, road signs, and a certificate.

DOWNTOWN WESTFIELD CORPORATION 2005 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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THE PLAYERS IN 1997 TO 'SAVE THE RIALTO' (LEFT TO RIGHT) ANTHONY SCHILLING, MICHELE PICOU, JESSE SAYEGH, BUD BOOTHE, DAVID OWENS AND MAYOR TOM JARDIM.



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