

Executive Summary

Downtown Wilkes-Barre Lighting and Streetscape Design
Category: Special Projects

The Mayor of Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, Thomas Leighton, delivered his popular "I Believe" speech to the Wilkes-Barre community to motivate citizens to support the revitalization of the Downtown Business District. City Council, the Mayor's office, and the Chamber of Commerce Lighting Committee, with input from the general public, decided that new street lighting and streetscape improvements for the 14 block downtown business district should be the first step toward the City's revitalization. **"Clean and Safe" had become the City's cornerstone for an urban renaissance.**

Borton-Lawson was chosen to develop an overall streetscape concept that identified light fixture styles and patterns, sidewalk treatments, appropriate planting schemes under various circumstances, and other incidental items to be included in the downtown "look". A major challenge of the project included producing a constraints map to address the underground maze of utilities, which required custom foundation designs for the hundreds of new streetlights. Photorealistic renderings of the proposed streetscapes were instrumental in gaining public support for this significant project. **The Downtown Lighting Project gave us, as a design team, a unique opportunity to communicate to the public the connection between quality, insightful design and its impact on their daily urban life.**

Governor Edward Rendell and Mayor Leighton **"threw the switch"** for the first phase of lights on South Main Street creating momentum for the City's downtown revitalization. The new streetlights and streetscape have stimulated new business activity, increased safety for pedestrians, and insured the success of the new Movie 14 complex in the Downtown proving that **Wilkes-Barre does have a brighter future!**

