

History and Enabling Legislation

History & Legislation

June 13, 1993

To: The Downtown Development Authority of the Village of Chelsea From: William J. Bott, Volunteer Consultant

Subject: An Interim Progress Report: Where we started; where we are now; and what we need to do in the future.

The Beginning

The Downtown Development Authority was created in December, 1985 by action of the Village Council at the urging of the Downtown Development Committee of the Chelsea Chamber of Commerce. The Public Act of the State of Michigan under which the DDA was created, provided an "additional tool for use by municipal officials and business men of a city, village or township for revitalization and economic development of the downtown district of the community."

The Articles of Incorporation of the Chelsea DDA stated that it is organized "for the purpose of correcting and preventing deterioration in the downtown business district." The proposal to establish the DDA was the result of a study by the planning firm of Johnson, Johnson & Roy, Inc. commissioned by the Chamber of Commerce and paid for by local businesses who donated \$3,900 in February, 1984.

Why is Downtown Important?

- It is a major segment of the total village tax base. In 1985 the SEV of the defined DDA District was \$4,115,775 or 9% of the village total. Today it comprises 14.5% of the tax base.
- Employment by small businesses alone exceeds 300 people.
- Maintaining and enhancing the viability and integrity of downtown as the "Town Center". This includes a variety of eating establishments catering to a wide spectrum of taste and price; entertainment; and providing of a wide selection of goods and services desired by the consumer. Downtown must be exciting, not just in the daytime, but in the evening as well.
- Downtown usually forms the first and lasting impression of a community by newcomers, visitors, prospects for potential employers and investors.

In Summary

- More jobs have been provided.
- Tax base has increased by \$9,067,325 or 220%.
- Five million has been invested in downtown by the private small business sector.
- The County and State have also invested \$630,000 in downtown Chelsea.
- The last vacant building which has been extensively remodeled, is under current discussion for occupancy.
- The DDA's share of the total village tax base has increased from 9% to 14%.
- Additional public improvements are planned.
- A concerted effort to mount a marketing program is being formulated.