

America Downtown®
New Thinking. New Life.

Salisbury

Downtown Action Agenda 2001



National League of Cities

HyattPalma

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Dull, inert cities, it is true, do contain the seeds of their own destruction and little else. But lively, diverse, intense cities contain the seeds of their own regeneration, with energy enough to carry over for problems and needs outside themselves.

Jane Jacobs

The Death and Life of Great American Cities

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June 27, 2001

The Honorable Barrie Tilghman, Mayor,
and City Councilmembers
City of Salisbury
125 N. Division Street, Room 304
Salisbury, MD 21801

Dear Mayor Tilghman and
City Councilmembers:

It is with great pleasure that we submit to you this Action Agenda for the rebirth of Downtown Salisbury. We commend you for your concern regarding the revitalization of Downtown Salisbury and for providing the leadership necessary to focus attention on this issue.


The **Salisbury Downtown Action Agenda 2001** is based on your community's shared vision for Downtown Salisbury and on the market-driven steps necessary to get you there. A strong, private-public partnership will be key to the success of your efforts. This **Salisbury Downtown Action Agenda** is meant to guide all of the partners participating in the rebirth of Downtown Salisbury.

We salute your commitment to making Salisbury a healthier and more vital community and offer our continued support of your efforts.

Sincerely,



Donald J. Borut
Executive Director
National League of Cities



Doyle G. Hyett
Chairman



Dolores P. Palma
President

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Introduction



I. INTRODUCTION

In 1992, as America's largest membership organization representing the elected officials of this nation, the National League of Cities (NLC) decided to assume a more aggressive role in the areas of Downtown enhancement and local economic development. That role would involve offering technical assistance to local elected officials concerned about the economic success of their Downtowns.

To fill this role, the National League of Cities approached HyettPalma, Inc. Together, NLC and HyettPalma designed an advanced new pilot program. The new pilot would offer on-site, technical assistance to a limited number of communities.

The new Downtown pilot was presented under the banner of *ACCEPTING THE CHALLENGE: THE REBIRTH OF AMERICA'S DOWNTOWNS*. It was structured to guide local governing bodies -- working in partnership with local business owners, property owners and concerned citizens -- in rethinking ways to rebuild our nation's Downtowns.

Availability of the Downtown pilot was limited to eleven cities. The purpose of limiting the number of communities that could participate in the pilot was to ensure quality service delivery to the participating cities. In addition, the pilot required the local governing body in each participating city to be the agency that contracted with NLC for services. This was done to ensure the involvement of the governing body from the very start of the local Downtown enhancement effort.

Once the pilot was completed, NLC and HyettPalma evaluated its effectiveness and whether or not to continue offering Downtown technical assistance. This was done with the assistance of local officials from the eleven pilot communities. Based on the evaluation, and specifically on the advice and needs expressed by the pilot's local officials, a new comprehensive technical assistance program was developed titled *AMERICA Downtown® -- NEW THINKING. NEW LIFE.*



America Downtown® -- New Thinking. New Life. was structured to provide the help local officials need to reverse their Downtown's cycle of decline and help it evolve to a brighter future. The program brings together the political insight of the National League of Cities and the Downtown expertise of HyettPalma, Inc. Together, they offer individualized assistance and a combination of strengths not available anywhere else.

America Downtown® -- New Thinking. New Life. provides direct, hands-on help to city officials and community leaders who want to start, refocus, or energize their Downtown enhancement efforts. In 2001, Salisbury became a member of this Downtown program. The program's strengths are built on the following convictions.

- The assistance provided is implementation-oriented -- not another Downtown plan or study but an aggressive course of action that local officials and community leaders can start to implement immediately.
- The recommendations made for each Downtown are pragmatic -- tailored to local resources so that they can be realistically implemented.
- The solutions offered are success-oriented -- designed to improve each Downtown's economy so that the results are long-lasting.
- The on-site assistance is inclusive -- providing a forum that brings public and private sector constituents together to identify Downtown issues, define a Downtown vision, and take needed actions in partnership.

