



A SPECIAL EDITION *of* *the* ARDMORE AGENDA

THE ARDMORE INITIATIVE Our Fourth Five-Year Plan

July 2008

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**SEE PAGE 2 FOR
REAUTHORIZATION
PROCEDURES**

I. History and mission of The Ardmore Initiative

The Ardmore Business District Authority, known as the Ardmore Initiative, was incorporated October 1993 and began operations in January 1994 with the goal of improving and enhancing the Ardmore commercial district. For the past 15 years the Ardmore Initiative has worked to make the commercial district more attractive and welcoming to investors, business owners, residents, shoppers and visitors. It has provided comprehensive planning and management for the district, and worked with Lower Merion Township and other public and private entities to coordinate resources in the most efficient way for Ardmore's benefit. It has also promoted the district through the media and its own publications and provided a voice for Ardmore business and property owners.

II. Boundaries

The east-west boundaries of the district extend from Wyoming Avenue and 333 West Lancaster Avenue on the western end to 233 East Lancaster and 218 East Lancaster Avenue on the eastern end. The northern boundary follows the railroad tracks, and the southern boundary proceeds along Rittenhouse Place up to and including 30 East Athens Avenue, and along Cricket Avenue up to 123 Cricket Avenue. (See map on page 4.)

III. Administration of The Ardmore Initiative

The Ardmore Initiative is governed by a Board of Directors, 11 to 17 in number, representing the property owners and a cross-section of business interests. In addition, two representatives of Lower Merion's Board of Commissioners and the Ardmore Initiative's Solicitor serve as ex-officio members of the Board. Board members are nominated by the Ardmore Initiative and appointed by the Lower Merion Board of Commissioners for 5-year terms. The day to day operations of the Ardmore Initiative are overseen by an Executive Director working under the direction of the Board.

The projects and services undertaken by the Ardmore Initiative are funded in part by a special assessment on each commercial property within the district based on the assessed value of each property. The payment of the annual assessment is enforceable in the same manner as municipal real estate tax assessments.

When the Ardmore Initiative was approved in 1993, it contained a "sunset" provision requiring property owners within the district to reauthorize the Authority after five years of operation. This Five Year Plan addresses the Ardmore Initiative's request for reauthorization.

Letter from the Chair

The Ardmore Initiative is working hard to continue improving our commercial district and your property's value, and with your approval, hopes to continue to do so in the coming years. This edition of The Ardmore Agenda provides detailed information regarding our history, mission, accomplishments and goals, as well as our next five year plan and budget. We are very proud of all we have accomplished and are excited about our plans for the future of Ardmore.

Our plan comes from your ideas. Throughout the year we have met with many of you at our office and have also distributed a survey asking for your most pressing concerns and priorities. Your responses indicate that you believe Ardmore's main challenges to be parking, mix of businesses, and poorly maintained buildings. You told us that our most important function is to continue to serve as your advocate to Lower Merion Township and developers, and to mitigate business disruption during construction for Ardmore's upcoming Revitalization project. These priorities are reflected in our plan and budget with increased funding for marketing (including parking signage) and for business recruitment and retention.

We'd appreciate your input and invite you to attend a public hearing regarding our reauthorization on **Tuesday, July 22, 2008** at 7 p.m. in the 2nd floor Board Room of the Lower Merion Township Administration building at 75 E. Lancaster Ave.

Thank you for the support you have shown us since our inception and we pledge our best efforts to earn your support as we move forward.

For more information about The Ardmore Initiative's plan and renewal, please contact the office at 610-645-0540 or email Christine@ardmoreinitiative.org.

Regards,
Mike
Mike Silver

IV. Where we've been

Now in its 15th year, the Ardmore Initiative (AI), our Business Improvement District, has worked creatively and successfully for downtown businesses and properties. In the last five years, the BID has:

- Secured more than \$2.1 million in grants to Ardmore from Township, County, and State agencies.
- Created solid partnerships with Township, County, and State Legislators, and State agencies.
- Upgraded Ardmore's identity and appearance with new sidewalks, benches, banners, landscaping and planters.
- Petitioned and secured Township and County agencies for façade grants to over 20 properties, contributing to over \$11 million in private investment within the district.
- Created a Business Directory, Restaurant Guide, Antiques Guide, and new business welcome kit.
- Worked with the Township to create and retain Retail Recruiter. In 2008 alone, Heidi Tirjan has secured more than 35 visits to Ardmore, resulting in 10 signed leases.
- Redesigned our website www.ardmoreinitiative.org, complete with an online business directory and real estate listings. Since our redesign, our website has gotten over 34,000 visits with over 63,000 page views.
- Played an active role in the campaign to attract a suitable developer for the Ardmore Transit Center revitalization project.
- Answered thousands of questions out of our Lancaster Avenue office.
- Continued & increased communication with our stakeholders via print & E-newsletters, blast faxes & regular stakeholder meetings

Reauthorization Procedures

Any interested party is invited to attend a public hearing regarding our reauthorization. This will be held on Tuesday, July 22, 2008 at 7 p.m. in the 2nd floor Board Room of the Lower Merion Township Administration building at 75 E. Lancaster Ave.

Legal owner(s) of a taxable property in the Ardmore Business District may submit a signed, written objection to the Authority's renewal within forty-five (45) days after the public hearing (by Sept. 5, 2008). Objections **must** be mailed or delivered **both** to the Authority's office at 56 E. Lancaster Ave., Ardmore, PA. 19003 **and** to Douglas S. Cleland, Township Manager, Lower Merion Township, 75 E. Lancaster Ave. Ardmore, PA. 19003. Photocopies or faxes are not acceptable.

V. 5-year plan 2009-2013

Organization

- Create a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation (with the same board and staff), which will aid in securing more grants for improvements within the district.
- Create an Advisory Board whose input will assist us in planning and fundraising.
- Negotiate financial commitments from current partners such as Lower Merion Township and the Department of Community and Economic Development

Design

- Continue to assist building and business owners in revitalizing their properties and work with Township, County, and State Governments to secure and maximize all available grant dollars for existing programs.
- Assist property owners with the façade grant application and guide them through the Historical Architectural Review Board (HARB) approval process.
- Encourage and educate property and business owners on the use of energy-efficient, eco-friendly building materials and products and pursue available grants for property owners to use to increase their building's energy efficiency.

Streetscape

- Continue to improve the appearance of the business district through the Ardmore Blossoms beautification project, including maintenance of Schuffele Plaza, sidewalk flower pots, and flower and tree beds. Continue to install sidewalk benches throughout the district.
- Expand participation in holiday perimeter building lighting, and convert all downtown lighting to energy efficient and cost effective LED lighting.
- Continue to improve the cleanliness of the business district with targeted sidewalk cleaning and by installing and replacing trash receptacles and ash urns as needed.

Marketing and Promotions

- Increase regular communications with stakeholders and continue to promote businesses via web site and expanded distribution of business directories and guides.
- Improve the parking experience for shoppers by creating maps of existing parking in addition to working with the township to provide more visible signage for parking.
- Support businesses during redevelopment and construction by increasing marketing activities.

Business Recruitment and Retention

- Strengthen the shopper destination by creating an incentive program for building owners and real estate agents to bring desirable retailers into existing downtown buildings, and seek funds for interior fit-outs of these properties by strong retail tenants.
- Increase pedestrian traffic and store visits by attracting stores that will bring a larger share of multiple destination shoppers.
- Seek funding for ADA accessibility renovations.

VI. 2007 Annual Report

2007 was both a sad and exciting year for The Ardmore Initiative. It began with the sudden illness and leave of absence of Executive Director Moira Shaughnessy. It also saw the resignation of one of the founders and longtime leader of the Ardmore Business District Authority, Charlie Ward. Other Board members whose terms expired in 2007 include Marty Phillips, Scott Lustgarten and Anthony Costa and we thank them for their many years of service to our organization and to our community. As a tribute to Charlie's leadership and vision, The Ardmore Initiative emerged as a newly energized and committed organization. At our annual retreat in June, we nominated a new slate of Officers: Mike Silver as Chair, Michael Coughlan as Vice-Chair, Larry Gee as Secretary, and Brett Swain as Treasurer all of whom were elected by unanimous vote of the Board at the July meeting. Christine Vilardo, who served as acting Executive Director beginning in January, was appointed as the permanent Director in May. 2007 was a year of healing for the Ardmore community and the beginning of improved relations among the many Ardmore stakeholders. The Initiative cooperated with community groups to host a successful fundraiser for Moira Shaughnessy in March and continues to participate in the Township Adhoc Ardmore Revitalization committee. 2007 saw 15 new businesses start up or relocate within the business district and 11 businesses leave. Property and business owners also invested over \$1.4 million in property improvements.

The accomplishments of The Ardmore Initiative committees and staff in 2007 include:

Design

- Created a *Renovation Assistance Handbook* as a tool for business and property owners to help navigate the Township's regulations and permit processes.
- In cooperation with Lower Merion Township, with funds from Pa. Department of Community and Economic Development, The Design Committee awarded Façade Improvement Grants of almost \$25,000 to Orion Construction, Vito Cilluffo, Ardmore Eye Care, Janice Martin and Giannini Jewelers. In addition, \$20,000 grant awards (with funds from Montgomery County Revitalization Program) are pending to Junior League Thrift Shop, Human Zoom, Radio Shack building, Pennywise Thrift Shop.

Streetscape

- The Streetscape Committee debuted Ardmore Blossoms, a downtown beautification project which placed seasonal flowers on many of our sidewalks, planted close to 2000 tulip and daffodil bulbs which will ensure a vibrant & colorful Spring in Ardmore.
- The Green (sidewalk cleaning) Machine resumed regular operations. Community service workers have removed graffiti and provided additional street cleaning services.
- We received a grant to purchase and install 12 ash urn receptacles to help keep our downtown cigarette-litter-free.
- The Ardmore Initiative placed a Holiday Tree and dreidel in Schaufele Plaza (courtesy of Shreiner's Tree Care Service and The Law Firm of Silver and Silver). Holiday season lights included snowflake and tree lights for the district.
- We purchased additional Ardmore "A" lights to brand our downtown. The Initiative subsidized the cost of perimeter building lights on approximately eight buildings.
- Five new benches were ordered and will be installed in early 2008.

Marketing

- An updated Restaurant Guide was published and monthly E-newsletters were instituted to keep our community informed.
- The Initiative hosted a series of Open Houses for property and business owners to update them on the progress of the Ardmore Transit Center/Revitalization project.
- We have provided substantial financial and administrative support to First Friday Main Line, a monthly arts event which increases foot traffic in our downtown.
- The Ardmore Initiative web site, www.ardmoreinitiative.org was redesigned courtesy of SwainTechs. This dynamic new site will allow the Initiative to more effectively promote our downtown and disseminate information to our stakeholders.

Other

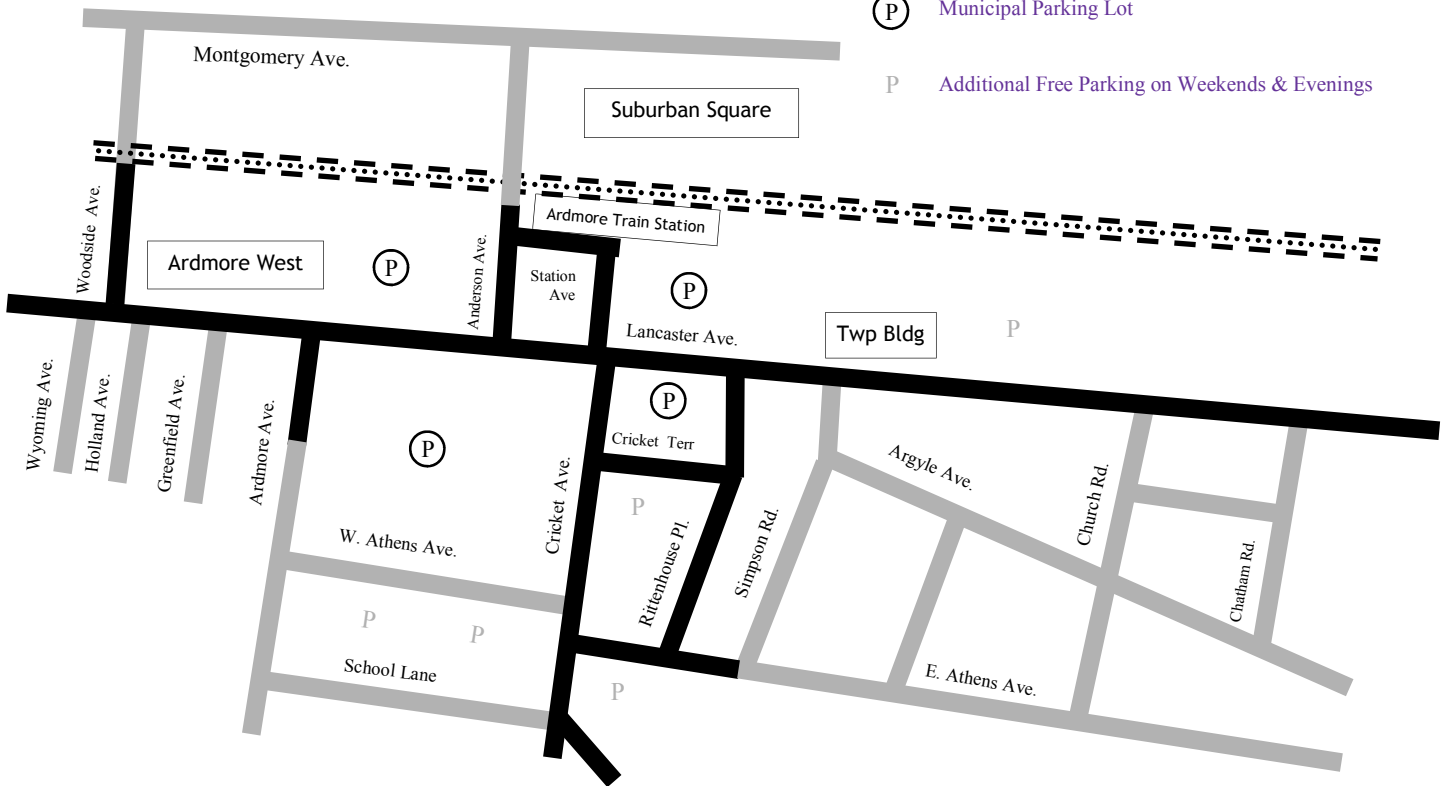
- The fifth annual *Ardmore Swings!* Golf Outing netted approximately \$40,000. The Initiative made substantial contributions to both the police and fire companies. In addition, Charlie Ward was the guest of honor at the dinner and we announced the creation of the Charles F. Ward Service to Ardmore Award.
- The Board and committee members of The Ardmore Initiative donated 565 volunteers hours toward the improvement of the Ardmore Business District.
- The Executive Committee in concert with the entire Board worked to shape the RFP for the Ardmore Transit Center/Downtown Revitalization project.

Revenues and Expenses 2007

Revenues	Actual
Assessment Collections	\$130,215
Interest	\$ 6,179
Fundraising & Donations.	<u>\$ 91,577</u>
Total Revenues	\$227, 971
Expenses	
Planning & Management	\$122,578
Fundraising Expenses	\$ 48,735
Professional Fees	\$ 16,124
Economic Restructuring	\$ 3,686
Streetscape	<u>\$ 33,794</u>
Total Expenses	<u>\$224,917</u>
Grant Revenue (net):	<u>(\$ 2,250)</u>
Net Revenue/(Expenses):	<u>\$ 805</u>

VII. Ardmore Business District Map

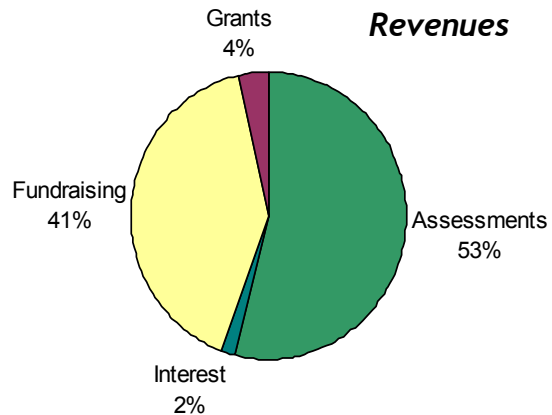
- Within Ardmore Initiative District
- Outside Ardmore Initiative District
- P Municipal Parking Lot
- P Additional Free Parking on Weekends & Evenings



VIII. 2008 Budget

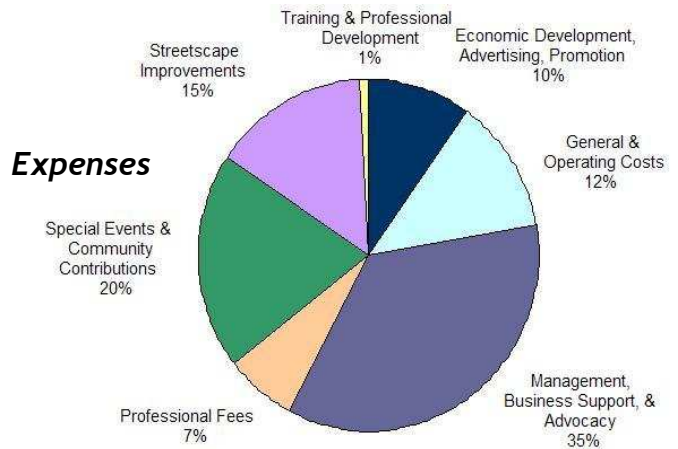
Revenues

Assessments	\$138,000
Interest	\$4,000
Fundraising	\$104,000
Grants	\$9,500
Total	\$255,500



Expenses

Economic Development, Advertising & Promotion	\$24,550
General and Operating Costs	\$31,900
Management, Business Support and Advocacy	\$91,300
Professional Fees	\$16,900
Special Events and Community Contributions	\$51,300
Streetscape Improvements	\$37,500
Training & Professional Development	\$2,000
Total	\$255,450



IX. Ardmore Initiative proposed 5-year budget plan 2009-2013

Expenses	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
General and Operating	\$ 35,650.00	\$ 37,005.60	\$ 38,319.44	\$ 39,744.30	\$ 41,283.07
Management, Business Support and Advocacy	\$ 96,546.00	\$ 100,336.44	\$ 104,227.07	\$ 108,373.87	\$ 112,663.05
Professional Fees	\$ 16,396.00	\$ 17,031.92	\$ 17,711.36	\$ 18,438.27	\$ 19,216.98
Training and Professional Development	\$ 2,040.00	\$ 2,080.80	\$ 2,122.42	\$ 2,164.86	\$ 2,208.16
Special Events and Community Contributions	\$ 31,000.00	\$ 32,860.00	\$ 34,831.60	\$ 36,921.50	\$ 39,136.79
Programs and Initiatives					
Streetscape	\$ 45,000.00	\$ 47,700.00	\$ 50,562.00	\$ 53,595.72	\$ 56,811.46
Marketing	\$ 35,000.00	\$ 37,100.00	\$ 39,326.00	\$ 41,685.56	\$ 44,186.69
Business Recruitment and Retention	\$ 65,000.00	\$ 65,000.00	\$ 65,000.00	\$ 65,000.00	\$ 65,000.00
Planning -501C3 Creation/Development Plan	\$ 10,000				
Façade Improvement Grants*	\$30,000		\$ 30,000.00		\$ 30,000.00
Total	\$366,632.00	\$339,114.76	\$382,099.89	\$365,924.08	\$410,506.20
Revenues					
Assessments	\$ 148,886.19	\$ 157,819.36	\$ 167,288.52	\$ 177,325.84	\$ 187,965.39
New Assessed Properties (LMT)	\$ 17,658.00	\$ 18,718.50	\$ 19,841.61	\$ 21,032.11	\$ 22,294.03
Interest	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 4,160.00	\$ 4,326.00	\$ 4,499.00	\$ 4,678.00
Fundraising	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 50,000.00
Other Commitments	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 25,000.00
Grants- Misc.	\$ 7,000.00	\$ 17,000.00	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 34,000.00	\$ 43,000.00
DCED Main Street Funding & Planning Grant	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 45,000.00	\$ 40,000.00	\$ 35,000.00	\$ 30,000.00
LMT Financial Assistance	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 23,000.00	\$ 22,000.00	\$ 21,000.00	\$ 19,000.00
DCED Façade Improvement Grants*	\$30,000		\$ 30,000.00		\$ 30,000.00
Total	\$367,544.19	\$340,697.86	\$383,456.13	\$367,856.95	\$411,937.42
Net Budget Surplus	\$ 912.19	\$ 1,583.10	\$ 1,356.24	\$ 1,932.87	\$ 1,431.22

Note: The assessment rate (.0035) has not increased in 15 years. In order to continue to provide our current level of service as well as to provide increased services which you requested in your survey responses, the current rate of assessment is not adequate. Therefore, this proposed 5 year budget reflects an annual increase (.00468) of 3% adjustment for inflation and 3% for new and expanded programs, including transition marketing and business recruitment and retention. This reflects an average increase per property of less than \$50 per year.

* The Ardmore Initiative may only apply for Façade Improvement Grants from DCED after existing grant funds have been awarded and disbursed.

THE ARDMORE AGENDA

Special Edition

56 East Lancaster Avenue

Ardmore, Pennsylvania 19003

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Any interested party is invited to attend a public hearing regarding our reauthorization.

Tuesday, July 22, 2008

at 7 p.m.

2nd floor Board Room,
Lower Merion Township
Administration building,
75 East Lancaster Avenue

The Ardmore Initiative Board of Directors

Mike Silver, Esq., Chair Silver & Silver 42 West Lancaster Avenue Ardmore, PA 19003 Atty./Bus/Prop Owner/Township Res.	Michael Coughlan, Vice-Chair State Farm Insurance 19 East Lancaster Avenue Ardmore, PA 19003 Bus/Prop Owner	Larry Gee, Secretary Suburban Square Properties 6 Coulter Avenue Ardmore, PA 19003 Gen. Mgr. Suburban Square/Res.	Brett Swain, Treasurer Swain Techs, Inc. 6 Cricket Avenue Ardmore, PA 19003 Bus owner/Township Res.
Mack Emmanuel Wells Fargo Insurance Suite 205, 701 Lee Road Chesterbrook, PA 19087 Township Res.	Rob Burnham CF Ward Associates 15 Rittenhouse Place Ardmore, PA 19003 Senior VP	Haven Freihofer Mahoney Realty 9 Cricket Terrace Ardmore, PA 19003 Realtor	Jamie Lokoff MilkBoy Coffee 44 West Lancaster Avenue Ardmore, PA 19003 Bus owner
Fenton J. Fitzpatrick Beneficial Savings Bank (retired) Ardmore, PA 19003 Township Res.	Gregory Matusky Gregory FCA Communications 27 West Athens Avenue, Suite 200 Ardmore, PA 19003 Bus Owner	Nancy Scarlato The Junior League of Philadelphia 27 West Lancaster Avenue Ardmore, PA 19003 Prop/ Bus owner/Township Res.	John Durso St. Edmond's FSB 7032 Valley Avenue Philadelphia, PA 19128 Bank VP/Mgr.

Honorary and Ex-Officio Members

<i>Commissioner Maryam W. Phillips</i> Lower Merion Township	Charles F. Ward, Chairman Emeritus Ward Associates 15 Rittenhouse Place Ardmore, PA 19003
<i>Commissioner Cheryl Gelber</i> Lower Merion Township	
Commissioner Jane Dellheim Lower Merion Township	Patrick J. Keenan BMT Mortgage Company 801 West Lancaster Avenue Bryn Mawr, PA 19010
<i>R. Stanley Schuck</i> Main Line Chamber of Commerce	

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Anna Durbin, Esq. Law Office of Anna M. Durbin 50 Rittenhouse Place Ardmore, PA 19003	