



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

CITY HALL • 340 NORTH WASHINGTON AVENUE • SCRANTON, PENNSYLVANIA 18503 • PHONE: 570-348-4101 • FAX: 570-348-4215

Now in my third term as Mayor of Scranton, Pennsylvania I am able to reflect on several years of work, both challenging and rewarding. And as any Mayor knows, many of our best projects are those that take years to develop and implement.

One such project, only recently completed, is the Connell building renovation in downtown Scranton. This historic 200,000 square foot building had been vacant for almost 20 years. On the surface, a building construction project might not appear to be a terribly exciting or even innovative initiative. However, the Connell has been transformed from the Connell building to the Connell Lofts. With 89 upscale, yet affordable, apartments occupying the top four floors above extensive retail and commercial space. All 89 units were rented before the first tenant moved in, the majority of whom are young professionals and commuters who decided to relocate from outside the city.

My commitment to the Connell project began in 2002 when I identified and recruited an interested developer for the renovation. Once we had the developer's commitment, I secured several rounds of financing and state and federal grants, totaling over \$8 million over the eight years of its development. 2010 marked the completion of the project, marking a bustling new hub of activity and an immediate market of hundreds of people for downtown businesses.

However, the investment in the Connell renovation did not exist in a vacuum. This project has been the culmination of years' worth of work and effort, beginning with my pledge to revitalize the downtown when I was sworn into office in 2002. Our downtown businesses and storefronts began to open again after I reallocated over \$10 million from federal block grant monies into a revolving loan fund for small businesses. To date, over 100 new businesses have opened in downtown Scranton. Once the small businesses returned, new possibilities for development and investment in the downtown emerged. Over the past nine years, we have overseen over \$500 million in construction projects, generating thousands of local jobs. Upon this foundation I was able to secure four square blocks of real estate for one of the most significant recent milestones in Pennsylvania, the establishment of the first new medical college in almost fifty years. Facilitating and advocating for the Commonwealth Medical College's downtown location would have been a difficult, if not an impossible cause if Scranton had not undergone such significant and substantial changes over the eight years preceding its founding.



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All of this is, perhaps, a long way of saying that one of my recent projects is also one that has been a long time coming. Scranton is now a 24-hour city, unthinkable 8-10 years ago and as a result, Scranton's downtown can now boast residential living and attract our best and brightest to center city. I would like to think that the success of the Connell also serves as the stamp of approval from Scranton's residents on the kind of job we've done in our downtown.

Chris Doherty,
Mayor,
City of Scranton