

**Community Gateways & Garden Program
 Towanda Borough
 Bradford County, PA**

Project Description:

While driving or walking toward downtown Towanda, the Gateway Park welcomes residents and visitors. Acting as a formal entrance to the borough, the park sits on the northeast corner of the Route 6 and Main St. intersection. Benches are situated along the small park's brick pathway, which circles around a manicured garden and shade trees. Nearby, a sign provides a map of the borough's historic district and information about upcoming community events. The park was completed in 2003 and is part of ongoing architectural changes and improvements dressing up downtown Towanda.

"The borough has had a revitalization and redevelopment goal since the early 1980s. Towanda's an old community. It was first settled in 1796 and we've gone through many phases since then," said Tom Fairchild, Towanda Borough Manager.

"We have a large historic district with a large collection of wonderful Victorian-era buildings but also a lot of worn out infrastructure. Our challenge is to preserve our historic character while improving the infrastructure. This project is a prime example of how to achieve that."

This project is an important step in the revitalization efforts. "For one thing, it drastically beautifies the area. It has restored community pride. It's unique. It's a very good example of good design,"

Quote: Tom Fairchild, Towanda Borough Manager
 "If someone would ask me what you need for a project like this, I'd say, 'You've got to have a plan. A lot of perseverance. A lot of community support. A lot of council cooperation.' And we do. This project is a very good example."



Fairchild said. The community involvement that went into building the park is one reason it's so well designed. "This is a prime example of good master planning and cooperation from the community and the state," Fairchild said. "The master plan was very well developed from the ground up. We had many series of

public meetings. Really, the community has been involved since the 1980s."

The senior class of '97 donated money for the message board; the garden club gave input for the flower gardens; the shade tree commission suggested which trees to use.

Buildings that house government, borough and private company offices, a state senator's office and Lackawanna College facilities surround the park while downtown offerings like shops and a theater are just a block away. The park doesn't just offer a welcoming entrance to the

downtown, it also provides links to the nearby trail systems and riverfront park.

The project cost totaled \$32,100 – \$20,000 of which was covered by a DCNR Keystone grant. Work included site preparation, planting, paving, lighting, two gateway entry signs and other related site improvements within the community gateway garden plaza.

Amount of Keystone funding awarded, year and matching sources:

- 1998: \$18,000
- 2001: \$2,000
- 2002: \$20,000
- Matching funds: Public Cash (\$12,100)