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Sands Casino Resort Bethlehem Opens with a Little Help from Taggart Associates

After years of waiting for redevelopment on the former Bethlehem Steel site, the Sands Casino Resort Bethlehem opened for business on May 22nd. The public opening of the complex came after two “test days” held by the Sands to comply with the PA Gaming Control Board’s regulations that all machines are fully tested prior to opening to the public.

The Commonwealth mandates that all profits from these two days must be donated to charities. Taggart Associates had a major role in identifying the benefactors of these days. Working with the Sands, Taggart Associates sought out eligible area charities, acted as the liaison between the Sands and the organizations, and compiled all necessary paperwork for the

donations. Over the two day period, \$118,000 was raised for 15 Lehigh Valley charities.

Taggart Associates has been working with the Sands since 2006 as a Community Outreach Coordinator. The opening of the facility was the culmination of the hard work the Sands, City of Bethlehem and community has contributed over the past five years.

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Megan Santucci

Taggart Associates Hires New Associate

Taggart Associates is pleased to announce Megan Santucci has recently joined the Taggart Associates team.

Megan is an experienced strategic event professional, having worked for large and small corporations, nonprofits and government entities, and has planned a variety of events for diverse audiences. She has worked on multiple economic development projects and has a passion for living and working in cities. Megan’s past experience includes promoting events such as the US Open tennis tournament, the Walk to

Cure Diabetes and fundraising at the Smithsonian. At Taggart Associates, she is currently planning the ceremonial groundbreaking for the \$12 million Lancaster Train Station rehabilitation project.

We are pleased to be able to offer this added service to our clients when they need an expert in public relations, communications and event logistics.

In this economic climate, many companies and organizations may find their marketing budgets pinched and may not be

able to afford a full time marketing resource and may not even want to hire a full time employee, however there are still key marketing initiatives and events they need executed professionally. Taggart Associates provides the unique combination of expert marketing and public relations services on an “as needed” basis, with the expertise of an urban redevelopment firm.

Please feel free to call us to set up an appointment to discuss your needs with Megan and see how we can help your marketing efforts or email Megan at megan@taggartassociates.com.



From the President...

Despite the current economic conditions, it is a great time for one thing: planning. My advice is to use this time to get organized, so that you are ready when the market recovers!

We have noticed recently that some savvy municipalities are using this time to solicit planning proposals for revitalization plans. They are thinking ahead: targeting areas for encouraging re-development, and investing in capital improvements. Upgrades such as trees, pedestrian-friendly streetlights, crosswalks, banners and flowers can make an area more attractive to private development, and as things turn around, they can make a difference. These smart municipalities are working hard to develop a strategy to attract the types of businesses they want downtown, and putting financial incentive programs in place to make that happen.

It's also a great time for partnerships. "When money is tight, it only makes sense for companies and municipalities to seek out alliances that can lighten the financial load and reduce risks," writes Sarah Fister Gale in the June 2009 issue of Project Management Magazine. "Sometimes they're public-private partnerships, in other cases it's two private companies looking to leverage the expertise of global teams with local businesses."

The Downtown Idea Exchange agrees. "Downtowns must build their know-how networks," N. David Milder, DANTH Inc., writes in the January 1, 2009, issue. While it seems like no one has money or time to spare, everyone can invest in relationships. Build strategic partnerships that benefit both groups, and your alliance may outlast the current economic conditions.

To balance the impact on downtown retail, some areas provide financial assistance to new merchants for outfitting their stores, link with a university to provide management and marketing assistance to local small businesses, and even use farmers markets as de facto business incubators. The nationwide decrease in commercial property values and rents and increase in potential creative labor and entrepreneurial energy makes downtowns ideal for small business start-ups.

Prepare for the next positive wave, because long-term trends remain favorable. Downtowns are going to continue to be a great place to invest, but as the economy turns around they are going to be a hotter investment than ever!

Contact Donna for more information about downtown revitalization at donna@taggartassociates.com.



The Mt. Pisgah Inclined Plane, constructed in 1845, courtesy of the Switchback Gravity Railroad, www.switchbackgravityrr.org

Study Underway To Examine Feasibility of Reviving Historic Switchback Site

The Switchback Gravity Railroad Foundation recently hired the team of Taggart Associates, Ott Consulting, and BL Companies to conduct a feasibility study investigating the viability of resurrecting a portion of the historic Switchback Gravity Railroad site located in Jim Thorpe, Carbon County. The Switchback served as both a mode of transportation and an

amusement ride from the 1870s until the 1930s, and the current study is focused on examining options for interpreting the Mount Pisgah Plane and Summit areas

The study will determine if the area of Jim Thorpe, already a popular tourist destination prized for its quaint merchant shops, eateries, and small town charm, can feasibly support the project without

compromising the area's natural beauty and wildlife presence. The research will also examine traffic flow/patterns, how many more tourists the attraction may bring to the area, the economic benefits for the community, among other key points. For more information on this project, contact chad@taggartassociates.com.

Lancaster County Bridge Design Moving to Final Design

The reconstruction of the Mount Pleasant Road Bridge over a tributary to Little Chickies Creek in Mount Joy Township, Lancaster County took a step forward in May when the Commonwealth provided preliminary engineering approval and environmental clearance. Lancaster County is serving as the local lead for this state bridge reconstruction project and Taggart Associates is serving as the County's contract Project Manager. Taggart Associates has worked closely with project engineer P. Joseph Lehman, County staff, and PennDOT District 8-0 to facilitate the preliminary engineering and environmental approvals process. While environmental clearance is usually obtained in 3-5 years for the normal project, Taggart Associates was able to secure approval in just 26 months. Final Design work will be finished in less than 8 months, with construction scheduled for 2010.

"The event is unique in that it celebrates the success and promotes the fundamental importance of best business practices in the Lehigh Valley business community."
- LV Suits

Donna Taggart Honored by LV SUITS



On Wednesday, March 18, 2009, Taggart Associates' very own President was honored by Equi-librium, Inc. The organization's Third Annual SUITS Awards event celebrated Lehigh Valley business professionals who demonstrate real horsepower in their service industry.

The awards highlight the outstanding achievements of individuals and teams

who work within eight service industry sectors in the Lehigh Valley, including Commercial Real Estate, Insurance, Banking, Human Resources, Legal, Accounting and Management Consulting. The event is unique in that it celebrates the success and promotes the fundamental importance of best business practices in the Lehigh Valley business community.

Donna received the Commercial Real Estate award based her "energy, expertise and resources to get the job done" and for demonstrating a higher quality standard of service for her chosen industry. We at Taggart Associates are very proud of Donna, and congratulate her on all of her hard work and efforts on behalf of her clients.

For more information about SUITS, visit www.lvsuits.org.

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Donna Taggart, President

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**Chad Helmer, Senior
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**Allyson Filippis, Esq.,
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**Megan Santucci,
Associate**

**Kim Hall, Executive
Assistant**

About Taggart Associates

Our clients and colleagues know that Taggart Associates offers full service project management services in the areas of transportation, environmental permitting, funding and economic development projects. What may be news is the fact that Taggart Associates has expanded services that are offered either independently or in conjunction with our other, more well known services.

Over the past several years, Taggart Associates has noticed that clients working towards development goals tend to need additional assistance in a variety of areas. As we've told you on Page 1 of this newsletter, we now offer expertise in marketing, public relations and event planning. Taggart Associates has also been writing successful grant applications for non-profit, private sector and municipal clients and has been expanding these efforts in this uncertain economic climate.

Our expanded services also include assistance with consultant selection, from preparing an RFP or RFQ for clients, to assessing proposals. Selecting the **right** consultant is key to your project's success. Taggart Associates has more than fifteen years experience helping clients assess their consultant needs and helping get the best services available, all while complying with federal and state agency requirements.

Taggart Associates can help you:

- Evaluate the range of needed skill sets
- Prepare required advertisements
- Prepare the technical scope of work
- Determine the most appropriate selection process – RFP/RFQ
- Create and lead the local selection process
- Provide professional review of the proposals and qualifications
- Act as a resource for the local selection committee.

The consultant selection process is often one of the most underestimated but required steps in advancing your community based project.

Using Taggart Associates' Project Management skills in the consultant selection process, you can continue to focus on your primary responsibilities with the comfort of knowing that the best professional for your project is being sought.

For more information on this management service, call or write Glenn Taggart at glenn@taggartassociates.com.

We're eager to assist in your development or redevelopment efforts. With our full menu of services, you can be certain that we will be able to meet your changing needs throughout the duration of your project.