

G-20: Thank You for the Experience

It's been one week since the G-20 Pittsburgh Summit began, and for me it was a true once-in-a-lifetime experience that I, and I'm sure everyone at the PDP, will remember forever. On behalf of the PDP board and staff, thank you to the law enforcement personnel who kept us safe. While some may view their presence as too extreme, it's difficult to ponder what could have been, had they not been here. And, we appreciate the hard work and partnership of Mayor Luke Ravenstahl, Allegheny County Executive Dan Onorato, the Allegheny Conference on Community Development, VisitPittsburgh and many others.

On the World Stage

You've probably seen many of the national and international stories about Pittsburgh that have been a result of the Summit. Suffice it to say, Pittsburgh was, and still is, on the world stage. In fact, Newsweek just referred to Pittsburgh as America's Venice! If you would like to read some of stories or view an amazing photo slide show of the G-20 experience, go to www.pittsburghg20.org. For those interested in the content and outcome of the event itself, you might want to read The Leaders' Statement which can be found here <http://www.pittsburghsummit.gov/mediacenter/129639.htm>.

If you're wondering whether or not it was all worth it, only time will tell, but we are encouraged by the positive stories which have already gained the attention of folks interesting in doing business in Pittsburgh. More jobs and conventions are tangible positives, but what is even more impressive is that thousands of people are saying Pittsburgh across the world. It's part of their vocabulary when maybe it hadn't been before. Pittsburgh is part of the discussion now and the opportunities it may bring, are endless. Let's keep up the momentum and continue telling our story.

The Golden Triangle: Business as Usual?

Up until Sept. 23, Downtown has truly never looked better. Weeds had been pulled, trees and flowers planted, roads paved, graffiti removed, trash picked up, vacant storefronts activated and "Welcome the World" signs hung along the streets. Thanks to everyone who offered their help, resources and talent to make that all happen. Our own Clean Ambassador, Brock, was even featured on an MSNBC Photo Slide Show of Downtown getting ready for the Summit.

But, as you probably saw, on Thursday and Friday many businesses closed and some even put plywood on their windows, which wasn't the best image of Downtown. Fortunately, during the two days of the Summit, there was no damage to Downtown property. And, some stores and restaurants saw some pretty incredible guests come through their doors. Imagine the stories they'll be able to tell for years to come! Just ask Denise Gaynor from Tonic who hosted the Chinese Delegation on Thursday.

I certainly recognize that it wasn't business as usual Downtown and we estimate that only about 20% of businesses were open and operating on those days. Security was tight and transportation was severely restricted. We know that some restaurants tried to remain open but ultimately had to close because of lack of business. The PDP appreciates the efforts everyone made to keep their business open and encourages those who did board up, to consider donating used plywood to Construction Junction: <http://www.constructionjunction.org>.

PDP Role: Now and in the Future

From the PDP perspective, we are proud to have been a part of the planning and preparation for the event. We hope you found value in the information we provided before and during the Summit. If you are a social media follower, you may have noticed our "Tweets" and Facebook updates. Our website, www.DowntownPittsburgh.com experienced a significant volume of traffic. From mid-August until the end of last week, the site had over 230,000 page views and users spent over seven minutes on the site for each session. The top pages were "Getting to and Around Town" and the G-20 Summit page. Now that the event is over, we hope you'll continue to follow us and visit our site often for news and events happening Downtown. And, we always appreciate your feedback. Don't hesitate to contact us at 412-566-4190 or PDP@downtownpittsburgh.com.

All the best,
Michael Edwards
President and CEO
Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership