
Mayor's Report

On Wednesday, December 3rd, City Manager Pat MacQueen, City Planner Pam Laflamme, and I went to Lewiston, ME to meet with City officials there. Over the last several years, Lewiston has made significant strides in the area of Economic Development, and we had an opportunity to go and witness firsthand some of the initiatives they have taken. We met with Mayor Laurent Gilbert (whom I had met earlier this past summer) along with City Administrator James Bennett and Assistant Administrator Lincoln Jeffers. Since the year 2000, Lewiston has seen approximately \$200 million invested in its downtown area and more than \$440 million citywide. Numerous factors played a role in this significant revitalization, and these numbers are not an attempt to compare Berlin to Lewiston in terms of scope as Lewiston is approximately three times the population of Berlin. However, what I found most telling about the success of Lewiston's revitalization is attitude. All three of the gentlemen we met with were positively exuberant about what the city has been able to do to date, as well as what they plan to do in the future. Perhaps most telling was administrator Bennett's remark that the department heads of the City of Lewiston are tasked with the following guideline: 90% of their efforts as they go about running their departments should be geared toward economic development. The remaining 10% is all that's needed to run the departments from day to day. If Berlin is to truly get serious about revitalizing our economy, this is the kind of mindset that needs to be adopted here as well
