

\$475,000 Grant to Aid Downtown Wildwood

Monday, March 30, 2009

Trudi Gilfillian

Staff Writer

Press of Atlantic City

WILDWOOD -- The city received a \$475,000 grant this week from the state Department of Community Affairs, Mayor Ernest Troiano Jr. said Friday.

The funding, coupled with an existing grant from the state Department of Transportation and funding from the Wildwood Business Improvement District, should be enough to complete renovations along Pacific Avenue from 26th to Cresse avenues.

The district's business-corridor development plan, which has been a cooperative effort among the district, the city and numerous state and federal agencies, has provided a major facelift to the downtown business district since it began in 2005. New sidewalks, curbs, gutters, street signs, street lights and other amenities such as trash cans, planters and benches are all part of the plan.

"I was thrilled when I received this news because it will help the city of Wildwood and our Business Improvement District complete a major facelift along Pacific Avenue that we have been working on for several years," Troiano said in a press release, noting that millions of dollars have been used to improve Pacific Avenue "and almost none of it has come at the expense of homeowners in our town."

The district - a private, nonprofit company funded through an assessment on commercial properties in the downtown area - provided the initial funding to complete all of the engineering and design elements necessary to apply for various grants. The only cost to the city was for the preparation of the grants.

"As a business owner, I am pleased on two fronts: First, that we are nearing completion of this great project, and second, that the cost for this project has not been borne by property taxes in the city," said Bill Kurtz, president of the improvement district and the managing partner of Neill's Steak and Chowder House.

The final phases of the development plan should be under construction this winter.

###