

# SPRUCING UP SIDEWALKS

*New planters sprout throughout downtown.*

**BY JIM LOCKWOOD**  
STAFF WRITER

SCRANTON — Downtown sidewalks sprouted dozens of new, large planters filled with fall mums.

To spruce up streetscapes, Scranton Tomorrow, a nonprofit economic development organization, recently purchased and placed 64 self-watering planters on many of the sidewalks downtown, organization Executive Director Leslie Collins said.

The new planters complement 50 older ones that have been on the sidewalks for years. The city years ago had installed about 75 concrete, round tub planters throughout the downtown, and Scranton Tomorrow took them over about seven years ago, group President Joshua Mast said.

Of those old concrete planters, 20 were removed because of cracks and damage.

The 64 new, vase-shaped planters — 44 round and 20 square — are made of plastic resin and have reservoir walls and bases that hold water, Collins said. Filled with water via plug holes on the rims, the new planters allow water to drain from the reservoirs into the bases and wick up into the potting soil. This keeps flowers watered for about three weeks before refilling is needed, Collins said.

The group used state gaming grant funds to buy the new planters, which cost about \$23,000, and the soil, which cost about \$2,000, Mast said.

The city last year designated Scranton Tomorrow to lead the city's economic development efforts downtown, to bolster a renaissance already underway. This is the first year of a three-year implementation period aimed at laying the foundation for creation of a downtown business improvement district. The new planters are part of the overall initiative.

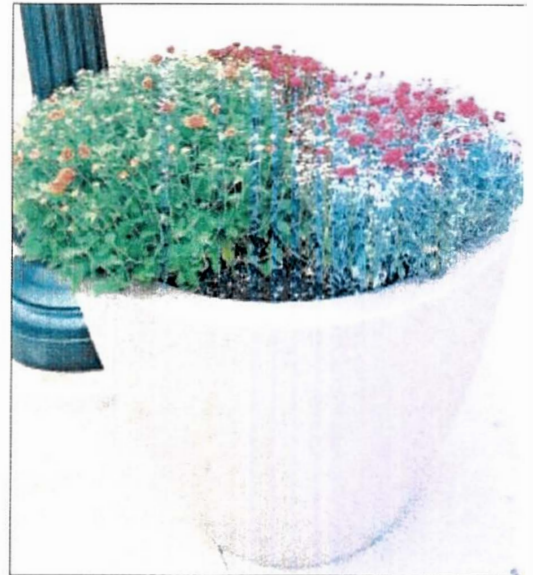
"The building owners and property owners need to see the value in all that Scranton Tomorrow does," Mast said.

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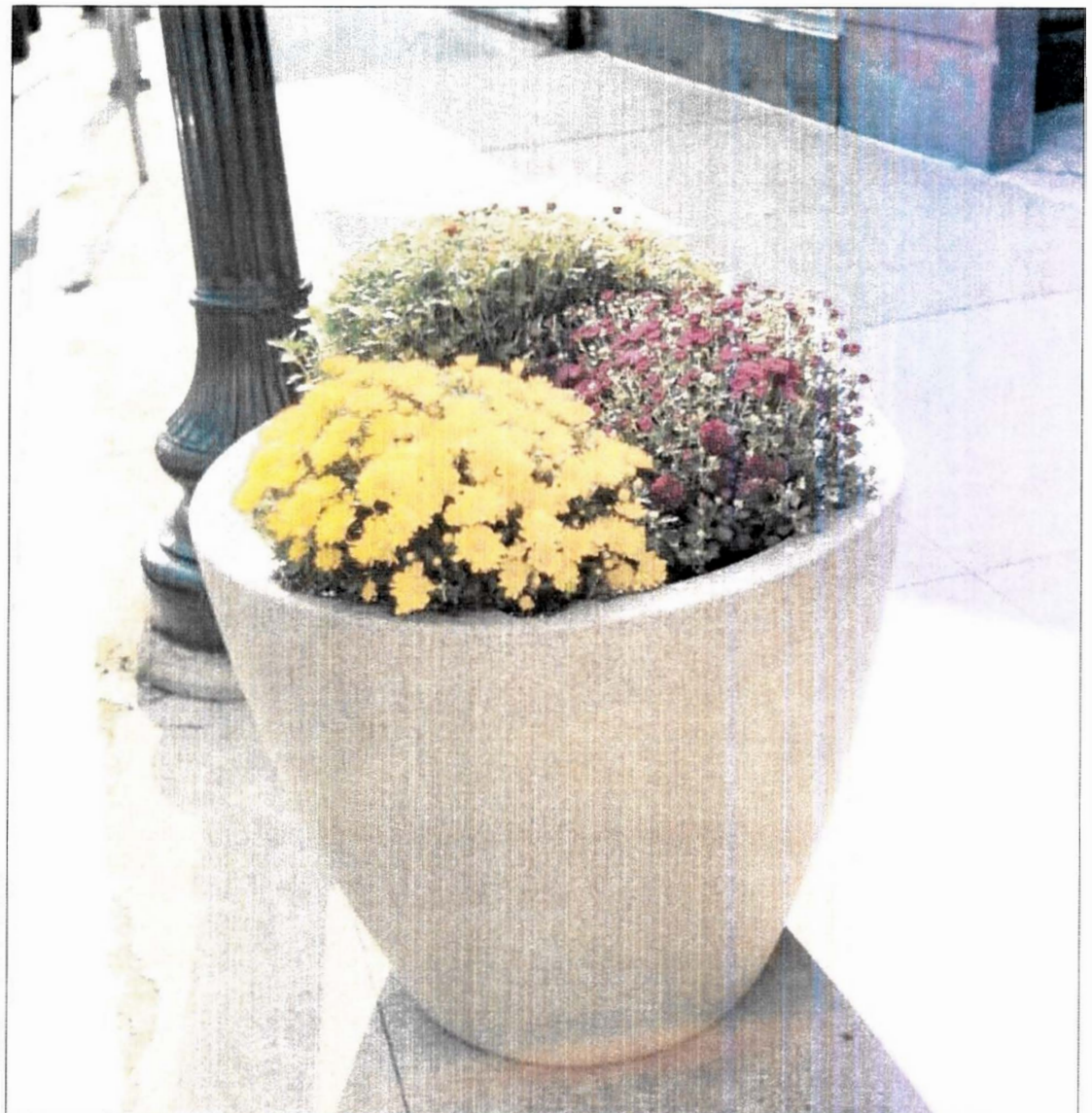
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Scranton Tomorrow recently placed new planters, including this one on Penn Avenue, throughout downtown Scranton. Top: A new square self-watering planter with mums, left, and a round one.