



**NINE VILLAGES.**

**ONE VISION.**



**Downtown  
Revitalization  
Initiative**  
Submitted by:  
Livingston County



# WHY US

*It's our  
Innovative  
approach!*

Livingston County is seeking an investment through the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) in its nine core downtown districts. While this Countywide approach is beyond a single, traditional downtown neighborhood, we feel that a strong case can be made that this program, and in turn these communities, are well-prepared for continued investment.

## **AWARD WINNING RECOGNITION.**

- NYSEDC Excellence in Community-Based Development

## **REPLICABLE.**

- Legislation introduced by Senator Cathy Young suggesting replication of our Program

## **EXPERIENCE.**

- A successful, proven record of being able to leverage public funds
- More than 175 completed projects in 120 buildings

## **REGIONAL COLLABORATION.**

- Village buy-in for the Downtown Partnership of \$36,000 annually.
- Shared services of a Countywide Downtown Coordinator

## **POVERTY REDUCTION.**

- 82 affordable residential units created
- 80+ new projects identified to create new employment opportunities and additional housing

## **PUBLIC AND PRIVATE INVESTMENT.**

- Thus far, every \$1.00 of public funds is accompanied by \$1.41 in private funding
- \$7,290,000 of investment partially comprised of \$4,262,000 in private funding

## **SHARING THE WEALTH.**

- Our nine (9) downtown plan creates a more significant impact over a larger area
- Transformational change instilling community pride and driving millennial attraction

Livingston County is dedicated to the philosophy that we are stronger together than we are alone, and therefore has adopted a countywide approach to Downtown Revitalization as a key component of its economic development strategy.



# IMMERSE YOURSELF IN TRUE

*Americana*

It has no central city and no signature commercial area. In fact, it has no incorporated cities at all. Its tallest downtown building is only four stories. Yet nowhere in New York State is Main Street development more important than in Livingston County. Its nine incorporated villages all rely on a healthy central business district, not only for the traditional economic impacts of jobs and taxes, but for their contributions to the very essence of the lifestyle that is Livingston County's greatest asset - **THE SENSE OF HISTORY AND PLACE THAT HAS LONG BEEN THE HALLMARK OF RURAL COMMUNITIES ALL ACROSS AMERICA.**



Over the past fifty years, however, that lifestyle has been heavily impacted by the growth of the neighboring Rochester metropolitan area, growth that has challenged the vitality of Livingston County's downtowns and threatened the economic viability of its historic villages.

The simple geography that dictated Livingston County's development over the past century is now also responsible for dampening its economic opportunities. With the construction of Interstate 390 and other transportation improvements over the last several decades, a stunning 68.9% of Livingston County's workers now commute to their primary jobs outside of the County. The vibrant Rochester area economy literally drags Livingston County's workforce into Monroe County each weekday morning, gobbles up its restaurant and shopping dollars, then sends it home each evening. This outmigration of its workforce, combined with the draw of Monroe County's suburban malls and big box retailers, has pulled people away from their social connections to the community and created leakage in the form of consumer purchases and associated sales tax revenues.

Livingston County was very aware that the ability of its downtowns to thrive in the face of that competition was critical to preserving the character and charm of its villages that had become the hallmark of its rural lifestyle. In

2003, the County began to rethink its overall approach to downtown development and to view its commercial cores as an integrated network that would not just compete with the suburban retail complex, but do so in a way that would offer unique work spaces and shopping alternatives, develop and enhance special events and cultural activities, and preserve the historic structures that are so important in defining village living.

**The result was the Downtown Partnership, an award-winning community revitalization program that has not only had remarkable success in creating and expanding businesses, renovating historic properties, and establishing effective organizational structures, but perhaps most importantly has served to restore community pride and preserve the heritage in Livingston County's villages for generations to come. With this application, Livingston County looks to acquire the resources required to achieve its goal of creating vibrant self-sufficient communities through innovative downtown programming.**

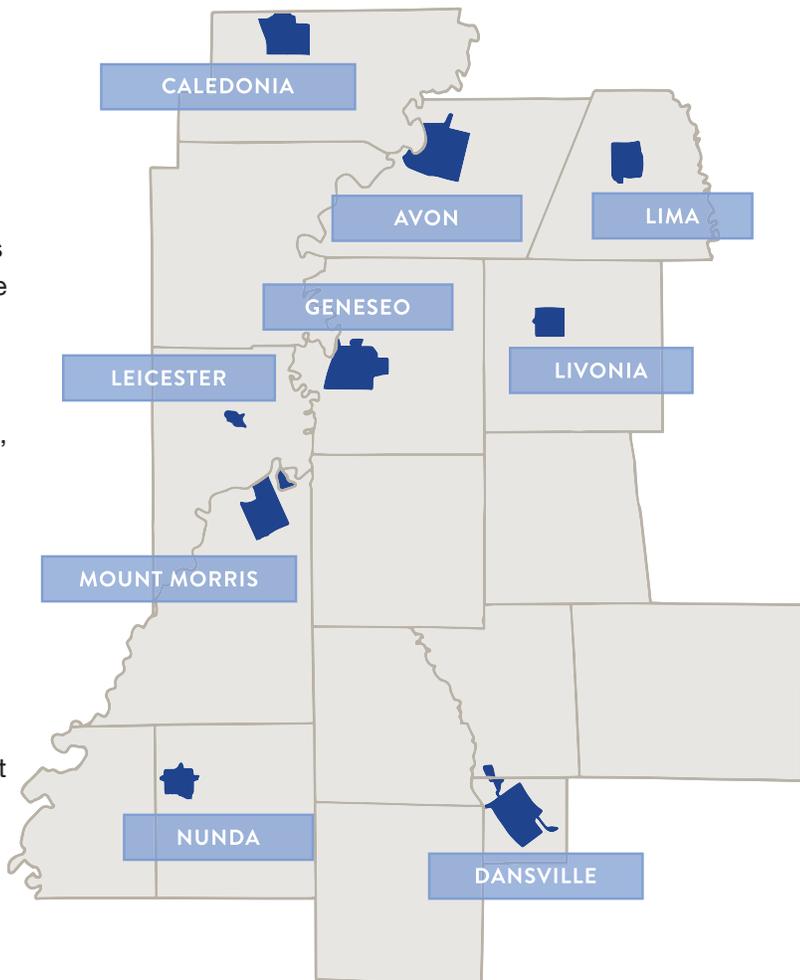
## Section 1- Downtown

leveraging

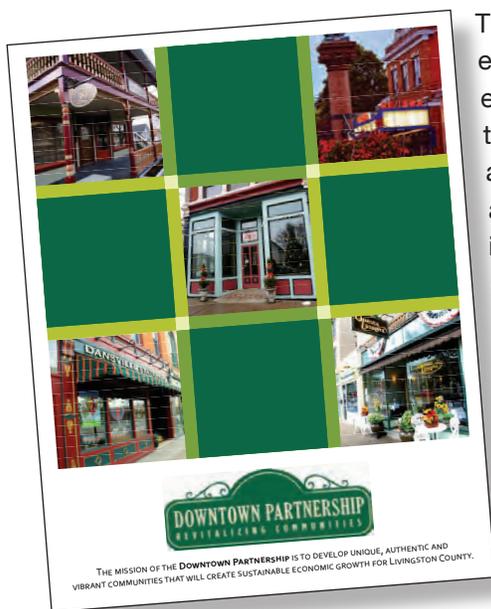
# resources

In communities across the country, downtown revitalization is a challenge. Livingston County's nine villages lack the density and business mix seen in larger cities, and are often bypassed due to highways routing traffic around the village and downtown. Additionally, these villages lack the resources to independently initiate and administer downtown revitalization programming.

The creation of the Downtown Partnership, a county-wide program staffed by a full-time downtown coordinator, has leveraged resources making revitalization programming possible in these small villages and helping to bring educational and financial resources to building and business owners. The mission of the Downtown Partnership is to promote and enhance the unique, authentic, and vibrant communities of Livingston County.



The Partnership enhances economic growth through programs and assistance in downtown revitalization and community development; preservation and enhancement of downtown buildings; integrated marketing of the existing businesses and community; and entrepreneurship development and recruitment of new business.



# Heart & Soul

As a whole, Livingston County's downtowns house more than 560 buildings, 386 businesses and over 800 jobs; this makes our downtowns our largest private sector employer! These downtown areas are the centers of commerce, government, social interaction, entertainment, education, transportation, and worship. It's here that Livingston County residents meet, shop, access services, dine, and share ideas – in the same historic buildings and public spaces that have hosted these activities for generations, and it's here that you see the very heart and soul of the Livingston County community.



It was with an understanding of the importance of the downtowns that the County established a Main Street revitalization program – the Downtown Partnership – with the goal of preserving and enhancing the businesses, buildings, and public spaces that are emblematic of what “Living in Livingston” is all about. Combining a mix of innovative incentives with the presence of a full-time downtown coordinator has resulted in a commitment from both the public and private sectors that is visible in renovated buildings, new storefront businesses, apartments, and increased activity in the downtowns.

The Downtown Partnership has been tremendously effective for our rural county where our villages are mostly less than 5,000 in population. In just the last five years, more than \$7 million has been invested in 120 downtown buildings – that's more than 20% of our downtown building stock. This investment has created improved commercial spaces on first floors as well as 82 improved or newly created residential units on the upper floors of the central business districts throughout the county.

Livingston County's Downtown Partnership program has attracted new businesses and private investment to the downtown districts as well as retaining existing businesses and jobs. We have reduced commercial vacancy rates by up to 20% in some of our communities. More people live and work on Main Street. Residents have renewed pride in their downtown, and in their community. More people have been inspired to invest in downtown buildings because of the downtown partnership programs. Healthy downtowns have helped to boost industrial development, business attraction, retention, and expansion. Many of the elements of our

program have been used individually in other communities, but only Livingston County has put them all together to create a truly transformative revitalization program for the whole county.

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**Livingston County's downtown model is efficient, proven, and easily replicated. The broad scope and sheer volume of its initiatives guarantees a much deeper impact than investments in a single city or neighborhood.**



# A model for Success



While “New York” makes many think of skyscrapers, neon lights, and traffic jams, the truth is, the majority of this state is rural:

- 55 percent of counties in New York State have a population of less than 100,000
- 39 percent of counties in New York State have a population smaller than Livingston
- 35 percent of counties in New York State do not contain a city

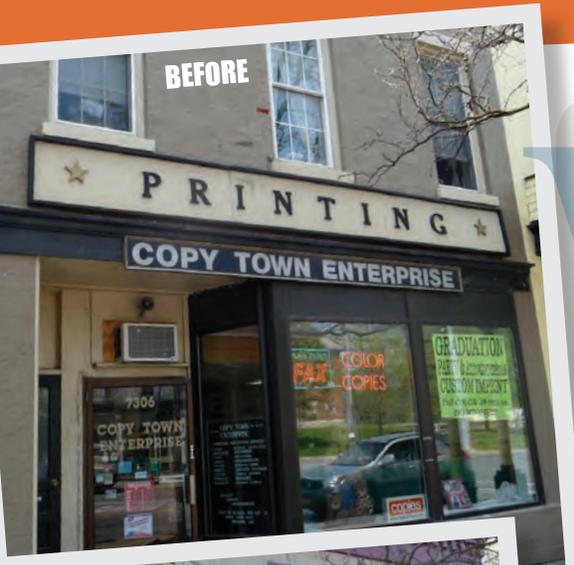


**A program like the Downtown Partnership could be utilized to revitalize communities across the state.**

At its Annual Meeting in Cooperstown, the New York State Economic Development Council recognized Livingston County’s Downtown Partnership Program with the Excellence in Community-Based Economic Development Award. Senator Catherine Young has introduced legislation suggesting the replication of the programming that has been piloted here in Livingston County.



# HARD WORK MUST CONTINUE



While our Downtown Partnership has certainly seen success, our planning efforts have consistently pointed to a continuation of the downtown revitalization efforts as a primary community development objective. While the results in our villages have been remarkable, much work remains to be done in the following areas, among others:

- Continue to fill vacant commercial space
- Continue to identify and fill gaps in essential goods and services
- Identify and create area anchors and draws
- Focus on business retention and expansion
- Build organizational capacity
- Enhance zoning and code compliance
- Leverage farmer's market initiatives
- Identify and preserve historic resources
- Develop strategies for addressing infrastructure and property improvement needs
- Implement strategic marketing plans countywide and in each commercial target area

Livingston County's Downtown Partnership model is ripe for investment for so many reasons, but the one reason above all that the DRI should invest in Livingston County is because it's not an investment in just one community – it's an investment in the whole state.

**THE MODEL WHICH LIVINGSTON COUNTY HAS ALREADY CREATED THROUGH ITS DOWNTOWN PARTNERSHIP CAN AND SHOULD BE REPLICATED ACROSS THE STATE. INVESTMENT THROUGH THE DRI WILL BUILD UPON ALREADY ACHIEVED SUCCESS, PILOTING THE NEXT PHASE OF THE COUNTYWIDE REVITALIZATION MODEL**

The downtown revitalization experience that Livingston County has through its downtown partnership has built the capacity necessary to administer programming for both capital improvements and technical assistance. The organizational structure and procedures are already in place through which investment could be funneled to continue revitalizing Livingston County's downtowns and continue paving the way for other counties to replicate the success that we have seen.

# Section 2 - Boundaries

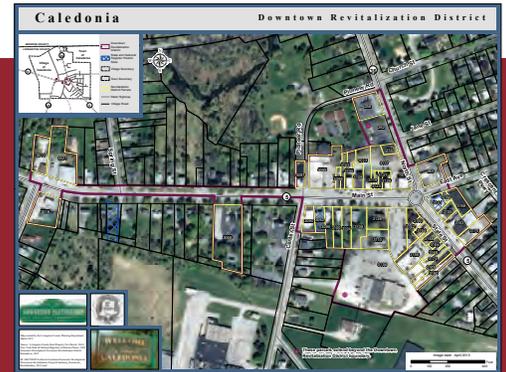
Each of Livingston County's nine village centers has a well-defined downtown district. Boundaries of these districts were established by local committees with guidance from Livingston County's Downtown Coordinator. Programs under the Downtown Partnership apply to buildings and businesses within the boundaries of the designated downtown district.



**AVON**

Unique to Avon among area towns, the Village Green plays a prominent role in defining Avon's intimate and pedestrian friendly downtown district. The park is a green space amidst a historically industrial village and railroad town. Large, corner, anchor buildings stand directly across from the park and trees march along N. Genesee Street, extending the park-like quality through the district. After the grand first impression left by the D'Angelo building, opera block, and the former bank of Avon building, the remainder of N. Genesee Street Commercial district consists of small, predominately wood frame, 1 and 2-story structures.

Caledonia's primary thoroughfare has two separate but intact lengths of traditional village blocks as well as two prominent anchor buildings at either side of the open paved area of the Monument Circle. The continuity of the downtown between these two blocks is hindered by a lack of pedestrian "connective tissue" between Main Street and State Street. There are gaps between buildings that could be bridged; the revitalization of downtown Caledonia is a key component of the village's newly completed comprehensive plan.



**CALEDONIA**

A grand scale and rich architectural character permeate Main Street, Dansville. The downtown revitalization district is very dense compared to other villages in the region. Additionally the large number of 3-story masonry buildings with intact, rhythmic, original window openings is a tremendous and unique asset. Main Street has maintained several contiguous blocks of such buildings. Many of the buildings in the downtown are on the historic register. The wide Main Street is flanked with trees and "adopted" flower beds adding color and charm.



**DANSVILLE**



## GENESEO



Geneseo's downtown is nationally recognized, with a rich history, landmark status, and a variety of architectural styles. In comparing it to other communities in Livingston County and beyond, its many unique attributes collectively define a quality we call "Centeredness". Main Street is well-defined at both ends rather than being a simple densification of a highly-trafficked thoroughfare; a dense urban center radiates from a central fountain, and the downtown is bounded by a park-like corridor to the south and on the north by a tree-lined promenade of stately (converted) homes and porches.

Leicester's Main Street has always been contained within a small space. Yet from building faced to building face, the road and sidewalks are part of a wide thoroughfare. Historically, some of that space has been utilized for exterior porches, decks, and balconies. Occasionally small communities have the benefit of green space as a major element of their central business district. Leicester is one of those communities. The Village Park plays a central role in the identity of Leicester and its Main Street. The park and memorial regularly engage residents in annual events and activities.

## LEICESTER



## LIMA



The revitalization district of Lima is compact with an informal historic charm. Its "crossroads" character is memorable and distinctive. Several characteristics stand out to differentiate Lima from other villages in the region. These items relate to the interface between façade and sidewalk, porticos, basement access, steps and landings, green space and historic markers. Lima's history is visibly celebrated and shared through an established and visually prominent network of signs, plaques and artifacts. Lima has well established zoning ordinances that have placed it in an excellent position to maintain a vibrant village.



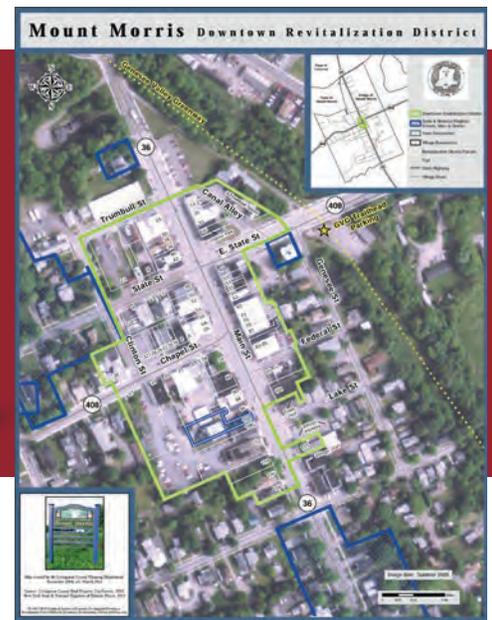
# LIVONIA



Livonia's primary thoroughfare bisects the densest portion of its commercial core. The first sighting of Livonia's downtown core for traffic is the west facing facades of the Commercial Street buildings. Because there is no building on the east corner of Main Street and Commercial Street, entrance from the east has a clear view toward the front facades along Commercial Street. A series of one-story buildings define the north edge of the commercial district. The Southern approach along Commercial Street more closely resembles the density of a Western New York "main street." As you pass over peripheral railroad tracks you encounter traditional, two-story mixed use buildings typical of this setting.

Mount Morris' buildings are the most visible emblem of its history. This history – translated where possible into building façades - establishes a public identity that allows Mount Morris to stand out as a prosperous, patriotic town. Prior to recent downtown revitalization efforts, there was a lot of authentic Mount Morris history concealed or compromised, embedded in the buildings. Renovations to a number of the façades that make up Mount Morris have revealed an exceptional amount of their original character, hidden and retained by alterations made throughout the years. This puts Mount Morris at an advantage over many towns where significant portions of the buildings and their façades have been altered several times.

# MOUNT MORRIS



# NUNDA



Many villages have a single characteristic that make them unique and identify them as specific places. The "Central Square" is the focal point of Nunda. The Square has a tree lined median that buffers through-traffic, creating a more pedestrian-friendly environment. The Central Square contains the village's concentration of downtown businesses, with historic, wood-framed buildings comprising the majority of the square's border and branches. This physical organization of buildings is unique among villages in Livingston County and makes Nunda stand out as a one-of-a-kind community, portraying a very tangible sense of place.

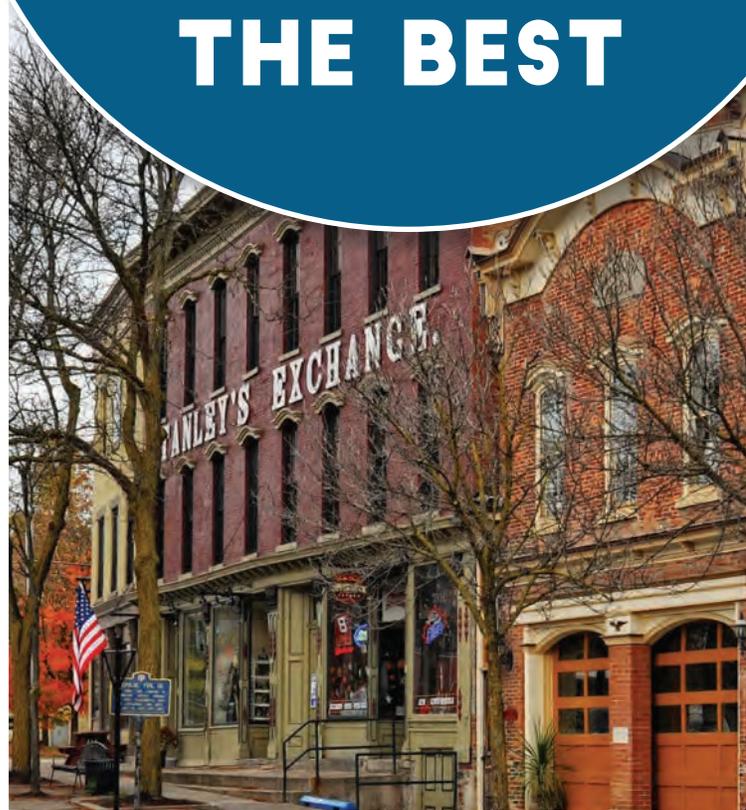
## Section 3 - Size

**With their growth and close proximity to one another and to other year-round attractions, Livingston County's downtowns create a vibrant, four-season economy with a strong quality of life for residents.**

One of the central themes of the recently completed America's Best Communities Plan is connectivity, especially among the downtowns.

The ABC Plan calls for the ongoing improvement of existing linkages between Livingston County's downtowns in a way that expands their collective economic impact and cultural influence. While it is important that each downtown retain its historic character, this collaboration offers a way to enhance the experience for both residents and visitors.

**THE BIGGEST  
IS NOT  
ALWAYS  
THE BEST**



# *Strategic Growth*

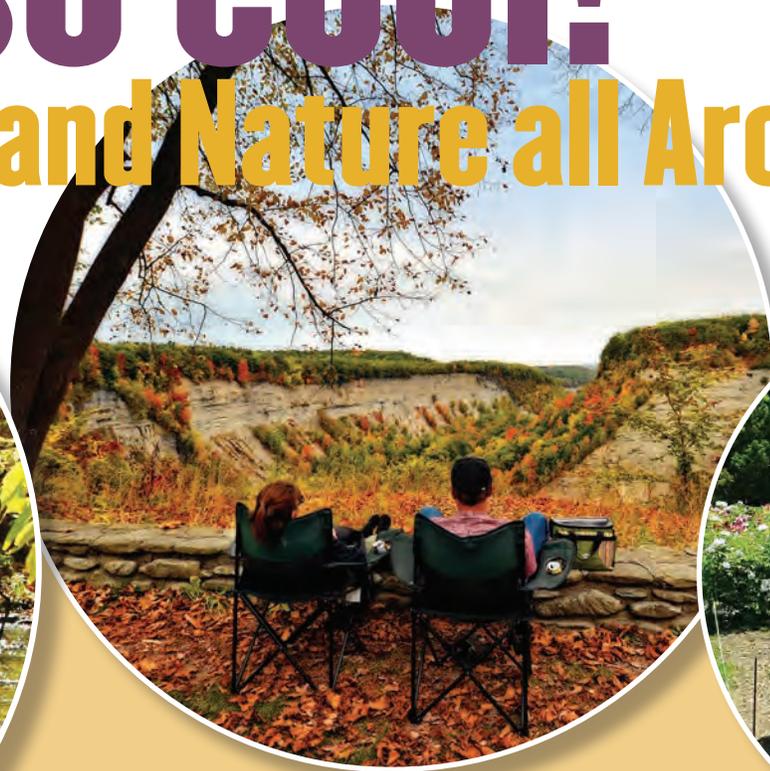
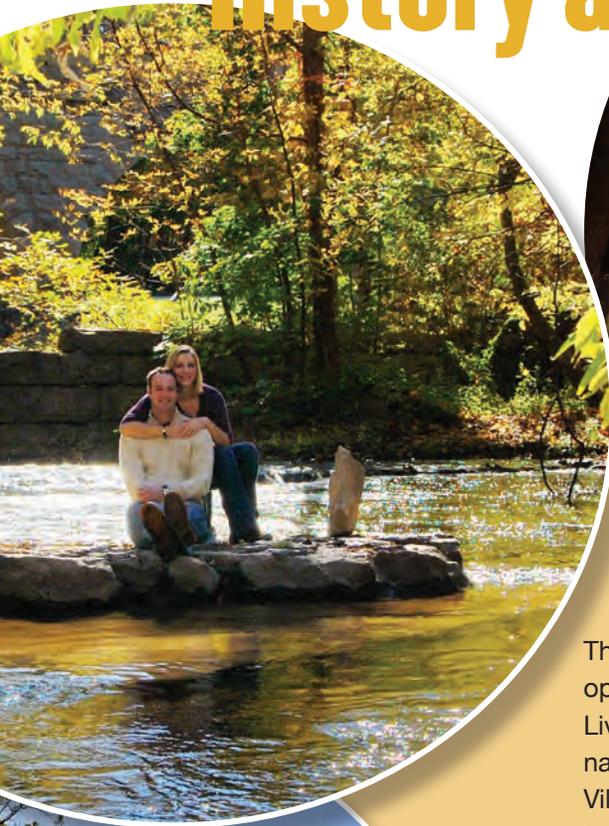
## **BUILD IT TOGETHER. BUILD IT RIGHT**

Two specific strategies proposed to be implemented through the Downtown Revitalization Initiative are:

1. Further network the downtowns by coordinating activities and events, shopping and entertainment options, and marketing efforts to better service residents and increase consumer spending and associated sales tax revenues
2. Create unique branding for each of the downtowns that showcases cultural heritage, historic properties, and shopping, dining, and entertainment experiences.

# This so cool!

## History and Nature all Around



These networked downtown opportunities, combined with Livingston County's wealth of nearby natural assets, make the Livingston Villages a special place to live. Natural features around the downtowns include the stunning landscapes of Letchworth State Park, known as the "Grand Canyon of the East" and voted "Best State Park" in 2015 by the readers of USA Today. Hemlock and Conesus Lakes provide additional recreational opportunities as part of an extensive network of waterways, hiking, biking, and snowmobile trails that help to support the very active four-seasons lifestyle of Livingston County's residents.

The built environment also has a significant influence on the character of Livingston County downtowns. The State University of New York at Geneseo is a premier public liberal arts college located in the heart of the County and the Downtown Network. Highly ranked in national publications for academic quality and value,

its 5,700 graduate and undergraduate students inject a healthy dose of commerce, vitality, and social and artistic expression into the community.

The National Warplane Museum, also in Geneseo has become a regional destination attracting thousands of visitors from all over the world. The Museum has over 1,000 members and is Western New York's only hands-on warplane museum that operates with an active runway and has 15 vintage warbirds in its collection.

One of the signature projects proposed to be planned and implemented through the DRI is a trolley link to strengthen the growing connectivity among Livingston's Villages and these unique assets. **THE RESULT OF THESE EFFORTS ARE RICH COMMERCIAL AND CULTURAL EXPERIENCES AND THE MORE COMPLETE OFFERINGS THAN EXIST IN MUCH LARGER URBAN AREAS.**

# DOLLARS

## Section 4 - Past Investments & Future Investment Potential

# SENSE



LIVINGSTON COUNTY HAS A HISTORY OF SUCCESSFULLY COUPLING ITS ENTREPRENEURSHIP ASSISTANCE PROGRAMMING WITH ITS DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION INITIATIVES. THIS EFFORT HAS INVOLVED

I.

The provision of traditional business development support through training, technical assistance, and financing.

II.

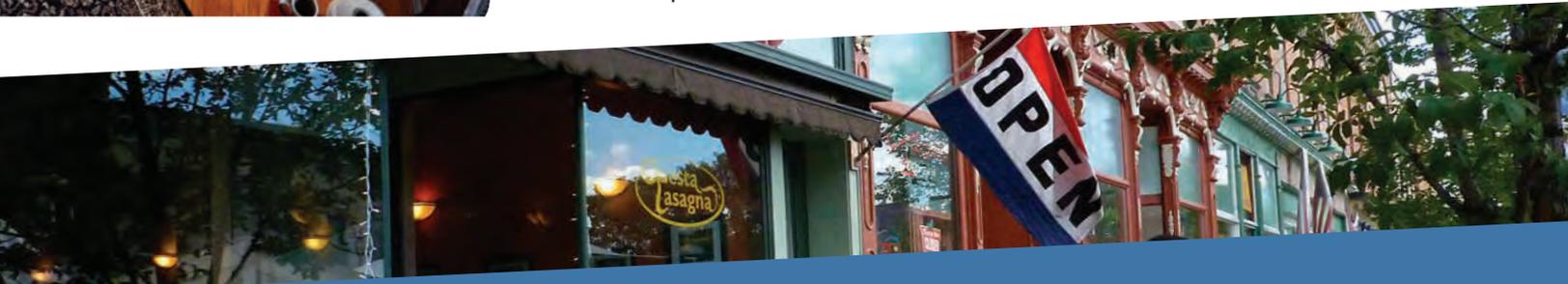
The analysis of retail and service gaps in the County's downtown commercial centers.

III.

Rental assistance and capital grants provided to businesses that will locate in vacant downtown space and fill one or more of the identified retail or service gaps.

IV

The implementation of a signage and facade program for downtown properties. The synergies created by pairing new businesses with appropriate commercial locations has had the dual impacts of addressing downtown revitalization goals while enhancing the entrepreneurs' chances for success.



In 2001, the County partnered with the Livingston County Development Corporation, Geneseo Foundation, Inc., and the Small Business Development Center at SUNY Geneseo to establish a comprehensive microenterprise assistance program (MAP) that included classroom instruction, business plan development, one-on-one technical assistance, and low-interest loans. Capitalized with federal Community Development Block Grant funding, the program

quickly became seen as one of New York State's most comprehensive and effective for helping new businesses get started.

The success of Livingston County's microenterprise program led to the introduction in 2003 of a pilot downtown revitalization program that took the assets made available under the MAP, augmented them with two new capital programs designed to fill vacant storefronts, and targeted that assistance

to four of the County's village downtowns. The needs in those areas varied and included poor property conditions, gaps in goods and services, ineffective marketing, aging infrastructure, and a lack of organizational development. While there was recognition of those needs at the local level, there was a lack of appropriate training, knowledge, experience, and resources to implement effective downtown revitalization strategies.

# THIS IS GROWTH

## INVESTMENT PAYING OFF

The addition of a full-time Downtown Coordinator to manage and deliver all of the programming completed the model and sparked development in the four downtowns that far exceeded anyone's expectations. In just its first three years of operation, the program leveraged substantial private investment in the four targeted downtowns and accomplished the following:

- Created 20 new downtown businesses, 11 of which provided essential goods and services
- Created 68 new full-time equivalent jobs
- Filled over 57,000 square feet of formerly vacant space
- Provided over \$60,000 in rent subsidies for new or expanding businesses
- Provided \$90,000 in low-interest loans
- Provided \$70,000 in grants to businesses which provide essential goods or services to the community
- Leveraged over \$1 million in private investment
- Completed strategic marketing plans for each downtown
- Created positive community attitudes and support for successful downtown revitalization
- Made a substantial impact on the development and growth of downtown organizational structures

In 2011, the program was rebranded as the Downtown Partnership. The success of Livingston County's downtown revitalization efforts has led to additional capital grants from the State of New York and eventually to the institutionalization of the program with dedicated County funding, local matches, and participation by all nine of the County's villages.



The Village of Mount Morris presents a prime example of what downtown revitalization efforts can achieve. Creative programming combined with private sector investment led to a stunning renaissance of the Village's historic downtown. The County used innovative capital financing programs to bring previously vacant storefronts and upper floors to life. Facade investments, creative lease structures, pop-up art displays, student involvement, and community volunteers were all catalysts for community growth and enhanced economic activity. The Mount Morris experience, which was featured in the New York Times, has been studied both locally and nationally as a model for how small town downtowns can be restored and revitalized while retaining their historic character and cultural identity:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/11/12/nyregion/12morris>.

Since our first award in 2008, Livingston County has successfully administered and completed six New York Main Street (NYMS) grant programs, leveraging almost \$3 million in private investment; that is an average of 57% match versus the required 25%. Another \$1 million in NYMS funds is currently being used to complete building renovations in five Livingston County downtown districts. Additionally, two NYMS technical assistance programs have been completed and another two are underway. With the completion of the above mentioned grant contracts, all nine downtown districts will have received NYMS investment at least once.

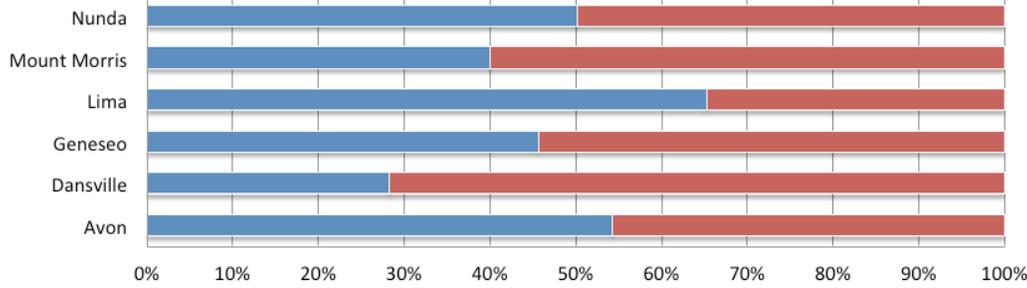
*Top Photo: Main Street, Mount Morris*

*Second Photo: James Rubin, Commissioner of NYS Homes and Community Renewal and Senator Catherine Young visit Pantry Mouse Tea House in Mount Morris*

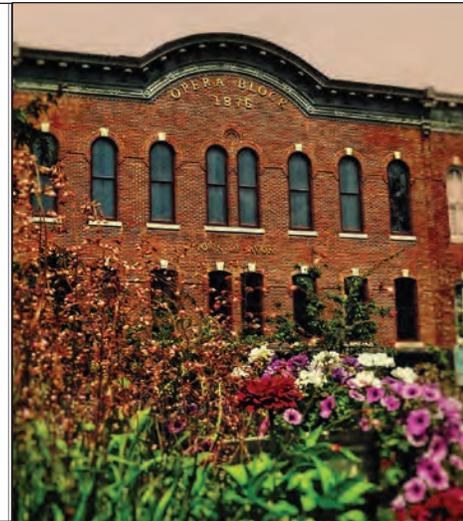


# IT'S WORTH THE INVESTMENT

## Livingston County New York Main Street Program



	Avon	Dansville	Geneseo	Lima	Mount Morris	Nunda
■ NYMS Grants	\$250,000	\$399,000	\$560,000	\$315,000	\$400,000	\$250,000
■ Private Investment	\$211,150	\$1,010,694	\$667,600	\$167,000	\$600,000	\$248,726



## Sign and Façade Program Since 2011

BEFORE



AFTER



BEFORE



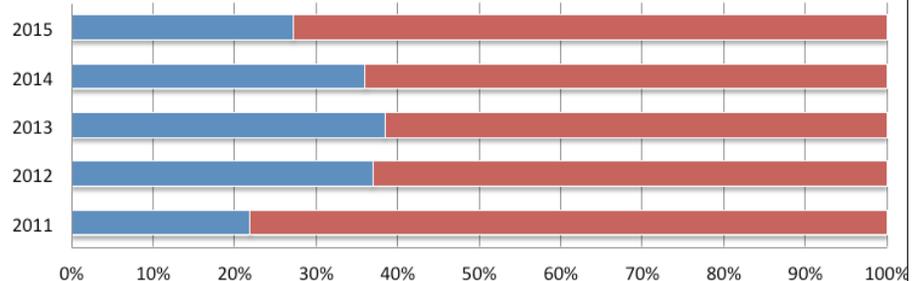
AFTER



Building or business owners can apply for up to \$5,000 in matching funds (50/50) for sign and/or façade improvements to their downtown building.

Eligible uses of funds include repairs, painting, siding, windows, doors, awnings, and signage. This highly successful program is funded through the Livingston County Industrial Development Agency. To date more than 100 projects have been completed county-wide leveraging over \$675,000 in private investment.

## Livingston County Sign & Façade Program



	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
■ Sign & Façade Grants	\$62,083	\$42,782	\$91,833	\$59,067	\$48,453
■ Private Investment	\$221,532	\$73,018	\$147,035	\$104,950	\$130,000

# Building the foundation Brick by Brick

## Downtown Revitalization Efforts in Livingston County

**2003**

Livingston County initiates a Downtown Revitalization Program with a dedicated coordinator for the Villages of Dansville, Livonia, Mount Morris and Nunda



**2005**

Lima joins the County's Downtown Revitalization Program



**2008**

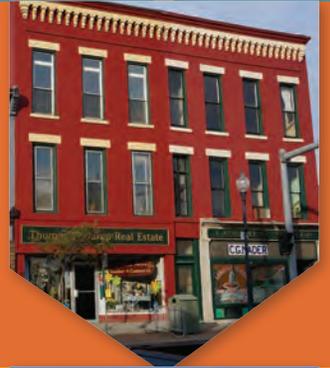
Livingston County administers a \$400,000 New York Main Street Grant in Mount Morris leveraging \$600,000 in private investment to renovate 12 buildings, 17 commercial units and 17 apartments



**2010**

Livingston County administers a \$399,000 New York Main Street Grant in Dansville leveraging \$1,010,694 in private investment to renovate 13 buildings, 14 commercial units and 17 apartments

Lima receives New York Main Street Grant - \$315,000 in grant funds leverage \$167,000 in private investment to renovate 7 buildings, 11 commercial units and 8 apartments



**2011**

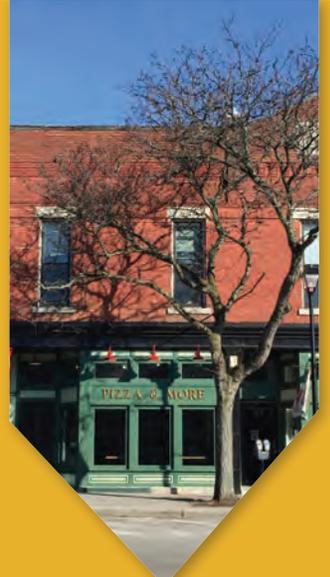
Livingston County's Downtown Revitalization Program is rebranded as the Downtown Partnership

Geneseo and Avon join the Downtown Partnership

Livingston County administers a \$410,000 New York Main Street Grant in Geneseo leveraging \$467,600 in private investment to renovate 11 buildings, 24 commercial units and 7 apartments

RP-485n Tax Exemption for Livingston County receives overwhelming approval in both the State Senate and Assembly

Livingston County pilots a local Sign & Façade program, awarding \$62,083 in grant funds to leverage \$221,532 in private investment and complete 19 projects





# 2012

Livingston County administers a \$250,000 New York Main Street Grant in Avon leveraging \$211,150 in private investment to renovate 8 buildings, 11 commercial units and 12 apartments

Livingston County administers a \$250,000 New York Main Street Grant in Nunda leveraging \$248,726 in private investment to renovate 8 buildings, 13 commercial units and 6 apartments

The Sign & Façade program awards \$42,782 in grant funds to leverage \$73,018 in private investment and complete 15 projects

# 2013

Livingston County administers a \$150,000 Rural Area Revitalization Project Grant leveraging \$200,000 in private investment to rehabilitate the historic Riviera Theater in Geneseo

The Sign & Façade program awards \$91,833 in grant funds to leverage \$147,035 in private investment and complete 28 projects



# 2014

Caledonia and Livonia join the Downtown Partnership

New York Main Street Technical Assistance Grants fund reuse plans for 11 downtown buildings in Caledonia and Livonia

New York Main Street Grant awarded for the completion of building renovation projects in Dansville, Geneseo, and Mount Morris

Awarded NYSEDC's Certificate of Excellence for its Downtown Partnership Brochure

The Sign & Façade program awards \$59,067 in grant funds to leverage \$104,950 in private investment and complete 23 projects





# 2015

Leicester joins the Downtown Partnership – all 9 villages are now members!

New York Main Street Grant awarded for the completion of building renovation projects in Caledonia and Livonia (as planned with technical assistance grant in 2014)

New York Main Street Technical Assistance Grants fund reuse plans for downtown buildings in Avon and Leicester

Livingston County named quarter-finalist in the America's Best Communities Contest – complete community revitalization plan



# 2016

Senator Young authors legislation to establish a Main Street Development Center, citing Livingston County's successes which should be replicated

Awarded NYSEDC's Inaugural Excellence in Community-Based Development Award



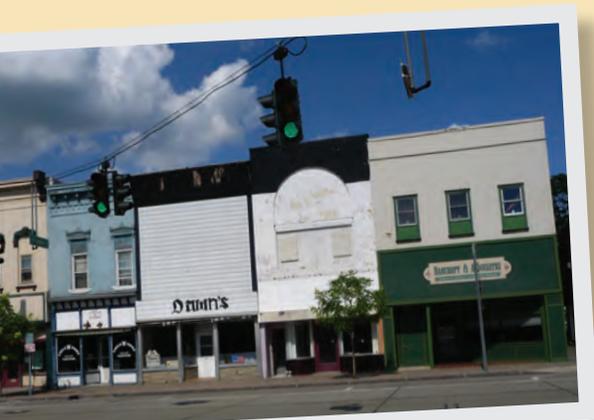
# SUCCESS NEVER LOOKED SO GOOD

## MOUNT MORRIS

Mount Morris was the first Livingston County community to receive a New York Main Street Grant Award. \$400,000 in grant funding leveraged over 1.5 million in private investment and created 15 new businesses and 30 new jobs in the downtown district.

With this funding 12 buildings were renovated and 17 residential units rehabilitated which transformed the village and gave it a renewed economic life.

Today Mount Morris has a thriving business district, and even more renovations have taken place recently as a result of a second New York Main Street Grant and the Livingston County Sign and Façade Improvement Grant Program.



*"I believe in the power of downtown revitalization in both urban and rural settings. When you improve a downtown, you benefit the entire community. The programs and leadership of the Downtown Partnership enabled me to improve many buildings throughout Livingston County. In five short years we have been able to create housing for over 50 new residents in the downtown districts and create more economically viable commercial cores."*  
-Greg O'Connell, Developer



## DANSVILLE

In 2013 the Village of Dansville completed a New York Main Street Grant that renovated 14 buildings. 17 residential units were renovated, 12 of which were created in previously unused space.

\$400,000 in grant funds leveraged over 1 million dollars in additional private investment. 4 blighted buildings were saved from demolition, turned into productive commercial and residential space, and returned to the tax rolls. Another nine projects are currently underway utilizing New York Main Street funding, when complete these projects will represent another \$500,000 of private investment in the downtown district.

Today, this beautiful Main Street filled with 3 story brick buildings has a renewed vitality and renewed investment.

*These 2 buildings were within weeks of demolition. They now house 4 residential units and 2 commercial spaces.*



*This storefront has been restored to the original design and 2 residential units created in previously unused space.*



Anybody in the mood for a cup of Joe?

### THE COFFEE CUP/THE SUGAR BOWL

With the assistance of New York Main Street Grant funding and Livingston County Sign and Façade funding, these 2 buildings were saved from demolition and put back on the tax rolls. Four upscale residential units have been created, and 3 commercial spaces have been restored. Original tin ceilings and wood flooring have been revitalized to create attractive and unique spaces for a tavern, coffee bar and restaurant. These buildings now house destination businesses that have brought new entertainment options to Main Street that have attracted the young professional crowd.



# AMAZING Transformations

# I'm ready for my close up

## THE RIVIERA THEATER

GENESEO

Originally constructed as a silent film theater, the Rex Theatre was built by the Aprile family and opened its doors in 1914. The theater was remodeled in 1923 and 1942. New management changed the name to the Riviera in the 50's, and the last movie was shown in 1995.

The Riviera Theater, an anchor building for the Village of Geneseo, sat neglected and derelict for almost 20 years. Once the building was stabilized, 2 residential units were created on the upper floor. With the assistance of Rural Area Revitalization Project funds, the theater and marquee were brought back to their former glory.

The Riviera is now a multi-use cultural anchor for the Village and a center for community events.

*"The Downtown Partnership not only eased the completion of our project, but helped us finish almost two years ahead of our projected completion date."*

*Don Livingston, owner Geneseo Riviera and Palace Properties of Geneseo*



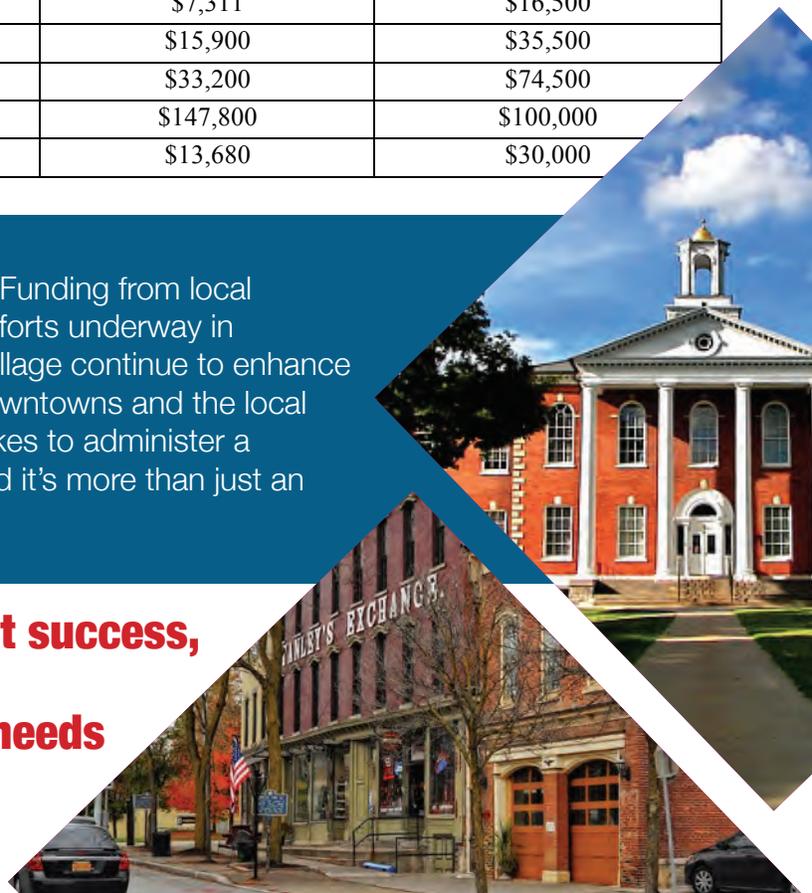
# Oh the Opportunities

## PROJECTS IN DEVELOPMENT

Projects Currently in Development	Total Project Cost	Private Dollars	State and/or Public Dollars
47 Main Street, Mt. Morris	\$26,000	\$13,000	\$13,000
112 Main Street, Mt. Morris	\$49,650	\$24,825	\$24,825
6 Chapel Street, Mt. Morris	\$33,230	\$18,230	\$15,000
8 Chapel Street, Mt. Morris	\$52,000	\$26,000	\$26,000
173 Main Street, Dansville	\$110,000	\$65,000	\$45,000
164 Main Street, Dansville	\$100,000	\$50,000	\$50,000
186 Main Street, Dansville	\$50,000	\$25,000	\$25,000
167 Main Street, Dansville	\$139,000	\$94,000	\$45,000
182 Main Street, Dansville	\$100,000	\$55,000	\$45,000
130 Main Street, Dansville	\$36,000	\$20,000	\$16,000
93 Main Street, Geneseo	\$253,000	\$173,320	\$61,675
115 Main Street, Mt. Morris	\$75,600	\$39,100	\$31,500
35 Main Street, Mt. Morris	\$39,634	\$20,134	\$19,500
168 Main Street, Dansville	\$10,341	\$2,586	\$7,755
193 Main Street, Dansville	\$30,000	\$9,500	\$20,500
137 Main Street, Dansville	\$20,000	\$6,500	\$13,500
3156 State Street, Caledonia	\$84,400	\$37,125	\$46,875
3154 State Street, Caledonia	\$75,000	\$28,125	\$46,875
3113 Main Street, Caledonia	\$27,608	\$8,608	\$19,000
3127 Main Street, Caledonia	\$30,784	\$9,534	\$21,250
3175-77 State Street, Caledonia	\$32,100	\$10,100	\$22,000
3136 Main Street, Caledonia	\$159,172	\$109,172	\$50,000
3130 Main Street, Caledonia	\$23,811	\$7,311	\$16,500
10 Commercial Street, Livonia	\$51,400	\$15,900	\$35,500
2 Commercial Street, Livonia	\$107,700	\$33,200	\$74,500
11 Commercial Street, Livonia	\$247,800	\$147,800	\$100,000
17 Commercial Street, Livonia	\$43,680	\$13,680	\$30,000

Livingston County has built local capacity over time. Funding from local government helped to get downtown revitalization efforts underway in Livingston County. Annual contributions from each village continue to enhance collaborative work to improve and strengthen our downtowns and the local economy. Livingston County understands what it takes to administer a comprehensive revitalization effort for downtown, and it's more than just an improved aesthetic.

**While the Partnership has seen great success, we are constantly reevaluating and adapting programming to meet the needs of the communities and business owners.**



# and more Opportunities

## FUTURE INVESTMENT POTENTIAL

The Downtown Partnership has a vision for the future of its nine Livingston County downtown districts. Historic features of our downtown buildings are preserved, while underutilized space finds creative new life. Innovation and ideas are nurtured. Businesses operate in a supportive environment and have access to assistance which will help them grow. A cohesive image exists which leverages the strengths of neighboring commercial cores.

### THE DOWNTOWNS OF LIVINGSTON COUNTY ARE DESTINATIONS.

All of this will be accomplished by focusing programming and investment in four core areas:

#### CAPITAL PROJECTS

In 2015, we changed our Sign and Façade program from an annual application to a rolling application, allowing businesses to apply for matching grants on an as needed basis. This change has been beneficial, specifically when a new business is opening and has an immediate need for signage. When it comes to capital improvements in our downtowns, the goal is to be able to offer assistance in any community when the time is right, rather than working grant to grant, community by community. Moving forward, we need to explore ways to further leverage private investment in downtown revitalization, recognizing the need for Livingston to become self-sustaining and vibrant regardless of outside forces.

#### ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Livingston County has offered different models of entrepreneurship training throughout the years, from ten-week classroom courses to concentrated day-long workshops. Moving forward, we are looking to be more proactive. An analysis of needed businesses and services should be conducted for our downtowns and recruitment of indicated businesses should ensue. Business plan competitions, forgivable startup loans and technical assistance are among the strategies that may help to further develop the right mix of business in our downtown districts.

#### BUSINESS ACCELERATION

Recognizing that our existing businesses have been and continue to invest in the community, we see a need to focus on what we call business acceleration – helping them bring their business to the next level through access to a team of professionals that can assist with marketing, social media, finance, human resources, legal counsel and design/store layout. Partnerships with SUNY Geneseo have been utilized to offer student support to businesses for assistance with social media and marketing. This has been a mutually beneficial opportunity for both parties. The concept of the business acceleration team would build upon this success and add greater expertise partnered with potential financial assistance such as access to our low interest revolving loan fund.

#### COOPERATIVE MARKETING

The Downtown Partnership has greatly benefited the businesses within the downtown districts of Livingston County, but we would like to move towards a more holistic approach, beginning with branding. While each of Livingston County's downtowns are members in the Partnership, they each still carry their own identity. We would like to better develop a brand for each community all of which can be incorporated into the overall brand of the Downtown Partnership. Streetscape plans for each downtown need to be completed and



# WORKING TOGETHER TO BUILDTIYA BETTER COMMUNITY

**The initiatives very briefly identified below are just a starting point for what could be next.** The organization and capacity exist to take the countywide approach to the next level. With investment through the DRI to further develop a strategy and begin implementation, Livingston County could catalyze future private investment in its downtowns and create viable, sustainable places to live, work and visit.



## CAPITAL PROJECTS

- 9 downtowns
- 80 projects
- 9 anchors



## ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT

- Identify gaps in goods and services
- Business plan competition
- Forgivable start-up loans
- Training and 1-on-1 assistance



## BUSINESS ACCELERATION

- Partner with the Edward Lowe Foundation and GRE to develop scaled down “economic gardening” approach for downtown businesses
- Revolving loan fund



## COOPERATIVE MARKETING

- Cooperative branding for downtown partnership and all 9 communities
- Streetscape plans
- Initiate Main Street Manager positions

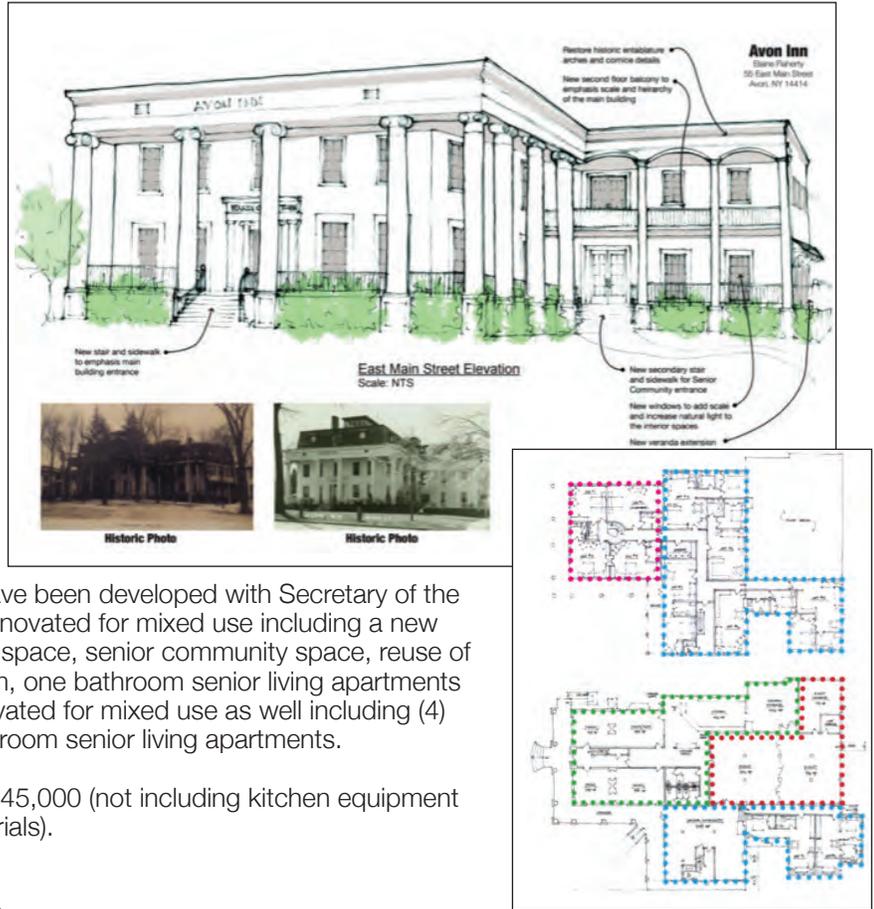
# Signature Projects

## AVON INN

This East Main Street property is a prominent landmark adjacent to the downtown core and is also listed on the national register of historic places. It has access to both on-street and off-street parking and sees a significant amount of vehicular traffic due to its location on East Main Street. With the exception of the existing west wing which houses (2) residential units, the building currently sits vacant and is not in the best interest of the property or owner, but demonstrates an opportunity for both commercial and residential tenants.

A building reuse plan has been developed using New York Main Street Technical Assistance funding, with involvement from both the current owner and a potential buyer. Recommendations have been developed with Secretary of the Interior's Standards in mind. The first floor will be renovated for mixed use including a new family friendly dining space and supporting kitchen space, senior community space, reuse of the existing events space and (2) new one bedroom, one bathroom senior living apartments within the west wing. The second floor will be renovated for mixed use as well including (4) new inn suites and (5) new one bedroom, one bathroom senior living apartments.

Initial cost estimates for the project came in at \$1,745,000 (not including kitchen equipment and evaluation and remediation of hazardous materials).

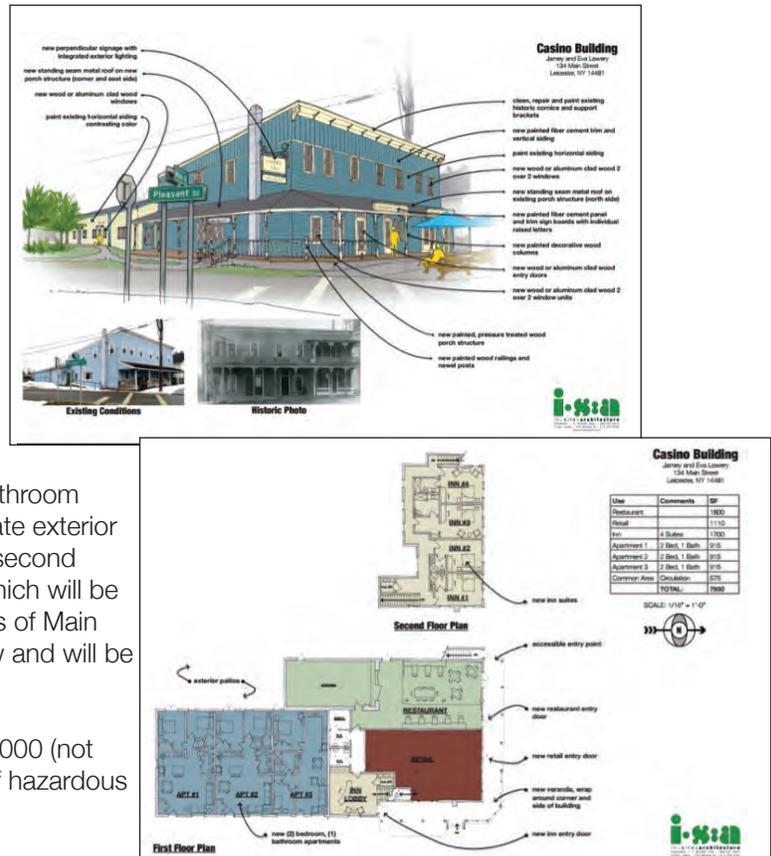


## CASINO BUILDING – LEICESTER

This Main Street property is an anchor building for the downtown core, has access to on-street parking and sees significant pedestrian and vehicular traffic due to its location on Main Street. The building currently sits vacant but demonstrates an opportunity for both commercial and residential tenants.

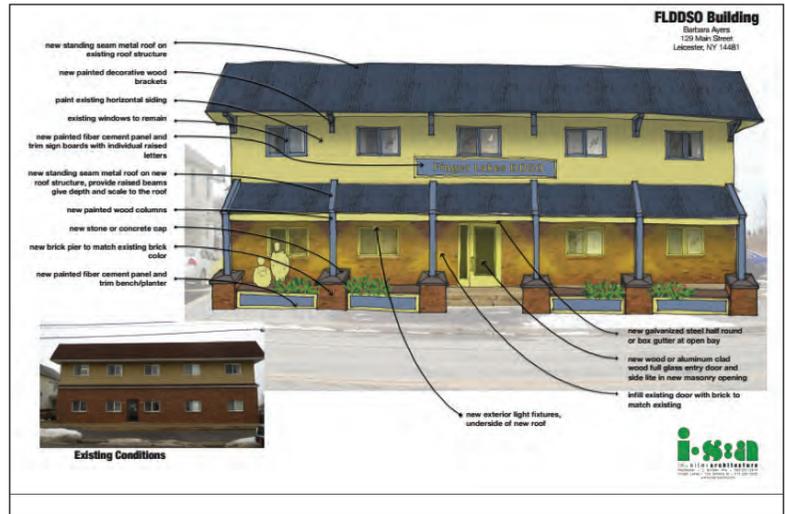
A building reuse plan has been developed using New York Main Street Technical Assistance funding, with involvement from the current owner. Recommendations have been developed with Secretary of the Interior's Standards in mind. The first floor will be renovated for mixed use which will include a new restaurant, retail space and inn lobby with a new platform lift to allow access to the second floor units. The first floor will also include (3) market rate two bedroom, one bathroom apartments with open floor plans, washer/dryer hookups, private exterior patio space and private entrances along Pleasant Street. The second floor will be renovated to include a new inn with (4) units, (1) which will be handicapped accessible. The quaint units will have direct views of Main Street, access to both the restaurant and retail functions below and will be within walking distance to the Village of Leicester park.

Initial cost estimates for the project came in just under \$1,000,000 (not including kitchen equipment and evaluation and remediation of hazardous materials).



# VILLAGES OF AVON AND LEICESTER BUILDING REUSE PLANS

In addition to the anchor projects identified above, renderings and cost estimates have been developed for 12 buildings in the downtown districts of Avon and Leicester. Livingston County will now seek funding to assist in the implementation of the planned building renovation projects.



# GRAIN AND ALE GROWING LIKE WHEAT

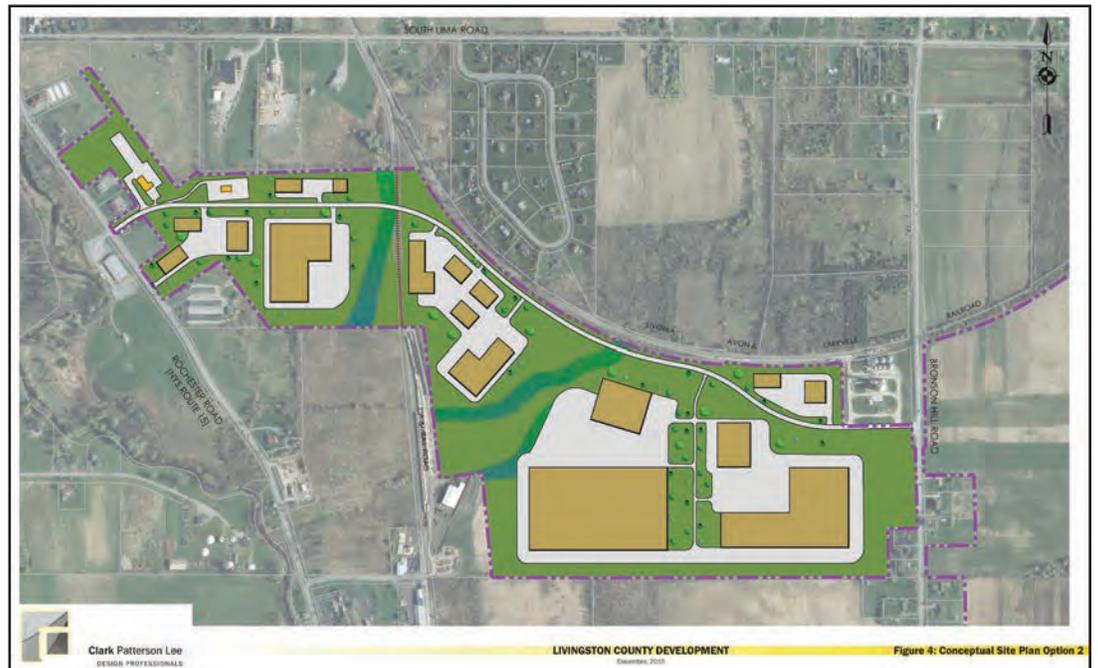
LIVINGSTON COUNTY DEVELOPMENT AND THE DOWNTOWN PARTNERSHIP ARE DEVELOPING THREE INTER-RELATED PROJECTS DESIGNED TO CREATE JOBS IN THE VILLAGES AND SURROUNDING AREAS BY UTILIZING LIVINGSTON'S MANY STRENGTHS THROUGHOUT THE AGRICULTURAL CYCLE, WHILE BUILDING A VIBRANT DOWNTOWN BREWING COMMUNITY IN LIVINGSTON.

## GATEWAY ROAD PROJECT

Livingston County Development has proposed a Gateway Road Project that would provide an opportunity to create a new agribusiness park. Livingston County has locational advantages by being in close proximity to local producers and suppliers, making it a prime location for an expansive agribusiness park. Establishing an agribusiness park will provide additional market opportunities for local farmers, create new jobs, and add to the local tax base.

The main entrance to the proposed Park along Rochester Road (NYS Route 15) is approximately one mile south from I-390 exit 9 with eventual connection to downtown Livonia. Access to rail is a major benefit for an agribusiness park. This site has access to the Livonia Avon & Lakeville Railroad.

The Gateway Road would provide additional access to NYS Route 15 for all area business and potential tenants that would locate within the proposed Park. Traffic would be reduced along the mostly residential sections of Bronson Hill Road and congestion would be reduced in the Village of Lakeville, at the intersection of NYS Route 15 and US Route 20.





## SMALL GRAINS HUB

With support from the Livingston County Board of Supervisors and the Town of Livonia, Livingston County Development has commenced an examination of the feasibility for a regional small grains center in Western NY. The focus of the study will be the Center's viability to source, aggregate and distribute both conventional and organic grain for the growing interest in microbrewing/distilling and local bakery needs.

Livingston County's interest emanates from an impressive 2015 study titled 'Meeting the Demand for Small Grains in New York State,' commissioned by Empire State Development. This study illustrates the

unprecedented growth in the craft brewery industry, fostered by the passage of the Farm Brewery and Farm Distillery legislation and renewed interest and growth in the historic industry of baking, due to "New York City Greenmarket's baked goods rules requiring bakers to source local flour." These interests combined have helped "fuel a grain-renaissance in New York State."

Ideally, the WNY Regional Small Grains Center would complement the focus to develop the Gateway Park, serving as an anchor for the new park. Additionally, it will support a push within the Downtown Network to build and support a vibrant brewing community

# *A vibrant brewing community*

## PROJECT SUDS BREWING COMPETITION

Livingston County Development and the Downtown Partnership are seeking to leverage the development of the Small Grains Hub and the Agribusiness Park by accelerating the growth of a vibrant downtown brewing community. Funding is being sought to support a brewing competition to be marketed throughout the Country.

A panel of tasters accredited by the Beer Judge Certification Program will determine the winners, who will receive an incentive package if they open a brewpub within one of Livingston's Villages. Four (4) awards are anticipated and the "prize packages" will include a \$30,000 grant to go toward the purchase of brewing equipment, as well as significant technical support including, but not limited to:

- Business start-up assistance (legal, accounting, licensing, etc.)
- Business plan development
- Real estate development
- Group purchasing opportunities with the other winners from local providers
- Marketing and branding support

The initiative will also include development and marketing of at least one new craft beer event designed to feature the winners' offerings and increase the visibility of the Livingston brewing scene.



# UNDERUTILIZED BUILDINGS POTENTIAL ANCHOR PROJECTS

## THE DRISCOLL BUILDING - AVON

Located on the village square adjacent to the downtown district, this building has been derelict and a detriment to the community for many years. The village envisions this building being rehabilitated for commercial use on the first floor (over 4,000 sq ft) and 3 residential units.



## THE PARK THEATRE - AVON

This theatre has been dark for over 10 years. The building includes 2 storefronts and a residential unit along with the theater space which is large enough to seat 200. Planning has been started for rehabilitation and a community group has been organized with the mission of creating a multi-use cultural centers.



## THE MAXWELL BLOCK - DANSVILLE

This significant building in the center of Main Street Dansville has 5 commercial spaces on the first floor, 3 of which are currently vacant. The 2nd and 3rd floors are boarded up and undeveloped. This building is on the State Historic Register, as are many of Dansville's downtown buildings. Bringing this building back to its original historic design and utilization of the upper floors is of paramount importance to local stakeholders.



# UNDERUTILIZED BUILDINGS POTENTIAL ANCHOR PROJECTS



## 148 MAIN ST. - DANSVILLE

Centrally located in the downtown district, this building is severely underutilized and blighted. 2 of the 3 commercial spaces are vacant, and the 2nd and 3rd floors are undeveloped. Rehabilitation of this building is paramount to the economic vitality of downtown Dansville. It is adjacent to the Star Theater which was recently restored by a local family and is currently operating as a single screen family theater.

## SCHOOL BUILDING ELIZABETH STREET - DANSVILLE

Previously St. Mary's School, this building is contiguous with the downtown district of Dansville. Because of its proximity to the downtown, this building has potential to be converted to multi-use commercial or residential units that would be beneficial to the density of the central business district units.



## 3090-3092 MAIN STREET - CALEDONIA

This 6,000 sq ft space was a thriving retail center until 2014, when the business relocated out of the downtown. Adaptive reuse of this building would greatly benefit the Main St. district. The adjacent historic stone building is in severe disrepair and in danger of being lost.

## THE LIVINGSTON HOUSE - NUNDA

The Livingston House in Nunda is an anchor building for the downtown, with 5 occupied commercial spaces and 3 residential units on the second floor. The fourth floor is an intact opera house. Parts of the building have already been restored, but there are plans for more restoration, including an adaptive reuse plan for the 4th floor and additional residential units on the 3rd floor.



## Section 5 - Job Growth

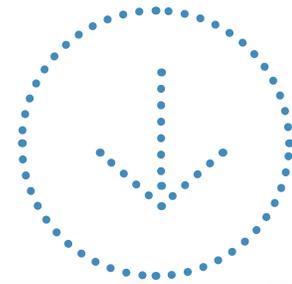
# QUALITY OF LIFE IS A KEY COMPONENT FOR ATTRACTING AND RETAINING RESIDENTS.

Economic Research which indicates that the economic development world has seen a shift in the key drivers of business location and hiring decisions: employers follow population and talent, and regions with concentrations of highly-skilled or reliable talent are experiencing growth and investment. The insinuation, as a result, is that jobs will not attract professionals, but rather a focus on the attraction of population and talent will help to attract jobs.

Quality of life is a key component for attracting and retaining residents. Livingston County's communities offer a number of amenities, including renovated downtown districts, premier educational institutions, quality

healthcare and outdoor recreational opportunities. As we further enhance and develop amenities in our central business districts, we feel that they will become a residential and recreational location of choice for regional workers. Both the Baby Boomer generation, as they downsize, and the millennials, as they graduate and begin working, may desire housing that provides flexibility such as smaller footprints and limited maintenance requirements. It is our goal, that with investment through the DRI, the Downtown Partnership can continue and enhance its important work throughout Livingston County's downtown districts, further improving the sense of place and quality of life in the community, thus helping to attract jobs to the area.

Livingston County's 15 largest employers are within 5 miles of a downtown – a quick and easy drive. Nine of the 15 are within a walkable mile of a downtown and four of them are located in a downtown district. Additionally, there are the jobs that exist within a downtown. While many downtown businesses employ just a few people, the compilation of these positions in such a dense area creates a job market as well as a customer base which is significant for a county of Livingston's size.



COMPANY NAME	Distance to Downtown	Jobs
SUNY Geneseo	in downtown	1064
Livingston County	in downtown	1036
Livingston-Wyoming ARC	in downtown	640
Groveland Correctional Facility	4.5	588
Genesee Valley Board of Cooperative Educational Services	0.5	480
Nicholas Hospital	0.9	422
Kraft Foods Global, Inc	0.8	400
Livingston Correctional	4.5	340
Hilltop Industries, Main Office	in downtown	325
American Rock Salt Company	2.7	244
Star Headlight & Lantern	1.1	215
NYS Department of <u>Env.</u> Con	4.1	200
Gray Metal Products Inc.	1.4	190
Coast Professional, Inc.	2	155
Barilla America-NY	1.1	140

# WOW!

In 2015 alone the Livingston County Industrial Development Agency took action on seven projects representing an investment of more than \$80 million by expanding businesses in Livingston County. These projects will retain 450 jobs and create 100 more.



1.888.762.7258



American Rock Salt is the largest operating salt mine in the United States with the capacity for producing up to 18,000 tons daily. A 1500 foot rail siding extension allowed the company to increase output making them more competitive. The \$1.5 million project will result in the creation of 26 new jobs.

Once Again Nut Butter Collective Inc. constructed a new state of the art facility for the production of Organic and Natural Peanut Butter, allowing the company to operate a separate peanut-free facility. The \$13 million project will result in the creation of 15 new jobs and the retention of 67 employees, the majority of who work and live right in Nunda. The project also plays a key role in helping accelerate "Finger Lakes Forward," the region's comprehensive blueprint to generate robust economic growth and community development, as it builds upon one of the plan's three industry clusters: agriculture and food production.

**"As one of the top food processing facilities in the Finger Lakes region and the fastest growing certified organic food company, Once Again Nut Butter's newly expanded facility will allow it to meet its rapidly growing sales," said Empire State Development President, CEO & Commissioner Howard Zemsky. "The addition of new, permanent jobs in the small town of Nunda will also foster a significant economic impact felt throughout the county."**



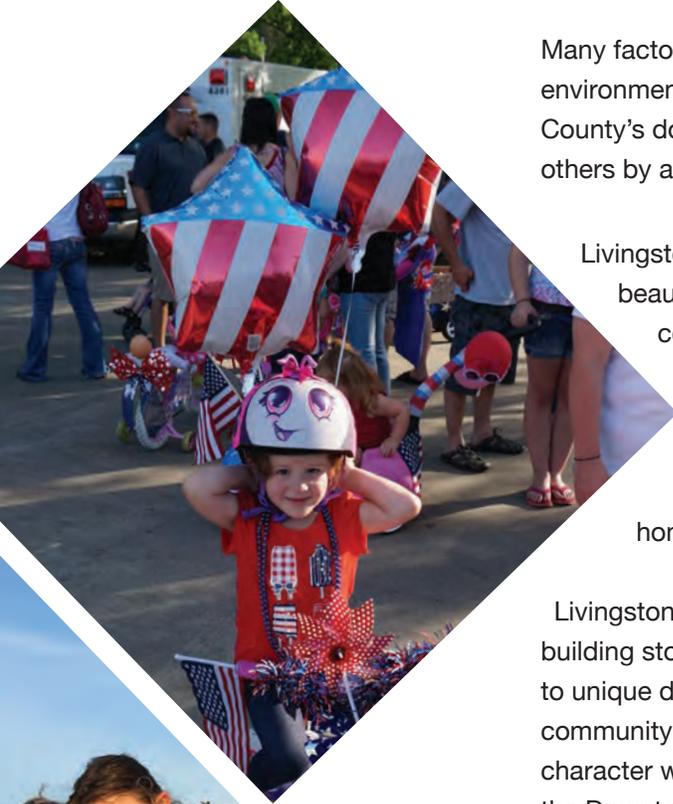
## **PROJECTS INITIATED SO FAR IN 2016 ARE EXPECTED TO CREATE OVER 130 JOBS.**

Improvements to County Industrial Parks are leading to more focused and aggressive marketing efforts. The county is working on several projects including the creation of a new agribusiness park on the north end of

the County and retail development on the south end of the county. A business plan competition is in the works which will result in the creation of a Livingston County Craft Brewing Trail. The County is planning for a Small Grains Center which will help meet the demand of craft breweries, distilleries, and bakeries throughout the region. The feasibility of a public market is being explored. There is certainly no lack of activity when it comes to business attraction, creation, expansion and retention in the county.

## Section 6 - Attractiveness of the Downtown

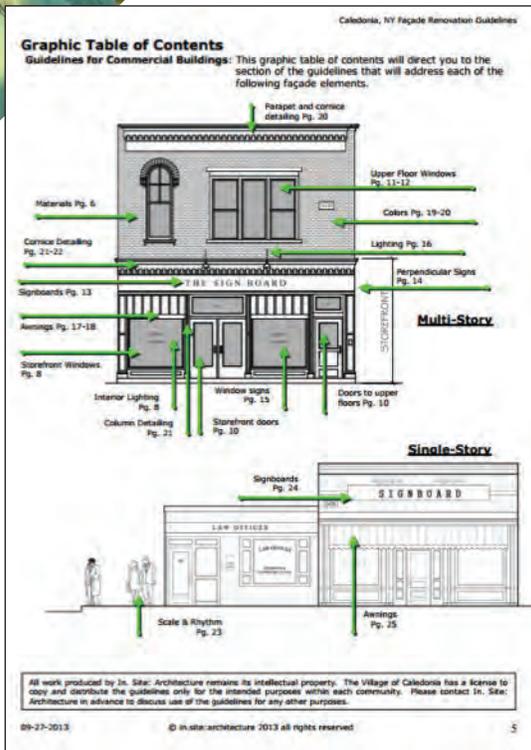
# A Stronger Community



Many factors contribute to the livability of a place including attractiveness of the environment, perception of safety, and access to amenities. Each of Livingston County's downtowns can offer these essentials and each is connected to the others by a variety of remarkable public places.

Livingston County is nestled in the heart of the Genesee River Valley in the beautiful Finger Lakes Region of upstate New York. A predominantly rural county, Livingston is home to ample waterfront, trails, and entrances to two state parks. Residents enjoy four seasons with plenty to do year-round including hiking, biking, whitewater rafting, kayaking, horseback riding, snowmobiling and cross-country skiing. In addition to great recreation, Livingston County has excellent schools, affordable homes, a hospital, accessible public services, and no congestion.

Livingston County's nine villages boast intact downtown districts with a historic building stock. Our villages serve as community gathering places and are home to unique dining experiences, charming shops, and countless festivals and community events. Livingston County's nine downtown districts each have unique character which contributes greatly to sense of place and quality of life. Through the Downtown Partnership, each community has developed and adopted design guidelines to advise renovations when rehabilitating historic storefronts in a designated downtown district.



Façade guidelines are intended to aid owners of buildings undergoing façade renovations, in contributing to the creation of a vibrant, safe, and pedestrian-friendly downtown. Façade elements such as signs, colors, lighting, awnings, windows and doors, siding materials, and detailing all make a significant contribution to the character and identity of the street. Not only can guidelines help building owners with design decisions, they also can be used to highlight and enhance existing characteristics of Livingston County's Downtowns.

Requiring compliance with design guidelines for all buildings receiving grant funding has proven to be extremely beneficial. In addition to preserving our history, the transformations that have taken place in our downtowns have helped to attract businesses, visitors, residents, and additional renovations.

# IMPORTANCE OF FAÇADE GUIDELINES



**WHILE OVER \$7 MILLION HAS BEEN INVESTED IN 120 DOWNTOWN BUILDINGS THROUGH DOWNTOWN PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMS, THIS IS ONLY 20% OF OUR DOWNTOWN BUILDINGS.**

Much work remains to be done and much potential exists, especially in vacant upper floors. The Downtown Partnership has aided in the improvement or creation of 82 downtown apartments and each time one is completed, they have been immediately rented. We have estimated that more than 50% of our downtown building stock is undeveloped or underutilized. The potential is significant.

There are several plans in place which will contribute to the livability of Livingston's downtowns as they implement initiatives in healthy living, food awareness, transportation, recreational assets, accessible art, broadband access and more:

- Livingston County Economic Development Strategic Plan (2016)
- Livingston County Community Revitalization Plan (2015)
- Livingston County Transportation Connectivity Plan (2015)
- Livingston County Community Cultural Plan (2015)
- Livingston County Community Health Assessment (2013)
- Livingston County Community Health Snapshot (2013)
- Livingston County Department of Health Community Health Improvement Plan (2013)
- Livingston County Department of Health Strategic Plan (2011-2014)
- Livingston County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan (2006)

# Section 7 - Policies Promoting Quality of Life

The creation of the Downtown Partnership, a county-wide program staffed by a full-time downtown coordinator, has leveraged resources making revitalization programming possible in Livingston's villages and helping to bring educational and financial resources to building and business owners.

**THE MISSION OF THE DOWNTOWN PARTNERSHIP IS TO PROMOTE AND ENHANCE THE UNIQUE, AUTHENTIC, AND VIBRANT COMMUNITIES OF LIVINGSTON COUNTY. THE PARTNERSHIP HAS A DEMONSTRATED TRACK RECORD OF IMPLEMENTING POLICIES TO SUCCESSFULLY FURTHER THEIR MISSION.**

The Downtown Partnership further provides tremendous opportunity to adopt and

implement forward-looking policies across municipal lines, thereby increasing their overall effectiveness. For example, Livingston County is one of only two counties in the state of New York that offers tax exemption for mixed-use properties through section 485-n of the Real Property Tax Law (RPTL). This law authorizes the governing body of any town or village in Livingston County to adopt a local law offering a partial tax exemption from town taxes and town special ad valorem levies or from village taxes, to properties that are converted, created, modernized, rehabilitated, expanded, or otherwise improved for commercial and mixed residential and commercial uses.

Additionally, Livingston County Development and the Downtown Partnership have implemented design guidelines utilized by each participating village when property owners receive grant assistance through the Main Street Sign and Façade Program.

The Downtown Partnership is in the process of creating an even better organizational structure for policy and project implementation. We've submitted a funding application to support a Regional Main Street Program Manager who would work directly

on behalf of Mount Morris, Geneseo, and the Village of Perry in Wyoming County. The Program Manager would be under the umbrella of the existing Downtown Coordinator and the Downtown Partnership. If this model works as anticipated, it can and will be replicated with dedicated staff serving the other villages by geography allowing for more hands-on project and policy implementation.

The timing really could not be better for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative as Livingston County has the leadership, strong desire, and organizational infrastructure to implement creative, forward-thinking policies. Another policy measure that Livingston County and the Downtown Partnership are looking at is the formation of a Land Bank.

There are numerous buildings throughout the villages, including the seven (7) under-utilized properties featured in this plan, which would be prime candidates for redevelopment through a land bank or similar entity. The planning and technical assistance available through the DRI would help ensure that the creation of a Land Bank, and the development of other new policy initiatives, will be efficient, and designed in the best manner to propel Livingston's downtowns forward.

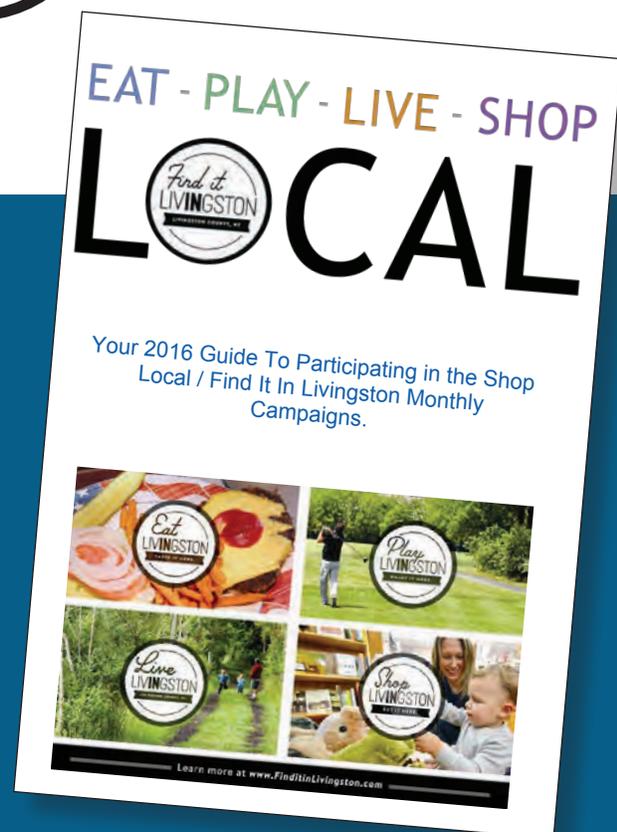


# Find it in Livingston



The Find It In Livingston program's focus is to promote the value of shopping locally. The program also provides our businesses and community organizations with opportunities to further promote themselves while engaging our county as a whole.

**Visit [www.FindItInLivingston.com](http://www.FindItInLivingston.com) to learn more.**



## Section 8 - Poverty Reduction

*An active downtown increases local pride and creates a positive image of the region*

According to the New York State Department of Labor, unemployment rates by county in March of 2016 were higher among rural counties than urban counties. Poverty is as much a rural issue as it is an urban issue.

The Census Bureau's most recent American Community Survey (ACS) notes that 14.7% of the population in Livingston County has an income below the poverty level and 9.9% of families are below the poverty level; that number jumps to a staggering 33.8% when looking at female head of household families. The 2010 Census reported that 24,409 out of 27,123 housing units were occupied; this is a vacancy rate of 10%. Of those occupied units, 26.9% are renter occupied. The ACS shows that 56.1% of renters pay more than 30% of their income for rent.

These are astounding numbers, and an issue that Livingston County renters are faced with monthly. Not only are residents lacking in affordable housing options, but the housing stock is aged. The ACS shows 34.8% of residential structures in the county were built before 1939. Most of the downtown buildings are much older. Homes/apartments of this age require costly upgrades and renovations to maintain safe and quality conditions.

Efforts of the Livingston County Downtown Partnership have helped to renovate more than 80 downtown apartments. These units are reasonably priced and regularly rented. The real need is to create additional units by bringing vacant upper

floor space back into use. In addition to adding available affordable housing options, creating residential units in previously vacant space is necessary for the integrity of these buildings. Vacant, unmonitored space leads to issues that can compromise the entire building. Renovating upper floors to house residential units will benefit the community by adding affordable housing options downtown, creating rental income for building owners to offset the costs of maintaining their building, creating a welcoming atmosphere that is lived in and watched over, and supplying feet on the street which support businesses and create the appearance of an active downtown.

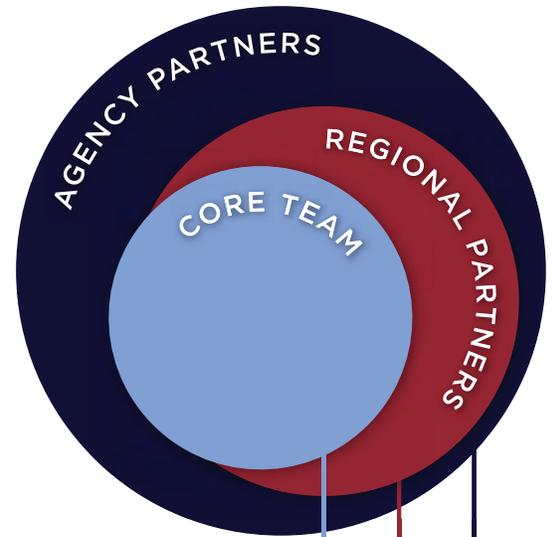
An active downtown increases local pride and creates a positive image of the region. Downtown revitalization stimulates new private investment and helps attract industrial development and potential investors. By revitalizing out downtowns we are addressing barriers for people impacted by poverty by offering affordable residential options in walking distance to goods and services, public transportation and jobs. Revitalizing our downtowns also makes Livingston County a more attractive place to live, work, and play, which can in turn attract new residents, industry and visitors, all helping to add to the local tax base and create further employment opportunities.



# Section 9 - Local Support

The Livingston County Downtown Partnership was created by and continues to be supported financially by the Livingston County Board of Supervisors. The Livingston County Board of Supervisors consists of 17 town supervisors who are elected officials. Each of the nine villages in Livingston County pays annually for membership in the Downtown Partnership. These financial investments clearly illustrate the commitment among local leaders to supporting and furthering downtown revitalization in Livingston County.

The Downtown Coordinator is a position dedicated to the businesses and communities within the Downtown Partnership. The Downtown Coordinator administers grant and loan programs for business assistance and building improvements. The Partnership maintains an inventory of buildings and businesses in the downtown district, an inventory of available space in the downtown district, and a mailing list of all building and business owners. As an advocate for Livingston County's downtowns, the Downtown Coordinator regularly works with business owners and community leaders in each of the downtowns to implement programming, assist with integrated marketing, and recruit new businesses. Livingston County's Downtown Coordinator would be the local lead responsible for convening a local Downtown Revitalization Initiative Planning Committee.



- Livingston County Board of Supervisors
- 9 Villages of Livingston County
- Livingston County Industrial Development Agency
- Livingston County Development Corporation
- Livingston County Planning Department
- Livingston County Workforce Development
- Livingston County Business Education Alliance
- Livingston County Area Chamber of Commerce and Tourism

CORE TEAM

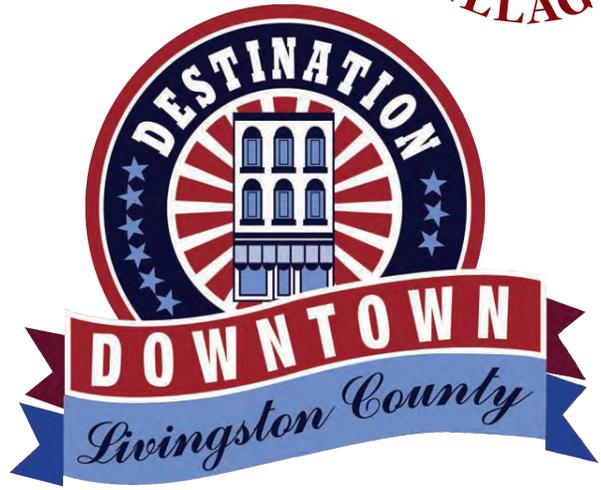
- Genesee Community College
- SUNY Geneseo
- Small Business Development Center
- Cornell Cooperative Extension
- Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development Council
- Genesee/Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council
- Greater Rochester Enterprise
- Genesee, Livingston, Orleans, Wyoming Workforce Investment Board
- Genesee Valley Educational Partnership

REGIONAL PARTNERS

- Empire State Development Corporation
- NYS Office of Community Renewal
- NYS Department of State

AGENCY PARTNERS





**Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) Region:** Finger Lakes  
**Municipality Name:** Livingston County  
**Downtown Name:** Downtown Partnership of Livingston County  
**Contact:** William Bacon, Director, Livingston County Development  
 585-243-7124 – [wbacon@co.livingston.ny.us](mailto:wbacon@co.livingston.ny.us)





May 31, 2016

Mr. Vincent Esposito, Director  
Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development Council  
400 Andrews Street, Suite 300  
Rochester, NY 14604

Dear Mr. Esposito,

As contributing members of the Downtown Partnership, we are writing in support of Livingston County's application for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) in the Finger Lakes Region.

Nine Livingston County villages make up the membership of the Downtown Partnership, a comprehensive countywide program that works to promote and enhance the unique, authentic, and vibrant communities of Livingston County. The Downtown Partnership has leveraged resources making revitalization programming possible in our small communities and has helped to bring educational and financial resources to our building and business owners.

Here in Livingston County we are dedicated to the philosophy that we are stronger together than we are alone. DRI investment in Livingston County's Downtown Partnership communities will result in a greater impact and more leveraged private investment than could be realized in a single community alone. I urge you to consider Livingston County's track record in downtown revitalization and invest in this innovative initiative.

Handwritten signature of Thomas W. Freeman in black ink.

Mayor Thomas W. Freeman  
Village of Avon

Handwritten signature of Deborah Davis in black ink.

Mayor Deborah Davis  
Village of Caledonia

Handwritten signature of Peter Vogt in blue ink.

Mayor Peter Vogt  
Village of Dansville

Handwritten signature of Richard B. Hatheway in black ink.

Mayor Richard Hatheway  
Village of Geneseo

Handwritten signature of Barry Briffa in black ink.

Mayor Barry Briffa  
Village of Leicester

Handwritten signature of Carl Luft in black ink.

Mayor Carl Luft  
Village of Lima

Handwritten signature of Calvin Lathan in black ink.

Mayor Calvin Lathan  
Village of Livonia

Handwritten signature of Joel Mike in black ink.

Mayor Joel Mike  
Village of Mount Morris

Handwritten signature of Robert Cox in black ink.

Mayor Robert Cox  
Village of Nunda

THE SENATE  
STATE OF NEW YORK



CATHARINE M. YOUNG  
SENATOR  
57TH DISTRICT

**CHAIR**  
FINANCE

**STANDING COMMITTEES**  
AGRICULTURE  
CHILDREN & FAMILIES  
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION  
HEALTH  
HOUSING  
TRANSPORTATION

ALBANY OFFICE  
ROOM 428  
STATE CAPITOL  
ALBANY NEW YORK 12247  
(518) 455-3563  
FAX (518) 426-6905  
DISTRICT OFFICE  
WESTGATE PLAZA  
700 W STATE STREET  
OLEAN NEW YORK 14760  
(716) 372-4981  
FAX (716) 372-5740  
1-800-707-0058

June 10, 2016

Mr. Vincent Esposito, Director  
Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development Council  
400 Andrews Street, Suite 300  
Rochester, New York 14604

Dear Mr. Esposito,

I am writing in support of funding for Livingston County's application for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI). Through the efforts of Livingston County's Downtown Partnership Program and its nine participating Villages, this grant funding, in the amount of \$10,000,000, will help support their mission to further promote and enhance the unique, authentic and vibrant communities in Livingston County.

Livingston County initiated the DRI Program in 2003, and has been acknowledged as a leader in New York State's downtown revitalization. Having personally visited these nine participating Villages, it is evident that these downtown areas are no longer desolate and blighted. There is a sense of pride in each community and they continue to attract those from near and far. Moreover, the County has estimated progress at 15-20% in each of the downtowns.

Livingston County's Downtown Partnership is the only comprehensive countywide program of its kind in the State. By working together, this partnership between the nine downtown districts has leveraged more than \$7 million in public and private investments, improving business climate, providing housing options and creating a sense of place in each community.

Livingston County was recently presented with the inaugural Excellence in Community-Based Economic Development award at the New York State Economic Development Council's 2016 Annual Meeting, as recognition for their hard work and dedication.

This funding will help support Livingston County's desire to continue to make a transformational impact in our rural communities, building upon their replicable model for downtown revitalization and piloting the next phase of their countywide approach.





June 8, 2016

Bill Bacon  
Livingston County Economic Development Office  
6 Court St., Room 306  
Geneseo, NY 14454

Dear Bill:

On behalf of the Livingston County Area Chamber of Commerce, I am writing to share our enthusiastic support of the Livingston County Development Corporation's Downtown Revitalization Initiative application.

The unique approach that your office is taking, to include all nine villages in Livingston County, will certainly serve to benefit our county as a whole. Each village in this county has its own unique characteristics, industries and culture; to have a \$10million influx into all of these communities will be truly transformational for Livingston County.

The Livingston County Area Chamber of Commerce applauds your efforts to secure this important funding opportunity for the nine villages in Livingston County. We looking forward to working with your office to make this important project a reality.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Laura Lane". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Laura Lane  
President & CEO

THE SENATE  
STATE OF NEW YORK  
SENATOR PATRICK M. GALLIVAN  
59TH DISTRICT

June 6, 2016

Mr. Vincent Esposito, Director  
Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development Council  
400 Andrews Street, Suite 300  
Rochester, NY 14604

Dear Mr. Esposito:

I am writing to express Livingston County's intent to apply for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) in the Finger Lakes Region. It is my belief that the award can be best leveraged through the cohesive efforts of Livingston County's Downtown Partnership and its nine participating villages.

Livingston County initiated a Downtown Revitalization Program in 2003 and has since been acknowledged as a leader in downtown revitalization in New York State, most recently being presented the inaugural Excellence in Community-Based Economic Development award at the New York State Economic Development Council's 2016 Annual Meeting in Cooperstown.

The Downtown Partnership is the only comprehensive countywide program of its kind in the state. The program has created a workable connection between all nine Livingston County downtown districts and has leveraged more than \$7 million in public and private investment to improve the business climate, housing options, and sense of place in our community.

While the Downtown Partnership has certainly seen success, their planning efforts have consistently pointed to a continuation of the downtown revitalization efforts as a primary community development objective. Next steps and additional programming have been identified and are ripe for investment. A DRI award could build upon their replicable model for downtown revitalization in rural communities, and pilot the next phase of the countywide approach. I believe the application as a county will have a highly visible impact, spur a larger share of private investment, and overall provide a greater benefit to the state and region.

Thank you for your consideration. Feel free to call my District Office, should you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Patrick M. Gallivan  
Senator - 59<sup>th</sup> District

# GENESEO

Office of the President



1 College Circle, Doty Hall 310  
Geneseo, New York 14454-1450

June 9, 2016

Mr. Vincent Esposito, Director  
Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development Council  
400 Andrews Street, Suite 300  
Rochester, NY 14604

Dear Mr. Esposito,

SUNY Geneseo shares a history of mutually beneficial cooperation with Livingston County and the Village of Geneseo that dates back to 1871, when the Village raised funds to found the Wadsworth Normal and Training School. That School, with its campus contiguous to Downtown Geneseo, evolved into present-day SUNY Geneseo.

Continuing with the tradition of College-County-Village cooperation, I am writing to communicate SUNY Geneseo's support of the Livingston County Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) that will leverage the ongoing Downtown Partnership of the county's nine participating villages, including the Village of Geneseo. The County's DRI will benefit not only members of the County and Village, but also our students, faculty and staff.

Livingston County has cooperated with the College by working closely with our Institute for Community Well Being on a number of initiatives, supporting interns who work on downtown development through the Livingston County Development Office, and promoting the Finger Lakes Opera, an annual campus event and tourist attraction. The County launched the "Adopt a Business" program, which pairs SUNY Geneseo students with small businesses in Geneseo, Mount Morris, and Dansville to collaborate on social media accounts and enhance marketing. Students and merchants work together to build awareness and drive in-store sales.

Currently the College supports the County through the "Find it in Livingston" campaign that encourages members of our community to make purchases within Livingston County and patronize local businesses. The campaign is based on a collaborative College-County consumer spending outflow study completed in 2010 that found that approximately \$600 million annually was being spent on consumer purchases outside the County.

Livingston County's Economic Development Strategic Plan identified business development as a key economic development strategy, and the County has worked with the College to support entrepreneurship projects, including the establishment of VentureWorks, SUNY Geneseo's very successful entrepreneurship program.

Livingston County's Downtown Partnership is the only countywide program of its kind in the state. Its connection of nine downtown districts, which have leveraged more than \$7 million in public and private investment to improve the business climate, housing options, and sense of place, has already made our campus more attractive to current and prospective students. An award for the partnership DRI application will spur a large share of private investment in nine downtowns and provide a much needed boost to the economy of this rural county in the Finger Lakes Region. Thank you for considering this worthy program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Denise A. Battles".

Denise A. Battles, President

Phone | 585.245.5501

Fax | 585.245.5555

Web | [president.geneseo.edu](http://president.geneseo.edu)

Livingston County Board of Supervisors  
Geneseo, New York



Resolution No. 2016-183

**SUPPORTING THE DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE APPLICATION OF THE  
LIVINGSTON COUNTY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

WHEREAS, the Livingston County Development Corporation has designated nine (9) downtown areas located within their corresponding Villages; and

WHEREAS, a Downtown Coordinator has been on staff for 7 years administering NY Main Street Program grants and Sign & Façade Improvement Program grants utilizing a comprehensive list of property and business owners; and

WHEREAS, each of the nine (9) Villages has adopted design guidelines in accordance with the grant funding requirements and to enhance the community's unique heritage and character for their downtown district; and

WHEREAS, administration of the NY Main Street Grant Program has completed rehabilitation of 74 buildings creating 82 residential units and 105 commercial units leveraging \$3,538,784 of private investment to create a total investment of \$6,252,784; and

WHEREAS, over 100 sign and façade improvement projects have been completed to-date leveraging \$647,419 of private investment to create a total investment of \$947,885; and

WHEREAS, the Livingston County Development Corporation will be submitting a new Downtown Revitalization Initiative Application; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Livingston County Board of Supervisors hereby supports the Downtown Revitalization Initiative Application to be submitted by the Livingston County Development Corporation.

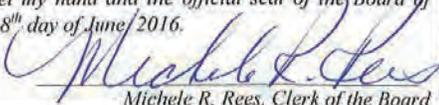
Dated at Geneseo, New York  
June 8, 2016

Public Services Committee



*This is to Certify that I, the undersigned, Clerk of the Board of Supervisors of the County of Livingston, have compared the foregoing copy of resolution with the original resolution now on file in this office and which was duly adopted by the Board of Supervisors of said County on the 8<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2016 and that the same is a true and correct transcript of said resolution and of the whole thereof.*

*In Witness Whereof I have hereunto set my hand and the official seal of the Board of Supervisors of the County of Livingston, this 8<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2016.*

  
Michele R. Rees, Clerk of the Board



LIVINGSTON COUNTY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION  
LIVINGSTON COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER  
6 COURT STREET, ROOM 306  
GENESEO, NEW YORK 14454-1043

PHONE: 585-243-7124  
EMAIL: INFO@LIVINGSTONCOUNTYDEVELOPMENT.COM

**RESOLUTION**  
**APPROVAL TO PROCEED WITH THE DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE APPLICATION**

Motion By: Pete Yendell  
Seconded By: Eric Gott

WHEREAS, Livingston County Development Corporation has designated nine (9) downtown areas located within their corresponding Village; and

WHEREAS, a Downtown Coordinator has been on staff for 7 years administering NY Main Street Program grants and Sign & Façade Improvement Program grants utilizing a comprehensive list of property and business owners; and

WHEREAS, each of the nine (9) Villages has adopted design guidelines established for compliance in accordance with the grant funding and to enhance the community's unique heritage and character for their downtown district; and

WHEREAS, Livingston County has adopted a 485N property tax abatement program providing exemptions on improvements to buildings, phased in over a 12-year period; and

WHEREAS, administration of the NY Main Street Grant Program has completed rehabilitation of 74 buildings creating 82 residential units and 105 commercial units leveraging \$3,538,784 of private investment to create a total investment of \$6,252,784; and

WHEREAS, over 100 sign and façade improvement projects have been completed to-date leveraging \$647,419 of private investment to create a total investment of \$947,885; and

WHEREAS, participation from SUNY Geneseo and the Livingston County Chamber of Commerce assist with the administration of a Buy Local Campaign, Entrepreneurship Training and general advocacy for the business owners in each of these designated areas; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Livingston County Development Corporation hereby supports the application for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative ("D.R.I."); and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Livingston County Development Corporation hereby supports the submittal by Livingston County as the applicant.

Passed by the following vote of all Livingston County Development Corporation Board Members voting in favor thereof:

Affirmative: 5  
Negative: 0  
Abstain: 0

I, William E. Bacon, do hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was passed at a meeting of the Livingston County Development Corporation Board held on June 2, 2016, and is incorporated in the original minutes of said meeting, and that said resolution has not been altered, amended or revoked and is in full force and effect.

Dated at Geneseo, NY  
June 2, 2016