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Sign, facade grant program returns

By MATTHEW LEADER
MATT@LIVINGSTONNEWS.COM
PUBLISHED: TUESDAY, JANUARY 5, 2016 AT 11:01 AM

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The Finders Keepers thrift store in Mount Morris before receiving a grant from Livingston County Development to improve its outer signage and facade.

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Through its Downtown Partnership arm, Livingston County Development recently announced a new round of its popular sign and facade improvement grants for local businesses looking to spruce up their storefronts.

Businesses located in the downtown districts of Avon, Caledonia, Dansville, Geneseo, Leicester, Lima, Livonia, Mount Morris and Nunda are eligible to receive reimbursement grants of up to \$5,000.

The grant requires at least a 50 percent match from the business or building owner, though any size project – anything from a new sign or door to painting a structure's entire façade – will be considered.

"We're looking for projects that are transformative for the downtown district," said Louise Wadsworth, Livingston County Development's downtown coordinator. "A carved perpendicular sign, a colorful awning or additional lighting can transform the impression a storefront makes on the pedestrian and has been proven to impact sales and traffic in the downtown."

Livingston County is widely recognized as a leader in downtown revitalization in New York.

By utilizing a variety of different revitalization programs and incentives, more than \$7.2 million in private and public funds have been invested in more than 174 properties in the county's downtown districts in the past five years.

During the 2015 round of funding alone, 15 Sign and Façade Improvement projects were completed in eight of the county's downtowns with a total investment of more than \$178,500, about \$130,000 of it private.

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Applications for the Sign and Façade Improvement program will be accepted on a rolling basis from January through September 2016. Once awarded, projects must be completed within 90 days. Applications and complete program guidelines can be found at: www.livingstoncountydevelopment.com or by contacting Louise Wadsworth at (585) 243-7124.

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