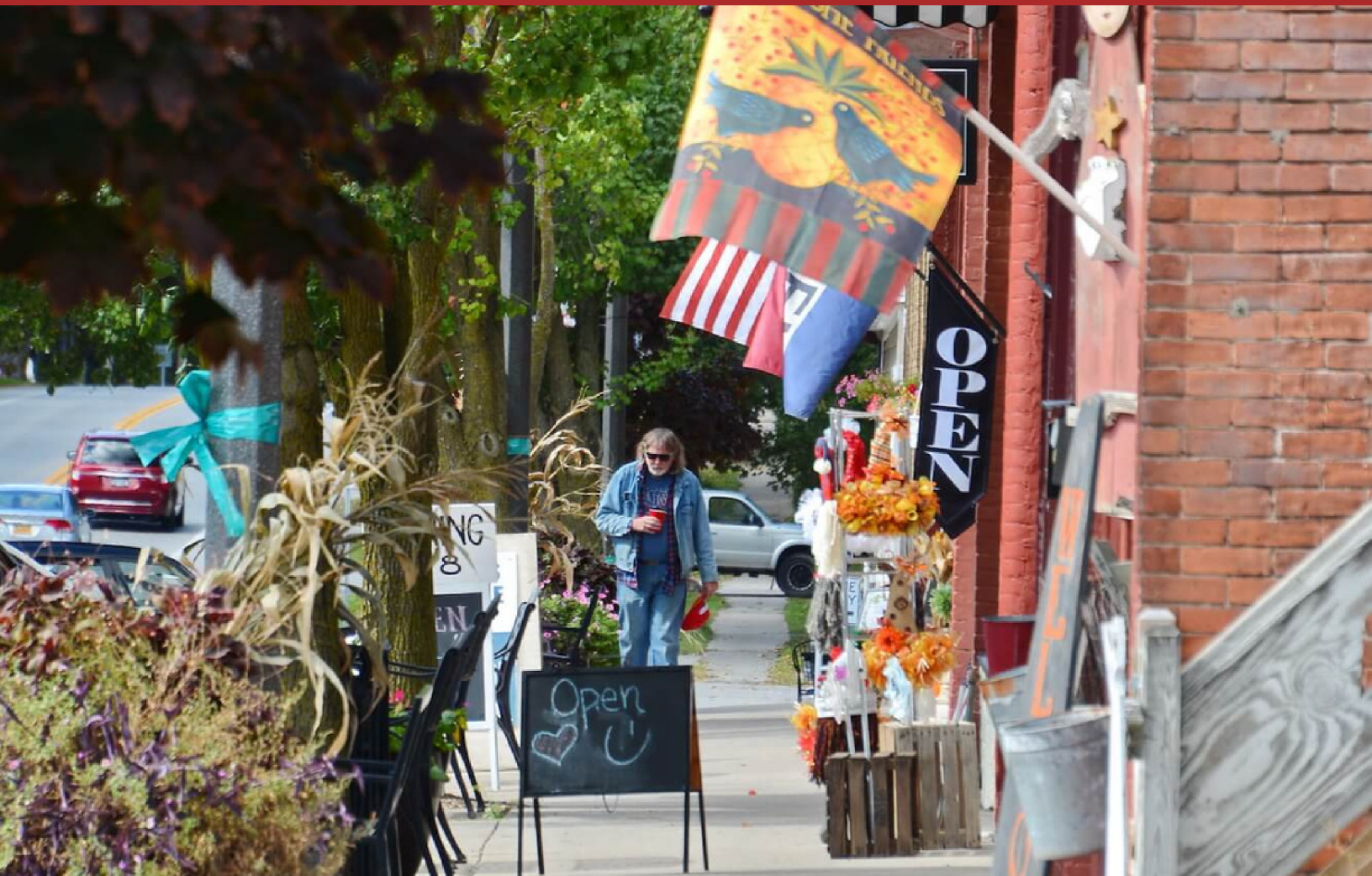




First Impressions Program



2024 Program Guidelines & Application

You never get a second chance to make a first impression!

First Impressions Program

Opening Date:	Start accepting applications on March 4, 2024
Submission:	Applications are accepted on a rolling basis
Project Deadline:	Projects must be completed by November 15, 2024
Maximum Request:	\$5,000

Purpose

The First Impressions Program funds projects that promote a lasting and genuine first impression of Livingston County's communities and businesses. The program contributes to creating a sense of place for residents, businesses, and visitors along with driving the economy for future success. This program focuses on funding one of three services: sign and facade, digital, and design. Eligible businesses must have a physical location within Livingston County and be open for at least 20 hours/week.

Program Description

The First Impressions Program provides reimbursement for several types of projects including:

- 1. DOWNTOWN SIGN & FACADE:** Signage, interior or exterior lighting, or façade improvements for **new businesses located in one of Livingston County's nine designated downtown districts.** Reimbursement up to 50% not to exceed \$5,000 for any individual project. This program is not intended to fund general maintenance projects.
 - Eligible activities include:
 - Awnings, exterior lighting including architectural, pathway, and signage, interior display lighting, cleaning and repointing of brick, replacement or repair of windows, doors, paint, etc. may be eligible as part of an overall façade rehab
 - Wall signs, perpendicular signs, awning lettering, window lettering, free standing signs (such as sandwich board or A-frame signs)
 - Tenants must provide written acknowledgment from the building owner if their application involves renovations to the building.

2. **TOURISM SIGN & FACADE:** Signage, interior or exterior lighting, or façade improvements for **tourism businesses* located in any town or village in Livingston County**. Reimbursement up to 50% not to exceed \$5,000 for any individual project. This program is not intended to fund general maintenance projects.
 - Eligible activities include:
 - Awnings, exterior lighting including architectural, pathway, and signage, interior display lighting, cleaning and repointing of brick, replacement or repair of windows, doors, paint, etc. may be eligible as part of an overall façade rehab
 - Wall signs, perpendicular signs, awning lettering, window lettering, free standing signs (such as sandwich board or A-frame signs)
 - Tenants must provide written acknowledgment from the building owner if their application involves renovations to the building.

3. **DIGITAL:** Professional digital first impressions for **tourism businesses* located in any town or village in Livingston County**. Reimbursement up to 80% not to exceed \$5,000 for any individual project.
 - Eligible activities include:
 - Website creation and design services, product photography, copywriting, SEO or keyword services, branding, or e-commerce setup

4. **DESIGN:** Professional architectural renderings or logo/visual identity development for **tourism businesses* located in any town or village in Livingston County**. Reimbursement up to 100%, not to exceed \$1,500 for any individual project.

5. **DESIGN:** Professional architectural renderings for **buildings located in one of Livingston County's nine designated downtown districts**. Reimbursement up to 100%, not to exceed \$1,500 for any individual project.

Projects undertaken prior to receiving formal approval will not be eligible for funding. If project funding is awarded the final scope of work must be approved by Livingston County Development Corporation (LCDC) before the project can begin. For a project located in a downtown district, all improvements must follow the **Livingston County Downtown Design Guidelines** to ensure compatibility with the existing Main Street, helping to create a uniform and coordinated streetscape that is attractive and functional.

All applicants must be current on all County, Town, Village and School real property taxes in order to be eligible to participate. If an applicant has previously received First Impressions funding, that project must be complete prior to applying again.

Depending on your scope of work, you may need to apply to the Village or Town for a building permit. If your project includes any signage, you will need to apply to the Village or Town for a signage permit. While permits do not need to be submitted with your First Impressions Program application, they must be in place before any work can begin.

**Tourism businesses include businesses focused on visitor-focused retail, food and drink, entertainment, or accommodation. The business must consistently draw visitors from outside of Livingston County.*

Project Deadline

Approved projects must be completed **no later than November 15, 2024**.

Application Review

Applicants will be notified of funding decisions within 30 days of application. If an application is denied, the Livingston County Economic Development Office will notify the applicant and specify the reason for disapproval. Approved projects will receive a written commitment letter detailing any supplemental information needed. The Downtown Coordinator will meet with the applicant to review the proposed project and confirm the scope of work prior to executing a grant agreement. Once a grant agreement is in place, the project can begin. **Approved projects must be started within 30 days of entering into a grant agreement, and completed by November 15, 2024.**

Reimbursement Procedures

Funds shall not be provided in advance of construction, project completion or full payment for the project by the grant recipient. Once the applicant provides verification that the work has been completed and that all vendors have been paid in full, reimbursement will be processed. Applicants must document project expenditures and the required match to receive reimbursement. Proof of payment to the contractor/vendor is required in the form of an invoice and canceled check or credit card statement. **Cash payments are not an acceptable form of payment and cannot be reimbursed.** The LCDC will only reimburse those costs deemed to be reasonable and appropriate to complete the project that was approved and agreed to. Personal labor by the business or property owner is not a reimbursable project cost.

Application Submission

Applications and all attachments can be submitted electronically to **lwadsworth@co.livingston.ny.us** or in person/by mail to Livingston County Economic Development, 6 Court Street, Room 306, Geneseo, NY 14454.

All questions regarding this program should be submitted via email to **lwadsworth@co.livingston.ny.us** with the subject "First Impressions".

Section 1: Applicant & Business Information

Applicant Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Preferred Phone: _____

Preferred Email: _____

Business Name: _____

Business Address: _____

Ownership: Sole Proprietorship Partnership Corporation LLC LLP

Year Formed: _____

State Formed: _____

Applicant is: Building Owner Tenant Other:

Location of proposed project: _____

Brief description of business: (If a tourism business, specify category: visitor-focused retail, food and drink, entertainment, or accommodation and describe how the business consistently draws visitors from outside of Livingston County.)

List all owners with a 20% interest or more (attach additional pages if needed):

Owner	Position	% Interest

Is the company or any owner delinquent in the payment of any property tax? Yes No

Is the company or any owner delinquent in the payment of any income tax? Yes No

Is the company or any owner delinquent in the payment of any loans? Yes No

Is the company or any owner currently in default on any of its loans? Yes No

Are there currently any unsatisfied judgments against any of the company's principals? Yes No

Have any of the company's principals ever personally filed for bankruptcy or in any way sought protection from creditors? Yes No

Are any of the company's principals delinquent in the payment of any child support? Yes No

If this is a current business, are there currently any unsatisfied judgments against the company? Yes No

If this is a current business, has the company ever filed for bankruptcy? Yes No

If this is a current business, are you delinquent or have you been delinquent in the past 12 months in the payment of your sales tax? Yes No

**If the answer to any of the questions above is "yes", please attach an additional page to explain.*

Section 2: Project Description

Proposed project includes:

SIGN & FACADE:

- _ Signage: Wall sign
- _ Signage: Perpendicular sign
- _ Signage: Awning lettering
- _ Signage: Window lettering
- _ Signage: Freestanding sign/A-frame sign
- _ Façade: Cleaning and/or repointing of brick
- _ Façade: Repair or replacement of windows
- _ Façade: Repair or replacement of doors
- _ Façade: Painting
- _ Façade: Awnings
- _ Exterior lighting: architectural lighting
- _ Exterior lighting: pathway lighting
- _ Exterior lighting: signage lighting
- _ Interior lighting: display lighting

DIGITAL:

- _ Digital: Professional website creation and/or design services
- _ Digital: Professional branding
- _ Digital: Professional product photography
- _ Digital: Professional copywriting
- _ Digital: Professional SEO or keyword services
- _ Digital: Professional e-commerce set up

DESIGN:

- _ Design: Professional architectural renderings
- _ Design: Professional logo/visual identity development

Explain the proposed project, detailing the proposed scope of work in detail (quotes and/or renderings must be included for work to be performed).

How will the proposed project improve the first impression of your business or community and help to attract new customers and visitors to you?

Describe the anticipated impact that the project will have on your business and/or community.

Section 3: Project Cost

First Impressions requires at least two cost estimates to be submitted for all work to be completed. Please list all work to be completed in the table below, and indicate to total of each estimate. The lowest estimate should be used to compile your total project cost and grant request.

If you are proposing a Design and/or Digital First Impression Project, contact Louise Wadsworth, Downtown Coordinator, before obtaining quotes.

Work to be completed:	Estimate #1	Estimate #2	Lowest Estimate
Total Project Cost:			

Section 4: Eligibility Requirements

REQUIRED FOR SIGN & FACADE PROJECTS, IF DIGITAL OR DESIGN PROJECT, SKIP SECTION 4.

1. Are your Village, County, Town and School taxes current?

Yes No

2. Have you contacted your Village or Town to inquire about required permissions, building permits and/or signage permits?

Yes No

If "no" please ensure you do so. While permits do not need to be submitted with your First Impressions Program application, they must be in place before any work can begin.

3. Are proposed improvements in compliance with the **Livingston County Downtown Design Guidelines** (for projects located in a downtown district)?

Yes No

If "no" or "unsure" please contact Louise Wadsworth, Downtown Coordinator PRIOR to applying.

Section 5: Certification

Please read and initial the following statements, indicating that you understand and agree to each:

I am eighteen years of age or older. I have read the program guidelines and application, understand its contents and agree to comply with program requirements.

I hereby certify that to the best of my knowledge, all of the information provided in this application is true and correct. I understand that any willful misstatement of material fact will be grounds for disqualification. Livingston County is hereby authorized to verify any of the above information in any appropriate matter, and to inspect the property prior to grant approval and following work completion.

I understand that any contract for improvements to be paid for, in part, by the Program shall be between the contractor and myself, and that I should not sign any contract for work under this program until authorized to do so in writing. I understand that the grant payment is subject to satisfactory completion of the approved work.

I also understand that Livingston County is not responsible or liable for any breach of contract, faulty workmanship, accident, liability or damage, which might arise from (my/our) relationship with the contractor.

I hereby grant the Livingston County Development Corporation the unrestricted right to use, for any lawful purpose, photographs taken of the property listing herein, which I own and/or for which I have the authority to grant such permission, and to use my name in connection therewith if it so chooses. I release and discharge the LCDC from any and all claims or causes of action arising from the use of such photographs, including, without limitation, claims for libel or invasion of privacy.

Applicant Signature

Date