

Grow Liv Co

NY

2020 ANNUAL REPORT



DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

This certainly wasn't the year I had envisioned. The department started the year riding the momentum of several recent grant announcements including more than \$1.2 million designated for a number of pending projects and concepts including the Livingston County Public Market, a Countywide Wayfinding Master Plan, a Downtown Promotional Brand, and Main Street Technical Assistance. We rolled out the new and improved *First Impressions Program*, scheduled several *Plan, Launch, Grow* entrepreneurship sessions and were in the midst of preparing for the County's inaugural Inspirations Trail. Then, a global pandemic changed the world as we knew it.

We immediately pivoted and refocused all our efforts to be an essential resource for LivCo's business community. We set up a page on our website to provide the vital, continuously-changing information that businesses needed. We rolled out new programs including LivCo Locals, Digital Matching Grants, the Local Business Recovery Loan, and the Small Business Innovation Fund. We provided financial assistance to more than 120 businesses and technical assistance to even more.

The whole experience showed me first-hand how resilient and innovative LivCo is. Not only was I impressed by the way our businesses responded to the challenges they faced, but I was proud of the efforts by our residents and community members in how they reached to support local. The creation of *Livingston County Menus* on Facebook is just one example of how a LivCo resident cared enough to make a difference. The result was two-fold. It supported a restricted restaurant industry and introduced our residents to the many options and variety of choices offered within our County.

As a result of this resiliency, the 2020 fiscal year sales tax receipts actually increased over 2019 by 2.31%! In May, realtor.com named the greater Rochester real estate market as the hottest in the Nation. Letchworth State Park had to close their gates to visitors on more than one occasion this past fall as visitation had reached capacity. And despite the challenges businesses faced, the Economic Development Office experienced over \$30 million of investment into our communities by new and existing employers.

This may not have been the year I imagined but I could not be prouder to lead this amazing team and most importantly, to support this remarkable community of businesses.

Bill Bacon
Director



Staff

Bill Bacon
Director

Maureen Wheeler
Deputy Director

Louise Wadsworth
Downtown Coordinator

Tessa Taylor
Economic Development
Assistant

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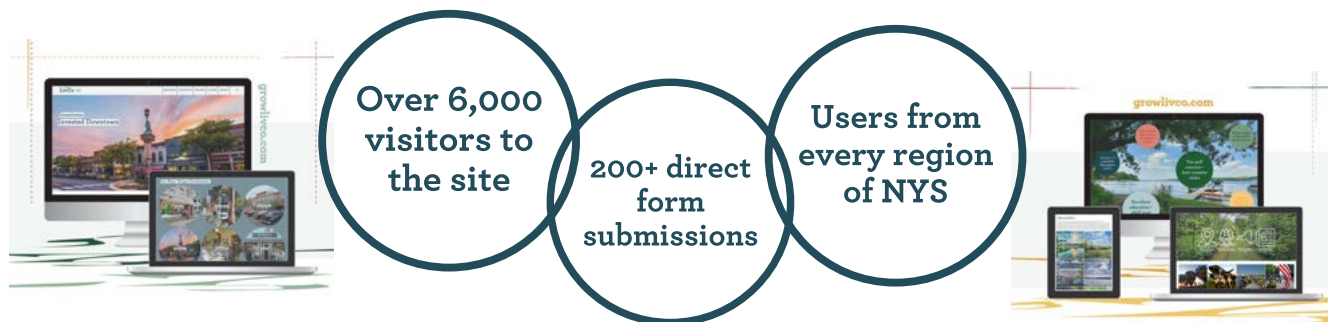
Introducing our new brand...



Our team is committed to finding innovative ways to ensure the success of the Livingston County business community for years to come. To support these efforts, this year we unveiled Livingston County Economic Development's new brand, Grow LivCo. Over the course of six months, our team conducted market research, focus groups, and collaborated with experts to create the perfect brand. Grow LivCo represents what we work tirelessly to do: Grow Livingston County using a tailored approach to connect businesses to resources and incentives that stimulate transformative economic growth.

1 Launched New Website at GrowLivCo.com

As part of the rebrand, our team sought out online platforms with creativity and care. From startup grants to business expansions, our desire to support the needs of business owners led to the launch of our new website, GrowLivCo.com.



2 Created Comprehensive Logo Suite

Our initiatives are diverse, focused on enhancing the business community in Livingston County. To ensure our work is recognizable and comprehensive, we created a complete logo suite that encapsulates the essence of the Grow LivCo brand. These logos are used throughout our collateral and stand out amongst other Economic Development offices.



3 Highlighted Our Continued Investment in LivCo

We are committed to our businesses. To highlight our investment in Livingston County, we created "Proudly Invested in LivCo" logos. Businesses can add these logos to their website and collateral to show that they are proud to do business in Livingston County. These businesses can also utilize our new hashtag #GrowLivCo across social media platforms.



How We Helped Our Businesses Recover

Small Business Innovation Fund

Livingston County Economic Development created the Small Business Innovation Fund to help businesses adapt to the changes caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and economic shutdown. The Fund aimed to expand the way businesses interact with their new and prospective customers and encourage grantees to innovate and find adaptations and solutions for conducting business during the pandemic. Businesses that received funding could invest in supplies, training, design, technology, infrastructure and/or furnishings to adapt their operations or business models.

Assisted 16 Businesses
\$66,628.67 in Grants
\$96,277.95 in Match
\$162,906.62 Invested

Digital Matching Grants

To assist businesses that were forced to close in Livingston County due to COVID-19, we offered Digital Matching Grants. The funding aimed to help businesses find ways to reach customers and continue to sell their products during these difficult times. This gave businesses the opportunity to update their website, set up an online store, and adapt their marketing strategy.

Assisted 8 Businesses
\$3,172.67 in Grants

LivCo Locals

LivCo Locals was developed as a campaign to share the unique stories of local community members in Livingston County. It began as a facebook page which quickly grew to more than 1300 followers! We believe that sharing these stories will help support local businesses, develop new connections, and give people another reason to love living in Livingston County.



We told 52 stories in 2020!



How We Helped Our Businesses Recover

Local Business Recovery Fund

Livingston County Economic Development created the Local Business Recovery Fund to assist small businesses in Livingston County that have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Livingston County Local Business Recovery Fund provided loans of no less than \$2,000 and no more than \$10,000 to eligible small business owners for reopening their business located in Livingston County. Funding provided to eligible borrowers had to be used to assist in the reopening of their businesses within 30 days once governmental orders were lifted. Loans were issued with a 48-month term and a 1% interest rate.

Unique Signage for Businesses

To help our businesses communicate with customers, we created "Safety Signs" in a variety of options and colors for businesses to use inside and outside their store. Additionally, we created "Open Signs" each with available white space to customize with business information.



Re-Opening Resources

Livingston County Economic Development worked closely with the State, County, and our local partners at the Chamber of Commerce and Small Business Development Center to share resources with businesses as they were available. During these unprecedented times, Livingston County Economic Development is here for our businesses.



Elevating Industry in LivCo



67
Jobs will be created

\$30,052,000
Will be invested in new or expanding businesses in Livingston County

In 2020, the **Livingston County Industrial Development Agency** closed on **6 projects**. As a result of these projects:

\$2,857,000
Cost to the state and region



\$109,548,223
Benefit to the state and region

Livingston Associates, Inc. – Town of Caledonia

Livingston Associates provides support services to a number of different contracting and material supply firms, along with construction management services. For this particular project, one of the affiliate companies, Power & Construction Group (P&CG) offers significant support to all of the major utilities. This 10,400sf building will provide office staff and warehousing space to the necessary materials required by the utilities for emergency services as well as regular maintenance or replacement. This structure allows P&CG to inventory these products and respond quickly when needed, thereby enhancing service delivery to their customers and by association, the utility's customers.

Industry: Construction
Total Investment: \$904,000
Number of new jobs projected: 21 FTE - (20FT/2PT)
Number of jobs retained: 3 FTE - (2FT/2PT)
Total employment: 24 FTE - (22FT/4PT)

American Rock Salt – Town of Groveland

As one of our largest, privately held businesses, American Rock Salt (ARS) has a significant impact to the economy of Livingston County. As such, ARS maintains a laser-like focus on the safety of their miners and invested \$967,500 in mine safety equipment. The underground communications package provides GPS technology and two-way radios for each worker, providing the whereabouts and ability to talk with one another at all times.

Industry: Mining
Total Investment: \$967,500
Number of new jobs projected: 0
Number of jobs retained: 324 FTE - (324 FT)
Total employment: 324 FTE - (324 FT)

Sunvestment Energy Group NY 64, LLC – Town of Geneseo

Renewable energy projects are finding their way to the forefront of New York State economic development. As the first of many, this project proposed a 2.75MW community solar array located at Lakeville Estates on the corner of Routes 256 and 20A in Geneseo. It has become typical practice to enter into a PILOT Agreement with the developer so that tax revenue can be procured from the project.

It is not unusual that these types of projects will not generate jobs, which is a traditional indicator of economic impact. However, as a targeted industry of the current State Administration, renewable energy and the creation of a tax agreement provides the local municipalities with increased tax revenues while generating sustainable energy for the future.

Industry: Energy
Total Investment: \$4,400,000
Number of new jobs projected: 0
Number of jobs retained: 0
Total employment: 0

Elevating Industry in LivCo

Piranha Milling & Paving, LLC – Avon, NY

One of the newest additions to the James Steele Commerce Park in Avon is Piranha Milling & Paving, a residential, commercial, and heavy highway paving company that also offers excavation work and hauling. The project creates a physical presence in Livingston County for the company with the construction of a 23,400sf building comprised of office and maintenance space. The addition of five (5) new jobs will accompany this project.

In addition, Piranha constructed a 10,000sf building designed as “flex-space,” able to be subdivided and create a mixed-use facility for renters. The use for this type of building is perfect for small service businesses such as landscapers, contractors, and sales organizations that represent various product lines or manufactured items.

Industry: Construction

Total Investment: \$1,947,000

Number of new jobs projected: 5 FTE - (5 FT)

Number of jobs retained: 21.5 FTE - (19 FT/3PT)

Total employment: 26.5 FTE - (24FT/3PT)

Millstone Development Geneseo 1, LLC – Geneseo, NY

The keystone project for the development on the corner of Route 20A and Volunteer Road in Geneseo is the addition of a medical facility providing access to care from physicians and services affiliated with Rochester Regional Health. The 50,000sf structure is part of a larger plan that awaits additional tenants on this 26-acre parcel. The build-out for this area included approximately \$4,000,000 of developer-funded infrastructure including water and sewer service installs as well as roadways which will be dedicated back to the Town.

Rochester Regional Health aims to add 38 new jobs to the existing 14 jobs being relocated to this new building. The state-of-the-art medical facility will provide a significant upgrade to those existing services offered in this area and will bring several new treatments to Livingston County.

Industry: Medical Services

Total Investment: \$10,750,500

Number of new jobs projected: 38 FTE – (38 FT)

Number of jobs retained: 14 FTE – (14 FT)

Total employment: 52 FTE – (52 FT)

Growmark F.S. – Town of York

One key to maintaining a thriving agriculture industry is to have the necessary support businesses here to help it prosper. Agribusiness is a targeted industry for this region and acts as a tremendous resource for our farms. Growmark F.S. offers dry and liquid feed and fertilizer services throughout Livingston and surrounding counties from their location on Route 5 in the Town of York. The \$4,500,000 project increased the existing blending capacity from 800 tons to 5000 tons. It is anticipated that this facility will be the primary locations to service areas to the east and west of Livingston County.

Industry: Agribusiness

Total Investment: \$4,500,000

Number of new jobs projected: 2 FTE - (1FT/2PT)

Number of jobs retained: 15 FTE - (12FT/6PT)

Total employment: 17 FTE - (13FT/8PT)

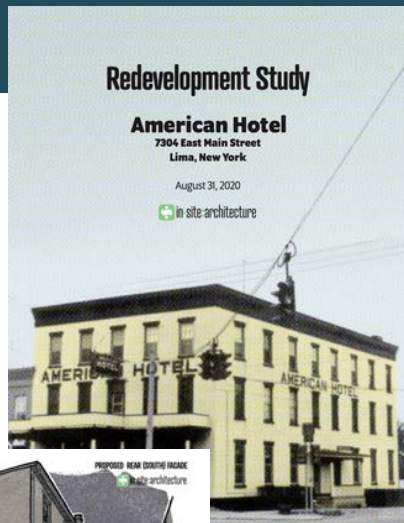
Economic Development Loans

- Started year with 22 active loans
- Approved 9 new loans
- One loan was paid off
- Ended year with 30 active loans
- \$750,000 was awarded to the Development Corporation through USDA’s Intermediary Relending Program. This program provides low-interest loans to local businesses to improve economic conditions and create jobs in rural communities. These funds will be available for lending in early 2021.

New York Main Street

County-Wide Design Guidelines

We have taken the Design Guidelines that were previously developed for the nine downtown districts and reinvented them into a single, comprehensive, user-friendly, highly-visual format. We've added a section on public space and art providing general guidance on the treatment of public and semi-public spaces such as parks, plazas, and public parking areas to ensure visitor comfort and a high quality downtown image. The document includes quick references to signage and awning codes from all nine villages. It is our intention to meet with each village in 2021 to review the document and offer high-level input related to recommended zoning changes that would address common problems and assist with uniform enforcement.



Redevelopment Analysis for the American Hotel

Livingston County Economic Development proactively plans for the future of historically significant anchor buildings that have the potential to be a catalyst for the revitalization of the area. The iconic American Hotel building represents a valuable opportunity to modernize and revitalize one of the most visible corners along the 5&20 corridor, and bolster both quantitatively and qualitatively the downtown core. This feasibility study takes a preliminary look at a number of variables - from concept, structure and building condition, building code implications, the opportunity to develop residential units, construction costs and funding opportunities that may be available.

New York Main Street

Building Renovation Grant for the Villages of Avon + Leicester: Over \$1 million invested in 13 buildings including 5 residential units

Avon

9 Buildings Renovated:

12 Commercial Units + 3 Residential Units

NYMS: \$259,159 + Private Investment: \$273,788

Total Investment: \$532,947



Park Theater

One residential unit created, marquee restored, façade cleaned + pointed, windows replaced



Village Restaurant

New signage, awning, lighting + façade restoration



Leicester

4 Buildings Renovated:

4 Commercial Units + 2 Residential Units

NYMS: \$203,341 + Private Investment: \$235,767

Total Investment: \$439,108

134 Main Street | TrailOtter

Prominently situated in the center of the downtown, this extremely derelict building was in danger of being lost.



This project exemplifies how multiple programs and funding sources can be combined to revitalize a downtown building:

- NYMS Technical Assistance funded design renderings
- LivCo Sign + Facade funded painting and removal of power lines and porch structure
- NYMS funded structural stabilization of the building and created two new residential units + one new commercial space
- Dream-O-Vate Business Plan Competition attracted TrailOtter - the area's 1st outdoor store - to the commercial unit

Dream-O-Vate



**Dublin Corners Farm
Brewery Geneseo Tap Room**

Dublin Corners – Livingston County’s first brewery – has more than tripled in size since opening on their York Farm in 2016. Dublin Corners Tap Room opened on Geneseo’s Main Street offering locals, visitors, and college families a taste of their award-winning brews as well as NYS wines and products.



**Wendy's Pantry + Country
Mouse Tea House**

Wendy's Pantry, located at 82 & 84 Main Street in Mount Morris, is an old fashioned candy and high-end food store with an emphasis on New York State items. Already a visitor favorite, owner Wendy increased traffic through expanded and diversified inventory and marketing.



Jonny B's Custom BBQ

Jonny B's Custom BBQ was a food truck and catering service that opened a brick and mortar restaurant at 1883 Rochester Street in Lima. This family-friendly restaurant offers quality southern cuisine for dine-in or take-out along with entertainment at a music hall.



The Livonia Inn

Tracy Cope and owner Ralph Parker have transformed the Livonia Inn at 17 & 19 Commercial Street. The Inn has reopened as a multipurpose venue housing two new businesses.

Parker's Pub – a bar and restaurant offering craft cocktails, local beer, and unique food, and Commercial Café – a coffee shop serving healthy food and beverages along with a game room and community space.



Sweet Arts Bakery

Ruth Ann and Brian are the owners of Sweet Arts Bakery located at 95 Main Street in Geneseo. They transformed from a coffee shop that sells baked goods, to a bakery that sells coffee. Their offerings of scones, artisan breads, and signature cinnamon rolls are complemented with handmade candies and chocolates, a special order cake shop, and expanded space for classes and meetings.



Sunrise Bouldering

Sunrise Bouldering is a rock bouldering gym located at 2 School Street in Geneseo. The facility enables participants to climb up, down, or across artificial rock walls using proper climbing techniques to complete a set number of routes. Owner Jake plans to include a café, retail space, and event space to encourage a healthy mindset and inclusive community for people of all ages.



Honeygirl Gourmet

Honeygirl Gourmet offers a wonderful shopping experience at 61 Main Street in Geneseo. Increased inventory offerings have boosted in store sales while improved marketing and digital presence assists with online sales.



TrailOtter

TrailOtter - located at 134 Main Street in Leicester - sells outdoor safety gear and food, along with items to support visitors and campers to Letchworth State Park. Owners Bill and Sonni offer hiking guide services, seminars, and training exercises for indoor and outdoor skill-building.



Boriken Restaurant

Using the experience she gained working on her family's food truck in Puerto Rico, owner Melanie opened a Caribbean Restaurant at 40 Main Street, Mount Morris. The Boriken Restaurant serves lunch and dinner in a tropical atmosphere that will transport visitors to the delights of Puerto Rico.

First Impressions

37 Projects

\$91,736.59 in Grants

\$197,147.44 Invested

\$105,410.85 Leveraged

The infographic features four photographs. The top-left photo shows a dilapidated, two-story white building with peeling paint and a red pickup truck parked in front. The bottom-left photo shows the same building after renovation, now painted a vibrant teal color with white trim and a new roof. The top-right photo shows a plain, yellowish-brown building facade. The bottom-right photo shows the same building after renovation, featuring a sign for 'MANNY'S GROCERY & DELI' and a window display for 'SPANISH AMERICAN DELI'.

Destination Creation

In 2020 Economic Development staff Louise Wadsworth and Maureen Wheeler became certified facilitators to teach the Destination Creation Course, a class designed to help business owners increase their revenue and customer traffic during the Covid-19 pandemic and beyond. Louise and Maureen are the first and only certified facilitators in New York State and two of only 48 trained facilitators in North America.

The Destination Creation Course teaches the proven 14-point business success strategy developed by internationally-known business consultant Jon Schallert. Schallert created this methodology after three decades of coaching independent business owners to make their businesses irresistible to customers. Businesses that follow Schallert's process can attract both local consumers and customers from far beyond the typical geographic market of a business.

The course will be available to LivCo Businesses beginning January 2021.



Downtowns with Heart



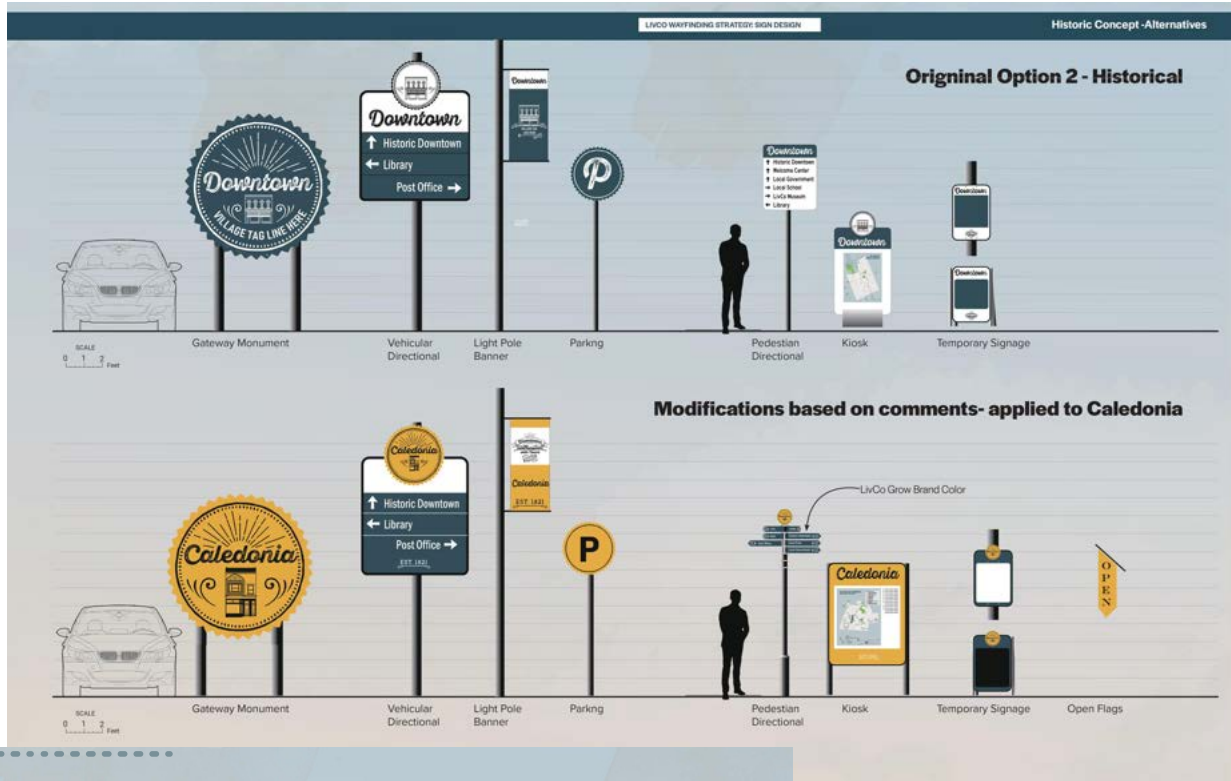
As was recommended in the 2017 Commercial District Analysis, we secured funding to move forward with the development of a cohesive brand for the downtown districts of Livingston County which embraces the distinct qualities of each district. The brand will be used to promote the nine downtown districts of the county in an effort to attract new businesses, residents and visitors. Identifying and communicating what is special and different about these communities will also boost local pride and spending. Marketing templates are being created and a style guide will be developed to assist communities in implementing the brand through wayfinding signage, gateway signage, banners, community ads, etc.



Our Village Brand

Wayfinding Master Plan

Our primary objective for the Wayfinding Project is to develop a Master Plan to improve the pedestrian, tourist, and visitor experience navigating to and within the nine downtown districts in Livingston County. The project inventoried local sites and assets to be included in the Wayfinding Master Plan and identified signage types, locations, treatments, and prioritized phases of installation. The Master Plan will create a unified, consistent impression across Livingston County's nine downtown districts to effectively and safely connect the traveling public to local assets.



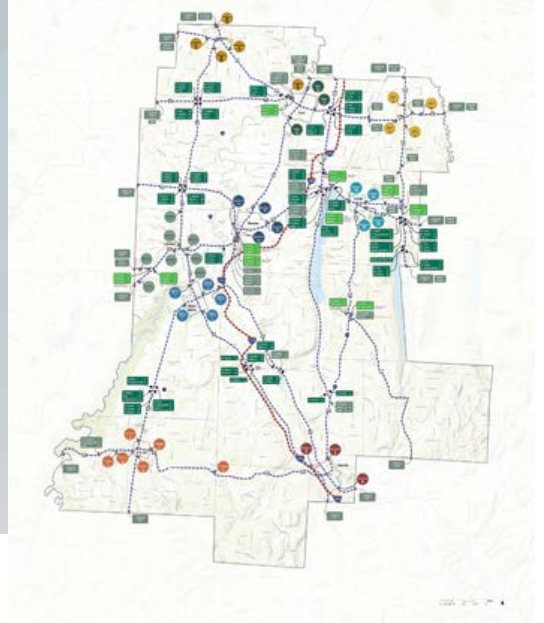
Parking Signs



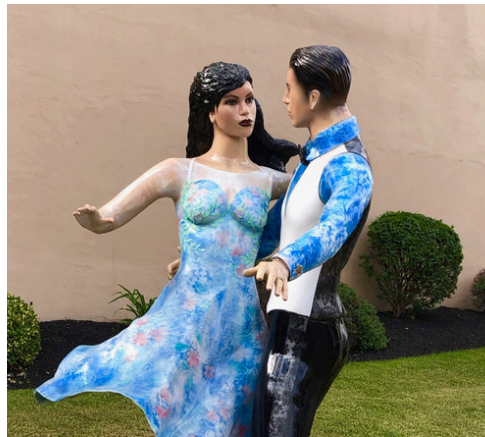
Banners



OVERALL MAP | LivCo County-Wide Wayfinding



Inspirations Trail



The Inspirations Trail was envisioned as a 90-mile, self-guided art tour through the nine downtowns of Livingston County. The goal is to create sustainable public art pieces that encourage locals and visitors of Livingston County to discover and be inspired by our downtowns. Despite the inaugural trail being significantly scaled back due to COVID-19, progress was still able to be made on multiple permanent art pieces. Two large-scale murals were completed in both Mount Morris and Nunda and a third is underway in Avon. The "Dancing Under the Stars" sculpture was installed in Dansville and several other sculptures are being planned. In July, the "Sidewalk Showcase" displayed 97 Inspiration Boards in storefront windows that had been designed and painted by high school students and local artists. These boards will be displayed at the Genesee Valley Council of the Arts Gallery in the summer of 2021 where they will be available for purchase. New boards will be solicited for the next Inspirations Trail, planned for July 2022.

Recovery Assessment + Action Plan

Roger Brooks is the founder of award-winning Roger Brooks International and the Destination Development Association. Roger has assisted nearly 2,000 communities with their branding, tourism, downtown development, and marketing over a distinguished career spanning nearly 40 years. In 2020, we invited Roger to Livingston County to conduct a Recovery Assessment and develop an Action Plan.

The Recovery Assessment is a powerful tool that offers an objective view of what a visitor sees and experiences while in our communities: from the initial planning to on-the-ground exploration. When talking about visitors, this is not only geared to tourism; any site-selector, investor, business relocation expert or potential new resident will come to us first as a visitor. What will they see as they explore the community for the first time? What will their first impressions be? What's missing?

This three-week process began from a distance as Roger Brooks planned a trip to the area, to see what our digital marketing showed. Next, Roger spent two weeks in our communities for a professional, in-depth look as a visitor, potential investor, or future resident. The Recovery Assessment concluded with a Findings and Suggestions Workshop, presented by Roger Brooks as well as a full-day retreat where the Livingston County team developed an action plan.



Destination Identity or PlaceBrand

"Originating in the hills of Northern Pennsylvania and flowing north about 180 miles into Lake Ontario is the only river that completely crosses New York State, and that is the Genesee. Along the way it has forged stunning gorges nearly 600 feet deep, hidden valleys, and is home to some of the most scenic and productive farm country found anywhere. It tumbles over six waterfalls - three in Rochester, and three in the incredible Letchworth State Park. Welcome to the amazing Genesee River Valley and its beautiful and historic villages."

3 Important

Facts:



#1

Tourism is the front door to your non-tourism economic development.

#2

Jobs are going where the talent is or wants to be.

#3

Quality of life is leading both economic and tourism development.

What's Next: 2021

The beginning of 2021 has started with the same momentum we experienced as 2020 came to a close. Business attraction opportunities have increased, not only in Livingston County, but throughout the nine (9) County region. Our office is working with several new businesses looking to locate here, while several others are seeking to expand.

We believe that market conditions have offered us a chance to grow this area. A phenomena known as “the urban exodus” has been substantiated by some of the trends we are experiencing as a Country. Some believe the pandemic has folks looking to leave the densely populated areas, but the truth is that the trend started before the pandemic. The most common factors leading the charge are centered around quality-of-life and would include affordability, open spaces and convenience. Based on this and some of our experiences, we are positioning ourselves to attract the talent necessary to recruit businesses, further drive residential attraction, and build tax base.

Solar development has also experienced a huge expansion in Livingston County and New York State, as a whole. The current Administration has focused on renewable energy from a policy standpoint and aims to lead the Nation in the reduction of fossil fuels. We are proceeding cautiously with regard to solar development and each municipality is carefully crafting solar laws to reflect the needs and wants of their community.



What's Next: 2021

The balance between increasing the tax base by attracting renewable energy and taking farmland out of the rotation is a delicate one. As development continues, please know that we will continue to review each project through both lenses.

As we embark on a new year, don't forget about the projects that are already in process and will carry into 2021! Our first Destination Creation course is underway and the First Impressions program will be soliciting new applications next month. We have an expansion at OSB Ciderworks and a new brewery, Strange Design Public House, will open in the old County Poor House. The Park Theater in Avon is getting a facelift through Restore NY and will be opening soon. The former Olympia Theater and Raider Lanes in Caledonia are almost complete, taking on a new look for the future. Grant applications have been submitted for New York Main Street programs in Dansville and Avon and a CDBG application will fund a second round of the Dream-O-Vate business plan competition to attract new businesses for our communities. We look forward to rolling out the Wayfinding Master Plan and the Downtowns with Heart brand. The move to an in-house tourism program will allow for a closer alignment with many County initiatives that will leverage and grow other areas of our economy.



Stay tuned!



**Invested in LivCo.
Invested in You.**

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