



# VILLAGE OF SHERMAN



## DRI Round 9 and NY Forward Round 4 | 2025 Application

Western New York Region

Chautauqua County

Village of Sherman Est. 1890

Certified Pro-Housing Community 10/7/2024

**Mayor, Colleen Meeder**

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Sherman NY Forward

Honorable Council:

The Village of Sherman is excited to present over \$13,000,000 of viable transformative projects with more opportunities developing in the downtown, along the trail, aligned with I-86.

The proposed projects further the Village of Sherman Comprehensive Plan in its goal of achieving a Trail Town Designation leveraging the booming ecotourism and recreational industry bolstering local business and job growth. The transition is in keeping with the local culture and character of the quiet bedroom community for a healthy and engaging quality of life, moving from its previously singular focused small farm economy. Ecotourism and agritourism are economic drivers in Chautauqua County.

It is with great pleasure and enthusiasm that the Board of Trustees presents this application for the Village of Sherman to the Western New York Regional Economic Development Council for nomination to Governor Hochul's Downtown Revitalization Initiative and New York Forward Program.

The Village has made great strides in preparing for both private and public investment most directly impacting the residents and visitors of Sherman. The planning initiatives and over \$15,000,000 invested in public infrastructure of essential utilities presents the foundation for transformation. Enthusiasm is electric as buildings have been restored, businesses opened, and new development is on the horizon. Sherman has drawn the attention of a host of stakeholders who are anticipating the next great opportunity that the DRI or NYF will ignite.

Sincerely,



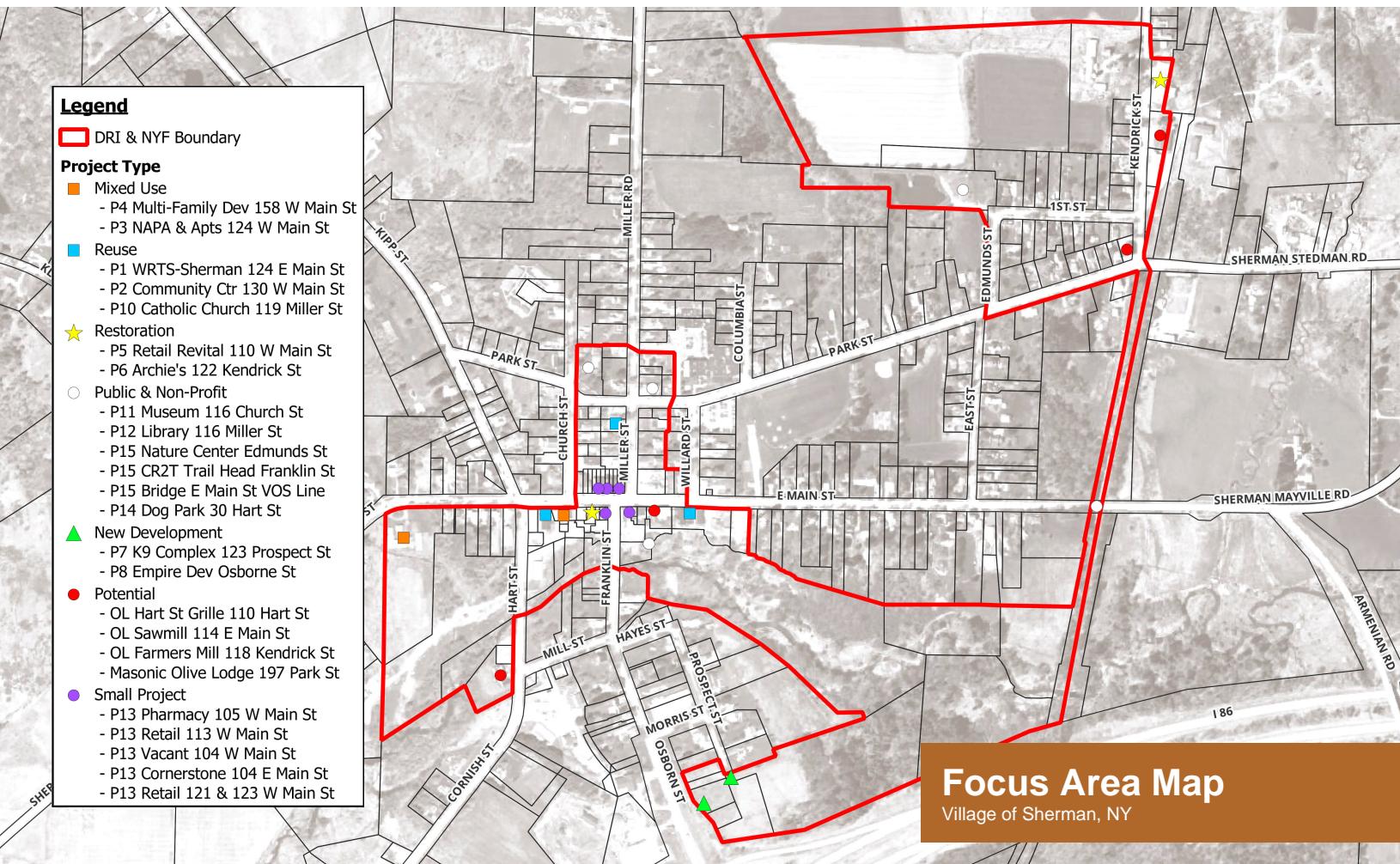
Colleen M. Meeder  
Mayor



SHERMANNY.GOV

*"Preserving our Past, Serving Today, while Working for our Future."*

# Geographic Area & Justification



The Village of Sherman is known by its historic **Downtown Main Street** with its charming multi-story brick attached-row-buildings with distinct architectural facades and covered walkway. It is surrounded by outdoor recreational opportunities at parks along French Creek, the Nature Center, and southern trailhead of Chautauqua Rails to Trails (CR2T). Sherman offers an affordable, family-friendly, walkable and bikeable community for a healthy quality of life.

The quaint Village along the I-86 corridor and 13 miles from I-90 is centered between the cities of Jamestown, Dunkirk, and Erie, PA, and the metropolitan areas of Buffalo, Cleveland, and Pittsburgh. Nearby attractions include Chautauqua Institution, National Comedy Center, Peek 'n Peak Resort and three beautiful recreational lakes within 20 minutes (Findley Lake, Chautauqua Lake, and Lake Erie). Chautauqua Rails to Trails and Westside Overland Trail in the Village and Town of Sherman connect the Village to some of the many blueways and greenways to experience

in Chautauqua County. Together these position Sherman as a welcoming, accessible place to live and visit, whether commuting from the quiet bedroom community or traveling to this strategic location for regional tourism.

The focus area consists of commercial and mixed-use buildings, restoration and reuse projects, housing development, retail and façade improvements, public art and placemaking projects, with enhancements to parks, trails, and safe streets with traffic calming and wayfinding elements. Downtown Main Street is lined with multi-story, mixed-use attached row buildings containing

retail establishments and restaurants on the first floors with residential units occupying the upper floors, some of which are vacant due to the 1991 fire and require rehabilitation. The downtown center is bookended with two vacant industrial buildings uniquely positioned to be transformed into recreational and community spaces that will draw visitors to the region. The proposed projects at the museum, library, parks, and trail in the focus area complement the downtown projects with enriching educational, cultural, natural, and recreational improvements, providing ADA accessibility and safety elements.

*The Village of Sherman's successful transition to a Trail Town is incumbent upon supporting amenities. Local and regional trails cradle Downtown Main Street, with its French Creek parks, aligning the I-86 corridor in Chautauqua County.*

# Vision

The Village of Sherman's success in transitioning to a family-oriented 'bedroom community' relies on its ability to adapt by leveraging its geographic location, natural assets, and achieving a Trail Town Designation. Its sustainability is dependent on growing ecotourism and regional agritourism and creating amenities attracting visitors to the region. This includes providing community services and enhancing engagement through

placemaking, maintaining and building diverse housing options, connecting people within the safe walkable and bikeable community, and incorporating green resiliency into planning and development practices. The focus on outdoor and recreational opportunities contributes to a healthy living environment for residents, supports small businesses providing accommodations for visitors, and strengthens the local economy.

*"The Village of Sherman has transformed from its historic roots as a sawmill and dairy farming community to become a Village which cultivates economic, educational, and recreational opportunities for families and residents of all ages..."*, Comprehensive Plan 2021, Amend. 2023.

# Quality of Life

The Village of Sherman's iconic streetscape and historic character contribute to its charm and identity. Main Street displays beautiful Italianate bracketed cornice top along the antique brick façades, the pendant lights aligned under the covered walkway awning along the attached row buildings, and the draped colored lights celebrating each season crossing overhead on Main Street.

## Affordable Housing

The compact tight-knit village is made up of lower- and middle-income residents. The target area provides a sense of space consisting of eateries, parks, trails, a library and museum with increasing amenities for residents and visitors. The downtown mixed-use attached row buildings have 2<sup>nd</sup> floor apartments, with more 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> story possibilities. There are too few rental apartment units and a high demand for single-family dwellings and small single-story homes accommodating the accessibility needs of senior citizens.

## Commercial and Retail Main Street Businesses

The Cornerstone Restaurant, Cooler Bar & Grille, Mama's Pizza, and Sherman Hotel are successfully growing the restaurant business. However, Sherman is lacking fresh food options, such as a local farmer's market (which ended during COVID), local goods store, or general store that would provide healthy, fresh options for residents in the greater Sherman community whose only current option is a Dollar General, with eleven miles to the next grocery store. Downtown has vacant buildings in need of retail establishments and experiential shops accommodating the increasing number of visitors.

## Walkability and Bikeability

The Village's Beautification Committee planted over 100 street trees. The Village has committed to replacing sidewalks with 5ft widths. The Complete Streets Policy adoption bolsters and better defines the Village's plans to extend sidewalks, calm traffic, install crosswalks, and improve signage and wayfinding. The Chautauqua Rails-to-Trails, a developing part of the greater Erie to Pittsburgh Trail, provides connectivity to the region and beyond.

## Community Space, Recreation, Cultural & Entertainment Amenities

The Cooler Bar & Grille holds outdoor concerts and hosts volleyball tournaments. George Edmunds Memorial Park is the grounds for annual community festivals, including Sherman Days, the Sherman Music Festival, and the Christmas week celebration concluding with the growing, creative Sherman Lighted Tractor Parade routed down Main Street in a Hallmark style setting. The Community Center coming soon with coffee shop and Farmer's Market, will provide a public space available to all residents and visitors for fellowship and programming.

The family-friendly neighborhood experience continues with the Village of Sherman's French Creek Yorker Museum, a Living History Museum transporting you back in time with the beautifully curated local antiques and history. The Minerva Free Library offers afterschool, preschool, and summer reading programs, as well as book club, and game nights. The K9 Complex is a competitive dog sports facility offering agility, obedience, rally and walking trails. It is the first full spectrum dog facility in WNY. The planned inclusive We Rock the Spectrum – Sherman children's sensory gym and adjacent Autism Nature Trail will provide accessibility and play for all children.



# Past Investments

The Village of Sherman has successfully administered over \$15M in grants and projects over the last 7 years; and Village businesses and non-profits have invested a few million more driven by entrepreneurs and organizational leaders with a commitment and passion for Sherman.

The Village's upgraded public drinking water and sewer utilities are attractive for prospective businesses and developers. The LED streetlights extending to I-86 illuminate the Sherman Exit to invite travelers. This was accomplished with National Grid Energy Incentives earned from the \$7M Wastewater Treatment Plant and \$2.2M Drinking Water Improvement Projects. The development of two Community Solar Arrays provides payments to the municipality offsetting public infrastructure debt service, infusing PILOT and Host Community Agreement payments into the community for more the \$3.1M over the 25-year-life of the arrays. In 2023, the Village participated in the Municipal ZEV Infrastructure Grant Program installing two electric vehicle fast charging stations in public parking conveniently located in the downtown encouraging commuter spending.

American Rescue Plan Act funds stimulated planning and implementation of economic and community development initiatives, together with a Rural Business Development Grant for business signs, Community Development Block Grants for Community Planning, and NY Main Street Technical Assistance Grants leading to the Façade Restoration Project. Chautauqua Region Economic Development Corp (CREDC) and Chautauqua County Partnership for Economic Growth (CCPEG) granted an additional \$25,000 toward the restoration of

the unique and historic walkway awning arcade, \$25,000 in the Paint CHQ Mural, and \$20,000 in trailhead parking improvements.

Sherman's Inn on Main invested \$380,000 in the beautifully restored bed and breakfast that is sought after in the downtown business district. With over 40 years in business, Triple E Mfg & Design, a woman owned business, is continually innovating their American Made products resulting in them doubling their floor space (construction completed in 2024) and being recognized as the CHQ Chamber Producer of the Year in 2025. Several vacant establishments underwent significant rehabilitation including the Sherman Hotel, The Cornerstone Restaurant, and the Cooler Bar & Grille along with its addition of the Cooler Creamery in May 2025. Altogether representing another \$1M in private investment.

Inspired by his meaningful early life experiences in Sherman, Harold Wake has donated over \$1M to Sherman non-profits within the village. His family foundation built the children's playground and newly constructed public restrooms and showers at George Edmunds Memorial Park. The Cooler Bar & Grille constructed the sand volleyball courts bringing large groups of people each summer. Non-profits, including the Minerva Free Library and Stanley Hose Company, underwent major interior and exterior renovations, increasing programming and recruitment. In 2023, the Village of Sherman French Creek Yorker Museum began its most recent restoration efforts with \$20,000 from the Chautauqua Region Community Foundation. The Village continues to work with the NYS Preservation League through Preserve NY grants awarded.



# Future Potential

## There is great potential in the Village of Sherman

- Opportunities for placemaking with inviting open natural spaces and parks along the multi-use trail promoting regional connectivity with amenities for residents and visitors encouraging healthy living and family-friendly activities.
- A walkable and bikeable community focused on safety, traffic calming, and accessibility.
- Diverse housing developments supplying the rental demand, need for single-family residences, and accessible homes to accommodate senior citizens.
- Non-profit organizations increase programming and foster interest in the rich history with improved accessibility and inviting aesthetics.
- Attractive gateways with murals, trailhead, and parks, coming into the downtown.
- Renovating underutilized second story vacant residential space on Main Street within the focus area.

The Village of Sherman will have a competitive advantage in attracting tourists. As the new restaurants continue to thrive, the short-term rentals are completed, and entrepreneurs build the amenities, like the Cooler Creamery and K9 Complex which opened in 2025, and the bike rental and repair shop coming soon, the Village can apply for a Trail Town Designation. This designation will exponentially attract trail enthusiasts. Ecotourism brings visitor spending, drives labor income, and increases tax revenue for the communities along trails. The Village of Sherman is the southern trailhead to the Chautauqua Rails to Trails, and with its expansion it will be a part of the greater Erie to Pittsburgh Trail. Chautauqua County has many trail systems traversing the region, including the Westside Overland Trail 1.25 miles to the east connecting NY State Forests. Outdoor recreation is key to the economic development and vitality of Sherman's future, producing more accessible green spaces and activities for all ages and abilities, contributing toward Chautauqua County's greenway improvements and the Live CHQ campaign.

Developers are interested in constructing diverse and affordable residential homes in the village filling the need for rental multi-family dwelling units, small single-story accessible homes for senior citizens, and new single-family homes. The proposed developments will benefit equally from the walkable and bikeable proximity of the downtown center from the improvements and amenities with a DRI or NYF Award to the Village of Sherman.

More opportunities are presenting themselves for reuse of historical buildings at the Old Farmers Mill 118 Kendrick St, Millworks 114 E. Main St, Hart Street Grille 110 Hart St, and Masonic Lodge 197 Park St.



# Recent & Impending Job Growth

As with the Western New York Strategic Plan, Sherman's quaint village is striving to create a more vibrant downtown with ideal conditions for economic growth and placemaking. This will be accomplished by building a neighborhood that will attract talent and cultivate new business development by revitalizing outdated and vacant retail spaces on Main Street, providing additional affordable housing opportunities, and reusing vacant industrial buildings.

The Village of Sherman's substantial investment in the public utility infrastructure and its location along the I-86 corridor makes Sherman attractive for business development and construction of residential housing. In concert with Friends of the Chautauqua County Greenways (FCCG) and the Choose CHQ campaign Sherman will contribute to a thriving regional economy.

The Village subsequently planned and implemented projects to revitalize the downtown Main Street and maintain essential residential housing stock with CDBG, NYMS, and MMHR funding programs through the NY State Office of Homes & Community Renewal. To provide for the quiet bedroom community, these efforts support transforming Sherman from one previously focused on small farms to one driven by ecotourism and agritourism in pursuit of a Trail Town designation. The small downtown businesses and the trail advancements are becoming interdependent, presenting an opportunity for job growth as visitors require more of these amenities.

The Village of Sherman has seen job growth in the last five years from The Cornerstone Restaurant, Cooler Bar & Grille, Cooler Creamery and Sherman Hotel all who remodeled and reopened previously

closed eateries. Triple E Mfg doubled its floor space to accommodate new innovative equipment to add more American Made products for their customers.

Regional employers are experiencing a workforce shortage, particularly in high demand are the most critical institutions and non-profits including nurses, teachers, skilled labor, licensed and certified operators. As a family-oriented bedroom community supporting a healthy quality of life, Sherman is a contributor to the Live CHQ and greater regional initiative attracting a strong and talented labor force. Chautauqua County Industrial Development Agency has made great efforts to establish multiple industrial sites within an easy commute to Sherman, (e.g. Ripley). These new developments will bring a significant need for a labor force that will be supplied by neighboring communities like Sherman.



# Supportive Local Policies

The Village of Sherman has implemented practices in accordance with adopted policies in pursuit of improving the resiliency and sustainability for the livability and quality of life in Sherman. The Village Board of Trustees with the input from the greater Sherman community adopted the Village of Sherman Climate Smart Comprehensive Plan in 2021. As local priorities evolve, the Comprehensive Plan was amended in 2023 with greater emphasis on historic preservation, hazard mitigation, stormwater management, and Complete Streets policies.

## Zoning Updates

The goals for updating the Village Zoning Code include preserving the character of neighborhoods, creating a downtown business district, establishing design guidelines, updating language, addressing new legislation (i.e., cannabis), transitioning to green and alternative energy systems, and adopting stormwater management regulations to secure existing assets and new development. In the interim, the Village Board has adopted a series of timely amendments addressing safety and quality of life needs.

## Pro-Housing

As a Certified Pro-Housing Community, since October 7, 2024, the Village is taking a strong Pro-Housing position for the future stability and sustainability of the small rural community. The Village adopted local laws in efforts to enforce property maintenance, remediate blight, and manage issues arising from vacant properties. The very effective 2019 Vacant, Abandoned, Boarded, Foreclosed Law serves as a deterrent and proactive measure preserving the existing housing stock by encouraging property owners to act for safety and nuisance prevention. This has resulted in the successful rehabilitation of several single-family dwellings. Chautauqua Home Rehabilitation & Improvement Corp (CHRIC) administers the Village of Sherman's twice-awarded Community Development Block Grants (2020, 2023) for the Rehabilitation of Single-Family Dwellings and the 2023 Mobile & Manufactured Home Replacement grant award.

## Climate Initiatives, Green Resiliency, Agriculture

The Village of Sherman was the first in Chautauqua County to adopt the Climate Smart Community Pledge in 2018 and received the Designated CEC Status of a Clean Energy Community by NYSERDA. The Village has since completed large scale progressive projects beginning with the \$2.2M Drinking Water Improvement project replacing pumps and installing variable frequency drives, and the \$7M upgrade to the Wastewater Treatment Plant resulting in energy efficiency and improving the quality of effluent with UV disinfection. The Village installed two electric vehicle fast charging stations with the NYS DEC

Municipal Zero-Emission Vehicle (ZEV) Infrastructure Rebate Program and National Grid NY EV Make-Ready Program.

Municipal owned property was developed into two 5MW Community Solar Arrays. The Village ensured the land use incorporated agrivoltaic practices with sheep grazing. This innovative approach is fulfilling the Village's Comprehensive Plan goals in efforts to prevent farmland loss from repurposed solar fields and is in keeping with Sherman's rural character.

## Stormwater Project Building Resiliency

The multi-phase cooperative \$2.8M Comprehensive Stormwater Improvement Project financed by Rural Development is scheduled for completion in March 2026. The Community Development Block Grant award of \$1.25M for 2023 Co-Funded Infrastructure provided for the Main Street Stormwater Improvements. Chautauqua County Soil & Water Conservation District is constructing the detention in the Upper Basins. As part of the reclamation, the Village has put the Complete Streets Policy into action, installing new sidewalks, improving the trailhead, adding crosswalks and bump-outs for traffic calming.

## Complete Streets Initiative

In collaboration with GOBike, the Village adopted its Complete Streets Policy resulting in preliminary designs that consider all pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit (including equestrians), with special conditions for children, senior citizens, and those with disabilities, with the clear intent of understanding and accommodating all users and modes. The Village identifies priorities and strategies to integrate into capital projects to bring connectivity, safety, encourage outdoor activity, and promote the overall health and well-being of the community and visitors.



# Public Support and Engagement

The Village of Sherman's vision is a compilation of multiple initiatives and successful projects brought together through public engagement, input from key stakeholders, and support by involved agencies.

This year's Open House held at Archie's Powersports was an example of new entrepreneurship with decades of experience, providing a range of services to trail users. The previously underutilized and vacant building restored for reuse with the creative vision of the new owner was the perfect setting for inspiration. A range of enthusiastic stakeholders came out in curiosity and strong support of the Village of Sherman's application for the DRI and NYF grant opportunity. Residents, commercial property owners, and developers were in attendance providing input.



In 2024, the Village hosted "Night at the Museum" which has become an annual event. It started as a community engagement session held to inform all stakeholders of the NY Forward opportunity, present the proposed projects, and solicit input. Nearly 50 people experienced Sherman's French Creek Yorker Museum 'under a new light', demonstrating the possibilities for the future of the museum and the community.

During the Comprehensive Plan, Downtown Market Analysis, NY Main Street Feasibility Study and Implementation, applications to earlier rounds of Restore NY and NY Forward, and the Completes Streets Initiative, there have been many public meetings, open houses, surveys and interactive opportunities for the public to engage in the future planning of the Village; this included breakout sessions, guided walks with GOBike, and more!

The Sherman Area Chamber of Commerce, to which the Village is a part, meets monthly exchanging information, updates, and ideas. Officials from the Village municipality are represented on the Sherman Day Committee, celebrating Sherman's historic roots and rural character, attracting alumni and new visitors to Sherman. The Village's Planning Board, Steering Committee, Beautification (Tree) Committee, Edmunds Park Committee, and the

Sherman Historical Society provide regular feedback and input into community and economic development strategies.

The Village continues communication and efforts toward distributing information to the public with printed and social media to reach all in the community. Bi-monthly newsletters and flyers are mailed and emailed. The Village of Sherman administers a combined Village and Town website serving a variety of community needs and has established a separate ShermanNYForward.org website for the purpose of presenting a more in-depth look at the proposed projects. The Village municipality has multiple active Facebook accounts including the primary 'Village of Sherman, NY'. In addition to social media, the Village Board Meeting Minutes provide detailed monthly updates on capital projects, initiatives, committee and organizational meetings, including the DRI and NYF application. The area reporter from the Westfield Republican and Jamestown Post Journal writes articles covering Village initiatives.

There are many enthusiastic letters from the community, businesses, and stakeholders in strong support of the Village of Sherman's application for the DRI and NYF grant opportunity.

# Transformative Projects For A Trail Town

The Downtown Revitalization Initiative or NY Forward Award will continue the momentum of investment in the Village of Sherman with transformational projects that fit the character and vision of the Sherman community. The Award will realize projects sooner, with more creativity and quality, providing a robust impact and injection of capital stimulating further investment.

'Trail Town' designations have proven to substantially bolster the regional economy through ecotourism. The development of the K9 Complex and desired We Rock the Spectrum – Sherman children's sensory gym compliment the community's character and vision for drawing visitors to the region. A Trail Town Designation is incumbent upon supporting amenities (eateries, shops, lodging, etc.); these recreational and experiential attractions bring patrons to the amenities creating a symbiotic relationship of cooperative businesses.

*"No single project stands alone, combined they support and contribute to each other's missions and the vision for the greater Sherman community. The DRI or NYF Award will be the catalytic driver ensuring the success and sustainability of these interdependent attainable goals."*



# PROJECT 1 — WE ROCK THE SPECTRUM, SHERMAN

## Kid's Sensory Gym (124 E Main St)

### Project Sponsors

Agape Mas, LLC

### Estimated Project Cost

\$1,250,000

### Funding Match Possibilities

Owner, Donations, Restore NY, regional foundations (CRCF)

### Project Timeline

18-24 months

We Rock the Spectrum – Sherman is rehabilitating the vacant 23,000 SF industrial building last used as a heavy equipment garage and shop. Its expansive space and high ceilings make the kid's sensory gym a perfect reuse of the historic building that was once home to the 1929 Sherman Theatre.

The successful international reputation of the WRTS franchise for its unique sensory equipment is part of the expanding multi-billion-dollar industry representing the robust market of children's activity and play centers.

Their inclusive philosophy creates an environment for learning, socialization, exploration, and safe sensory experiences for neurodiverse children of all ability levels to play and grow together through recreational, healthy physical and social-emotional activities.

In serving all children and families by providing a safe, inclusive, interactive, fun, and highly successful developmentally appropriate space, WRTS-Sherman will bring essential services to underserved communities in Western New York while bringing families from around the region.



# PROJECT 2 — HOSTEL & COMMUNITY CENTER

## Historic Nuttal Building (130 W Main St)



### Project Sponsors

Village of Sherman  
Tusk Real Estate Property Mgt

### Estimated Project Cost

\$3,602,996

### Funding Match Possibilities

NY Bricks, Restore NY, regional foundations (CRCF)

### Project Timeline

2-3 years

The historic 1928 Nuttal & Son building was a garage and showroom until 2008. The vacant 10,000 SF industrial building was donated to the Village of Sherman. Tusk is contracted to collaborate in the rehabilitation and reuse of the public & private space as a community center, hostel, coffee shop, Farmer's Market,

fitness center, and venue. The dedicated public space will be available to the rural community's youth, veterans' associations, and senior citizens to gather for fellowship and programming.

The 130 W Main St location adjoins Chautauqua Rails to Trails and French Creek parks. This project serves as the western bookend to the immediate downtown Main Street business district, complementing WRTS – Sherman to the east in the transformation of the active family-orientated neighborhood.

The hostel accommodations for those transiting the all-season, multi-use trails will contribute to achieving the Trail Town Designation and support ecotourism. The unique efficient short-term rentals will provide convenient and economical lodging options for visitors to Chautauqua County.

## Alignment with NY Forward Goals

Create an active downtown and sense of place

Providing amenities that support and enhance downtown living and quality of life

Enhance public spaces for arts and cultural events, serving the community and visitors around the region

Attracting a variety of new businesses for residents and visitors, and provide job opportunities

Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and support investments that are more resilient to future climate change impacts

Growing the local property tax base

## PROJECT 3 — MIXED-USE, EFFICIENCY RENTAL APARTMENTS

# NAPA Auto Parts Building (124 W Main St)

### Project Sponsors

Danielle Crane (future owner – pending negotiations) Duane Woods (current owner)

### Estimated Project Cost

\$236,500

### Funding Match Possibilities

Private Funds

### Project Timeline

2-3 years

The 124 W Main Street building is the location of the Sherman NAPA Auto Parts store with a vacant second floor. As the owner retires and the manager purchases the business and building it brings opportunity for new investment in a mixed-use building, providing for business growth and efficiency rental apartments.

The restoration of the iconic Sherman building setting at the end of the series of attached row buildings is critical in maintaining the historic character of the quaint downtown. The 1898 building features Italianate details in the brick cornice that give a nod to its beautiful history and opportunity to highlight these elements with façade restoration. The active storefront will be renovated for accessibility and efficiency.

Rental units are in high demand, and the location of two 1,300 SF efficiency apartments will provide affordable housing within the immediate walkable and bikeable community. The apartments are adjacent to Edmunds Park and French Creek, located on the trail, near eateries and entertainment making this space perfect for singles or couples.



## PROJECT 4 — MULTI-FAMILY DWELLING DEVELOPMENT

# 4.6 Acre Site with Commercial Buildings (158 W Main Street)



### Project Sponsors

Owner David Conrad, Conrad Contracting

### Estimated Project Cost

\$1,800,000

### Funding Match Possibilities

Private Funds

### Project Timeline

1-2 years

In 2024, the 158 W Main Street commercial property was purchased for mixed-use development by revitalizing the vacant retail establishment to attract business and construct sixteen new townhouses on the open 4.6 acres complimenting the surrounding existing residential neighborhood.

The property previously known as Chase Antiques has four industrial / commercial buildings totaling over 15,000 SF on W Main St in need of restoration before reuse.

There is demand for new multi-family homes providing for highly sought after affordable housing and rental needs. Conrad Contracting is looking to build four two-story multi-family dwellings with four units each for a total of sixteen new affordable two-bedroom 1,000-1,200 SF townhouse style residences for rent. Being aligned with French Creek parks within the walkable downtown makes the location ideal for young families.

## Alignment with NY Forward Goals



Create an active downtown and sense of place



Providing amenities that support and enhance downtown living and quality of life



Enhance public spaces for arts and cultural events, serving the community and visitors around the region



Attracting a variety of new businesses for residents and visitors, and provide job opportunities



Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and support investments that are more resilient to future climate change impacts



Growing the local property tax base



Varied housing, supporting a diverse population

## PROJECT 5 — RETAIL REVITALIZATION

# Vacant “Old Hardware” (110 W Main St)

### Project Sponsors

Owner

### Estimated Project Cost

\$295,000

### Funding Match Possibilities

Private Funding

### Project Timeline

18-24 months

The 110 W Main Street vacant 5,000 SF building circa 1900 is currently under contract for purchase. Its 46 ft expanse on Main Street is the longest of the attached row buildings under the unique and historic walkway awning arcade,

providing a large visual impact directly contributing to the active downtown and sense of space at the center of the charming historic business district.

What once was a vibrant hardware store can be turnkey for an entrepreneur with façade restoration and customization. To cultivate economic growth and prosperity retail activity is essential to the revitalization of the business district. It has been recognized as a critical building for restoration with its location at the center of the downtown attached row buildings.



## PROJECT 6 — TRAIL TOWN AMENITY

# Archie’s Powersports (122 Kendrick St)



### Project Sponsors

Owner John Swabik, Archie’s Powersports

### Estimated Project Cost

\$130,000

### Funding Match Possibilities

Private Funding

### Project Timeline

18-24 months

Archie’s Powersports is a new retail and service business that opened in June 2025. The previously underutilized and vacant 14,000 SF building is now filled with snowmobiles and other powersports related paraphernalia. With decades of experience servicing and restoring various motorized recreational vehicles the owner is expanding his plans to service a range of needs for trail goers from bikes and e-bikes to snowmobiles.

The location along the old railroad bed of the industrial district has left the property with several historic features that the owner wishes to highlight and display. The owner’s goal is to refurbish the antique gas pumps outside the building and create a showroom of vintage snow mobiles that are complemented by the old pumps. The building requires further restoration and improvements in making this the perfect stop along Chautauqua Rails to Trails that will include festive lights and Christmas events in the future to draw community trail users and visitors to the region.

The property’s transformation from a vacant building to an amenity that directly supports and celebrates the outdoor recreational experiences is in direct alignment with the vision and goal of becoming a Trail Town.

## Alignment with NY Forward Goals



Create an active downtown and sense of place



Providing amenities that support and enhance downtown living and quality of life



Enhance public spaces for arts and cultural events, serving the community and visitors around the region



Attracting a variety of new businesses for residents and visitors, and provide job opportunities



Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and support investments that are more resilient to future climate change impacts



Growing the local property tax base

## PROJECT 7 — NEW DEVELOPMENT

# K9 Complex (Prospect St)

### Project Sponsors

Owner Christine McKay

### Estimated Project Cost

\$1,000,000

### Funding Match Possibilities

Private Funding

### Project Timeline

12-24 months

The K9 Complex is designed as a destination for canine sports, with a goal of providing a year-round, climate-controlled agility arena complemented by an outdoor ring, private walking trail, and other sports arenas.

The Complex prioritizes professional-grade footing and smart design. With Phase 1's outdoor arena complete, it's entering Phase 2 to build a membership-based indoor venue where dog sports can thrive locally. Chautauqua County currently does not have a dedicated dog-sport space, sending handlers far distances, including out of state, for reliable training facilities. This facility will offer a high-quality, close-to-home solution and drive local impact through events, competitions, and partnerships with trainers, groomers, vendors, and pet-friendly lodging. The property is 9 acres on undeveloped property right off I-86 providing easy access for visitors.

The project will be shovel ready as building plans are currently being drafted and the site preparation, accessibility, safety and code requirements are being reviewed.



## PROJECT 8 — NEW DEVELOPMENT

# Empire Development (Osborne St)



### Project Sponsors

Owner Micah Meredith, Empire Development

### Estimated Project Cost

\$1,200,000

### Funding Match Possibilities

Private Funding

### Project Timeline

1-3 years

The owner is a local developer known and accredited for his decades of work in the industry. As a Shermanite he is committed to working with the Village Planning Board and trusted investors to find the right development opportunity in service to the community without detracting from the historic downtown business district.

The multiparcel property has been cleared and prepared for the next phase of construction of business entities that will provide job opportunities and attract visitors from I-86 and the region.

## Alignment with NY Forward Goals

 Create an active downtown and sense of place

 Providing amenities that support and enhance downtown living and quality of life

 Enhance public spaces for arts and cultural events, serving the community and visitors around the region

 Attracting a variety of new businesses for residents and visitors, and provide job opportunities

 Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and support investments that are more resilient to future climate change impacts

 Growing the local property tax base

## PROJECT 9 — PUBLIC ART

# Mural depicting Sherman History & Culture

### Project Sponsors

Owner  
Sherman Area Chamber of Commerce (Sponsor)  
Village of Sherman (Sponsor)

### Estimated Project Cost

\$50,000

### Funding Match Possibilities

Owner, Donations, Paint CHQ, Restore NY,  
regional foundations (CRCF)

### Project Timeline

1-2 years

In cooperation with the property owners of The Cornerstone Restaurant, the Village of Sherman received a 2025 Paint CHQ mural wrapping 104

E Main St at the central southern entrance to the downtown business district near the trailhead. The result is a beautiful public art display welcoming visitors to Sherman and greater Chautauqua County.

This has inspired a great interest within the community to celebrate the local history and culture by working together to commission another mural or other public art display.

The art captures the community's character, history, and culture by depicting life in the community and the natural assets within Sherman, providing a beautiful and inviting gateway into the historic downtown, and a strong sense of place for residents and visitors alike.



## PROJECT 10 — REUSE

# Catholic Church (119 Miller St)



### Project Sponsors

Owner

### Estimated Project Cost

\$100,000

### Funding Match Possibilities

Owner

### Project Timeline

1-2 years

The recently closed and vacant Catholic Church is offering the new owner a unique opportunity for reuse within the active community hub located on Miller St near the library, fire hall, museum, and downtown Main Street.

The existing apartment already lends itself to mixed-use possibilities. There are a number of opportunities for reuse of the 4,000 sq ft commercial building with its beautiful stone structure. Applying some creativity to this well-maintained property with some customization will result in an exciting transformational project.

## Alignment with NY Forward Goals



Create an active downtown and sense of place



Providing amenities that support and enhance downtown living and quality of life



Enhance public spaces for arts and cultural events, serving the community and visitors around the region

## PROJECT 11 — MUSEUM & MONUMENT PARK

# French Creek Yorker Museum (116 Church St)

### Project Sponsors

Village of Sherman (Conservator, Property Owner)  
Sherman Historical Society, 501(c)(3) (Curator)

### Estimated Project Cost

\$250,000

### Funding Match Possibilities

Preserve NY Grant, regional foundations (CRCF)

### Project Timeline

18-24 months

The French Creek Yorker Museum is a 'living history museum' with a collection of six original buildings depicting life in centuries past, with period artifacts and antiques dating back to the 1750's. The museum is in need of new electric, stormwater drainage improvements to alleviate

moisture damage to the historic buildings, renovations to the Peter Ripley House identified in the PNY-TAG Limited Condition Assessment, and replacement of a log in the log dwelling.

The aging chain link fence around the perimeter will be replaced with black aluminum ornamental fence improving the security, accessibility, and curb appeal. The two 20ft gliding gates will open onto the Village Commons and Monument Park attracting visitors. The park will include monument restoration and addition of a historical marker. The park's redesign to remove overgrown trees and install the memorial on the Purple Heart Trail will provide placemaking improvements. The new signage, museum parking on Church St, hardscape and landscaping improvements to the Village Commons will be enhanced with the DRI or NYF award with LED park lights and other fixtures.



## PROJECT 12 — MINERVA FREE LIBRARY

# ADA Renovations (116 Miller St)



### Project Sponsors

Minerva Free Library

### Estimated Project Cost

\$125,000

### Funding Match Possibilities

NY State Public Library Construction Grant  
Community Impact Grant

### Project Timeline

1-2 years

The Minerva Free Library has installed a lift for ADA accessibility, replaced the windows for efficiency, added a front patio for placemaking and is looking to complete its restoration efforts

by ensuring full ADA accessibility by renovating the three bathrooms and completing finish work. Maintaining this important historic asset and making it inclusive for all in the community are high priorities for the Minerva Free Library members and the Sherman community who engage in its programming.

The 1908 construction of the building was commissioned by Oliver Willcox Norton for his sister, who was a member of the Minerva Club which established one of the first free libraries. Norton had an entrepreneurial spirit, was an author and philanthropist with a great love for music leading to his residence and ties to Chautauqua Institution, the home of Norton Memorial Hall. He humbly was the first to sound Taps and is known as the 'Taps Bugler'.

## Alignment with NY Forward Goals



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## PROJECT 13 — SMALL PROJECT FUND OF \$400,000

# Restoration and Reuse

### Project Sponsors

Owner

### Estimated Project Cost

\$550,000

### Funding Match Possibilities

Private funds

### Project Timeline

1-3 years

The Small Projects Fund will continue the momentum of the 2023 NY Main Street Façade Improvements to 15 properties, of which 9 underwent major façade and reuse improvements. Previously vacant spaces were opened for the Sherman Hotel Steakhouse & Saloon, Cooler Creamery ice cream shop, and a new retail storefront.

Interior — Refreshing and modernizing the space to accommodate entrepreneurs' needs while preserving the character and charm of the pressed tin ceilings and crown moldings. Constructing two short-term rental units and affordable rental housing among the vacant 2nd and 3rd stories of the attached row buildings. Expanding downtown upper floor living and hospitality options will benefit Sherman residents, visitors, businesses, and overall property value.

Exterior — Restoring windows, recessed doors, transoms, & repointing brick. Accentuating the Village of Sherman's key features with exterior lighting fixtures, highlighting the dentil trim along the roofline and the beautiful Italianate bracketed cornice top of the antique brick facades, distinguishing the iconic Sherman downtown skyline.



## PROJECT 14 — PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS

# French Creek Parks



### Project Sponsors

Village of Sherman

### Estimated Project Cost

\$125,000

### Funding Match Possibilities

Donations, Wake Family Charitable Foundation, Cole Electric  
Chautauqua Watershed Conservancy

### Project Timeline

1-3 years

French Creek traverses the Village of Sherman running parallel to Main Street with three distinct parks all of which will have LED lighting, bike racks, benches and picnic tables. The Chautauqua Watershed Conservancy is collaborating on tree and native plantings for the creek bank and park area.

To the east, off of Franklin St, Sheldon Park marks the southern Chautauqua Rails to Trails Rosie Billquist Trailhead where plans will be in concert with the trail improvements including story-walk boards.

Centered behind Main Street is George Edmunds Memorial Park with all new restrooms and showers, children's playground, sand volleyball courts, and 'little library'. The park needs the electric extended for LED park lights, renovations to the existing pavilion, and reuse of the adjacent building as a pickle ball court and year-round recreational facility.

To the west, off of Hart St, the open greenspace was home to the Dog Park that has to be relocated to the north side of the entrance after the municipal water upgrades. The plan is to install a new fence, lean-to for shade, water spigot, and activity center.

## Alignment with NY Forward Goals



Create an active downtown and sense of place



Providing amenities that support and enhance downtown living and quality of life



Enhance public spaces for arts and cultural events, serving the community and visitors around the region



Attracting a variety of new businesses for residents and visitors, and provide job opportunities



Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and support investments that are more resilient to future climate change impacts



Growing the local property tax base



Varied housing, supporting a diverse population

## PROJECT 15 — PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS

# All-Season Multi-Use Trail Connecting Sherman to the Region

### Project Sponsors

Village of Sherman  
Chautauqua Rails to Trails 501(c)(3)

### Funding Match Possibilities

Funding Match Possibilities  
Rails-to-Trails Conservancy's Trail Grants Program  
NYSDOT Transportation Alternative Program  
Chautauqua County Partnership for Economic Growth  
3% Occupancy Tax Tourism Development Grant  
Sheldon Foundation and Chautauqua Region Community Foundation

## Local Trail Improvements to the Chautauqua Rails to Trails

### Estimated Project Cost

\$300,000

### Project Timeline

1-3 years

Sherman's Rosie Billquist Trail is the southern trailhead of the 24-mile multi-use Chautauqua Rails to Trails (CR2T). CR2T improvements include resurfacing an existing .7-mile section by applying crushed and screened limestone, providing a smooth surface for an ADA compliant recreational resource. The Autism Nature Trail would be located here in coordination with the children's gym adjacent to the trail for development of an accessible sensory and exploratory trail for children of all abilities.

Trail enhancements involve finishing the loop to tie in the Nature Center, incorporating enhancements with trail amenities including bike racks, repair station, benches, educational signs, storybook trail, planting of trees, brush, and grasses.

The development, safety, surfacing, and accessibility of this trail is vital to the community's vision of creating a walkable and bikeable community. This provides opportunities to experience the French Creek natural asset and green spaces and attract eco-tourism to Sherman's downtown. It will contribute to the Village of Sherman successfully achieving the desired Trail Town Designation furthering proven economic growth through eco-tourism around trails in the Chautauqua County region.



## Trail Bridge for Safe Passage across NYS Rte. 430



### Estimated Project Cost

\$1,200,000

### Project Timeline

1-3 years

Safe connectivity is critical along Chautauqua Rails to Trails as it extends to the Corry Juction Greenway Trail completing the greater Erie-to-Pittsburgh Trail increasing the number of transiting hikers, bikers, equestrians, and snowmobilers. The installation of a bridge where the old railroad trestle was located will provide safety for all modes of trail goers. The lack of visibility when exiting the eastern boundary of the village is of utmost concern.

Additionally, those entering the village who haven't appropriately reduced their speed before crossing the intersecting trail on NY State Rte. 430 are creating a potentially dangerous situation.

The bridge will also frame the eastern entrance to Main St drawing attention to drivers entering the village. The substantial visual gateway with lights and welcoming signage will bring awareness to the immediate residential neighborhood.

This project is a top priority in achieving the goal of becoming a Trail Town in concert with the Complete Streets initiative.

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## PROJECT 16 — PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS

# Sidewalk Extensions, Streetscape Elements, Wayfinding

### Project Sponsors

Village of Sherman

### Estimated Project Cost

\$750,000

### Funding Match Possibilities

NYSHCR CDBG

### Project Timeline

1-2 years

The Village has begun implementing top priority Complete Streets practices identified by the community with the October 2025 completion of the \$1.25M Main Street Stormwater Project improving the trailhead, installing new sidewalks, crosswalks, and bump-outs for traffic calming.

Adding wayfinding signs will highlight key locations to provide direction for all modes of transportation safely connecting amenities, people, and places. The Village will be extending the sidewalk to 158 W Main St, installing a median island on W Main St, curbs, bump-outs, and replacing sidewalks with 5ft widths.

The plans will build resiliency leveraging green infrastructure opportunities along Main Street addressing the existing hardscapes and historic building structures currently lacking stormwater management practices. The Beautification Committee organized the planting of the first 125 street trees toward these efforts. The Village persistently strives to make improvements with the assistance of shared services and supporting agencies. The Chautauqua Watershed Conservancy is aiding with design plans for planting objectives, consultation from an area arborist, and applications for the Urban Forestry Grant.



## PROJECT 17 — PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS

# North Main St Alley Improvements

### Project Sponsors

Village of Sherman

### Estimated Project Cost

\$125,000

### Funding Match Possibilities

Property Owners

### Project Timeline

1-2 years



North alley improvements behind 101 Main St - 133 W Main St, will impact thirteen buildings having rear entrances from Main, Miller, and Church Streets; one of which serves as the main entrance to the Sherman Food Pantry. The plan is to allow for service access and delivery, while eliminating unrelated traffic through the alley. The design includes lights, landscaping with a courtyard for seating, and designated parking for tenants and guests.

The residents and business owners desire an aesthetically pleasing, safe, and well-lit area with outdoor accommodations in the downtown corridor.

## Alignment with NY Forward Goals



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# Administrative Capacity

The Village of Sherman has demonstrated its commitment to the preservation and restoration of assets and the capacity for growth and adaptability in a rapidly changing environment. The Village simultaneously took on multiple large scale infrastructure improvement projects involving multiple funding agencies, while initiating several community and economic development projects successfully, all with the assistance of teams of engineers, community planners, fiscal advisors, and legal counsel.

The Village of Sherman leads initiatives that most directly impact the members of the community, understanding that health, security, stability, and sustainability begin in the home, building a strong community. The Village has administered several grants to maintain the space it has secured for the Food Pantry. It also organized the first Home Repair & Energy Fair with Cornell Cooperative Extension's Sustainability Campaign Coordinator, bringing

together NYSERDA programs and a variety of others, for residents and businesses in the Chautauqua and Cattaraugus region.

The Village's Steering Committee is an amazing group meeting often to discuss initiatives, review proposed laws, and select economic and community development subawards ensuring the decisions are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan in realizing the vision of the community, objectives of the small businesses, and interests of stakeholders. The Planning Board and Board of Trustees provide oversight, but the creativity and innovation are inspired by the individuals and organizations that make up the Sherman community. The clerk-treasurer and mayor have served the Village of Sherman over the past 8 years, administering these successful projects and initiatives with the aid of committees, organizations, and shared service support. There is an expansive list of collaborators in Chautauqua County, each of

which has something to offer, whether through labor, materials, grant assistance, or technical support, all have in some way contributed to the success of Sherman and are eager to begin the next phase with a DRI or NYF award.

This DRI and NYF application was provided in large part from the support of the Chautauqua Region Economic Development Corp (CREDC) and Chautauqua County Partnership for Economic Growth (CCPEG). They have recognized the potential and capacity for Sherman's growth and development within the County's comprehensive plan to advance economic prosperity, expand recreational opportunities, attract families, and supply a labor force contributing to the Live CHQ and Choose CHQ campaigns. Sherman's natural assets, unique and historic community make the 'Village of Sherman' an ideal location for investment.



*"The engaging DRI and NYF process has inspired development and growth throughout the Village, within and beyond the target area. The Village of Sherman wishes to express its appreciation for this opportunity and is grateful for the WNY Regional Economic Development Council's time and consideration in what would be an extremely transformational award!"*

# VILLAGE OF SHERMAN

HOME OF THE YORKER MUSEUM

111 MILL ST, PO Box 629, SHERMAN, NY 14781  
716-761-6781 TDD 711 \* VILLAGE.SHERMAN@GMAIL.COM  
[WWW.SHERMANNY.ORG](http://WWW.SHERMANNY.ORG)

November 4, 2025

Ms. Karen Utz, Regional Director  
Regional Economic Development Council  
95 Perry St., Ste. 500  
Buffalo, NY 14203

RE: VILLAGE OF SHERMAN – DRI Round 9 & NYF Round 4

Dear Ms. Utz,

As I enter my third term as mayor, committed to the Village of Sherman since 2017, I have seen a wide spectrum of success and challenges. The potential of the Sherman community's ability to be great is palpable. Having begun with near failing infrastructure and a lack of budget created significant operational challenges which were overcome and resulted in financial stewardship, substantial grant awards, and the completion of public improvement projects in excess of \$15 million. All this positioning Sherman for the next phase of forward progression.

The members of our boards and committees set themselves aside, prioritizing the Village's vision and mission in a respectful and creative collaboration of ideas working together for the collective benefit of the community. The adopted policies and initiatives draw the community's awareness and engagement of stakeholders, and further strengthens the Village's purpose to serve.

We are witnessing the restoration and opening of new businesses, the library rejuvenated, and community getting excited! The DRI & NYF application process is fueling the momentum that is inspiring creativity and collaboration, bringing interest and investment to Sherman. The 2025 Paint CHQ mural installation began the beautiful transformation of the southern downtown gateway. The expansion and connection of the trail, placemaking, and amenities contribute to the future Trail Town Designation.

The Village has developed a great professional network of resources for administering the award that assures the Village of Sherman is stable and sustainable, contributing to the greater Chautauqua County and Western NY Region.

Sincerely,



Colleen M. Meeder  
Mayor

THE HONORABLE COLLEEN MEEDER, MAYOR  
DEPUTY MAYOR RYAN SANDERS  
TRUSTEES DENNIS WATSON, GARY EMORY & DANIEL CRANE

*"Preserving our Past... Working for our Future"*

THIS INSTITUTION IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROVIDER AND EMPLOYER



# THANK YOU



## DRI Round 9 and NY Forward Round 4 | 2025 Application

Western New York Region

Chautauqua County

Village of Sherman Est. 1890

Certified Pro-Housing Community 10/7/2024

**Mayor, Colleen Meeder**

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Sherman NY Forward