

Sherman's Inn on Main, Bed and Breakfast
137 West Main Street
Sherman, NY 14781
716-720-0889

October 11, 2024

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

Re: Village of Sherman 2024 NY Forward Round 3

Dear Ms. Utz,

I would like to offer this letter in full support of the Village of Sherman's application to the NY Forward program for \$4.5M.

I currently own and operate Sherman's Inn on Main Bed & Breakfast in the heart of the Village of Sherman, located at 137 West Main Street. I refurbished and opened the Inn in 2013 investing more than \$350,000 in the Village as well as many personal hours over the past decade as I sit on various community committees.

I am so thankful that the village is applying to this program to revitalize our community and secure the future of this quaint village. I have had ties to this community for over 70 years and although our village is unique with a colorful historical past, its infrastructure, from the 1800's to the present, is very much in need of innovation and new environmentally responsible systems both in and around the Village's Central Business District.

Our Village is currently a pass-through town on your way to someplace else. I welcome the new gateway and traffic calming ideas and would love to see our downtown district revitalized with the two empty commercial buildings being repurposed into a community center and the new anchor business, We Rock the Spectrum.

The much needed revitalization of the downtown area will positively benefit this community by attracting additional businesses, residents, and visitors. I firmly believe that increasing access to the trail systems, regenerating empty retail spaces to diversify the downtown's current offerings, and establishing We Rock the Spectrum – Sherman as the anchor business will draw families from all over the region. I am enthusiastic to hear that along with lodging, an eatery is the most essential business within a trail town. The proposed improvements to our local trail will go hand in hand with business development, boosting this economy and working toward a stable and sustainable community.

As a member of the Beautification Committee, it is our mission to create green space, improve the local environment, and promote physical, emotional and social well-being, so that our community get stronger and healthier. The trail improvements will help draw people outdoors, promoting a

healthier lifestyle while working toward our 'Trail Town' designation, which will exponentially attract trail enthusiasts. Statistics show that 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. That is so exciting!

The conversion of the old theater into a children's sensory gym right next to the trail, along with the proposed Autism Trail, will bring visitors from all over the county, and further. The Village of Sherman will have a competitive advantage in attracting tourists as there is no other children's sensory gym serving the target market with the same size and scope as the We Rock the Spectrum – Sherman facility in Chautauqua County. As a business owner and member of the Sherman Chamber of Commerce, I feel this anchor project will invigorate the local economy by increasing foot traffic to local eateries and retail shops, while also bringing attention to other parts of our community like our free library and living museum.

Currently there is no true hostel/hotel offering convenient, inexpensive, safe, overnight accommodations for trail users and other short-term lodgers. I would very much welcome the proposed hostel which would not be in competition with my Bed and Breakfast, but rather, meets a different demographic, both clearly in line with our vision and desire to become a 'Trail Town'.

Again, as a business owner and Chamber of Commerce member, the empty building reuse, new housing developments, and trail improvements around our goal of becoming a Trail Town, will all improve both the quality of living for our local residents and attract visitors stimulating our local economy. I reviewed the many proposed projects at the recent 'Night at the Museum' open house hosted by the Village of Sherman and was extremely grateful and impressed by the attendees support and excitement at these proposed initiatives.

Sherman brims with potential, and with the infusion of the NY Forward Grant, we can realize and foster a prosperous environment for all who call this charming village home. These improvements will, in turn, further advance the economic development and revitalization of the entire region, including the neighboring towns of Finley Lake, Mayville, Westfield and Chautauqua.

Thank you for your commitment to the revitalization of rural villages through the NY Forward program. I eagerly anticipate the potential transformative impact this grant can bring to the Village of Sherman, and Chautauqua County. I kindly request that you give the Village of Sherman your full consideration for this critical grant.

Sincerely,



Georgia Peck, Owner

Sherman's Inn on Main

Email: Georgiapeck137@gmail.com