



## **FOR IMMEDIATE DISTRIBUTION**

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**HEADLINE: Facade Improvement Grants Benefit Knox County Businesses**

**KNOX COUNTY —**

Area Development Foundation (ADF), The Knox County Commissioners, and the City of Mount Vernon recently partnered to create a matching grant program to encourage investment in the county's commercial building facades. The Facade Improvement Grant (FIG) program provided funds for improvements through a 50% matching grant of up to \$20,000.

The program aims to stimulate business development and enhance Knox County's unique character by encouraging small businesses to invest in the permanent improvement of fixed assets in Knox County's commercial areas.

ADF administered the program through the Knox County Revolving Loan Fund, utilizing \$170,000 from the Knox County Commissioners and \$100,000 from the City of Mount Vernon's ARPA allocations. Grants were awarded to 22 different buildings across the county, with an average award of \$12,000 per project.

The program was created to act as a catalyst for reinvestment in commercial properties with an emphasis on buildings in historic downtowns or along heavily trafficked corridors. The \$270,000 in grant funds led to \$721,775 in investment on facades alone. Many of these projects also included substantial interior renovations, increasing the impact on building conditions, shopper appearance, and downtown aesthetics.

"KL0210Properties LLC was thrilled to be awarded \$20,000 in matching grant dollars to assist in funding our facade improvements to our 100-year-old building in downtown Fredericktown. These funds not only allowed us to install new storefront doors and

windows but, in turn, gave us more in our personal budget to tackle additional renovation needs on the interior of the building. Having the support of the Knox Area Development Foundation has created encouragement and excitement in our village, and we are proud to be a part of this momentum,” said Kristine Lindeman, Owner of The Shoppe on Main.

ADF took a concerted effort to encourage participation from around the county. As a result, there were projects in Mount Vernon, Fredericktown, Centerburg, Danville, and Apple Valley. Residents can already see the benefit of these projects through the installation of outdoor dining areas, new awnings, updated signage, repaired bricks, fresh coats of paint, and storefront windows.

“ADF is proud to work with our local partners to bring this valuable program to the community. Knox County is known for its small-town charm and lifestyle. This program provided resources to enhance its quaint atmosphere. Hopefully, the improvements catalyzed through this grant will lead to increased downtown activity, tourism and community spirit,” said Jeff Gottke, ADF President.

The Facade Improvement Grant program has been a successful initiative that promotes community vibrancy which is one of the pillars of the Area Development Foundation’s (ADF) mission. ADF supports many county-wide efforts that focus on success. This program is a terrific example of how a collaborative approach across communities can better Knox County.

The program is closed for 2022, but ADF hopes to continue it in the future.

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The Area Development Foundation acts as the central clearinghouse for all economic development in Knox County. ADF’s mission is to create more high-quality/good-paying jobs, match good employers to job-ready workers, and advance efforts to support livable communities throughout Knox County.