



**Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) Region:** Southern Tier

**Programs:** NY Forward

**Municipality Name:** Village of Canisteo

**Downtown Name:** Downtown Canisteo

**County:** Steuben

**Primary Contacts:** Katrina Oliverio: Clerk-Treasurer, [clerk@villageofcanisteo.com](mailto:clerk@villageofcanisteo.com)

Monica Recktenwald: Mayor, [mayor@villageofcanisteo.com](mailto:mayor@villageofcanisteo.com)

## **Geographic Area and Justification**

The Village of Canisteo is located in the Southern Tier as one of the earliest occupied locations within Steuben County. The Canisteo River and Bennetts Creek outline the border of the village, creating a beautiful valley within the hills. The Village was officially incorporated in 1873 and populated quickly with the construction of the Erie Railroad. Several businesses and hotels were constructed to support the booming market. Canisteo is rich with Native American tradition as it housed an Indian village known as the Kanestio Castle until 1764. The Village's world-famous Living Sign has been featured in Ripley's "Believe it or Not" and in 2004, was added to the National Register of Historic Places. Originally constructed in 1933, the sign has been restored and still sits on the hill overlooking the Village. Whether one is hiking the nearby Finger Lakes Trail, touring the area's beautiful wineries, or just out for an afternoon scenic drive, the Living Sign is a must see on the list for tourists traveling through the area. These historic locations are significant to the tradition in our small-town community.



The Village of Canisteo has a total area of 1 square mile with approximately 946 households. The Village business district has evolved from the boom times in the 20<sup>th</sup> century to present day. Over the past century, many businesses have come and gone as the railroad and manufacturing industries have changed. The present-day downtown area is comprised of sections of Main, Depot and Greenwood Streets with current active businesses consisting of salons, restaurants, gas station, antique shop, massage therapy, bank, post office, and churches. Several buildings are original to the business district, featuring detailed craftsmanship and architecture that highlight the historical small-town charm. With six vacant buildings there is space for new business opportunities; however, the lack of upkeep and modernization has deterred potential businesses due to significant upfront investment required to update these buildings to an attractive commercial space.

The Village is poised to capitalize on the great support from New York State and the Department of Transportation with their recent investment in the Village of Canisteo. Significant enhancements to the area's walkability, including the business district, are in progress with new sidewalks installed along Main Street (State Route 248) and Greenwood Street (State Route 36) as part of the NYS highway project slated to complete construction in Spring 2023. As noted in the NYS DOT Press Release<sup>1</sup> issued March 18, 2022, "This project is more than just an investment in roads and sidewalks in the Village of Canisteo - it is

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.dot.ny.gov/portal/page/portal/news/press-releases/2022/2022-03-18>

fundamentally helping to grow and promote a healthy and vibrant community by making it more walkable, bikeable and accessible to all users of the road,” **said Commissioner Dominguez.** “I am very excited to announce the beginning of this important transportation project that will help support the local economy in Canisteo and benefit the entire Southern Tier community.””

Per the 2020 US Census data<sup>2</sup>, with a median gross rent 58% lower than other areas in NY state and a 4% vacancy rate, rental housing has been attractive to both those looking to rent and landlord investors. For those looking to purchase a home, Canisteo is a financially attractive place with a median housing value of \$79,200. For residents not employed with larger Canisteo employers such as the Canisteo-Greenwood School District, Canisteo serves as a bedroom community with many enjoying the small-town atmosphere to raise their families while commuting for work to the area’s larger employers such as Corning, Inc., Alstom, UR Medicine St. James Hospital, NYS DOT Region 6, local school districts, and local municipalities. Affordable rental and home prices, coupled with the proximity to larger employers' positions Canisteo as a prime location for housing investment. The current downtown has great opportunities for affordable second floor housing and multi-dwelling units.



<sup>2</sup> <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=1600000US3612254&tid=ACSDP5Y2020.DP04>

## **Vision Statement**

The Village of Canisteo's Downtown is the central hub for approximately 2100 residents living in our family-oriented community. The Village will use a grass root approach to identify ways to continue to attract a diverse population of new residents, while retaining current residents and business owners. With vast agricultural availability, the downtown area is ideal for markets to provide access to local goods for residents and visitors. The Village's Downtown intersects two major State Highways, while making it an optimal stopping place for visitors driving through the area. Several buildings downtown are original to the Village's established business district and create generations of memories. While we want to modernize our street level commercial space to attract aspiring entrepreneurs, it's important to strengthen the historic environment.

The Village of Canisteo has experienced numerous public and private investments within the last 5 years specifically through NYS DOT highway and sidewalks, Water Infrastructure, and Emergency Service HVAC/Ventilation projects. Though private investment has attracted new businesses, the downtown still lacks a sense of place. Unfortunately, many of our property owners are unable to acquire the means to make these necessary improvements and attract new opportunities. With the economic impacts and uncertainty of new business prospects, many property owners are hesitant to make additional investments. The NY Forward Program will support our revitalization to restore our downtown and bring new aspiring entrepreneurs along with new safe living opportunities to meet today's market. Overall investment in the downtown area will help better serve the community's needs, support entrepreneurship, and attract visitors to explore our historic beauty and natural landmarks.



## **Past Investment and Future Potential**

Recent public and private investment has been made within and supporting the downtown area being targeted with the NY Forward application. This investment coupled with other planned and future projects impacting the focus area are positive signs to help improve the community and promote economic growth.

Examples of recent investments include:

### **PUBLIC**

- 2020-2022: \$11K - LED Upgrade for multiple municipal buildings and all village street lighting completed
- 2022-2023: \$8.6M - NYS DOT project focused on Main Street, Greenwood Street, and the downtown park area (Press Release<sup>3</sup>)
- 2022-2023: \$538K - 35 Main Street – Municipal Building
  - \$400K CDBG-Care Act grant for 35 Main St, Emergency Services building. The grant was awarded in June 2021 to replace the generator and update the building's HVAC system. This municipal building is the command center for all public health and state of emergencies
  - \$138K for roof replacement
- 2022-2023: \$5.7M Water Infrastructure Improvement project. The Village has been planning the project since 2018 with key benefits to businesses and residents. The scope includes replacement of 10,000 linear feet of water main, procurement and installation of digital/radio-read meters to better monitor water usage and identify potential leaks, water storage tank cleaning and rehabilitation, and installation of new/additional hydrants as needed in the project area to support fire protection (HUNT Engineering Bid Info<sup>4</sup>.) At the 9/13/22 regular Board meeting, the project



<sup>3</sup> <https://www.dot.ny.gov/portal/page/portal/news/press-releases/2022/2022-03-18>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.hunt-easplans.com/jobs/361/details/village-of-canisteo-water-system-improvements>

was awarded to RB Robinson Contracting, Inc.

- 2023-2024: \$4.1M Wastewater Treatment Project. The Village of Canisteo will install ultraviolet effluent disinfection at the village's wastewater treatment plant. This project will improve water quality by reducing pathogens in the plant's discharge to the Canisteo River (NYS Regional Economic Development Councils<sup>5</sup>.)
- Future: Nicholas F. Clark Memorial Park
  - To celebrate our history and honor members of our armed forces, police, and fire departments there are rehabilitation tasks and improvements local non-profit Canisteo Community Support Group have been working to raise enough funding to implement at this local park

## **PRIVATE**

- 2017: \$100K renovation project – 2 Greenwood Street, Annie's Restaurant
  - Street level commercial space transformed and modernized
  - Since renovation, has been occupied by Annie's, a top restaurant in the community
  - Redevelopment of outdoor space to provide an ice cream window and outdoor seating
  - Upstairs renovated for housing/lodging and is currently offered through Airbnb, frequented by tourists visiting the nearby Finger Lakes Trail and Wine Country
- 2019: \$10K renovation project – 10 & 12 Greenwood Street, JLA Photography, LoX Salon
  - Vacant former bakery and exercise studio turned into a family-friendly photography studio and salon
- 2019: \$50K renovation project - 20 Greenwood Street, Iroquois House
  - Vacant former auto parts store transformed into a street level coffee/internet café with multi-unit housing in back and upstairs
  - Future planned enhancements include a \$50K billiard and game room
- 2022: \$35K renovation project – 31 Main Street, DJs Pizzeria
  - Street level commercial space updated to support modern pizzeria needs
  - Upstairs renovated for housing/lodging and is currently offered through Airbnb, frequented by tourists visiting the nearby Finger Lakes Trail and Wine Country
  - Future planned enhancements include a \$20K patio out back to complement the neighboring Mar's Bar

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<sup>5</sup> <https://regionalcouncils.ny.gov/cfa/project/363248>

## Recent or Impending Job Growth

Limited land opportunity makes manufacturing/industrial expansion unlikely within the focus area. Intergenerational connection is strong within the Village, and by creating a quality sense of place, new entrepreneurs will retain business with a sense of belongingness.

The Village recognizes the threat posed by the only remaining bank within the Village limits, Citizens & Northern Bank, recently announcing the closing of their Canisteo office in Fall 2022 and directing customers to their South Hornell office located off State Route 36. It would be advantageous to the local community and surrounding areas to retain a financial institution in the downtown Main Street building.

## Canisteo's Recent Job Growth

|                                          |                                                               |             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |             |                                            |
|------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|--------------------------------------------|
| <b>2018</b>                              | Elaura Salon<br>Opened<br><br>New Jobs: 7                     | <b>2019</b> | Iroquois House<br>Opened<br><br>New Jobs: 2                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <b>2019</b> | LoX Salon<br>Opened<br><br>New Jobs: 3     |
| <b>2019</b>                              | Twin Tiers<br>Construction Inc.<br>Opened<br><br>New Jobs: 25 | <b>2020</b> | Mullen Assoc.<br>Law Office<br>Opened<br><br>New Jobs: 1                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <b>2022</b> | DJ's Pizzeria<br>Opened<br><br>New Jobs: 7 |
| <b>Established<br/>Growing Employers</b> |                                                               |             | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Universal Builders: added 3 employees/yr over last 3 years. Total Employees: 25</li><li>2. Alstom: 1.8B contract awarded – Hornell, NY (&lt;5 miles from Canisteo downtown) Bringing approx. 250 additional jobs</li><li>3. Canisteo-Greenwood School District: continues to be a district of choice and sought out by potential employees. Consistent enrollment over the past 10 years.</li></ol> |             |                                            |

## **Quality of Life**

Several buildings in the heart of our downtown are original to Canisteo's history and are starting to show their age. With new investments in our water system, highway, sidewalks and our downtown parking lot we've created a safe and accessible atmosphere for all generations. The downtown has been improved with nearly 500 feet of new sidewalk that expands slightly over a quarter of a mile down East Main Street and West Main Street. This greatly increases accessibility throughout the Village presenting safe foot traffic throughout town. Not only has it made it a safer atmosphere for the community to explore the downtown but it's also made it more convenient for our public transportation system (Hornell Area Transit) to accommodate surrounding communities and our residents. The Hornell Area Transit (HAT) operates daily with some weekend service. One of the main five public routes includes Canisteo with the bus stop located in downtown Canisteo. With affordable fares and reliable schedules, the HAT System offers additional commuter opportunities and increased traffic volume to Canisteo's Downtown.

The businesses that are currently in our target area are a post office, several restaurants, an antique shop, hair and nail salons, a banquet hall to host events, a coffee shop and a florist. These businesses attract locals to the downtown however diversity and access to local goods is strongly lagging. There are six opportunity sites available to convey additional community resources and commercial business to the downtown. Outside of our scope, the Village of Canisteo is known as the home of the World-Famous Living Sign. This historic staple has made Canisteo a tourist interest thanks to its feature in Ripley's "Believe it or Not." The sign was also listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2004. As a whole, the Village residents and surrounding communities would like to see a clear and accessible trail from our downtown to the living sign and we will explore options to create a peaceful overlook with land markings and mile markers for the fitness enthusiast. The Finger Lakes Trails are located near the village and offers additional opportunities for hiking enthusiast to add to their footpath and explore the Village.

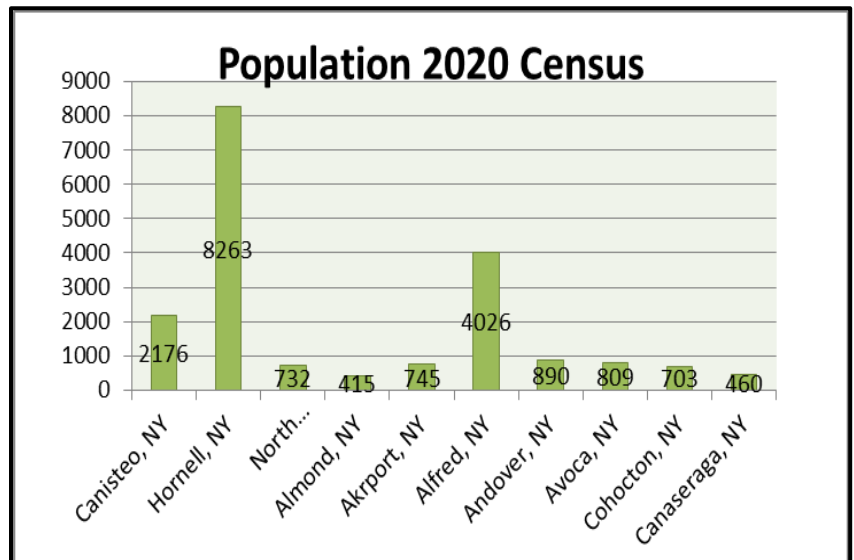
Aside from the commercial opportunities in our downtown, we also have a great deal of upper-level housing opportunities. Registered Airbnb's are quickly growing due to the demand for housing within the area. The Canisteo Wind Project and Alstom's contract expansions have increased demand for quality housing in the area. In our outlined boundary, there are three locations identified for single-unit renovation and one location a short-term lodging. By improving the quality and accessibility to these housing units, our downtown area will have a heightened quality of life.

In addition, the opportunities in the Canisteo Downtown, many families are attracted to the quality education offered by the Canisteo School District. During the 2021-2022 school year, Canisteo-Greenwood Elementary School was designated a Lighthouse School. This designation was earned by the district demonstrating engagement in ongoing learning while championing leadership for the school. This means the staff; students and families have effectively taught students' leadership traits through lessons, integrated approaches and modeling leadership skills at home and in the classroom. This certification is a highly-regarded standard set by Franklin Covey. Currently, Canisteo is one of three Lighthouse Schools within a 70 mile radius,

with one within 24 miles and the other within 53 miles. The high school has been listed as one of the Best High Schools by *US News & World Report*. This sets the Canisteo-Greenwood District apart from our neighboring districts and attracts families to our community.

Though Canisteo is experiencing a declining population like many small Villages through Steuben County, Canisteo's density per square mile is higher than most surrounding Villages. The 2020 Census population graph clearly shows the density of the population in Canisteo compared to surrounding Villages. In addition to population density within the area, Canisteo has seen a consistent demand in the residential housing market. Since 2018, there have been 138

residential sales with an average of 27 per year. Sales for 2022 are expected to exceed this average with 25 residential sales as of August. It can be said with confidence that Canisteo is an attractive Village with continued interest for many proprietors. The future of Canisteo shows many opportunities and with the funding opportunities our planning committee will execute these to their fullest potential.



### **Support of Local Policies**

The Village of Canisteo recognizes the importance of clean energy and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. In 2020 the Village streamlined permitting for residential solar projects, benchmarking of greenhouse gas emissions and LED upgrade to municipal building and streetlights. The Village is in concurrence for residential and commercial clean energy initiatives and adopted benchmarking and solar policies in support of these initiatives. Canisteo is one of the few municipalities within Steuben County to receive the Clean Energy Community designation.

Canisteo has been working with the Office of Community Renewal and has identified the importance of supporting under privileged communities. With efforts to upkeep the agencies practices, the Village has adopted a fair housing plan in conformance with the requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The village has established Units of General Local Government Section 3 Participation Plan, directing programs toward low- and very low-income persons. In addition, the Village has completed 504/ADA self-evaluations on municipal buildings to identify needs of improvements and areas to better service all needs of our constituents.

The Village of Canisteo is currently conducting a codification of our local code book. The editorial and legal analysis has been completed with the final editing of the manuscript pending. Once completed, the code book will have local codes in compliance with the new versions of 19 NYCCR and available online through eCode360. Furthermore, the village plans to further review zoning and planning codes to better accommodate present day demands and markets.

## **Public Support**

An introductory letter and notice of a public meeting were sent to all business owners within the village and residents received invitations for a public meeting through social media, Village website and local community information boards. The letter is as follows:

*“As a business owner in the Village of Canisteo I wanted to personally reach out to you regarding a funding opportunity we are exploring for our downtown. This program is called NY Forward and it’s offered to local governments to assist with restoring buildings to bring jobs and business opportunities to rural areas. I have attached a program flyer which offers more details on the program.*

*In order for our project and application to be successful, we need our community’s support and involvement. The Village Board is holding a public meeting at Village Hall on September 13, 2022 at 6:30PM to hear ideas from the community. I hope that you can attend this meeting and bring ideas on what you would like to see in our downtown project. If you cannot attend the meeting but would like to share ideas or have more questions on the program, please contact the office M-F 9AM-4PM at 607-698-4553. All ideas will be considered for our application which is due September 23, 2022.*

*It’s an honor to have committed businesses in the Village and we hope you know your support is exceptionally valued. I look forward to speaking with you further about how we can revitalize Canisteo and strengthen its small-town charm.”*

During the public meeting, held on September 13, 2022, approximately 29 business owners and residents attended to learn about the revitalization opportunities and provided great feedback on how they see the future of our downtown area. During the meeting, all in attendance were asked to complete a survey, which we also included on our website and have received a large response. The survey questions consisted of:



- Years lived in Canisteo?
  - o Majority reported living 20+ years within Canisteo
- Rent or Own?

- Majority reported they own
- Concerns with current downtown?
  - Empty, rundown buildings that need a face lift
- What businesses/services would you like to see in Canisteo?
  - Clothing, Gym, Hardware Store, Pharmacy, Dog Park, Arts Center
- Do you support upper-level housing improvement to your building if available?
  - Yes
- Would you be interested in participating in a Planning Committee?
  - Majority said Yes

In addition to attendance from local businesses and residents, Mike Rogers from Senator Tom O'Mara's office attended and provided feedback and recommendations on the program. Conclusively, we identified a demand for Community and Youth centers to provide a safe and interactive environment, enhancement of our historic buildings and natural landmarks and incorporate our large agriculture industry by offering space for local foods and goods downtown. Canisteo is still used by Military aviators using the Canisteo Living Sign as a geographical reference point, and residents enjoy hiking to this landmark. By adding signage in our downtown area, improve trails and paths to the living sign, we can encourage residents and visitors to experience the beautiful scenery.

The village also has great community support and sense of pride. The village volunteer fire and ambulance service are fully staffed with 50 volunteer members. Local annual events that are widely attended by many are Craze Daze and Christmas in the Village. These events are hosted by a local non-for-profit, Canisteo Community Support Group and are held in Downtown Canisteo. Other organizations that support the village include the Canisteo Police Club, Morning Star Lodge #65, Canisteo American Legion, Canisteo Rotary, and Athletic Sports Booster.



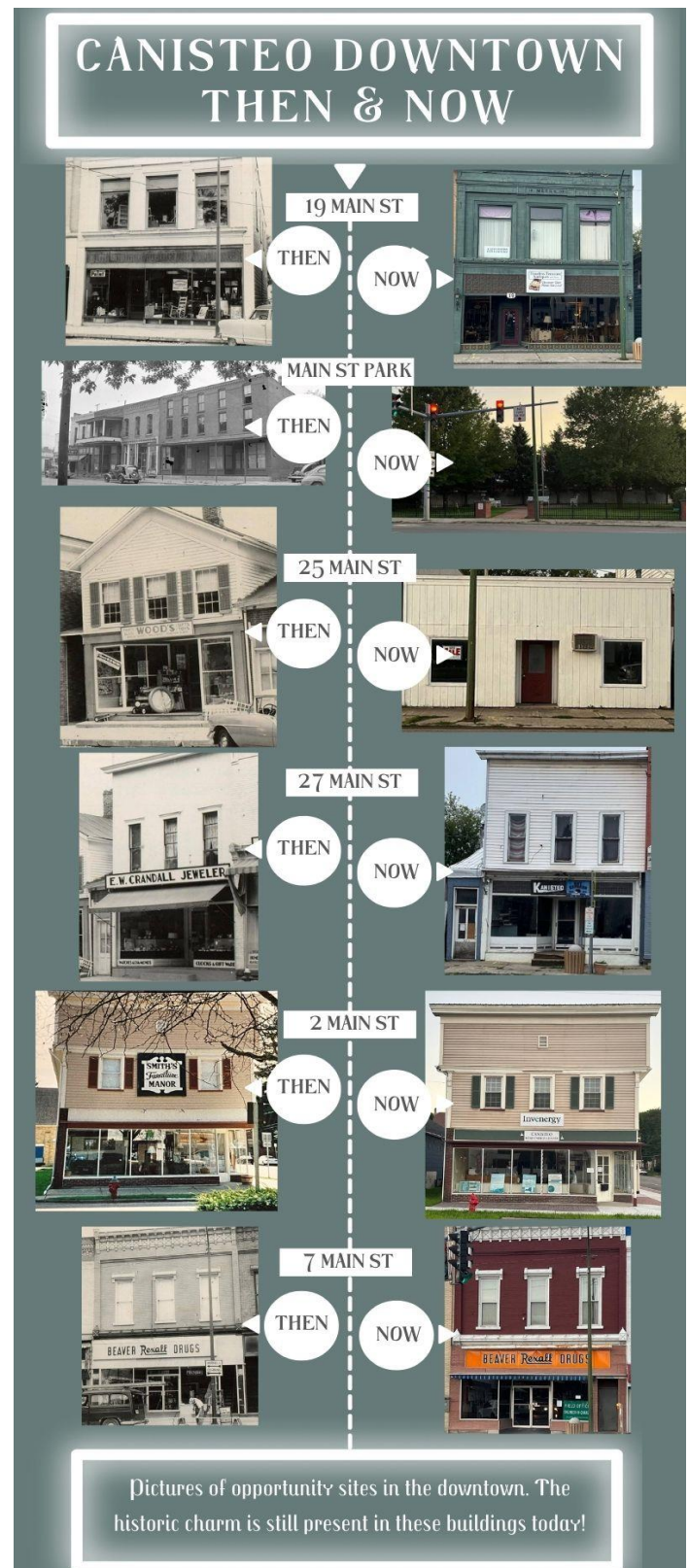
## Transformative Project Opportunities

The following locations have been identified opportunities for future commercial/business opportunities:

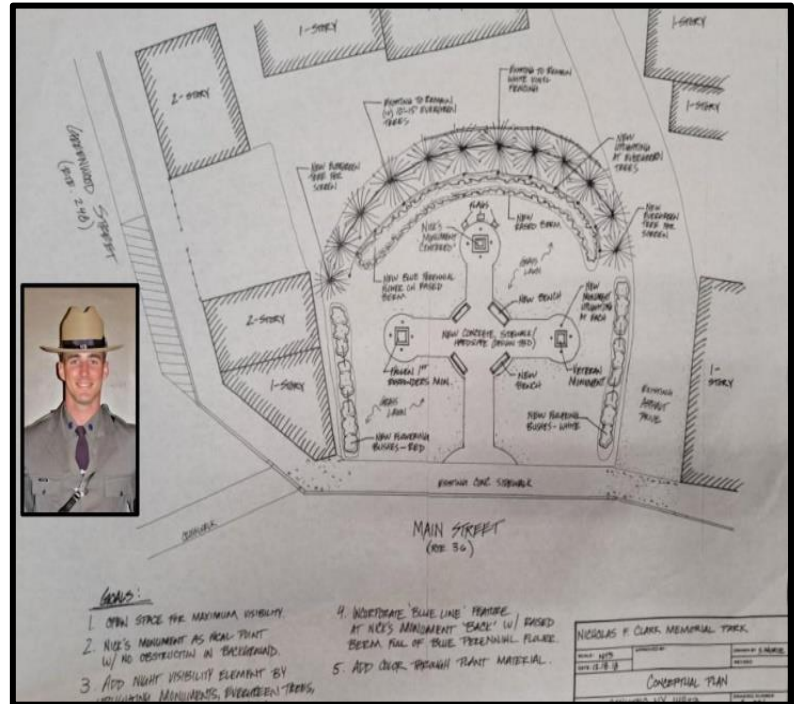
- **7 Main Street: Commercial Renovation**  
1900 Sq. Ft.- remodel for future business opportunity  
**Estimated cost \$380,000**
- **25 Main Street: Commercial Renovation**  
1200 Sq. Ft.- remodel for future business opportunity: Railroad Museum & shop to purchase local merchandise  
**Estimated cost \$480,000**
- **27 Main Street: Commercial Renovation**  
1480 Sq. Ft.-remodel for future business opportunity  
**Estimated cost \$592,000**
- **7 W. Main Street: Commercial Renovation**  
1792 Sq. Ft.- remodel for future business, CPA Office  
**Estimated cost \$360,000**
- **20 Greenwood Street: Commercial Renovation**  
880 Sq. Ft – add commercial kitchen to existing coffee/internet café to support expansion/growth, roof replacement  
**Estimated cost \$50,000**  
1200 Sq. Ft – convert original brick warehouse into barbeque restaurant, catering, and hosting events  
**Estimated cost \$100,000**

In addition to renovating commercial space for future job growth and business opportunities the Village has also identified upper-level housing and down-town restoration projects:

- **2 Main Street: Second Floor Lodging Renovation**  
3224 Sq. Ft.- remodel for future motel/inn  
**Estimated cost \$1,612,000**



- **7 Main Street: Upper-level Housing Renovation**  
1900 Sq. Ft.- remodel for future business opportunity  
**Estimated cost \$380,000**
- **8 Main Street: Community/Youth center**  
Restoration of building for future community or youth center.  
**Estimated cost \$200,000**
- **19 Main Street: Upper-level Housing Renovation**  
2132 Sq. Ft.-remodel for housing  
**Estimated 427,000**
- **27 Main Street: Upper-level Housing Renovation**  
1480 Sq. Ft.-remodel for housing  
**Estimated cost \$444,000**
- **Village of Canisteo Downtown Marquee**  
LED sign with a high definition 10mm display  
**Estimated cost \$12,255**
- **Village of Canisteo Nicholas F. Clark Memorial Park**  
Complete tear out and restore of concrete and greenery  
**Estimated cost \$92,000**



## Administrative Capacity

The Village of Canisteo has designated staff to oversee and manage the planning process for this project. Katrina Oliverio, Clerk-Treasurer, and Monica Recktenwald, Mayor, are the primary point of contacts and will have direct oversight of the project. Deputy Clerk, Letitia Turner will also assist with administrative duties including operations of projects once constructed.

In addition to municipal staff, the following community members have devoted to being on the planning committee:

Larry Fairman, Business/Property Owner  
Michael Palmer, Business/Property Owner  
Thomas Kneale, Property Owner  
Rosemary Kneale, Non-Profit President  
Steve Cotton, Historic Resource  
Roy Forshee, Property Owner  
Jen & Christopher Blake, Business/Property Owner

## **Letters of Support**

ATTACHED BELOW



**Cornell University**  
**Cooperative Extension**  
**Schuyler County**

**Schuyler County Human  
Services Complex**  
323 Owego Street, Unit #5  
Montour Falls, NY 14865

Tel: 607 535-7161  
Fax: 607 535-6813  
E-mail: [schuyler@cornell.edu](mailto:schuyler@cornell.edu)  
Web: [www.cce.cornell.edu/schuyler](http://www.cce.cornell.edu/schuyler)

September 6, 2022

Mayor Monica Recktenwald  
Village of Canisteo  
8 Green Street  
Canisteo, NY 14823

Dear Mayor Recktenwald:

I am writing on behalf of the Cornell Cooperative Extension to express strong support for the Village of Canisteo's application for the New York State's NY Forward Program. The proposed Downtown Improvement Project is vital to the community as a whole.

The Village has demonstrated community leadership by participating in NYSERDA's Clean Energy Communities (CEC) program and was one of the first communities to receive CEC Designation in the Leadership Round. They are also one of the few communities in Steuben County to be able to claim this recognition. Through this program the Village has: streamlined permitting for small-scale, residential solar; upgraded facility lighting and streetlighting to reduce energy use, cost, and associated greenhouse gas emissions while providing safer and better lit community areas. These actions have improved and benefited Village facilities and provide a good case to what the Village can implement on a larger scale.

With this funding, the Village will be able to develop investment and improvement plans for the Village of Canisteo's Downtown. These improvements are vital in creating job opportunities in rural communities, and potential loss of current businesses with lack of investment. We are hopeful the Village of Canisteo will be successful with their application request and participation in evaluating the downtown's future improvements. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Todd Knobbe'.

Todd Knobbe  
CCE Energy Resource Educator  
NYSERDA Clean Energy Communities Coordinator

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Melissa C. Schroeder'.

Melissa C. Schroeder  
Interim Executive Director  
Youth and Family Issue Leader

# STEBEN COUNTY IDA

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

MAKING CONNECTIONS  
CREATING SOLUTIONS

August 26, 2022

Mayor Monica Recktenwald  
Village of Canisteo  
8 Green Street  
Canisteo, NY 14823

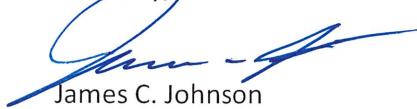
Dear Mayor Rechtenwald:

Please accept this letter of support from the Steuben County Industrial Development Agency (IDA) for the Village of Canisteo's application for the New York State's NY Forward Program.

As the designated economic development organization for Steuben County, we recognize the importance of vibrant downtowns and the impact this has on the ability to attract new investment and job creation opportunities for the region. The Village's proximity to the growth that is occurring at Alstom and the region's transportation industry make Canisteo a prime location for future development and we look forward to working together to help advance future projects.

The proposed downtown projects outlined in the Village's proposal are vital to the community as a whole. With this funding, the Village will be able to advance investment and improvement plans for the Village of Canisteo's Downtown which are vital in creating job opportunities in rural communities. The IDA is pleased to offer its support for this application and is hopeful the Village of Canisteo will be successful with their application request.

Sincerely,



James C. Johnson  
Executive Director

# Canisteo Valley Rentals

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17 S Elm St Canisteo

Village of Canisteo  
Attn: Mayor, Monica Recktenwald  
8 Green St.  
Canisteo, NY 14823

RE: Village of Canisteo NY Forward Application

Too Whom it may concern,

My name is Larry Fairman, I am a lifelong resident and business owner in the Village of Canisteo. I am writing this letter in support of Canisteo being selected for the NY Forward program. I have two businesses located in the village of Canisteo and own real-estate throughout the village residential and commercial areas. This program would change the curb appeal of our village greatly, we are a sleeper community that has much to offer people as they travel to and through our small town. A revitalized downtown area would attract even more people to this great place. We offer more than most small towns as we have great dining options, a newly renovated downtown park area, our police club does a great event called smoke in the valley that draws thousands every year in the summer, and we have a national landmark "the world-famous Canisteo living sign", that marketed properly can attract thousands more throughout the year. The NY Forward program would help local business and property owners enhance their downtown store fronts and additional building spaces to maximize all space that they currently don't or can't use. Programs like NY Forward can change the dynamic of a small town, with what we have to offer, and the tremendous support and strength of our community Canisteo would be a great choice for this program.

Thank you for your time.

Respectfully prepared by: Larry Fairman 607-382-8208

**RANKING MINORITY MEMBER**  
FINANCE  
INVESTIGATIONS AND GOVERNMENT  
OPERATIONS  
  
**COMMITTEES**  
RULES  
CODES  
JUDICIARY  
INSURANCE  
ENERGY AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS

**THE SENATE  
STATE OF NEW YORK**



**THOMAS F. O'MARA  
SENATOR  
58<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT**

ROOM 711B LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING  
ALBANY, NEW YORK 12247  
(518) 455-2091  
FAX: (518) 426-6976  
  
333 E. WATER STREET, SUITE 301  
ELMIRA, NEW YORK 14901  
(607) 735-9671  
FAX: (607) 735-9675  
  
E-MAIL: [omara@nysenate.gov](mailto:omara@nysenate.gov)

August 29, 2022

Monica Recktenwald  
Mayor  
Village of Canisteo  
8 Green Street  
Canisteo, NY 14823

Dear Mayor Recktenwald:

I write to express my strong support for the Village of Canisteo's application for the New York State's NY Forward Program. The proposed Downtown Improvement Project is vital to the community as a whole and builds upon other projects in the community.

It is my understanding that with this funding, the Village will be able to develop investment and improvement plans for the Village of Canisteo's Downtown, which are vital for job creation and retention of current businesses.

The Village is currently working with the NYS DOT on a complete downtown revitalization of streets, curbs, sidewalks and downtown parking lot, which is scheduled to be completed in the summer of 2023. Now, the Village's focus is to revitalize the original buildings to maintain the characteristics of downtown and in return, offer suitable commercial space for new businesses.

As the New York State Senator for the 58th Senate District, I know this funding is vitally important to the well-being my constituents and to catalyze economic development.

Should you have any questions, I invite you to contact my office directly.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thomas F. O'Mara". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Thomas" and last name "O'Mara" clearly legible.

Thomas F. O'Mara  
NYS Senator, 58<sup>th</sup> District