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Downtown Cohoes coming back one grant at a time

By: Tom Caprood , [The Record](#)

COHOES - Residents, politicians and the media gathered on [Remsen Street](#) Tuesday for a press conference held by [Mayor John McDonald](#) announcing a newly received grant to renovate downtown buildings.

The Cohoes Local Development Corp. recently received a check for \$200,000 from the state Division of Housing and Community Renewal. The money was distributed as part of the "New York Main Street" program, which provides financial and technical resources to help communities preserve and revitalize their main street or downtown business districts.

McDonald said that in 2005, the city had received a similar grant for \$148,000 to improve the condition of its downtown buildings. A portion of that money was used on the formerly deteriorating building at 103 Remsen St., which had sat vacant for more than 10 years. The main section of the building will be the new home of a [Soft-Tex Factory Outlet](#), specializing in the production of sleep products.

[Assemblyman Ron Canestrari, D-Cohoes](#), was in attendance to show his support of the mayor's commitment to revitalize the city.

"To have Cohoes receive this grant not only once, but twice, shows the merits of this proposal," said Canestrari. McDonald announced that the buildings slated for work under this grant include 95 Remsen St., 122 Remsen St., 133 Remsen St., 171 Remsen St., 188 Remsen St., and 12 White St. The revitalization process is being conducted in relation to a plan that was developed in 2002 to improve the area.

"We took the ideas and concepts mentioned to us by the public and have stayed tried and true to their plans and wishes. I think that is the underlying reason we are seeing success on Remsen Street," said McDonald.

The owner of the future [Soft-Tex](#) building, Bob Gallagher, said he believed the grant would mostly be used to improve the facade of his building. Construction on the interior of the structure is still taking place.

“This building was ready to fall down a year ago. The only things I had left were the four outside walls,” said Gallagher.

The upstairs portion of the building, newly decorated with brick walls and hardwood floors, will feature several apartments when finished and is the new home of Southside Funding, a local mortgage company.

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