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Improvements ahead for Cohoes

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Last updated: 3:26 p.m., Tuesday, September 25, 2007

COHOES - State and private will be invested toward improving Remsen Street in the heart of downtown.

Some \$200,000 will come from a state grant designed to spruce up "Main Street" corridors that have fallen into disrepair. That money matches investment from property owners to develop buildings with housing or stores, said Ed Tremblay, the city's director of community development and executive director of the Cohoes Local Development Corporation.

About \$20,000 will be spent to improve the streetscape with flowers and improved signs.

"If you were to walk down Remsen Street right now, you would see many architecturally historic buildings and some vacancies, and you would also see some small businesses starting to come back," said Mayor John McDonald.

The grant will be used on six buildings along Remsen Street: 95, 122, 133, 171, 188 Remsen and 12 White Street. McDonald was joined for the morning announcement by Assembly Majority Leader Ron Canestrari, D-Cohoes. This is the second time in three years Cohoes has won the Main Street Grant, administered by the Division of Housing and Community Renewal.

As the city sees new residential growth, McDonald hopes to "focus more residential opportunities downtown" while encouraging the arts. He said the grants will do just that, paving the way for small business.

"We need to find our niche," he said. "Our success is not derived on attracting Wal-Mart to downtown Cohoes. Our success is tapping into people who want to run their own business, and want to do something different."

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