

LIVINGSTON COUNTY AIDS GOODWILL STORE

Livingston County was assisted by Thoma in submitting a successful application to the State's Office of Community Renewal under the CDBG economic development program. The \$315,000 grant will be made available as a forgivable loan to ABVI-Goodwill contingent upon all job creation and investment goals being met.

ABVI's history dates back to the early 1900s when a group of graduates of the New York State School for the Blind had a dream that all people who are blind or visually impaired could lead full, productive lives. Goodwill was established in 1902 to improve the quality of life for people with disabilities and other disadvantages such as welfare dependency, barriers to employment, or lack of work experience. In 1994, ABVI became a member of Goodwill Industries International, an affiliation that has enhanced its ability to offer employment opportunities to blind or visually impaired persons, while also generating vital resources to help fund its mission.

ABVI will open a new Goodwill store in the Village of Geneseo. The store will serve Geneseo and Livingston County, offering lower cost clothes and other products. ABVI will lease 26,000 SF of vacant space in a former Ames building along Route 20A east of Main Street Geneseo. The project meets the County's job development goals and is an adaptive reuse of existing commercial space.



34 TOMPKINS STREET CORTLAND, NY 13045

"Partnering with Communities For a Better Tomorrow"

UPCOMING GRANTS...

SAFETEA-LU Trails – November 5, 2010

Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan Program – To be announced

Local Government Efficiency Grant – To be announced

State Archives – February 7, 2011

Community Visioning

Community Surveys

Comprehensive Planning

Downtown Revitalization

Economic Development

Feasibility Studies

Grant Accounting

Grant Administration

Grant Writing

Historic Preservation

Housing Rehabilitation

Infrastructure Improvements

Lead Clearance Testing

Lead Risk Assessment

Loan Portfolio Management

Market Studies

Microenterprise Assistance

Parks & Trail Development

Records Consulting

Recreation Planning

Strategic Planning

Zoning/Code Revisions

34 Tompkins Street
Cortland, New York 13045
607-753-1433
tdc@thomadevelopment.com

Bernard Thoma,
Senior Consultant



A newsletter of Thoma Development Consultants

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THOMA 30th ANNIVERSARY: WE SALUTE OUR CUSTOMERS

This fall marks the 30th anniversary of Thoma Development Consultants. This is a milestone for our company which could not have been achieved without a group of loyal, unwavering customers.

In 1978, I was working as a rehabilitation manager in the City of Cortland's Office of Community Development, a fledgling office that was developed to manage and administer an early Urban Renewal program and, eventually the Community Development Block Grant Program. Each of us in the office was under individual contracts with the City. In 1980 an audit produced a finding that the City would need to hire us as employees, subject to Civil Service requirements, or hire us as consultants. It was at this time, I decided to start Thoma Development Consultants. In addition to the City, we started to provide services to other municipalities. Linda Armstrong, who had been working with me in the Office of Community Development, agreed to come on board as our first employee. She has been with Thoma ever since.

Some of our first customers, such as the City and the Villages of Groton, DeRuyter, and Waterloo have remained with us to this day. As our reputation and services have grown, so have our geographic service area

and our customer base. We have served well over 100 municipalities, not-for-profits, and private business interests over 30 years and now have an active customer base of 40 to 60 communities at any given time. Our staff has grown to a dozen employees, many with over 20 years of individual experience with Thoma.

In addition to the support I have received from my family and employees, one of the most rewarding aspects of this job has been meeting the people who comprise our customer base: from mayors, supervisors, clerks, and department heads, to local citizens. You have provided me with a wealth of experience and job satisfaction.

Time flies as they say. I wanted all of you to know that our 30th anniversary is a time of great personal reflection and gratitude to all of you who have supported us over the years.

- Bernie Thoma



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BANNER YEAR FOR GRANT AWARDS!

In this time of shrinking municipal resources, we are happy to report that this was a banner year for us in capturing funding for our customers. The 2010 annual Small Cities Community Development Block Grant Program provides funding in the areas of housing rehabilitation, homeownership, downtown revitalization, and infrastructure improvements. Twelve (12) of these grants were awarded to our customers and include:

- Town of Catlin**, Chemung County - \$400,000 for housing rehabilitation
- Town of Cuyler**, Cortland County - \$400,000 for housing rehabilitation
- Town of Lisle**, Broome County - \$400,000 for housing rehabilitation
- Town of North Dansville**, Livingston County - \$400,000 for housing rehabilitation
- Village of Oriskany Falls**, Oneida County - \$600,000 for public sewer
- Village of Owego**, Tioga County - \$400,000 for housing rehabilitation
- Village of Parish**, Oswego County - \$600,000 for public sewer
- Town of Preble**, Cortland County - \$400,000 for housing rehabilitation
- Town of Springwater**, Livingston County - \$600,000 for public sewer
- Town of Verona**, Oneida County - \$400,000 for housing rehabilitation
- Village of Weedsport**, Cayuga County - \$400,000 for housing rehabilitation
- Village of Whitney Point**, Broome County - \$400,000 for housing rehabilitation.

These 12 awards represent almost 20% of all awards given and over 20% of the funding. Six (6) of these awards were resubmitted grant applications, proving it pays to be persistent.

We also assisted four of our customers in capturing NY Main Street funding. These grants will be used for building and façade improvements in commercial buildings and streetscape improvements. Our customers receiving funding include:

- Village of Dansville**, Livingston County - \$399,000
- Village of Homer**, Cortland County - \$310,000
- Village of Lima**, Livingston County - \$315,000
- Village of Whitney Point**, Broome County - \$351,750

Lastly, two of our customers received funding through the NYS HOME Program. Successful applicants include:

- City of Cortland**, Cortland County - \$384,000 for housing rehabilitation
- Village of Whitney Point**, Broome County - \$200,000 for housing rehabilitation

Congratulations to all! Thoma is already in the process of planning for next year's applications. If you are interested in participating, please call us soon.

MEET JOE SOSIK



This summer Thoma was fortunate to have Cornell graduate student, Joe Sosik, join us as part of Cornell's Cooperative internship grant. Joe is completing his Masters in Regional Planning. He provided us GIS mapping capabilities, was introduced to grant writing, worked on the City of Cortland's Comprehensive and East End Strategic Plans, and completed an inventory of our customers' planning documents.

Joe originally hails from the Lehigh Valley, Pennsylvania area and completed his undergraduate degree in human geography at Penn State. His experience includes planning work for the City of Bethlehem and the North Wales Water Authority, both in Pennsylvania.

We were very impressed with Joe's capabilities and we have hired him as a part time assistant to continue the work he started this summer and to assist him in completing course work related to the completion of his Masters degree. Joe will be conducting needs assessments for several of our newest customers to determine community and grant writing needs and will continue to fill our in-house need for GIS.

CONGRATULATIONS MOUNT MORRIS

The Town of Mount Morris in Livingston County received \$43,000 in NYS Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) dollars with Thoma's assistance. EPF funding requires a 50/50 match on the part of applicants.

Mount Morris will construct an all-weather pavilion in its Tuscarora Park; provide additional playground equipment; fill in the ditch along Main Street to make it easier for residents and visitors to enter and exit the parking lot; and install a sign to clearly mark the park's name. The park is located in the small hamlet of Tuscarora. We hope these improvements will benefit the community for years to come.

CORTLAND POLICE AND SCHOOL FORGE STRONG PARTNERSHIP

The Cortland Police Department and the Cortland Enlarged City School District have forged a strong working relationship that not only makes Cortland Schools safer, but also benefits both in terms of grant funding. Thoma is happy to be working with both organizations.

In 2003, Thoma worked with the Police Department and School District on a successful Secure Our Schools grant which netted \$125,000. This paid for a new police officer's position to fill the vacancy created by allowing an experienced officer, Rob Reyngoudt, to become the School District's School Resource Officer (SRO). This has been an extremely successful collaboration in terms of students and staff getting to know their SRO, averting bad behaviors before they happen, providing a quick response to school incidents, and having the SRO advise on safety improvements. The grant provided three years of SRO funding, with the City required to fund the fourth year. The School District is so pleased with Officer Reyngoudt's work, including a national SRO accreditation, they have included the position in the school budget.

The City Police and the Cortland School District also collaborated on a Safe Routes to School (SRTS) grant which provided \$193,600 in funds to install new sidewalks, permanent

mounted speed monitors, signage, and crosswalks. The School District and the Police were very concerned about the lack of sidewalks in an area near Randall Elementary School and the Cortland Junior High. Over time, this area has evolved into a high traffic site and student safety was a growing concern. In addition to the sidewalk improvements, the Police Department secured a radar gun and a bicycle to assist with traffic calming in the area.

Based on input from the SRO, and information provided by a security consultant, 2009 Secure Our Schools funding in the amount of \$250,250 was awarded to the Police Department. The School District will use the money to provide better lighting at the high school and more security cameras in all buildings. The District's match is provided by a capital project primarily aimed at improved security. For the Police Department's part, it will receive in-house surveillance equipment so that it can monitor each school from the Police station.

The partnership between the Cortland Police Department and the Cortland Enlarged City School District has been very fruitful. We congratulate them on providing a fine example of the benefits derived from a strong working partnership between a school and its police department.



Pictured left to right are Cortland Police Officer Rob Reyngoudt, the Cortland School's SRO, Cortland Police Chief F. Michael Catalano, and Cortland School Superintendent Laurence Spring.

LIVINGSTON COUNTY CAPTURES STREAMBANK EROSION FUNDS

The Town of Livonia in Livingston County will utilize \$358,132 in grant funds provided through the NYS Environmental Protection Fund Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (EPF LWRP) to make streambank improvements to Conesus Lake tributaries. EPF LWRP funds are available to communities that have completed, or are in the process of completing, an LWRP Plan, or in the case of Livingston County, a Conesus Lake Watershed Management Plan. The Town was the sponsor of the application for a number of lakefront municipalities and worked closely with the Livingston County Planning Department in developing the project. This is the second such grant received by the community.

The NYS DEC has been concerned about degrading water quality in and around Conesus Lake and has deemed it an "impaired water body". The main source of pollution is sediment. Sediment from eroding streambanks interferes with filtration at public water supply plants, contributes to nuisance weed growth, and alters water chemistry. Livonia will use grant funds for bank reshaping, vegetated gabions, and live fascines based on individual streambank needs and conditions.

Thoma was happy to play a part in this project which will hopefully serve to restore water quality to this important Finger Lakes area.



Streambank erosion in the Conesus Lake Watershed, such as this on Wilkins Creek, will be mitigated using state-of-the-art structural, vegetative, and bio-engineering techniques.