



# GOVERNOR JOSH SHAPIRO

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**In Bedford County, Governor Shapiro and Secretary Siger Visit Small Businesses, Announce Nearly \$7 Million to Support Pennsylvania's Main Streets and Communities Across the Commonwealth**

*Supporting our main streets is an essential element of Governor Shapiro's economic development strategy and 2024-25 budget proposal – and the funding announced today will support 49 community improvement projects in 25 counties.*

*The Governor announced the funding during his statewide RV tour – stopping at local Bedford small businesses and highlighting the quaint main streets and local small businesses that make PA a premier weekend getaway destination.*



**Bedford, PA** – Today, **Governor Josh Shapiro** and Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) **Secretary Rick Siger** announced nearly **\$7 million** through the [Keystone Communities Program](#) (KCP) to support 49 community improvement projects in 25 counties.

The Governor and Secretary Siger made the announcement after touring small businesses in Bedford County during the Governor's week-long *The Great American Getaway* RV tour highlighting Pennsylvania's new tourism brand, which promotes our vibrant main streets, local small businesses, and charming towns like Bedford and encourages millions within a few hours drive to visit Pennsylvania.

"I've been traveling across Pennsylvania this week, showing off our great Commonwealth and the places and people that make it so special. We've got small towns like Bedford, with a quaint main street, incredible shops, and friendly people ready to welcome travelers looking for a relaxing weekend. We've got something for every member of the family – because Pennsylvania is the Great American Getaway," said **Governor Josh Shapiro**. "Today, we are investing nearly \$7 million through the Keystone Communities Program to support 49 projects in 25 counties – including 3 projects here in Bedford County. Keystone Communities funding supports Pennsylvania Main Streets all across the Commonwealth – and that's why my budget includes \$25 million for our new Main Street Matters initiative, which builds off the Keystone Communities program to support small businesses, downtowns, and main streets all across the Commonwealth. The Main Streets Matter initiative will help us grow small

businesses, support our communities, create opportunity for more Pennsylvanians, and welcome more visitors to our towns."

This KCP funding supports Pennsylvania Main Streets all across the Commonwealth, helping communities pay for new sidewalks and improved streetlights, small businesses renovate their facades, and developers build more affordable housing.

Run by DCED, the [KCP](#) encourages the creation of partnerships between the public and private sectors that support the growth and stability of neighborhoods and communities; social and economic diversity; and a strong and secure quality of life. Local governments, redevelopment and housing authorities, nonprofit organizations, community development corporations, and business, neighborhood, and downtown improvement districts are all eligible to apply for KCP grant funding.

"The Governor is focused on making strategic investments, like the ones we are celebrating today in Bedford County, that help our communities become better places to live, work and visit," said **Secretary Rick Siger**. "We're looking to expand our impact on main streets and downtowns across Pennsylvania and to empower local leaders to realize the full potential of their economies. Governor Shapiro's call for \$25 million to create the Main Street Matters program is an investment in the success and prosperity of small businesses, downtowns, and main streets all across Pennsylvania."

In Bedford County, three local businesses and organizations will receive over \$80,000 for community improvement projects, including:

- **\$50,000** to [Downtown Bedford, Inc.](#) for a street audio/emergency notification system for the main streets in downtown Bedford Borough;
- **\$25,000** to the [Bedford County Development Association](#) to complete a Workforce Housing Impact Study throughout Bedford County;
- **\$10,942** to the [Center of Community Action](#) to update the Everett Borough community revitalization strategic plan to position the borough to obtain a Main Street Designation through the [Pennsylvania Downtown Center](#).

"I'm thrilled to see continued investment to Bedford County's workforce and proud of the organizations who work tirelessly to cultivate opportunity here," said **Senator Patrick Stefano**.

"Downtown Bedford is truly a centerpiece of our community with thriving businesses and eateries," said **Representative Jesse Topper**. "A key piece in attracting people to live, work and play in downtown settings is to provide them with the environment in which local economies will flourish."

In his [2024-25 budget](#), Governor Shapiro proposed a **\$25 million** investment to create the new Main Street Matters program – which builds upon and modernizes the existing

successes of the KCP to support the downtowns, main streets, and commercial corridors that are the backbone of Pennsylvania's communities.

In the current award cycle, DCED received 117 applications for the Keystone Communities program requesting more than \$24 million in funding – demonstrating the need for more state investments in the growth and stability of neighborhoods, main streets and downtown districts so that Pennsylvania's communities and their residents can thrive.

"I know that economic development is a priority of the Governor," said **Bedford Mayor William Leibfreid**. "Recently Bedford Borough Council has defined what a vision may look like for the future of the borough. A significant part of that is the economic development of the business district and main street - and it's to not only strengthen the existing businesses, but also to bring new businesses."

"At the Bedford County Visitors Bureau, we welcome travelers from all over the state and country to what we call 'Small Town America,' where the pace is a little slower than most places – but we like it that way. We are a region steeped in American history – and we are only a mere hours' drive away from several large cities, making Bedford a great destination for your next weekend getaway," said **Dennis Tice, Director of the Bedford County Visitors Bureau**. "We are thrilled the Governor and his Administration today are announcing grants to three Bedford County-based organizations through the Keystone Communities Program to revitalize our main streets in downtown Bedford and the surrounding region. This announcement is an example of what is possible when we come together to make our communities stronger."

A complete list of Keystone Communities Program grants can be found [here](#). In addition to the Bedford County recipients, additional grantees include:

### **Allegheny County**

- \$298,004 to [Gwen's Girls](#) to renovate the Rochez Building located in Wilkesburg Borough. Gwen's Girls, a social services organization focused on empowering young women, will relocate to this new location once renovations are completed.

### **Lackawanna County**

- \$500,000 to [United Neighborhood Centers of Northeastern Pennsylvania](#) for redevelopment of the former Peoples Security Bank Building in Scranton. The renovated facility will be used as a hub for workforce development, business networking, a venue for expansion of a year-round farmers market, and immigrant and refugee integration activities.

### **Lancaster County**

- \$500,000 to the [Lancaster Redevelopment Fund](#) to develop the “Prince Street Hub,” a site to address the needs of unsheltered individuals in Lancaster County by providing emergency congregate shelter, permanent affordable housing, crisis housing, and day center.

## Northampton County

- \$146,500 to the [Redevelopment Authority of the City of Bethlehem](#) for remediation of a blighted property in Bethlehem. The Redevelopment Authority will repair and improve the exterior condition of a 2.5-story blighted property located within the Historic Conservation District on the corner of East Fourth Street, a major thoroughfare in South Bethlehem.

## Philadelphia County

- \$500,000 to [Mt. Vernon Manor, Inc.](#) to develop long term housing affordability through construction of 40 affordable housing units in two predominantly low-income neighborhoods. Approximately half of the units will be allocated to individuals with special needs.

## Pike and Wayne Counties

- \$100,000 to the [Pennsylvania Route 6 Alliance](#) to implement a facade grant program located along the PA Route 6 Heritage Corridor in Wayne and Pike Counties. The Pennsylvania Route 6 Alliance proposes to continue their facade program and target businesses in the Pocono Mountains region including the five Heritage Communities of Hawley, Honesdale, Milford, Waymart, and White Mills.

The Governor’s 2024-25 budget proposal builds on his [Economic Development Strategy](#) and will help showcase Pennsylvania as a premier weekend getaway destination. In addition to the **\$25 million** for the Main Street Matters program, other proposed economic development investments in the Governor’s budget includes an **\$18 million** increase to boost Pennsylvania’s tourism industry and business marketing efforts across the Commonwealth.

For more information on how the Governor’s proposed budget will create opportunity for all Pennsylvanians, visit [shapirobudget.pa.gov](https://shapirobudget.pa.gov).

Need inspiration for your next Great American Getaway in Pennsylvania? Become a fan on [Facebook](#), keep up with us on [Instagram](#), share pins on [Pinterest](#), follow us on [X](#) (formerly Twitter), watch us on [YouTube](#), or listen to us on [Spotify](#).

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