



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patrick M. Gallivan

## Senator Gallivan Says NY Forward Funding Supports Projects in Aurora, West Falls & Gowanda

JIM RANNEY May 27, 2025

| ISSUE: **NY FORWARD**



### \$9 Million Awarded for Economic Development Programs

Senator Patrick M. Gallivan, (R-C, Elma) says \$9 million in funding awarded through the NY Forward economic development program will support a total of 12 projects in the Town of Aurora, the Hamlet of West Falls, and the Village of Gowanda. The municipalities were named Round 2 winners of the state's ongoing revitalization efforts.

“I congratulate local leaders and community stakeholders for identifying projects that will improve public spaces, help grow local businesses and create new opportunities for residents and visitors,” Senator Gallivan said. “By focusing on what makes these communities unique, we help build the local economy and enhance the quality of life for everyone.”

A total of 7 projects, totaling \$4.5 million, are in Aurora and West Falls:

- Expand Programming Capacity of the West Falls Center for the Arts (\$1,245,000): Enhance the programming services provided through interior and exterior upgrades to the Center for the Arts along with the construction of an art trail and outdoor performance stage and pavilion.

- Expand Capacity at the Blueberry Treehouse Farm (\$784,000): Adaptively reuse a historic general store by converting it into retail space and five apartment units, while improving parking and accessibility to the Blueberry Treehouse Farm.

- Transform Veterans Park, West Falls-Colden Library and West Falls Community Playground into Local Destinations (\$758,000): Enhance three existing public spaces that will establish new pedestrian connections, expand the total area of green space, and create new family-friendly recreation.

- Reinvent the West Falls Depot (\$725,000): Restore a historic 1917 train depot into a mixed-use development with trailside commercial space and short-term lodging.

- Building Access to West Falls by Converting a Rail Corridor into a Multi-Use Trail (\$420,000): Construct a 1.5-mile extension of the Erie Cattaraugus Rail Trail from Jewettville through the West Falls hamlet center.

-Preserve the Dog Bar (\$392,000): Preserve and enhance the only existing dining establishment in West Falls with upgraded interior and exteriors along with new outdoor dining space.

-Celebrate Local Flavor at the Florence Market (\$176,000): Transform a mixed-use building into a vibrant, go-to spot for fresh produce, artisan goods and daily essentials, featuring a stylish facelift with new siding, lighting, and a mural.

The 5 Gowanda NY Forward Projects, totaling \$4.5 million, include:

-Utilize the Former Community Bank as the Hollywood Theater Accessible Connector and Restaurant (\$1,400,000): Connect the vacant bank building with the Historic Hollywood Theater via a new ADA-accessible passage, update the bank's infrastructure, and restore its interior for future use as a restaurant.

-Modernize the 1904 Armes Block into a Mixed-Use Center (\$1,300,000): Renovate the 1904 Armes Block, a historic commercial building with underutilized upper floors, into apartments and commercial rental units, including a barber academy and cocktail lounge, with updated mechanical systems and historically appropriate storefronts to revitalize the Village gateway and support local businesses and vocational training

-Beautify the Gowanda Business District's Streetscape (\$989,000): Transform the Village's main corridor by replacing deteriorated pavers with decorative concrete, updating street lighting, and adding self-watering planters to enhance aesthetics, safety and environmental benefits while boosting local business and community appeal.

-Create a Small Project Fund for Additional Downtown Improvements (\$655,000): A Small Project Fund provides grants for building improvements, business equipment and public art, following the NYS Main Street Program's guidelines, with funding available to property

owners within the NY Forward Boundary.

-Elevate Gowanda's Identity: Implementing a Wayfinding, Connectivity, and Branding Plan for the Village (\$156,000): Improve signage and connectivity to key sites, create a new brand, and enhance accessibility to parks, historic sites, and local businesses.

The communities developed Strategic Implementation Plans, which identify and recommend a slate of complementary, transformative, and implementable projects. The plans are guided by a Local Planning Committee (LPC) composed of local and regional leaders, stakeholders, and community representatives. The projects selected for funding were identified as having the greatest potential to jumpstart revitalization and generate new opportunities for long-term growth.