



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Catharine Young

Creation of a New York Main Street Development Center Will Help More Communities Prosper

CATHARINE YOUNG April 8, 2016

| ISSUE: **HOUSING, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

ALBANY – Everyone wants their community to have a vibrant, thriving downtown and that can be the outcome when local and state officials collaborate with business owners and residents to develop a long term economic strategy.

With the goal of economic revitalization in mind, Livingston County officials worked with Senator Catharine Young (R,C,I– 57th District) to get a new law enacted that allowed local governments or school districts to opt into a tax abatement program that provided incentives for private investment in the community. At the time, the new program was hailed as a victory for Livingston County because it was seen as an economic driver through restored vacant storefronts and new jobs and development.

Last December, after four years of successful redevelopment work, Senator Young invited New York State Homes & Community Renewal Commissioner Jamie Rubin to see how the program has revitalized several communities' downtowns and how it could be implemented on a statewide basis.

“For many years, Mount Morris was a bustling place of commerce, but over time the downtown area started to decline in a big way. Since 2007, local and state officials have

worked with members of the community, business owners and others to advance a revitalization strategy that has built on the areas existing resources to renew the community's main street. Now the community's irreplaceable historic buildings are thriving with small businesses whose owners take pride in their businesses, and beautiful apartments that are home to people of all ages," Senator Young said.

Having seen the positive benefits the program has brought to municipalities in her Senate District, Senator Young has now authored [legislation](#) that has passed the State Senate that would establish a Main Street Development Center within the state's Division of Housing and Community Renewal. The office would provide assistance to local governments across that state that are seeking to revitalize their own downtown areas.

"Mount Morris' success has been built on the village and county's expert use of the tax abatement program to inspire development. By establishing a Main Street Development Center at the statewide level, we can bring the successes of Livingston County to other areas in Western New York and beyond, and expand revitalization to many more towns and villages. By revitalizing main streets across our state, we can bring more economic opportunities to everyone," she said.

The bill will now go to the Assembly's Committee on Housing.