

CITY OF XENIA, OHIO

# PRESS RELEASE

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## **City of Xenia Awarded Tier II Grant for Downtown**

### **\$400,000 Grant for Downtown Revitalization Announced by Governor**

Xenia, Ohio, Xenia, Ohio, December 14, 2009 : Governor Ted Strickland announced last week that the City of Xenia, Ohio is among six Ohio cities being awarded grant funds totaling \$2.4 million to be used toward revitalization projects in the cities' central business districts. Each of the communities is being awarded \$400,000 in grant funding in 2010, and a total of \$10.8 million in public and private funds is being leveraged toward redevelopment efforts.

The downtown revitalization program is designed to help communities revitalize their central business districts, eliminate blight, and create and retain job opportunities for low- and moderate-income residents. The bulk of Xenia's \$400,000 grant will provide loans to downtown building owners to make façade and code improvements in the Tier Two Target area. Xenia plans to improve twenty buildings in the target area. Owners will be required to contribute a cash match and would receive assistance in the form of low interest and deferred loans. "In this cash-strapped economy, this is a shot in the arm to downtown owners seeking to improve their buildings," said Steve Brodsky of XEGC who will be helping to administer the façade loan program.

In addition to the façade improvement program, the grant will provide funding for the installation of the first phase of a wayfinding system downtown, improve targeted curbs and sidewalks, and help the Xenia Mural Society finance their first murals. The grant award is timely in that it will supplement a number of other initiatives which will be underway concurrently in the downtown. "One of the biggest reasons Xenia received this grant for the first time is the organized and concerted effort we made to seize every grant opportunity we could to concentrate on the downtown in 2010/2011," said Brent Merriman, Assistant City Manager. The City also received grants for other improvements including: The continuation of the streetscape project on East Main Street between Whiteman and Collier Streets; lighting, landscaping and sidewalk replacement at the Xenia Station bike path spur along South Detroit;

upgraded pedestrian crossing and trail connectivity along South Detroit at Miami Avenue and South Detroit Street; improvement of two more downtown parking lots; and phase one of a new Wayfinding Signage Plan. These grants, representing an additional \$850,000 worth of improvements, are made up of ARRA-Stimulus Grants, CDBG Program Income Funds, CDBG Formula grant, a Transportation Enhancement Grant, and City of Xenia capital funds.

Community Development Director for the City of Xenia, Mary Crockett, cites the Xenia City Council's involvement in legislative initiatives as a key factor in helping to set the stage for the Tier II grant and overall downtown revitalization efforts. "Support of the Downtown Strategic Plan was the first step, but Xenia City Council has adopted design standards, façade loan guidelines, and updated parking standards over the past several years in an effort to strengthen downtown. These initiatives have been very important and highlight the Council's desire to maintain a thriving central business district," said Crockett.

City staff is scheduling a presentation to be given at a Xenia City Council meeting in early 2010 regarding the award of the Tier II grant with an overview of the downtown revitalization plans currently in the works.

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