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Press Release

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Downtown Marion Revitalization Impact Grant

The Community Foundation of Grant County has made Downtown Marion its focus with an opportunity for a \$100,000 to \$150,000 impact grant for downtown revitalization. These dollars will be made available to a collaborative group of 10 organizations (listed below), all which have a common mission to revitalize the Downtown Marion area. The group will be challenged to use these funds to seek matching grant opportunities at the state and/or federal level. They will work together with two co-facilitators, Kayla Johnson from the City of Marion and Cathy Weatherspoon from Thriving Families, Thriving Grant County. Once they have planned their course of action, they will then present their idea(s) to the Community Foundation of Grant County Board of Directors prior to applying for the matching grant or grants.

The decision to focus specifically on Downtown Marion Revitalization by the Community Foundation Board of Directors was due, in part, by focusing on the mission of the organization which is “*connecting people, resources, and causes to promote sustainable impact for the betterment of Grant County.*” The Board believes that a flourishing downtown County seat will lead to a larger impact for the entire county. Therefore, the Board decided to focus on a specific cause, rather than a specific organization, for this year’s Impact Grant.

According to Will Andresen, a Community Resource Development Educator at the University of Wisconsin, the “synergistic relationship between successful downtowns and their host community is powerful. Downtowns play instrumental roles in creating communities that people will choose to live in, while people living in and near downtowns help sustain an economically vibrant business environment.”

Drew Klacik, co-author of *Thriving Communities, Thriving Indiana*, a report of the IUPUI Policy Institute, stated, “Quality of life/place is important to attracting and retaining businesses, workers, residents, and families.” We agree and believe Downtown Marion Revitalization projects will help produce these benefits.

The organizations that have been selected as grantees to collaborate for the Downtown Marion Revitalization Impact Grant are Affordable Housing, City of Marion/Common Council, Grant County Economic Growth Council, Grant County Government, Halstead Architects, Main Street Marion/Downtown Roundtable, Marion Design Co., Marion Housing Authority, SOS – Save Our Stories, Inc., and Thriving Families, Thriving Grant County. These groups were selected because they all have a downtown revitalization mission and have already met to discuss the work they are undertaking to invigorate the Downtown Marion area.

Each organization has the choice to opt-out of collaborating for the Downtown Marion Revitalization Impact Grant, if they so desire. Additionally, organizations do not have to necessarily be a part of this group to be a beneficiary of the grant.

The Community Foundation is proud to announce the Downtown Marion Revitalization Impact Grant and has full confidence in these organizations to determine the best ideas to help the Downtown Marion area thrive.

The Community Foundation of Grant County, Indiana, Inc. is an advocate for local philanthropy and is dedicated to improving the lives of people in the Grant County area. Since 1984, the Foundation has been working with donors to establish charitable funds and has supported non-profit organizations through a variety of grantmaking efforts.