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## Springfield receives job ready sites grant

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SPRINGFIELD, Ohio — SPRINGFIELD — The city and a downtown property owner have been awarded \$5 million to renovate one of downtown Springfield's historic buildings.

The grant for renovation of the Bushnell Building at Fountain Avenue and Main Street is part of \$46 million in Job Ready Sites grants awarded Thursday, Nov. 13, by the Ohio Department of Development.

The grant is part of an almost \$10 million renovation project which will create 75,000 square feet of Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design certified Smart Office space.

"The Springfield project did many great things. It took an existing historic building and the available IT and infrastructure, melding it together to create the kind of office space" that will attract new business, said Steve Schoeny, ODOOD director of strategic business development.

The additional renovation funds will be provided by owners Jim and Nike Lagos, who have invested about \$4.3 million in the building in the past 12 years.

The project will renovate the top three floors of the building, focusing on energy-efficient components, such as insulation and roofing materials, in addition to creating usable office space.

The emphasis of the project is on having space immediately available for interested businesses and being able to compete by meeting current technical standards, said Tom Franzen, the city's economic development administrator.

"This fills a gap in our marketplace ... We're taking a 100-year-old building and turning it into a modern office space," he added.

The grant, Jim Lagos said, demonstrates not only the value of the building from a historical perspective, but its potential to drive job growth downtown.

This is the city's second successful Job Ready Sites grant application.

In 2007 Springfield, working with Mills Morgan Development, was awarded \$3.1 million for the construction of a 55,000-square-foot office building at Nextedge Applied Research and Technology Park. Mills Morgan also invested nearly \$8.1 million.

The grant process is highly competitive, Franzen said, with the application requiring a substantial investment in consultation with engineers, contractors and other necessary experts.

"This is another piece that will add to the momentum of the revitalization of downtown Springfield," Franzen said.

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