

Project Profile



Location:

500 Hughart Street
Confluence, PA
confluencecyclery.com

County:

Somerset

Description:

Business Expansion

Total Project Cost:

\$139,665



Confluence Cyclery



People:

A few days in Confluence convinced Maureen Smith that the town along the Youghiogheny River was where she and husband Brad should down-shift from Washington, D.C.-area lives as a teacher and a Department of Defense manager. "He brought me here for a long weekend, and I said, 'I love it. This is it,'" says Maureen. Among the mountains and along this section of Great Allegheny Passage trail, there was no traffic, no bustle – and, oddly, no bike shop.

Progress:

The Smiths bought a 100-year-old former department store, and started restoring the 14,000-square-foot complex's wood fixtures, brick facade, mezzanine and pre-Depression-era chandelier. Turning the second floor into two vacation rentals,

though, would require capital. Through the Trail Town Program, they learned of The Progress Fund, which arranged a state First Industries Program loan of \$50,000.

Impact:

While preparing the rental space, the Smiths are selling, renting, repairing and accessorizing bikes, giving serious cyclists a pit stop and casual visitors a chance to try the trail. They're directing customers to the area's bed-and-breakfasts, restaurants, stores and campgrounds. The result: day trips turn into long weekends – like the one that left Maureen head-over-heels and resulted in two new residents and one growing business.

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