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# Revitalization gives Scribner a boost

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 Fremont Tribune

SCRIBNER — Angie Lange’s voice is filled with enthusiasm as she talks about Scribner’s downtown revitalization.

The project, which included sidewalk replacement, new street lights and improvements to building facades, neared completion this week when railings were scheduled for installation on Main Street.

Lange and her husband, Aaron, who own Gambino’s Pizza restaurant and The Gathering Place, a rental hall, received grant funds and made the 25 percent match to update those buildings’ facades. The results included new 3-by-8 windows at the restaurant.

“It looks awesome,” Angie Lange said. “It just transformed the entire look — especially Gambino’s on the south side.”

The town now also has a new sign with a full-color, electronic message board designed to keep the community informed of upcoming events — and perhaps even attract more visitors. The sign is just one of many upgrades.

Scribner residents began seeing improvements months ago when work started on the \$700,000 downtown revitalization and citywide lighting project, which also included new water lines, storm sewer repair and historic lights along Main Street and replacement of all mercury vapor street lights throughout town.

The street lights started going up last spring, said Scribner City Administrator Al Vacanti.

Work on the infrastructure downtown began in June. That work included installation of 4-inch water lines, a new valve and new sidewalks on the west side of Main Street, and 8-inch water lines, new sidewalks and a new hydrant on the east side.

The revitalization also included downtown business building improvements. Scribner was approved to receive \$350,000 in Community Development Block Grant funds for



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**Several downtown businesses in Scribner, including the Scribner Steakhouse, took advantage of grant money to update and upgrade their facades.**

the upgrades. Funds were divided between the city — which is receiving \$277,500 for infrastructure — and local businesses — which are receiving \$100,500 for exterior and interior improvements. The city is adding matching funds of \$198,100 for the infrastructure. Businesses are adding \$33,500 in matching funds for improvements.

Business improvements have included window replacements with energy-efficient glass and facade upgrades, Vacanti said. Work has been done at various businesses, including Scribner Pharmacy and Scribner Steakhouse.

Vacanti added that the city is conducting a final accounting, and if any funds still are available, it may be able to look at other projects presented for consideration from the business sector.

Scribner’s improvements also included new streetlights. The city received a \$225,000 grant from the Nebraska Energy Office for lighting.

Funds have been used to install the new lights, which include historic ones, downtown. Eight energy-efficient, historic-looking light poles were added on Main Street, along with four others on Howard Street. Funds also were used to replace the rest of the street light fixtures in town with energy-efficient lighting.

Vacanti said the energy-efficient lights should save the city 60 percent on energy usage while providing better lighting on roads and sidewalks and enhancing Main Street’s appearance.

He said dips also were removed from Main Street where brick paving had settled. Six railings have been installed perpendicular to the sidewalks on Main Street. Curb-to-sidewalk ramps were made in front of the American Legion Club and the Scribner Medical Clinic.

Scribner also has a new sign situated along U.S. 275. The sign incorporates the town’s logo designed by Scribner-Snyder High School student Kyle Ebel with assistance from artist Dorothy Litz.

“It’s basically our ‘Welcome to Scribner’ sign and it has a message board,” said Deb Eggleston, economic development coordinator. “We feel we’re a stand-out community so we wanted a stand-out sign.”

Via computer, Eggleston will post community events such as school functions, nonprofit events at Mohr Auditorium, concerts, sports and county fair activities. Eggleston said funds for the sign came from a Joint Opportunities for Building Success grant for \$25,000. She’s applied for a Scribner Area Foundation Grant to help pay for the remaining cost of \$1,750, and the Scribner Improvement and Industrial Corporation also is providing some funds.

Local residents already have heard good response to the improvements.

“We’ve had some folks come through town, who hadn’t been through in a while, and they’re very impressed with the appearance of the town and our Main Street with all the businesses that are there,” Eggleston said.