

## Pittsfield secures \$1.3 million grant for pedestrian-friendly walkway at Wright Building on North Street

By Maryjane Williams, The Berkshire Eagle  
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Pittsfield City Council has accepted a \$1.3 million grant to build a pedestrian walkway around the Wright Building. The project is set to add 35 housing units to the market when it's finished, possibly later this year.

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PITTSFIELD — A state grant will bring a new pedestrian walkway around the downtown Wright Building redevelopment.

The Pittsfield City Council on Tuesday night unanimously accepted a \$1.3 million grant from the state's Office of Housing and Livable Communities to go toward pedestrian improvements around the building block, which spans 239-261 North St.

These funds will be used to convert a back alleyway into a pedestrian-friendly walkway around the building, which is being redeveloped into a 35-unit mixed-use space.

The alleyway serves as a direct link between the Intermodal Transportation Center at 1 Columbus Ave. and the Hotel on North.

The grant will also help give the pathway a makeover, with new fencing, landscaping and lighting improvements, according to Justine Dodds, the city's director of community development.

“It's going to make it a really welcoming space, it's going to tie ... North Street and all those businesses on that side and the new residents that we hope will be in those apartments,” Dodds said.

Pittsfield is one of the 12 communities to receive funding through the HousingWorks Infrastructure Program, which is designed to support projects associated with sustainable housing development.

Allegrone Construction Co. purchased the historic Wright Building, formerly home to the century-old Candle Lanes bowling alley and several artist studios, in 2018. Three years later, the company purchased the historic building's neighbor, the former Jim's House of Shoes.

The redevelopment project will transform both buildings into a combined 35 housing units and six commercial storefronts while preserving the historic architecture of the Wright building, which dates back to 1898.

Twenty percent of the 35 units — four in the Wright Building and three in the next-door space — will be designated as “affordable housing,” reserved for those earning up to 80 percent of the city's area median income (AMI) under the inclusionary zoning policy.

This award is not the project's first boost from the state — [Healey awarded Allegrone \\$4.1 million](#) through the Housing Development Incentive Program in July 2024 to get the project off the ground.

Allegrone began construction in January 2024, [gutting the Wright Building](#) to prepare for its conversion into residential spaces. Hazmat crews removed all hazardous material and some non-historic features, and with overall stabilization finalized, the first stage of the project is complete.

The second phase will be the construction of a new addition to replace the adjacent building. However, that phase is not yet fully funded. Of the \$4.1 million awarded to Allegrone Cos. through the Housing Development Incentive Program, \$1.5 million has been allocated for this portion. Allegrone said the remaining funds will be secured before reconstruction begins.

If the project stays on schedule, Allegrone anticipates opening applications and pre-leasing for the Wright Building by spring or summer, with residents expected to move in by the fall.

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A tax deal has cleared the way for Allegrone Cos. to bring two major housing projects to North Street in Pittsfield



The Wright Building redevelopment is on track to welcome tenants next year thanks to \$4 million from the state