

Downtown Grant For Winchester

*Money Will Be Utilized
To Enhance Appearance*

By Wayne Thomas
Staff Writer

Gov. Phil Bredesen announced this week that the state would provide the City of Winchester with an enhancement grant in the amount of \$388,265 to assist with the Winchester Downtown Revitalization Project.

"This project is one part of a long term plan that will change the face of downtown Winchester," said Gov. Bredesen. "I'm proud the State of Tennessee can make investments like this one that will enhance the City of Winchester for the ben-

efit of citizens and visitors alike for generations to come."

According to the grant application, the project will include landscaping, new signage, crosswalks, and sidewalk reconstruction. Winchester City Administrator Beth Rhoton explained that in addition to the sidewalk work, the city is wanting to improve the street lighting in the downtown area as well as adding a fountain plaza on the west side of the square.

In the past, city Public Works employees discov-

See MONEY, Pg. 7A

Money

(Starts on Page 1A)

ered that many sidewalks around the square had passageways underneath them. Long time city councilman Bobby Scharber explained that in years gone by the businesses in downtown Winchester had their coal delivered under the sidewalks. Scharber stated that folks would walk underneath the sidewalks to get their coal to heat their businesses.

"The existing sidewalks in the downtown district were constructed more than 30 years ago," said Rep. George Fraley. "The new sidewalks will provide a safer, more enjoyable experience for everyone who visits our downtown."

"A downtown that is more accessible to motorists and pedestrians will improve the quality of life for residents

and visitors," added Sen. Jerry Cooper.

The grant is made possible through a federally funded program administered by the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT).

"Including this year's enhancement grants, TDOT has helped fund approximately \$189 million worth of transportation-related projects, such as the restoration of historic facilities, bike and pedestrian trails, landscaping and other non-traditional transportation projects," said TDOT Commissioner Gerald Nicely. "These grants were made possible in the 1990's when Congress established a grant system funding activities designed to strengthen the cultural, aesthetic and environmental aspects of the nation's transportation system."

"We are really excited to receive this grant," Rhoton said. The city administrator stated that the city hopes to award the contract for the downtown work before next year's Dogwood Festival and to have the work to start the week after the festival.

Rhoton stated Wednesday afternoon that the awarding of the grant has been the work of a number of individuals.

According to state transportation officials, once the work is completed in the downtown area, the state highway department will do "millwork and repaving of the square area."

Those from Winchester attending the awarding of the grant in Nashville were Mrs. Rhoton, Mayor Terry Harrell, Margaret Lynch and Kathy Santisteban.