

DRI · Downtown Revitalization Initiative

Downtown Revitalization Initiative Guidebook · July 2021



**Downtown
Revitalization
Initiative**



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Downtown Revitalization Initiative

The Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) is a comprehensive approach to boosting local economies by transforming communities into vibrant neighborhoods where the next generation of New Yorkers will want to live, work and raise a family. In light of the impact COVID-19 has had on communities, it is more important than ever to support the revitalization of downtowns and its businesses, infrastructure, and other critical community assets. The 2021 program will invest \$200 million in up to 20 downtown neighborhoods across the State. Each of the State's ten Regional Economic Development Councils (REDCs) will solicit applications and chose one or two downtowns that are ripe for revitalization and have the potential to become a magnet for redevelopment, business, job creation, greater economic and housing diversity, and opportunity. Applications for the current round must be submitted by 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday, September 15, 2021. NYC applications are due by September 3, 2021.

Overview

Healthy, vibrant, walkable downtowns accrue numerous economic, social and environmental benefits to the locality, the region, and the state as a whole.

Business and development leaders recognize that downtown communities which offer a high quality-of-life and a critical mass of diverse public amenities and activities can serve as catalysts for increased and sustainable local

economic development. Investments that re-energize urban cores attract a diverse population of new residents and visitors of varying ages, incomes, and interests, which strengthens the customer base for local businesses and provides the reliable workforce needed to attract and retain employers and grow the regional economy. Government leaders recognize that focusing investment in urban centers is also fiscally responsible. Compact development lowers the cost of delivering essential government services (police, fire, emergency medical) and reduces demand for costly new infrastructure, making local government budgets more efficient and reducing the burden on taxpayers.

In addition, compact, mixed-use development is energy efficient and reduces the impacts of climate change. By focusing development in its downtown, a community can reduce its carbon footprint by promoting the use of public transit and reduce dependence on private vehicles.

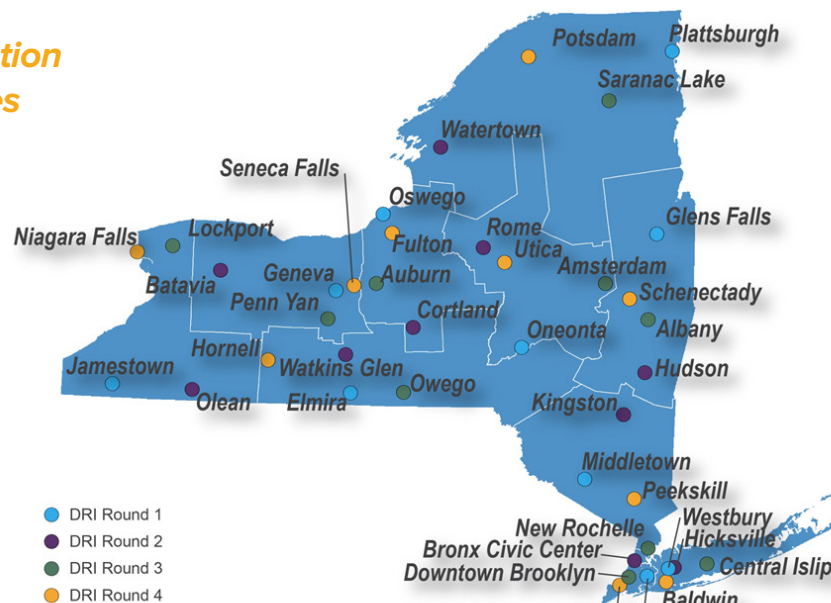
Recognizing the myriad benefits that downtown investment represent to New York State, the state introduced a major new initiative – the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI), in spring of



2016. In the past four rounds of the DRI, forty communities were selected to receive \$10 million each to undertake a bottom-up community planning process and to implement key projects recommended by the community. Each community developed the key ingredients needed for successful downtown revitalization: a clear vision for the downtown; goals and strategies to accomplish the vision; and a strategic plan to implement catalytic projects identified in the plan.

In the fifth round of the DRI, the Regional Economic Development Councils may nominate two downtowns to receive \$10 million awards, or one downtown to receive an award of \$20 million. Criteria utilized for selection of DRI communities include: physical environment, past investment, future potential, recent or impending job growth, support for the local vision, and readiness. Communities requesting \$20 million will be expected to demonstrate sufficient demand for DRI funds and the ability to quickly carry out significant, transformational downtown projects, as well as the capacity to successfully oversee a large-scale downtown revitalization program.

Downtown Revitalization Initiative Communities



In each community selected to participate in DRI, a Local Planning Committee (LPC) comprised of local stakeholders will be convened to oversee the development of a strategic plan for revitalization of their downtown. The LPCs receive support and technical assistance from a team of planners from the State, and the consulting team hired by the State.

The LPC will review the vision statement included in the DRI application with the consulting team and community to confirm that it reflects the unique characteristics of the downtown. A clear and concise downtown profile and assessment will be developed to articulate the story of the region and the downtown, and to describe its future.

Goals will be established that can help achieve the community's vision for downtown revitalization. Based on the downtown vision and goals, consultants will guide the LPC in development of creative and ambitious strategies and identification of projects to direct future

development and investment in the downtown. Strategies will address how the community hopes to accomplish the goals to realize its vision.

The planning process will link the community’s vision, goals and strategies to the projects that will implement those goals. The DRI strategic investment plan for each community will identify a variety of projects. Communities are encouraged to identify projects that will have substantial financial commitment from the municipal, nonprofit, or private sponsors. DRI seeks to leverage DRI funds with other funding initiatives from public or private sources. Project profiles and the LPC’s recommended funding amounts will be included in the plan.

Broad public engagement will help shape and enhance the plan and will include activities that inform and educate, solicit input, and build support for plan implementation.

Projects will be evaluated by a state agency team and a set of projects will be selected for funding. Project contracts will be administered by a variety of agencies and authorities, with the majority held by the Department of State, Empire State Development, and the Housing Trust Fund.

To streamline communication and project management, and to ensure timely start-up and delivery of DRI projects, each DRI community will identify a local DRI project manager who will serve as the primary point of contact for the community with private project sponsors and state agency representatives.

Previous DRI Strategic Investment Plans and other program information are online at www.ny.gov/DRI.

Region	DRI One Community	DRI Two Community	DRI Three Community	DRI Four Community
Capital Region	City of Glens Falls	City of Hudson	City of Albany	City of Schenectady
Central NY	City of Oswego	City of Cortland	City of Auburn	City of Fulton
Finger Lakes	City of Geneva	City of Batavia	Village of Penn Yan	Town of Seneca Falls
Long Island	Village of Westbury	Hicksville (T. Oyster Bay)	Central Islip (T. Islip)	Baldwin (T. Hempstead)
Mid-Hudson	City of Middletown	City of Kingston	City of New Rochelle	City of Peekskill
Mohawk Valley	City of Oneonta	City of Rome	City of Amsterdam	City of Utica
New York City	Jamaica, Queens	Bronx Civic Center	Downtown Brooklyn	Staten Island
North Country	City of Plattsburgh	City of Watertown	Village of Saranac Lake	Village of Potsdam
Southern Tier	City of Elmira	Village of Watkins Glen	Village of Owego	City of Hornell
Western NY	City of Jamestown	City of Olean	City of Lockport	City of Niagara Falls

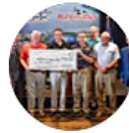
DRI Process



Community applications submitted to REDCs



REDCs review & nominate one community in each region



Governor announces DRI Areas to receive \$10 million in assistance for planning and projects



DRI Team established with State Planners, Local Committee, & Consultants



DRI Area vision confirmed, goals & strategies identified



Public & other stakeholders engaged throughout DRI process



Projects identified & vetted by the local committee & public



DRI Strategic Investment Plan written by consultants with DRI Team & public input and submitted to the State



Projects from each community evaluated by the State & selected for funding



Governor announces selected projects



DOS/HCR/ESD or other agency/authority works with project sponsors to execute grant agreements

Goals of DRI Program

The Downtown Revitalization Initiative provides a comprehensive approach to improving the physical, social, environmental, and economic climate of participating communities.

The fundamental goals of the DRI include:

- Creating an active, desirable downtown with a strong sense of place;
- Attracting new businesses (including “Main Street” businesses), that create a robust mix of shopping, dining, entertainment and service options for residents and visitors, and that provide job opportunities for a variety of skills and salaries;
- Enhancing public spaces for arts and cultural events that serve the existing members of the community but also draw in attendees from around the region;
- Building a diverse population, with residents and workers supported by complementary diverse housing and employment opportunities;
- Growing the local property tax base;
- Providing amenities that support and enhance downtown living and quality of life; and
- Reducing greenhouse gas emissions by creating compact, walkable development patterns that increase public transit ridership and allow for adoption of district-wide decarbonized heating and cooling; and by supporting efficiency and electrification of buildings, installation of onsite renewable energy generation, and electric vehicle charging.

These goals are reflected in the individual Downtown Strategic Investment Plans developed for each community, and the projects identified in each plan. To fully leverage the impact of the DRI, each plan identifies projects whose recommended funding would in total exceed the available DRI funds to ensure a continued pipeline of projects that may be implemented with other public and private sources.

Roles & Responsibilities

The DRI accomplishes its goals through a unique state-local partnership that includes the Local Planning Committee (LPC), state agency staff, and a consultant team. The LPC is responsible for representing the interests and priorities of the community, while the state agency



LPC in Schenectady

staff ensures that the process and deliverables are consistent with the goals, priorities, and requirements of the Initiative. In addition, the state agency staff, together with the consultants, provides expertise, guidance, and technical assistance to develop a strategic investment plan that will achieve the vision and goals for revitalization of the downtown as approved by the LPC.

Local Planning Committee

The Local Planning Committee (LPC) is made up of local and regional leaders, stakeholders, and community representatives. Each LPC is led by two co-chairs consisting of the local elected official (or his or her designee) and a member of the Regional Economic Development Council. Other members will be invited to participate by the Secretary of State after consultation with the LPC co-chairs and other state partners.

General membership in the LPC will include representatives from interest groups and organizations, as appropriate to the community. These groups may include:

- Local and regional government officials;
- Neighborhood associations, homeowners, and renters;
- Property owners, local developers, and real estate agents;
- Chambers of commerce, local business associations, and business owners;
- Community foundations and community loan funds;
- Local development corporations, housing corporations, industrial development agencies, and business improvement districts;
- Cultural institutions, such as museums, historic sites, and theaters;
- Educational institutions, including administrative and student leadership of area schools and universities;
- Local non-profit and advocacy organizations, such as environmental organizations and park conservancies; and
- Social and public service organizations, such as local police and health care providers, and faith-based organizations.

LPC members meet at least monthly to brainstorm ideas, provide direction to consultants, review planning products, and prioritize actions. The LPC members, working with the consultants and state planners, determine the most appropriate meeting schedule to accomplish their goals and to deliver an on-time DRI Strategic Investment Plan.

The LPC will work with the consultant team and state planners to prepare a Strategic Investment

Plan that will include:

- A profile of the downtown.
- Refined vision that was included in the community's DRI application.
- Strategies and methods to achieve the downtown vision.
- Projects key to overall downtown revitalization.

As representatives of a variety of interests within the community, the LPC members will be asked to play a central role in identifying the most appropriate range of approaches to community engagement for their DRI area and to take an active role in public outreach. Outreach should be both to inform the public and to receive suggestions from the public.

The LPC may form work groups to provide an opportunity for some LPC members to dig deeper into an issue, sometimes with the help of non-committee members, such as local businesspersons, labor specialists, academic experts, and neighborhood advocates. Work groups provide an opportunity for brainstorming, for building a sense of community spirit and buy-in of the plan, and allow for better time management at LPC meetings. Work groups may be developed around any topic, such as developing a public engagement strategy, business development, identification of projects and actions, and implementation of the plan.

LPC members will be required to sign a Code of Conduct as a reminder that they must always act in the public interest in their role as Local Planning Committee members. Any member of the committee with a real or perceived conflict related to a specific project will be asked to recuse from voting on or opining on the project that presents a conflict while still participating in decision-making for other projects.

Consultant Team

A consultant team contracted by the State is assigned to each community. The team will work with the co-chairs and state agency staff to prepare for and staff LPC meetings and public outreach events. Consultants will prepare and implement a public engagement strategy with input and participation from the LPC, whose members are best positioned to recommend strategies appropriate for their community. Consultants will handle meeting logistics and meeting presentations. At the LPC meetings, the consultant will ask LPC members for their ideas and guidance at each step of the planning process.

With direction from state agency staff and guidance from the LPC, consultants will prepare program documents, such as the downtown profile and assessment; the downtown vision and goals; revitalization strategies to achieve the vision and goals; the DRI Strategic Investment Plan; and other tasks within their scope of work, such as research and market studies.

Consultants will assist the LPC in identifying key projects for implementation using DRI funding,

and will prepare detailed project profiles and analyses that demonstrate the feasibility and potential impact of projects.

State Team

Each LPC will receive support from a team of state agency staff. The state team, which will be led by the Department of State (DOS), will also include staff from Homes and Community Renewal (HCR) Empire State Development (ESD), and NYSERDA. This team will manage the consultant team assigned to the LPC, assist the consultants and LPC in meeting preparation, and participate in preparation and review of DRI documents. The HCR representative will bring to the planning process their knowledge of the community and expertise in housing development, CDBG, and HCR grants and programs. The ESD Regional Director provides a wealth of knowledge of past, present, and proposed development in an around the downtown. NYSERDA staff will support the planning process to suggest decarbonization strategies and opportunities for the community and individual building upgrades, as well as helping to identify additional state and federal funding that can be used to achieve decarbonization in DRI zones. When needed, state agency staff will facilitate assistance from other state agencies.

The state team will also work with the consultants to ensure project profiles include the appropriate level of information needed for state evaluation of projects. Once projects are selected for funding by the State, the state team will prepare contract work plans or incentive proposals for projects assigned to their agencies, or work with others within their agency to supply needed information for work plans or incentive proposals.

Municipal Staff

Municipal staff from the DRI community may provide local assistance to the consultants and state planners when local resources or expertise are needed. Municipal staff may assist with meeting logistics, such as identifying accessible space; provide necessary background data and information; help identify municipal programs and resources that can be leveraged to advance the DRI planning process; and act as local point of contact for public engagement. As appropriate, municipalities are encouraged to partner with county or other local or regional entities that may provide technical assistance or other resources.

Public Engagement

Broad public outreach is important throughout the DRI planning process, as public input will help shape and enhance the plan. Outreach is a great way to educate residents and other community members about the DRI planning process and other related community goals and policies - such as comprehensive plans, local waterfront development programs, and other economic development initiatives – and how they can be involved.

Public engagement should be undertaken to inform and educate, to solicit and receive input, and to build support for plan implementation. LPC members will play a pivotal role by helping to identify

key individuals, organizations, and entities that should be involved in the planning and implementation process and by determining the best way to involve them. If some of the key individuals are not people who typically would attend public meetings and workshops, other techniques will need to be identified that will engage them.

Informing and educating the public can be done through formal public meetings and workshops, open houses, websites, social media, presentations at meetings of community organizations, and other means of communication.



Hudson Public Engagement Event

Full meetings of the LPC, whether in person or virtual, should be open to the public. The extent that the public will be able to actively participate in a meeting will depend on the purpose and structure of the meeting. In general, meetings will fall into three categories:

- **LPC Meeting** – These sessions are working meetings conducted by the LPC co-chairs to provide for discussion among the LPC members and presentations on scheduled topics. At the discretion of the LPC, meeting agendas may include time for public comment or other engagement exercises.
- **Open House** – These sessions will be largely conducted by consultants to educate the public and get the public's reactions to information and ideas. LPC members may also be present.
- **Workshop** – These sessions will be held to solicit ideas from the public, and comments on various planning topics. These public engagement workshops, charrettes, and focus groups are intended to be very interactive, with participation by both the public and LPC members.



Peekskill Harvest Fest

The LPC may form work groups to provide an opportunity for some members to dig deeper into an issue, and to provide an opportunity for non-committee members – such as local business persons, labor specialists, academic experts, and neighborhood advocates – to work interactively with LPC members. Work groups provide an opportunity for brainstorming, building a sense of community spirit and buy-in of the plan, and better time management at LPC meetings.

One-on-one conversations may also take place. Some of these conversations may be scheduled interviews, but others may be more casual, such as encounters with interested citizens outside of a meeting, at a school or community event, or even when shopping. While LPC members are free to engage in conversations with people, members should also encourage community members to share their ideas in writing or during a public comment session so other committee members can benefit from their input.

Public Engagement Strategy

The consultant, with input from the LPC, will develop a public engagement strategy to enable residents, public and private agencies, community organizations, local businesses, and institutions of learning to work towards a shared vision for a more vibrant downtown. Public engagement should occur early and consistently throughout the process and should encourage participation from a broad and diverse population. Consultants should design events that encourage openness and innovation.

DRI communities are asked to plan a minimum of three public events, whether in person or virtual. Events will be held at important milestones for the project, as described in the public engagement plan, including one event where proposed projects are presented to the public for comment.

A variety of public engagement techniques should also be used to engage a wider range of participants, such as use of social media, traditional media, email blasts, online forums, surveys, and making speakers available for meetings of local organizations.



Geneva's Storefront Engagement

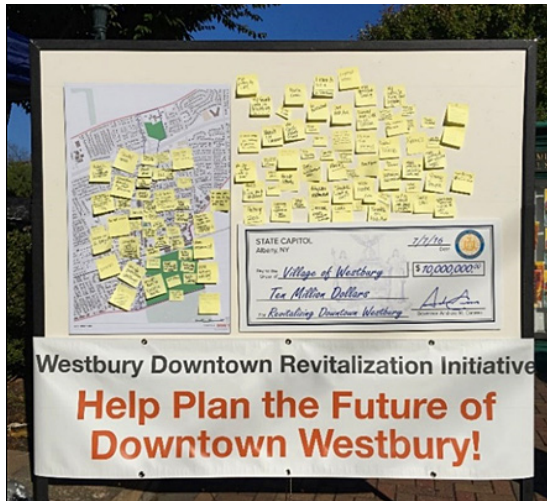
For DRI One, a downtown storefront in Geneva was donated by the property owner for use by the consultant team for the duration of the planning process.

Weekly “open hours” provided opportunities for the public to stop in and talk with city staff or a member of the consultant team regarding project ideas, process and document feedback.

The storefront served as a hub for consultant team members when in town.

In addition to the public meetings or workshops, outreach should include an interactive web presence. The State DRI website provides meeting notices and other program information. DRI municipalities may also use their own websites for posting DRI information, providing links to the State DRI website. Additional activities may include but are not limited to charrettes, surveys, information booths, and storefront information centers.

Examples of some public engagement methods used by consultant teams:



An "idea wall" for public comment at a Westbury Street Fair



Spanish language flyer for a public event in Kingston



Potsdam Popup Storefront Gallery



Supporting proposed projects with "Rome" dollars at a public session in Rome



Screenshot from a virtual meeting in Schenectady



Seneca Falls Central School District Workshop

Strategic Investment Plan Components

Building on the community's vision for downtown revitalization and the projects identified in the DRI application, strategic investment plans will examine local assets and opportunities, and include creative and ambitious strategies to achieve the downtown vision and direct future development and investment in the downtown. The DRI Strategic Investment Plan will also include detailed project profiles for key economic development, transportation, housing, environmental and community projects that will advance the community's vision and leverage additional investment. Plans may also include brief descriptions of additional projects and initiatives the LPC wishes to include in the plan without a recommendation for DRI funding.



Consultants will work with the LPC to identify and prepare the information, analyses, etc. that will be needed to complete robust profiles that best position projects for implementation.

DRI Area Boundaries

Each community that applies to the DRI will clearly identify the boundary of the downtown area which it proposes as the focus of planning efforts in its application for the program. As a selected community proceeds through the planning process, it may choose to modify the initial boundary of its downtown to address newly identified issues or to capitalize on opportunities outside of the original boundary. The resulting DRI area, however, should be generally consistent with the area proposed in the DRI application and continue to follow the guidelines of a compact, walkable, and well-defined area.

Downtown Profile and Assessment

Working with the LPC and key municipal representatives, and drawing on any existing plans and strategies, the consultant will prepare the DRI downtown profile and assessment that provides a clear, concise, and compelling narrative that articulates the story of the region and the DRI area. It should allow a reader to understand how this downtown will benefit from the DRI and provide a logical basis for the projects recommended for funding.

The profile and assessment will give the reader a sense of the downtown – its unique characteristics, its strengths, and its challenges. It is not intended to provide a comprehensive technical description of the downtown akin to what would be included in a comprehensive plan. While the consultant will collect, analyze and evaluate the demographics, economics, and other characteristics of the downtown to ensure that the proposals included in the DRI plan are realistic and appropriate, the downtown profile and assessment will contain only a summary of this information.

Vision, Goals & Strategies

As part of the DRI application, communities must provide a brief statement of their vision for downtown revitalization. At the start of the planning process, the Local Planning Committee (LPC) will review the initial vision and make modifications if desired to best reflect the unique characteristics of the downtown.

Goals and strategies will be established to help achieve the community’s vision for downtown revitalization. Goals should be detailed, attainable, and action-oriented with measurable strategies that will guide the implementation of the DRI vision. They should incorporate, as appropriate, the following fundamental objectives:

- Creating an active, desirable downtown with a strong sense of place;
- Attracting new businesses (including “Main Street” businesses), that create a robust mix of shopping, dining, entertainment and service options for residents and visitors, and that provide job opportunities for a variety of skills and salaries;
- Enhancing public spaces for arts and cultural events that serve the existing members of the community but also draw in attendees from around the region;
- Building a diverse population, with residents and workers supported by complementary diverse housing and employment opportunities;
- Growing the local property tax base;
- Providing amenities that support and enhance downtown living and quality of life; and
- Reducing greenhouse gas emissions by creating compact, walkable development patterns that increase public transit ridership and allow for adoption of district-wide decarbonized heating and cooling; and by supporting efficiency and electrification of buildings, installation of onsite renewable energy generation, and electric vehicle charging.

Based on the downtown vision and goals, consultants will guide the LPC in development of creative and ambitious strategies and projects to direct future development and investment in the downtown to realize its vision and goals. Projects that are recommended for implementation

using DRI funds, whether included in the community's DRI application or identified by the LPC during the planning process, should align with the goals and strategies.

Downtown Management and Implementation Strategy

The DRI Strategic Investment Plan will address local capacity, describing how the implementation of the proposed projects will be managed and sustained. The Plan will identify an existing or propose a new management structure to guide downtown revitalization in a fiscally sustainable manner and will identify where there is a need to create or enhance local capacity to support ongoing implementation of the DRI Strategic Investment Plan. For example, downtown development could be spearheaded by an existing or proposed downtown business improvement district, a local development corporation, or a special unit in the mayor or town supervisor's office.

The Plan will also present a realistic timeframe for implementation of the recommended projects that recognizes the need to initiate all projects receiving DRI funding within two years of award.

Projects

During the DRI application process, communities are asked to describe a range of transformative projects that could become part of the community's DRI Strategic Investment Plan to demonstrate that the community is ready to move forward with thoughtful and catalytic projects that will benefit a growing downtown. However, the application form notes that all projects submitted in the DRI applications will be further vetted by the Local Planning Committee and the State during the plan development process. The open, community-based planning process is designed to encourage creative and innovative approaches to downtown revitalization, and will result in a list of potential projects, including some that were contemplated in the initial application and others that arose during the process.



Vision for the Village of Watkins Glen

The vision of the Watkins Glen Downtown Revitalization Initiative is to leverage the accessible Seneca Lake waterfront, famous wine trails, vibrant arts scene, internationally recognized racetrack with a storied auto-racing heritage, and world class State Park for progressive community development that retains and enhances our unique character to sustain a year-round innovative and prosperous economy that is supported by our community.

City of Middletown DRI Plan

- Goal:** Make downtown a more attractive, walkable and functional place for residents, employees and visitors.
- Strategies:**
- Enhance the appearance of Downtown’s buildings, sidewalks, signage, streets, and open spaces.
 - Improve streetscapes to make the Downtown pleasant, accessible, and safe for people of all ages and abilities.
 - Make the Downtown pleasant, accessible, and safe for people of all ages and abilities.
 - Support and build on the Paramount Theatre as a cultural destination by increasing activity in its vicinity and by enhancing its connection to the downtown core.
 - Make parking options in the Downtown more efficient, attractive, and accessible.
 - Support venues and events for the City’s arts, cultural, and educational activities and institutions.
 - Create a more vibrant street life by encouraging outdoor dining and use of open spaces.
- Projects:**
- Redevelop the Woolworth Building into Rail Trail Commons
 - Bring the Orange County Accelerator Program to Middletown
 - Install Public Wi-Fi Mesh Network

City of Oswego DRI Plan

- Goal:** Increase downtown residential living
- Strategies:**
- Develop new residential infill on vacant and underutilized lots
 - Redevelop vacant building upper stories, including residential units
 - Revitalize adjacent residential neighborhoods
 - Increase evening and weekend programming to create vibrant 18-hour setting
 - Build new and improved parks, gardens, and street trees
- Projects:**
- Implement a transformative redevelopment of the underused Flexo Wire site to provide 75 units of new mixed-income housing and 8,000 sf of ground floor commercial space.
 - Transform the Global Buffet site at the core of downtown Oswego by renovating the restaurant space, creating 12 new housing units, and providing a rooftop deck.
 - Provide riverfront dining and six housing units in a historic building while also building six new townhomes on the same site to create additional housing choices.

The LPCs will evaluate the full list of potential projects to select a slate of projects for inclusion in their DRI Strategic Investment Plan that will most effectively advance the community's DRI strategies; that will have the greatest public benefit; that are primed for implementation; and that enjoy broad stakeholder support. In total, the projects selected for inclusion in the Strategic Investment Plans will exceed the DRI funding available for implementation to allow flexibility in funding awards, to account for the potential for other funding to come forward, and for complications that might arise that impact viability of a recommended project after the plan is complete.

The LPCs are encouraged to choose projects that will be catalytic and that present the strongest likelihood of jump-starting or continuing downtown revitalization and investment in the community. Each LPC will develop tailored criteria for project selection that are appropriate for their DRI's vision, goal and strategies, as well as the goals of the DRI program.

Recommended projects may range in cost and scale from small improvements to large-scale construction projects, from zoning updates to major infrastructure projects. For private for-profit projects, DRI funds may not exceed 40% of the total project cost except as noted on page 19. While DRI funding may be used to cover the entire cost of a public or not-for-profit project, leveraging of investment dollars from other sources (i.e., private, local, federal, or other state sources) is strongly encouraged. LPCs may establish more restrictive match requirements.

The recommended projects must clearly implement the vision, goals, and strategies for revitalization of the downtown, and taken together, should represent a holistic approach to downtown revitalization. What is being sought is SYNERGY, which essentially means that the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. To convey context and the interconnectivity of projects, the consultants will prepare a graphic representation that presents recommended projects on a map in relationship to each other and to the downtown area.

If desired, the LPC may also include brief descriptions of additional complementary projects in the Strategic Investment Plan that that could advance the vision and goals for the downtown with other funding sources.

Project Types

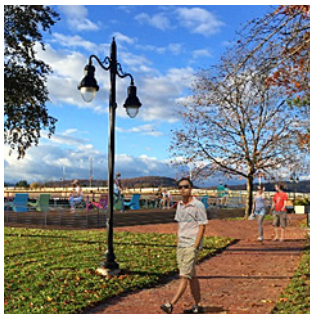
It is expected that the majority of DRI funds will be used for capital projects that will transform the physical environment of the downtown in ways that will benefit current residents and future generations. However, certain non-capital projects will also be considered to the extent that they will contribute to the revitalization of the downtown and are consistent with the community's vision and goals. Projects will generally fall into the following categories:



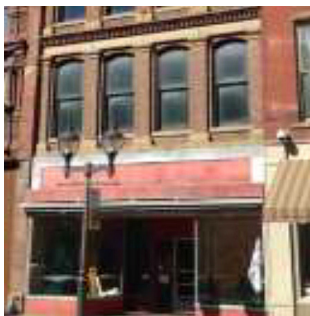
New Development and/or Rehabilitation of Existing Downtown Buildings

– Projects in this category may include development or redevelopment of real property for mixed-use, commercial, or public uses. They should have a visible and functional impact on the downtown, serving as anchor, catalytic or transformative projects that will provide employment opportunities, housing choices, and/or services for the community. Projects should employ decarbonization strategies consistent with the State’s goals under the Climate

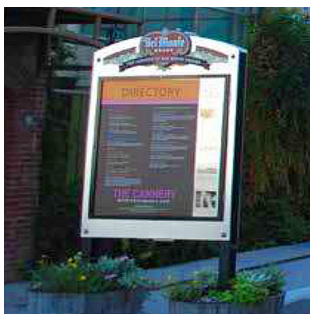
Leadership and Community Protection Act. Construction or rehab of stand-alone parking garages not connected with other uses will not be considered for funding.



Public Improvement Projects – These may include infrastructure projects such as broadband and other communications connectivity, green infrastructure, streetscape improvements, transportation, recreational trails, signage, new and upgraded parks and plazas, public art, and other public realm projects that will contribute to revitalization of the downtown.



Grant Fund or Revolving Loan Fund – A locally managed fund may be proposed to undertake a range of smaller downtown projects such as façade improvements, public art and public realm improvements, and physical improvements to existing and/or vacant commercial or mixed-use space. Projects that are significant, such as new construction, should not be proposed for a fund and instead should be proposed as their own individual project. Funds are typically capped at \$600,000.



Branding and Marketing – Examples include downtown branding and marketing projects that may target residents, investors, developers, tourists, and/or visitors. The costs eligible under this category must be one-time expenses, such as those to develop materials and signage. Ongoing operational costs, such as to fund a downtown manager or maintain a website, are not eligible for DRI funding.

Project Sponsors

DRI funding may be awarded to public, not-for-profit, and private entities to implement projects included in the final DRI plan. Each project profile will identify a project sponsor that has both the capacity and the legal authority to undertake the project and to whom the DRI funds may

Cortland Project Selection Criteria

All projects were first categorized as either City (typically, public infrastructure related), Private (typically, residential and commercial development) or Arts (typically, relating to the development or preservation of a cultural or entertainment venue). The categorization of projects in this way allowed projects of like type to be compared by one of three subcommittees: (1) arts and entertainment, (2) private development, and (3) municipal projects.

Market objectives were then identified, based on the overarching goals of Cortland's DRI application.

A simple scoring/weighting system was developed, whereby a higher market objective score/weight was allocated to a project, based on the project's likelihood to contribute towards achieving the market objective. A score of 3 suggests the project's strong likelihood of achieving the objective; a score of 2 suggests the project will likely achieve the objective but have a lesser effect than projects scoring a 3; a score of 1 suggests the project will have little chance of achieving the objective. A score of 0 suggests the project is not expected to contribute anything material towards the achievement of the market objective.

Consultants for the Cortland DRI Local Planning Committee developed a spreadsheet that listed the project proposals, included their market designation, and listed standard criteria to evaluate projects in all goal categories. Criteria included the following:

- **Transformative Potential** – Does the project fundamentally change the downtown and how it is perceived?
- **Catalytic Potential** – Will the project be able to make other things happen? Will it create momentum?
- **Sustainability** – What is the long-term impact of the project? Will it be successfully managed and maintained over time?
- **Return on Investment** – What will be the economic benefits to the community in return for the state/private investment (e.g., job growth, tax revenue)?
- **Feasibility** – Can the project sponsor reasonably participate in the project financially? Is it ready to go based on DRI timelines? Is there other support for the project? Are there any regulatory hurdles? Is the project out-of-scope with respect to the vision for the downtown?

be awarded. A final determination will be made by the State following award announcement as to the entity that will hold the DRI contract.

Project Requirements

DRI implementation projects will be required to comply with the following requirements:

Timing

- Projects must be able to break ground within two years or sooner. Grants to projects that do not meet this goal may be rescinded.

Project size and scale

- No DRI awards of less than \$100k will be considered to ensure projects are of a significant size and scale to be truly transformative in nature.
- To be considered for DRI funding, a fully-residential project must include at least 8 units and must include an affordable component.

Private or local match

- DRI will not cover more than 40% of privately-sponsored projects, except as described below.
- Leveraging for public and non-for-profit projects is strongly encouraged (local planning committees may set match requirements or goals). If a grant or loan fund is proposed, the state will work with the community to establish appropriate match requirements.

Decarbonization

- New and substantial rehabilitation construction projects will be required to meet the Stretch Energy Code, whether or not the locality has adopted that code.
- Privately-sponsored projects that commit to meeting higher standards, including efficiency combined with full electrification or the integration of climate resiliency measures, onsite renewables, energy storage or electric vehicle charging equipment, may be eligible for a larger DRI subsidy of up to 50%. Projects achieving these higher levels of performance should also seek incentives from NYSERDA to co-fund their development.

Ineligible Activities

There are very few restrictions on the use of DRI funds other than the requirement that the projects can be implemented quickly and, as a whole, will have a transformational impact on the downtown. However, a few specific activities have been identified as ineligible for DRI funds and should not be included in projects proposed for DRI funding. These include:



Litatro building, Oswego (before and after)

- Planning activities. Following the preparation of the DRI Strategic Investment Plan, all DRI funds must be used for projects that directly implement the plan. Utilizing DRI funds for additional planning is not the goal of the program.
- Operation and maintenance. DRI funds cannot be used for on-going or routine expenses, such as staff salaries and wages, rent, utilities, and property upkeep.
- Pre-award costs. Reimbursement for costs incurred before the DRI plan is complete and before funding awards are announced is not permitted.
- Property acquisition. A DRI project profile may include the cost of acquisition in the budget of a larger redevelopment, but it must also show that the acquisition itself will be, or has already been, covered by another funding source.
- Training and other program expenses. DRI is a one-time infusion of funds, and cannot be used to cover continuous costs, such as training programs, that would cease to exist once the DRI funds have been expended.
- Expenses related to existing programs. DRI is not intended to supplement existing programs or replace existing resources.

Project Profiles

Each project that will be included in the Strategic Investment Plan and recommended for DRI funding must have a project profile. Each profile should be able to stand on its own, i.e. contain the information needed to evaluate it in the context of downtown revitalization effort. The content of the project profiles is expected to evolve throughout the planning process, with the final project profiles providing a level of detail needed to move quickly to implementation.

Each project profile will include a full project description, its location, ownership and partners. Among the other details to be provided will be a description of the capacity of the project sponsor to implement and sustain the project; the budget and source(s) of project funding; a construction

and project cost estimation; regulatory requirements; conceptual design; and project readiness and a timeframe for implementation.

Additional information beyond the minimum requirements in the profile may also be provided as appropriate to better position the project for implementation. Supplemental information can assist project evaluations and increase project competitiveness if it supports project readiness, transformative properties, and impact on the DRI area. For example, project sponsors or consultants may develop economic assessments, market studies, feasibility studies, pro-forma, or other analyses as appropriate to demonstrate the feasibility and potential impact of a project on the overall economic health of the downtown area and surrounding region.



Project rendering from the Albany DRI Strategic Investment Plan

Implementation

After Local Planning Committees complete the DRI Strategic Investment Plans, the State will select projects to be funded through the DRI from those proposed in plans.

Project Selection

Projects will be selected following a careful review by the State. Every project recommended for funding in a community's DRI Strategic Investment Plan will be evaluated based on how well it meets the following criteria:

- State and Local Goals – The project is aligned with State and local goals and demonstrates strong community support.

- **Project Readiness** – The project is well developed and poised to proceed in the near term in a way that will jumpstart the redevelopment of the neighborhood.
- **Catalytic Effect** – The project is likely to have a significant positive impact on the revitalization of the downtown by attracting other public and private investment.
- **Co-Benefits** – The project will result in secondary benefits to both the community and project developer, beyond the primary goal of the project itself, which will generate additional economic activity, grow the local property tax base, improve quality of life in the neighborhood, and/or result in improved buildings likely to create healthier, more comfortable and productive environments in which to live and work.
- **Cost Effectiveness** – Investment of public DRI funds in the project would represent an effective and efficient use of public resources.

Contracting

Projects selected for a DRI award will be assigned to an appropriate state agency to manage the contract for implementation of the project. The state agency selected and method of contracting and funding disbursement will be dependent on the specific project. While there may be some variation between agency administration and the project type, in general awarded project funding will be provided on a reimbursement basis.

It should be noted that DRI funds may be used as match for other grant funding if permitted by the granting agency. However, the priority is to fund projects that are ready for implementation. Therefore, DRI funds will not be held as matching funds for other grants whose award or implementation cycles are in the out-years.

DRI awards will be subject to all requirements typically attached to state funding, including but not limited to minority- and woman-owned business enterprise (MWBE) goals, competitive procurement, and prevailing wages, as appropriate. For example, prevailing wages will be required where required by State law. Prevailing wage provisions would need to be met for public works projects (such as those projects subject to the Wicks Law, etc.) or if it is a requirement of another funding source (as it is for HUD CPD programs-Davis-Bacon).

Local Downtown Management

Local oversight and coordination of downtown projects is vital to the overall success of the DRI investments. While state agencies will work with individual project sponsors to implement each project, it is expected that each community will designate a DRI project manager to provide consistent oversight, serve as a single point of contact, and ensure that DRI projects move forward in an efficient and coordinated fashion.

2021 DRI Application

The Regional Councils will solicit interest in the program from communities in each of their regions, accepting revised applications from communities that requested consideration in previous years, and new applications from communities that didn't apply to or participate in the program in the past.

Applications may also be submitted by prior DRI recipient communities for a new distinct area. In addition, joint applications may be submitted by two contiguous communities that can demonstrate one interconnected downtown area or downtown corridor. Such applications must commit to sharing the DRI award jointly, without any pre-determined split between the award.

Applications from interested communities must be submitted electronically to the Regional Economic Development Council for their region at the email address in the table below. All applications should be prepared using the Downtown Revitalization Initiative Application, which is available on the DRI website at www.ny.gov/DRI. A description of the application is included at the end of this document. Applications must be received by the REDC no later than 4:00 PM on September 15, 2021.

- In New York City, the Borough Presidents' offices will be the official applicants to the REDC and organizations interested in proposing an area for DRI funding should contact the respective Borough President's office as soon as possible. Based on these proposals, each Borough President's office will develop and submit no more than two formal applications for consideration by the NYC Regional Economic Development Council. Applications to the offices of the Borough President must be received by email no later than 4:00 PM on September 3, 2021. The subject heading on the email must be "Downtown Revitalization Round 5."

Bronx: James Rausse at jrausse@bronxbp.nyc.gov

Brooklyn: Jeff Lowell at jlowell@brooklynbp.nyc.gov

Manhattan: Elka Morety at emorety@manhattanbp.nyc.gov

Queens: Shurn Anderson at sanderson@queensbp.org

Staten Island: Stephen Caracappa at scaracappa@statenilandusa.com

- Applicants in the Mid-Hudson region must limit their application to a total of 15 pages if applying just for a \$10 million award, or 20 pages if applying to also be considered for a \$20 million award. The map of the DRI Area requested in question number 1 must be part of the 15 or 20 page limit. The requested addendum regarding opportunities for electric vehicle chargers may exceed the page limit. No other attachments will be accepted.

Applicants from regions outside of New York City must submit applications directly to the relevant Regional Economic Development Council at the email address below.

Capital Region:	NYS-CapitalDist@esd.ny.gov
Central New York:	NYS-CentralNY@esd.ny.gov
Finger Lakes:	NYS-FingerLakes@esd.ny.gov
Long Island:	LIREDC@esd.ny.gov
Mid-Hudson:	NYS-MidHudson@esd.ny.gov
Mohawk Valley:	NYS-MohawkVal@esd.ny.gov
New York City:	See above
North Country:	NYS-NorthCountry@esd.ny.gov
Southern Tier:	NYS-SouthernTier@esd.ny.gov
Western New York:	NYS-WNY-REDC@esd.ny.gov

Each Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) will review proposals from interested communities and may request representatives from interested communities to make presentations before the REDC or a subcommittee of the REDC. Presentations may include all applicants or may be limited to a smaller pool of communities with the most promising applications.

Upon review of submitted applications, each Regional Council will determine whether to nominate two applications for a \$10 million award, or one application for a \$20 million award.

Desired Attributes

Each Regional Council will consider the extent to which applications describe a downtown that meets the list of desired attributes for participation in the DRI.

Well-defined boundaries. The downtown should be compact, with well-defined boundaries. There is no absolute minimum or maximum size for a downtown, but it must be a concentrated, defined area and should be easily walkable. A downtown can range from a corridor or few block(s) of a neighborhood to the municipality's traditional central

Counties Within Each Region

- **WNYREDC:** Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, Niagara
- **FLREDC:** Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Orleans, Seneca, Wayne, Wyoming, Yates
- **STREDC:** Broome, Chemung, Chenango, Delaware, Schuyler, Steuben, Tioga, Tompkins
- **CNYREDC:** Cayuga, Cortland, Madison, Onondaga, Oswego
- **MVREDC:** Fulton, Herkimer, Montgomery, Oneida, Otsego, Schoharie
- **NCREDC:** Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Hamilton, Jefferson, Lewis, St. Lawrence
- **CRREDC:** Albany, Columbia, Greene, Saratoga, Schenectady, Rensselaer, Warren, Washington
- **MHREDC:** Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, Sullivan, Ulster, Westchester
- **NYCREDC:** Bronx, Kings, New York, Richmond, Queens
- **LIREDC:** Nassau, Suffolk

business district (for smaller municipalities). Core neighborhoods beyond the central business district are also eligible. For example, an arts or entertainment district could be the focus of the DRI if it's shown that investments in these areas complement an existing downtown.

Past investments, future potential. The downtown should be able and ready to capitalize on prior public and private investment or catalyze future investments in the neighborhood and its surrounding areas as evidenced by:

- The presence of nearby investments planned or undertaken through the REDC or with other public or private funding;
- Continuity with the Regional Council's previously articulated vision for the area/region and consistency with recent planning efforts for the area;
- The existence of developable properties within the downtown, including properties that can be utilized for varying levels of housing affordability and mixed uses;

Desirable Attributes for Participation in the DRI

- Well-defined boundaries
- Past investments, future potential
- Recent or impending job growth
- Quality of life
- Supportive local policies
- Public support
- Transformative opportunities and readiness
- Administrative capacity



Project rendering from the Kingston DRI Strategic Investment Plan

- The growth potential and community involvement of anchor institutions in or near the downtown;
- The municipality's current investment commitment to the downtown, as demonstrated by business improvement districts, actively engaged IDAs and land banks, or partnerships with non-profits;
- The ability of existing infrastructure to support development of the downtown, and the potential to maximize recent infrastructure upgrades;
- Application of Smart Growth principles;
- Potential for development of energy-efficient projects and opportunities for green jobs; and
- Investments in arts and cultural institutions and activities.

Recent or impending job growth. A crucial characteristic is recent or impending job growth within or near the downtown, which may be a result of Regional Council commitments or other public and private investments. The attraction of a diverse workforce and population in the downtown will support redevelopment and make growth sustainable in the long-term. Job growth should also be accompanied by:

- The presence of major job-creating projects and initiatives near the downtown;
- The existence of new and expanding employers;
- Accessibility of new and existing jobs from the downtown by foot or public transportation; and
- Diversity in area job opportunities, with different salaries and entry levels and the potential for mobility between jobs.

Quality of life. The downtown should have the potential to be an attractive and livable community for diverse populations of varying ages, income, ability, mobility, and cultural background. The following characteristics are examples of desirable qualities:

- Housing at different levels of affordability and type;
- Commercial and retail main street businesses;
- An assortment of food choices, including restaurants, healthy and affordable food markets, and farmers' markets;
- Multi-modal transportation to and from employment centers, other downtowns, and/or regional attractions;
- Decarbonized buildings that provide improved living and working environments;



*100 W. Water Street
Apartments, Elmira*

- Walkability and bikeability within the downtown and connecting the downtown to surrounding open space networks and regional destinations;
- Accessible recreational amenities, waterfront trails, parks and gathering spaces;
- Access to health care facilities;
- Community spaces, institutions and events that reflect the ethnic, cultural, and religious diversity of the population of the State;
- Academic, cultural and entertainment amenities;
- Broadband accessibility; and
- Community design and/or housing that caters to all ages.

Supportive local policies. The municipality should already embrace or be able to create and implement policies that increase livability and quality of life for all New Yorkers, including:

- Planning and implementation documents that may include but are not limited to economic development, brownfield cleanup and redevelopment, community development, housing affordability, affirmatively furthering fair housing, and civic engagement;
- Use of modern zoning codes and development standards that promote smart growth principles such as a mix of uses, compact development, transit-oriented development, shared parking, and walkability;
- Adaptive re-use policies, program, incentives or laws;
- Prior adoption of New York State Stretch Code;
- Strategies and actions that cut energy use, reduce emissions, and adapt to climate change such as those required for certification as a Climate Smart Community or Clean Energy Community;

- Existence of a management structure, such as a downtown manager or downtown business improvement district;
- Application of Complete Streets principles that add to the enjoyment of amenities by all abilities and ages;
- Presence of expansive non-discrimination laws and/or other protections of diverse populations;
- Application of Smart Cities innovation technology; and
- Policies that would make the community eligible for Age-Friendly Community Certification from AARP/WHO.

Public support. The municipality has conducted an open and robust community engagement process resulting in a vision for downtown revitalization and a preliminary list of projects and initiatives that may be included in a DRI Strategic Investment Plan. Specific local leaders and stakeholders are committed to working together to advance revitalization efforts.

Transformative opportunities and readiness. The municipality is prepared for near-term implementation of projects that will advance downtown revitalization. It may propose projects that fall into the following categories:

- Projects that will be ready for implementation with an infusion of DRI funds within the first one to two years (depending on the scope and complexity of the project) and which may leverage DRI funding with private investment or other funds. Examples of the ways project readiness may be demonstrated include, but are not limited to, completion of feasibility and market studies, preliminary site design, site control of key properties by willing partners, funding commitments, and/or expression of interest by developers and investors.
- Other transformative opportunities that may be explored during the planning process such as reuse of vacant and developable properties and underutilized buildings; projects to address unmet needs in the downtown, including housing, retail, and community services; and activities that will build upon regional strengths and trends.
- A grant or revolving loan fund to undertake smaller projects that, collectively, will create a more vibrant and active downtown. Funds are typically capped at \$600,000. If a loan or grant fund is proposed, the municipality or other local entity should have the capacity to manage it.

Administrative Capacity. The municipality has the local capacity to manage the DRI planning process and implementation of projects, including the ability to oversee contracts for awarded municipal projects.

Watkins Glen DRI Application Experiences

The story of the Watkins Glen Downtown Revitalization Initiative is one of perseverance, partnership, and big dreams.

Watkins Glen's first attempt at being selected by the Southern Tier Regional Economic Development Council (STREDC) as its nominee to be the region's DRI Area got off to a very late start. A focused five-day effort right before the application was due resulted in selection as a finalist by the STREDC. The tourism and marketing director for the village Chamber of Commerce made a presentation developed by a group of stakeholders from the community. Despite these efforts, the STREDC recommended the DRI Area in the City of Elmira for the program in 2016.

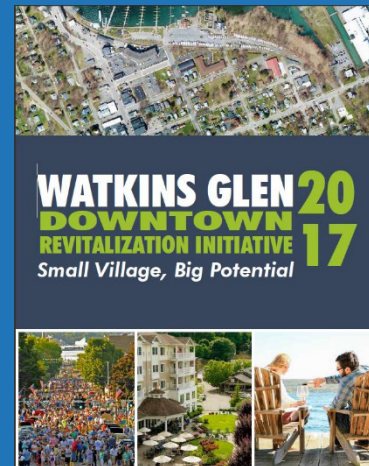
Immediately following the announcement of first round DRI Areas, the Schuyler County Planning Director and Chair of the FLX Gateway Community Development Corporation (Kristen VanHorn) began working on materials for round two. She studied applications, final plans, and awards booklets provided for every community designated as DRI participants in 2016 to identify the strengths of winning applications and to build off those strengths. The new application used basic information from the original application and was infused with information that would illustrate the community's creativeness, enthusiasm, innovation, and the residential stability evidenced by families remaining in the village and its catchment area for multiple generations.

Ms. VanHorn assembled support for another DRI bid, taking pains to make sure community input was gathered and reflected in the plan. A public workshop was held to ask participants to help Watkins Glen dream BIG!

The group developing the round two presentation to the STREDC brainstormed ways to show creativity while highlighting specific goals for the DRI Area; deciding to incorporate a 360-degree virtual reality video that would be produced by the experienced son of the SCOPED Executive Director. A presentation team was assembled that would amplify the strengths of the village by sharing their passion, enthusiasm, and continued commitment to the success of Watkins Glen. The team represented newcomers, multi-generational families, and Millennials, and included presenters from the Watkins Glen International Raceway, Schuyler County Planning Office, a local family-owned winery, Village Council, and the Schuyler County Administrator. The group made their case and was selected by the STREDC as the second-round DRI Area.

These are the lessons the village of Watkins Glen wants to share from its application experience:

- Think outside the box. Using virtual reality, the village presentation put the members of the Regional Council on the sidewalks to see firsthand the village's strengths and challenges, sailed around Seneca Lake, hiked through Watkins Glen State Park, and took a lap around Watkins Glen International Raceway.
- Have data ready. Federal, State, and local sources can be used to support the plan, but other information may need to be collected. To collect information related to investments made in and around Watkins Glen in the past two years, the village tapped the planning and code official, as well as local businesses that had made major investments. They also checked with businesses and organizations to learn about pending investments.
- Show you can hit the ground running. Demonstrate in your application that your community is ready to go. Propose key community members for the local planning committee. Assemble background information about your community and recent planning efforts that shows readiness to the REDC and will help focus the work of state-provided consultants.
- Utilize your assets. While the mayor or other traditional leaders can participate in REDC presentations, the village found success in using everyday people who live and work in the community. When paired with information-rich application materials, the presentation time could be used to provide highlights of the application and make the case why the community should be chosen as the DRI Area for the region.



Sample Application

Applications for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) will be received by the Regional Economic Development Councils (REDCs). Applicant responses for each section should be as complete and succinct as possible. Applicants should make every effort to engage the community in the development of the application. Prior to submission, applicants must have held a minimum of one meeting or event (virtual or in-person) to solicit public input on the community vision and potential projects and should demonstrate that any input received was considered in the final application. The DRI Application, available as a Word document, may be downloaded from www.ny.gov/DRI.

Communities that wish to be considered for a \$20 million award must provide additional documentation as noted below.

BASIC INFORMATION

- REDC Region
- Municipality Name
- Downtown Name
- County Name
- Applicant Contact(s) Name and Title
- Applicant Contact(s) Email Address and Secondary Email Address

VISION FOR DOWNTOWN

Provide a brief statement of the municipality's vision for downtown revitalization.

JUSTIFICATION

Provide an overview of the downtown area nominated for the DRI program, highlighting the area's defining characteristics and the reasons for its selection. Explain why the downtown is ready for Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) investment, and how that investment would serve as a catalyst to bring about revitalization.

DOWNTOWN IDENTIFICATION

- 1) **Boundaries of the proposed DRI area.** Detail the boundaries of the targeted downtown area or neighborhood, keeping in mind that there is no minimum or maximum size, but that the area should be concentrated and well-defined. Neighborhoods beyond traditional central business districts are eligible if they can meet other criteria making them ripe for investment. Include a map that clearly delineates the area to be included in the downtown revitalization area.

- 2) **Past investment, future investment potential.** Describe how this DRI area will be able to capitalize on prior private and public investment and catalyze future investments in the neighborhood and its surrounding areas. Describe recent planning efforts that support public and private investment in the proposed DRI area.
- 3) **Recent or impending job growth.** Describe how recent or impending job growth within or near the DRI area will attract a diverse workforce and population to an active life in the downtown, support redevelopment, and make growth sustainable in the long-term.
- 4) **Quality of life.** Identify the properties or characteristics that the DRI area possesses that contribute, or could contribute if enhanced, to the attractiveness and livability of the downtown for a diverse population of varying ages, income, gender identity, ability, mobility, and cultural background. Consider, for example, the presence of developable mixed-use spaces, varied housing types at different levels of affordability, walkability and bikeability, healthy and affordable food markets, and public parks and gathering spaces.
- 5) **Supportive local policies.** Articulate the policies in place that increase the livability and quality of life of the downtown. Examples include the use of local land banks, modern zoning codes or New York State Stretch Code, comprehensive plans, Clean Energy Communities or Climate Smart Communities designation, complete streets plan, transit-oriented development, non-discrimination laws, age-friendly policies, and a downtown management structure. If policies that support livability and quality of life in downtown are not currently in place, describe near-term efforts by the municipality to create and implement such policies.
- 6) **Public support.** Describe the public participation and engagement process conducted to develop the DRI application, and the support of local leaders and stakeholders for pursuing a vision of downtown revitalization. Characterize the commitment among local leaders and stakeholders to preparing and implementing a strategic investment plan.
- 7) **Transformative opportunities and readiness.** Describe opportunities to build on the strengths described above by providing a list of transformative projects that could be ready for implementation with an infusion of DRI funds within the first one to two years (depending on the scope and complexity of the project). Projects may be public or private, and could address economic development, transportation, housing, and community development needs. Project descriptions should include demonstration of readiness, proposed cost and funding sources, and identification of the project sponsor. For private for-profit projects, DRI funds may not exceed 40% of the total project cost (with a 10% bonus available for projects that commit to meaningful carbon reduction goals, including full electrification and net-zero building performance). While DRI funding may be used to cover the entire cost of a public or not-for-profit project, leveraging of investment

dollars from other sources (i.e., private, local, federal, or other state sources) is strongly encouraged.

Also identify any other transformative opportunities that may be explored during the planning process, such as reuse of vacant and developable properties and underutilized buildings; projects to address unmet needs in the downtown, including housing, retail, and community services; and activities that will build upon regional strengths and trends.

If a loan or grant fund is proposed, please identify who might be an appropriate entity with capacity to manage the fund. If candidate projects have been identified, please include them to demonstrate potential demand for the fund. Funds are typically capped at \$600,000.

Please note that if your community is selected to participate in the DRI program, any projects identified in the application, along with any others that may arise during the DRI planning process, will ultimately be vetted by the Local Planning Committee and the State to determine which projects receive DRI grants.

- 8) **Administrative capacity.** Describe local administrative capacity to manage this planning and implementation initiative, including the ability to oversee contracts for awarded municipal projects using existing staff and resources.
- 9) **Other.** Provide any other information that informs the nomination of this downtown for a DRI award.
- 10) **\$20 Million request.** For applicants wishing to be considered for \$20 million in DRI funding, provide a clear but concise justification of why your community should be awarded \$20 million. Justification should include identification of at least 1-2 large, transformational projects that will have a significant impact on the downtown and could be realized with a larger grant award. Project descriptions should include status of the following: site control, commitments from project partners, other funding sources, and zoning/regulatory requirements. Since a larger award amount will require heightened capacity on the part of your municipality, please identify the individual or entity that will coordinate DRI implementation. Also describe the capacity of any project partners to undertake the additional large-scale projects

Addendum: Opportunities for Electric Vehicle Charging Stations. DOS is soliciting feedback from communities on whether they may have locations suitable for electric vehicle (EV) fast charging stations in their downtowns, either at municipal or private parking lots. While responses to this question will not be included in the evaluation of applications for a DRI award, applicants are encouraged to consider opportunities for EV charging in their downtowns. Benefits to a host site community include becoming a destination for travelers to the downtown, resulting

in additional spending/economic activity for businesses in proximity to the fast charging site. Public EV charging stations also provide charging opportunities for community members without access to home charging.

Applicants should indicate any interest in having charging station(s) installed within their proposed DRI boundary and identify any locations that have the space requirements/ characteristics listed below. If it is a privately owned site, please indicate owner interest in participation.

* **Upper-bound:** 5 parking spaces able to dedicate to fast charging (e.g. become EV-only), with 32' x 16' additional space for supporting power somewhere in lot that can be either in parking spots or on grassy areas within the property lines.

* **Lower-bound:** 3 parking spaces able to dedicate to charging, with 22' x 16' additional space for supporting power somewhere in lot that can be either in parking spots or on grassy areas within the property lines.





DRI · Downtown Revitalization Initiative

Downtown Revitalization Initiative Guidebook · July 2021



**Downtown
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