

Downtown Revitalization Initiative

Round Five



NYS Department of State
NYS Homes & Community Renewal
Empire State Development



Downtown Revitalization Initiative

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The Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI), a cornerstone of the State's economic development program, transforms downtown neighborhoods into lively centers that offer a high quality of life and are magnets for redevelopment, business, job creation, and economic and housing diversity.

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

Compact, walkable downtowns with a vibrant and diverse mix of commercial and residential uses are a key ingredient to helping New York State rebuild its economy from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, and to achieving the State's bold climate goals by promoting the use of public transit and reducing dependence on private vehicles.

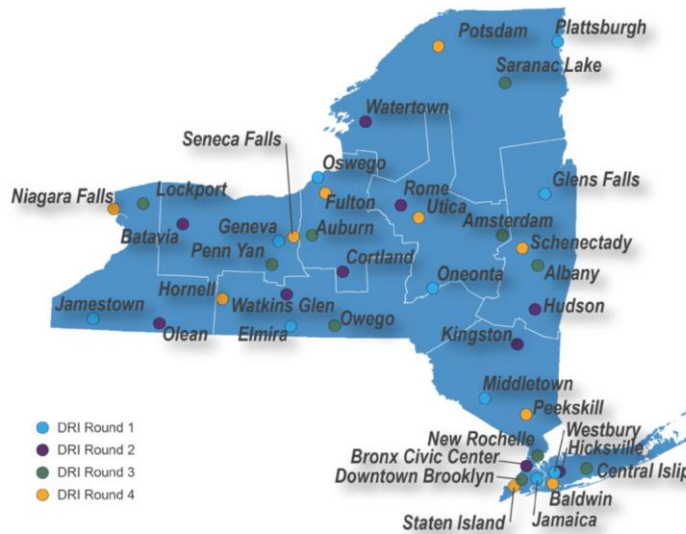
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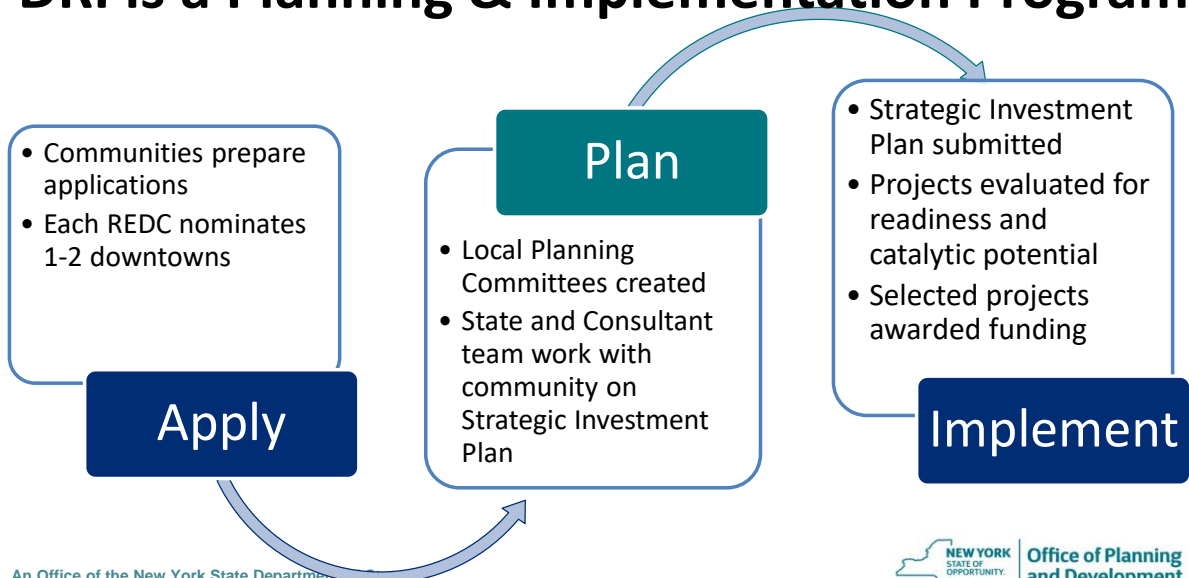
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DRI is a Planning & Implementation Program



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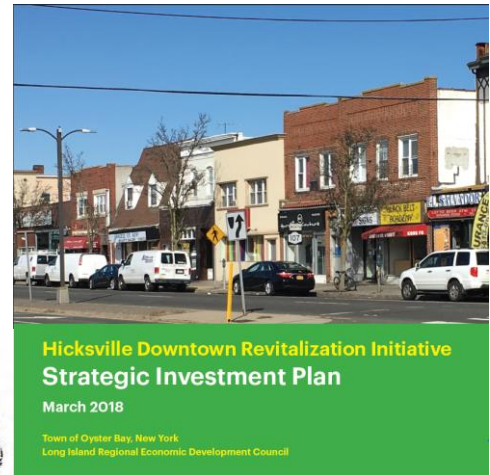
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DRI Strategic Investment Plan

- ☐ A clear vision for the downtown.
- ☐ Goals and strategies to accomplish the vision.
- ☐ A list of catalytic/transformational projects.
- ☐ A downtown management and implementation strategy.



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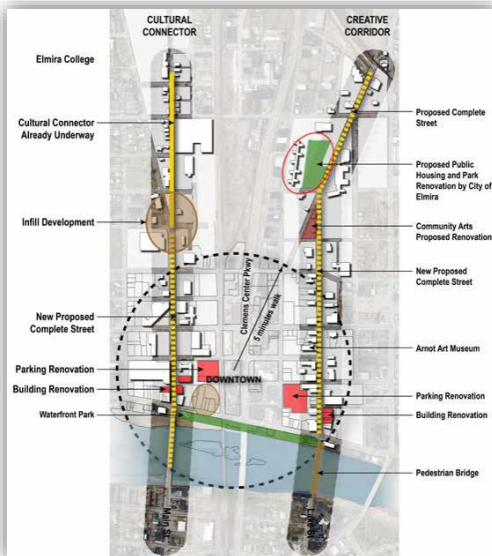


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Goal: Synergistic Projects



Key Plan of Priority Projects



- Support for Small Businesses
 - Establish Elmira Small Business Revolving Loan Fund
 - Develop Downtown and Regional Signage
 - Improve Downtown On-Street Parking
 - Develop West Water Street Parking
- Activate Buildings in Downtown Elmira
- ➡ Build Elmira Clemens Square
- Develop West Water Street Mixed-use Development
- Improve Clemens Center Parkway
- Improve Main Street
- Renovate Lake Street Pedestrian Bridge
- Renovate Centertown Parking Garage
- Develop Elmira Riverfront Boardwalk



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Goal: Catalytic Investment

- Nearby investments
- Continuity with REDC vision and recent area plans
- Developable properties
- Anchor institutions
- Current commitment to downtown
- Potential for quality and attractive affordable housing
- Existing infrastructure to support development
- Investment in arts and cultural institutions
- Support for Smart Growth principles

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DRI Round Five – Bigger than ever!

DRI Five is twice as big as previous rounds - \$200 million in total – to provide a significant jumpstart to impacted downtown economies

- Each REDC may award \$20 million to one or two downtowns
- REDCs will decide whether to nominate two \$10 million awardees or one \$20 million award upon review of submitted applications



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Successful DRI applications...



- Build on a clear vision for downtown and on previous planning efforts and key investments
- Demonstrate public involvement and community support
- Focus on a downtown area that has the foundation for success

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Eligible Applicants

- Previous or new applicants
- Prior DRI recipient communities for a new distinct area
- Two contiguous communities with one interconnected downtown area or corridor

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Attributes of a Successful Downtown

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



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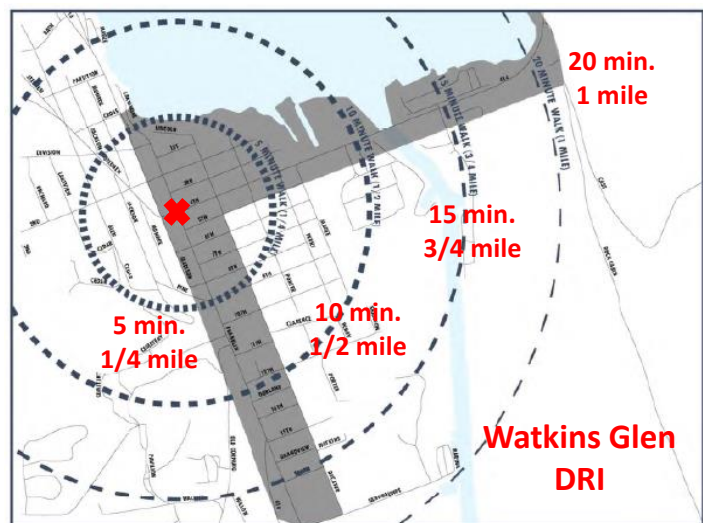
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Compact, Well-Defined Boundaries

- No minimum or maximum size
- Can range from a corridor or block(s) of a neighborhood to the municipality's traditional central business district
- Neighborhoods beyond the central business district are also eligible



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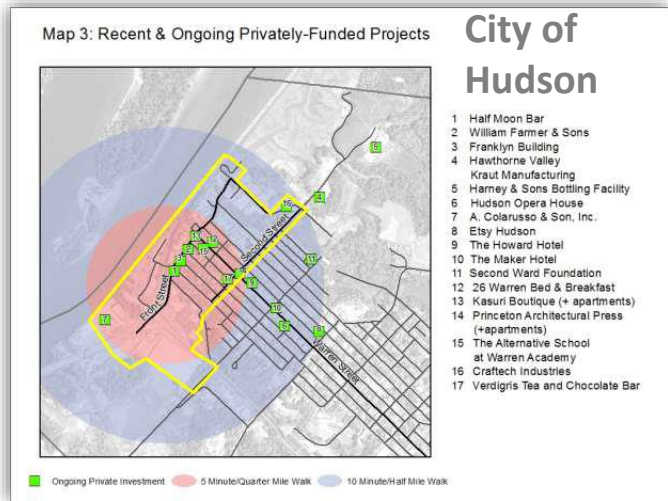
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Past Investments, Future Potential

DRI investment would build on previous private & public investment

- Nearby investments
- Continuity with REDC
- Anchor institutions
- Supportive infrastructure
- Arts and cultural institutions
- Smart Growth and energy-efficiency

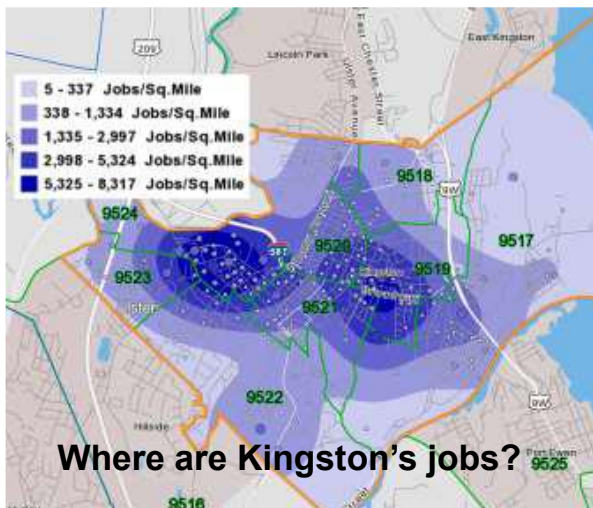
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Recent or Impending Job Growth



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- Presence of major job-creating projects
- New and expanding employers
- Accessibility of jobs by foot or public transit
- Diversity in job types, salaries, & skill levels
- Potential for mobility between jobs

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Quality of Life



Downtown contains or could contain:

- Housing at different levels of affordability and type
- Commercial & retail businesses
- Multiple means of transportation
- Walkable/bikeable pathways
- Recreational, cultural, and entertainment amenities
- Healthy, affordable food
- Access to health care



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Supportive Local Policies

Examples:

- Modern zoning codes/standards
- Adaptive re-use policies/programs
- Prior adoption of NYS Stretch Code
- Energy Efficiency/Clean Energy actions
- Application of Complete Streets principles
- Non-discrimination laws
- Age-friendly policies
- A downtown management structure



Source: WHEDco.jpg

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Public Support for Local Vision

- Public engagement in developing application
- Support/commitment of local leaders & stakeholders

The DRI committee formed in Watkins Glen asked the public three questions at a meeting:

1. What is at the top of your wish list for downtown Watkins Glen?
2. What do we currently have in downtown Watkins Glen that needs improvement(s)?
3. How do you see Watkins Glen in 10 to 15 years?



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Transformative Opportunities

Provide a range of potential transformative projects



Applications may include:

- Projects ready for implementation within 1-2 years
- Transformative opportunities to be further explored during the planning process
- Grant/loan fund



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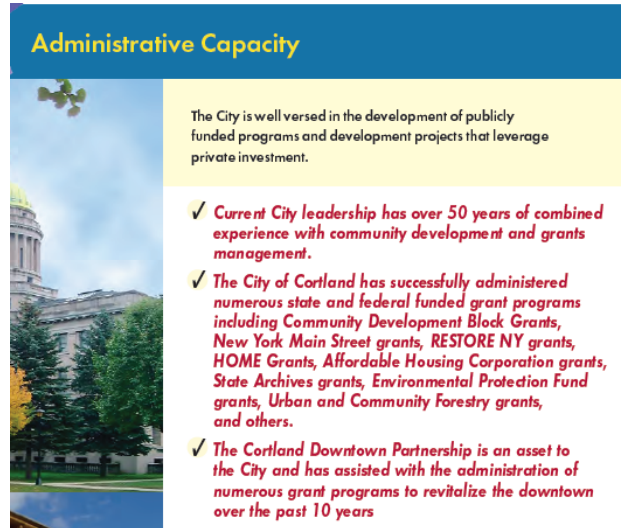
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Administrative Capacity

- Current leadership and department capacity
- Experience managing contracts
- Ability to work with partners
- Local grant management system

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City of Cortland DRI Excerpt



Administrative Capacity

The City is well versed in the development of publicly funded programs and development projects that leverage private investment.

- ✓ *Current City leadership has over 50 years of combined experience with community development and grants management.*
- ✓ *The City of Cortland has successfully administered numerous state and federal funded grant programs including Community Development Block Grants, New York Main Street grants, RESTORE NY grants, HOME Grants, Affordable Housing Corporation grants, State Archives grants, Environmental Protection Fund grants, Urban and Community Forestry grants, and others.*
- ✓ *The Cortland Downtown Partnership is an asset to the City and has assisted with the administration of numerous grant programs to revitalize the downtown over the past 10 years*

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Project Requirements

- Timeliness
- \$100,000 minimum DRI award
- Minimum of 8 units in fully-residential projects – w/affordable component
- DRI funding - 40% or less of total cost for privately sponsored projects – up to 50% for projects meeting higher decarbonization standards
- New and substantial rehab projects – NYS Stretch Code

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Ineligible Activities

- Planning activities
- Operation and maintenance
- Pre-award costs
- Property acquisition
- Training and other program expenses
- Expenses related to existing programs

\$20 Million Request

- Provide justification for larger award
- Identify at least 1-2 large, transformational projects
- Describe capacity of municipality and partners to manage implementation of larger award

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Addendum to Application

Opportunities for Electric Vehicle Charging Stations



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Application Submission

- Due to REDCs by 4:00 PM on September 15, 2021
- NYC applications due to Borough Presidents' offices by 4:00 PM on September 3, 2021
- In Mid-Hudson, applications are limited to 15 pages (20 pages if requesting \$20 M)

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Program Guidelines & Application Information Available at www.ny.gov/DRI

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