

# Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions
- DRI Program and Project Requirements
- Tonawanda DRI Vision, Goals, and Evaluation Criteria
- Project Development
- DRI Project Form
- Q&A



# Welcome and Introductions



# Introductions

## Name

## State Partners

<b>Ben Bidell</b>	<b>NYS Department of State</b>
<b>Angela Keppel</b>	<b>NYS Department of State</b>
<b>Erin Corrado</b>	<b>Empire State Development</b>
<b>Mo Sumbundu</b>	<b>Empire State Development</b>
<b>Lenny Skrill</b>	<b>Homes and Community Renewal</b>

## Name

## Local Planning Committee (LPC)

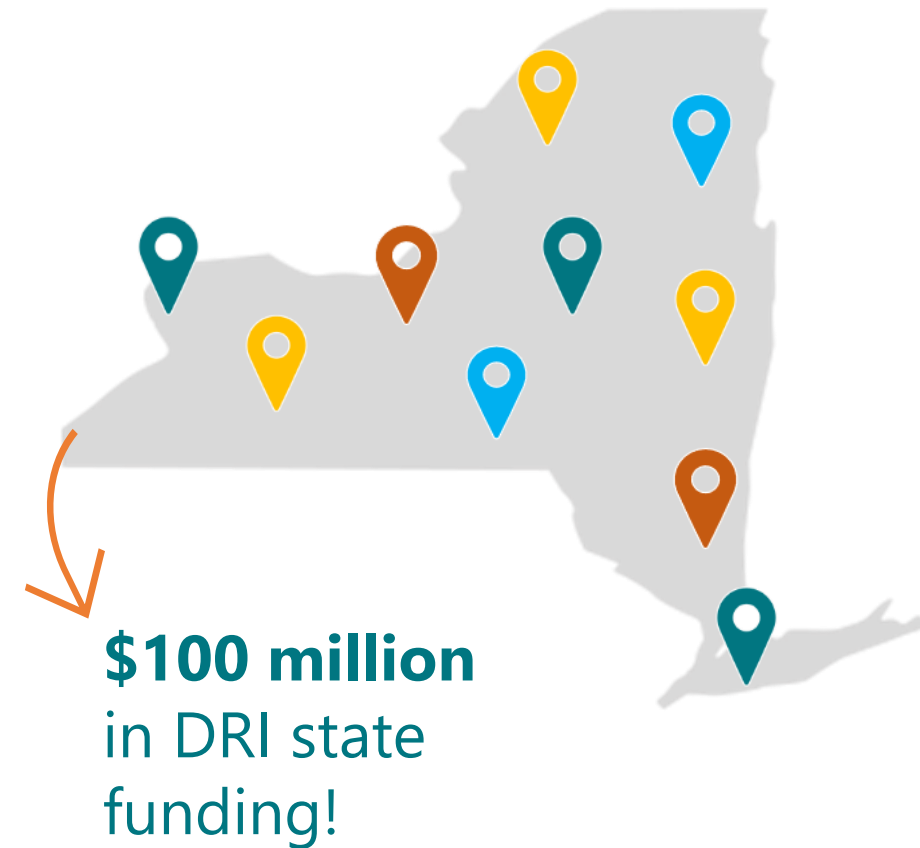
<b>Hon. Mayor John White</b>	<b>LPC Co-Chair (City of Tonawanda)</b>
<b>Paul Brown</b>	<b>LPC Co-Chair (WNY Regional Economic Development Council)</b>

# DRI Overview



# DRI Program Overview

- Launched in 2016 to improve the vitality of urban centers across the State
- Regional Economic Development Councils (REDCs) nominate communities for significant investment to revitalize their downtowns
- In DRI Round 7, each of the REDCs chose one community to receive \$10 million (\$100 million in funding statewide)
- Each community prepares a Strategic Investment Plan that guides the implementation of transformational project
- City's winning application can be found online at [www.TonawandaDRI.com](http://www.TonawandaDRI.com)



# Statewide DRI Program Goals



**Create an active downtown with a mix of uses**



**Enhance downtown living and quality of life**



**Create diverse housing options for all income levels**



**Provide enhanced public spaces that serve those of all ages and abilities**



**Encourage the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions**



**Provide diverse employment opportunities for a variety of skill sets and salary levels**



**Grow the local property tax base**



# Open Call for Projects

- Used to identify DRI projects sponsored by public, private, or non-profit entities
- Provides an open, fair, and transparent process for LPC to vet projects
- Open Call lasts at least 4 weeks
- Technical assistance available
- Allows LPC and consultant team to obtain information in a consistent manner
- Submission of a proposal for inclusion in the SIP does not guarantee selection or funding



# Tonawanda DRI Vision, Goals, and Evaluation Criteria





# Recommended DRI Vision Statement

*Downtown Tonawanda will become a commercial and cultural hub at the confluence of the Erie Canal, Niagara River, and Ellicott Creek, offering a distinct blend of historical charm and modern vitality for residents, workers, and visitors of all ages. By capitalizing on its natural and built assets as a waterfront community, downtown Tonawanda will be sustainable; a vibrant place to live, work, gather, and recreate; and a unique regional destination to connect with history, nature, and each other.*



# Recommended DRI Goals

1. Attract new shops, restaurants, and other businesses to the downtown area.
2. Make downtown Tonawanda a year-round destination for residents and visitors.
3. Embrace Tonawanda's waterfront, parks, and trails as key activity centers for residents and visitors alike.
4. Improve walkability throughout downtown and better connect downtown to parks, trails, and neighborhoods.

# Recommended DRI Goals

5. Refresh streetscapes to improve access and make downtown Tonawanda look and feel livelier and more attractive to businesses.
6. Upgrade downtown Tonawanda's housing stock with a diverse mix of options for all residents.
7. Celebrate Tonawanda's rich heritage through the preservation of historic buildings and cultural sites and story-telling.
8. Highlight the small-town, historic feel of the city through enhancements to buildings, public spaces, and amenities.

# Local Evaluation Criteria

- Transformative potential – elements that fundamentally change the downtown and how it's perceived
- Ability to provide a sustainable impact to downtown
- Capacity of the responsible parties to implement the project
- Community and economic benefits
- Alignment with the community vision, goals, and strategies
- Estimated impacts on tax revenue

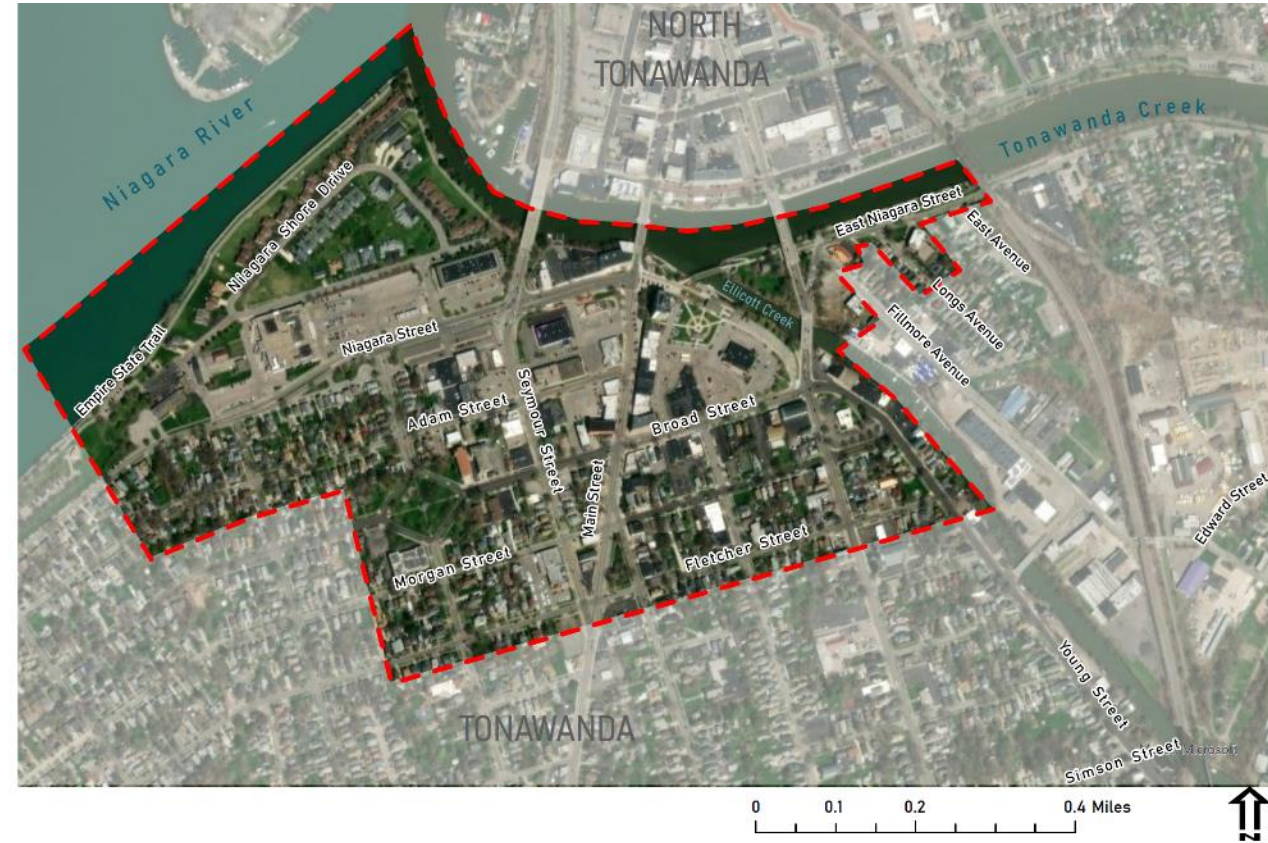
# DRI Project Requirements





# Open Call Overview

- Open Call for Projects: May 30 to July 12
- Proposed projects must be located within or near the DRI boundary
- Process:
  1. Applicants submit a completed DRI Project Form (with assistance from consultant as needed) by July 12
  2. Technical assistance and open office hours available throughout the Open Call for Projects
- Project Forms are available on the DRI website:  
[www.tonawandadri.com/#projects](http://www.tonawandadri.com/#projects).
- Project Forms also available at City Hall



# Funding Application Forms for Projects

- **DRI Project Form**

- For transformational projects >\$75K in total project cost to be considered for grant funding directly from New York State
- Provide as much detail as possible for project profile development

- **Small Project Fund Interest Form**

- For smaller, less transformational projects <\$75K in total project cost to be considered for grant funding from the City of Tonawanda
- Provide brief project description and itemized cost estimates for improvements/activities





# Eligible Project Types



## Public Improvement Projects

Streetscape and transportation improvements, recreational trails, new and upgraded parks, plazas, public art, green infrastructure, and other public realm projects.



## New Development and/or Rehabilitation of Existing Downtown Buildings

Development and redevelopment of real property for mixed-use, commercial, residential, not for profit, or public uses. Development / redevelopment should result in employment opportunities, housing choices or other community services.



## Small Project Grant Fund

A locally managed matching small project fund (up to \$600,000) for small downtown projects, such as façade improvements, building renovations, business assistance, or public art.



## Branding and Marketing

Downtown branding and marketing projects that target residents, tourists, investors, developers and visitors.

# Ineligible Project Types

- **Planning Activities.** All DRI funds must be used to implement projects.
- **Operations and Maintenance.** Funds cannot be used for on-going or routine expenses, such as staff salaries and wages, rent, utilities, and property up-keep.
- **Pre-award Costs.** Reimbursement for costs incurred before the completion of the Strategic Investment Plan and the announcement of funding awards is not permitted.
- **Property Acquisition.** DRI funds cannot be used for property acquisition.
- **Training and Other Program Expenses.** DRI funds cannot be used to cover continuous costs, such as training costs and expenses related to existing programs.
- **Expenses related to Existing Programs.** DRI funds cannot supplement existing programs or replace existing resources.

# Proposed DRI Boundary

- All projects receiving DRI funds must be located within the final boundary
- Projects submitted for funding consideration must be within or near the proposed boundary
- LPC can make minor boundary adjustments based on projects submitted through the Open Call for Projects



# DRI Project Requirements

**Timing** – must be able to break ground within two years or sooner

**Sponsor** – must have an entity that agrees to undertake the project

**Site Control** – must have authority to undertake the project at that location

**Scope** – must have potential to transform the downtown area

**Budget** – should have a detailed budget and leverage other funding

**Decarbonization** – may be required to meet energy efficiency requirements

# Project Match Requirements

- **Privately-Sponsored Projects** – Minimum match of 25% of total project cost
- **Public or Nonprofit-Sponsored Projects** – No minimum match requirements
- **Small Project Fund Only** – Minimum match of 25% of total project cost

The LPC has discretion to increase match goals, as appropriate. For example, the LPC may decide to increase the match goal for privately-sponsored projects to 40%, if desired.



# Decarbonization Requirements

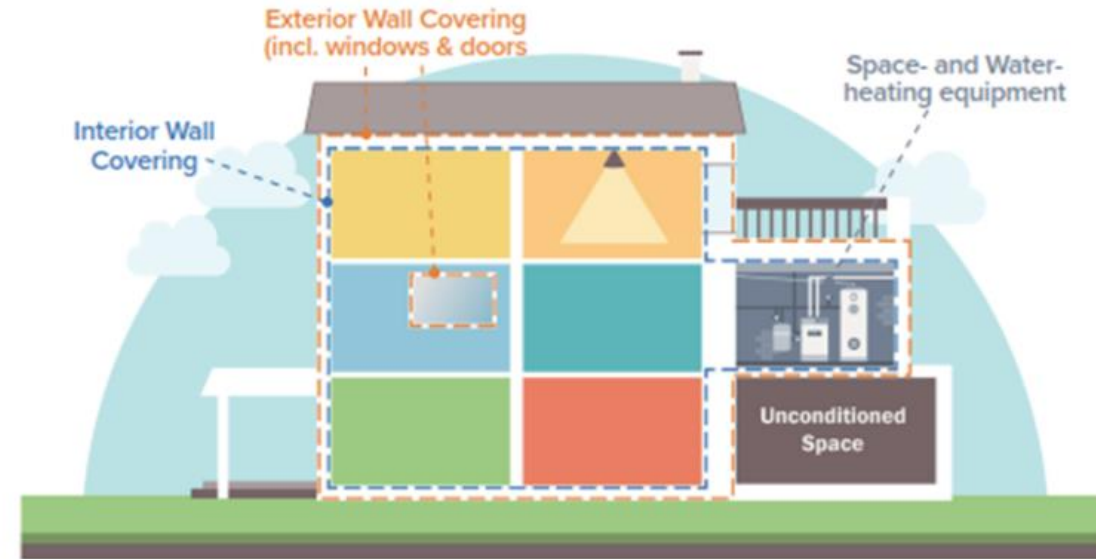
Decarbonization requirements apply to:

- New Construction projects >5,000 SF
- Building addition projects >5,000 SF
- Substantial renovation projects >5,000 SF and other renovation criteria

Projects must comply with one of the following:

- Meet the NYS Stretch Energy Code
- Obtain an Energy Star score of 90 or better using EPA's Target Finder Calculator
- Obtain certification from a third-party such as Energy Star, LEED, etc.

For building addition projects, only the addition is required to incorporate decarbonization



# Small Project Fund

- Small Project Fund is optional
- Total available for projects is up to \$600,000
- Small Project Fund can be used for:
  - Interior and exterior building renovations for commercial and mixed-use spaces
  - Upper-story residential improvements
  - Permanent commercial machinery and equipment
  - Soft costs such as architectural, engineering, and environmental services
  - Public art projects
- Minimum 25% match per project/building
- LPC decides whether to recommend creating the fund based on demonstrated demand and eligible project types (from above list)
- Small Project Fund Interest Form is completed by project sponsors to document demand



# DRI Funding Awards



# Funding by State Agency

Department of State (DOS):

Administers funding for public infrastructure projects



Department of State

Empire State Development (ESD):

Administers funding for economic development, business investment, and job creation projects



Empire State Development

Homes and Community Renewal (HCR):

Administers funding for affordable housing projects



Homes and Community Renewal

NYS Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA):

Provides technical assistance on decarbonization



NYSERDA

# Contracting with the State

In general, funding will be provided on a reimbursement basis

DRI funds are subject to all requirements typically attached to State funding:

- Minority- and women-owned business enterprise (MWBE) goals (30%)
- Service-disabled veteran-owned business (SDVOB) goals (6%)
- Competitive procurement (multiple bids)
- Grant reporting requirements

HCR and ESD grants are subject to a pro rata recapture if property is sold within 5 years of disbursement of funds

# Project Development



# Project Sponsors Roles & Responsibilities

**Project sponsors** are expected to:

- Clearly define the project purpose and scope and how it relates to the community's vision, goals, and strategies
- Work closely with the consultant team to provide the necessary information to support the development of the project profile, including a detailed scope of work, cost estimates, and renderings
- Provide information in a timely manner to enable review and evaluation by the LPC

# LPC and Consultant Team Roles & Responsibilities

## Local Planning Committee (LPC) will:

- Review project profiles and come to each LPC meeting prepared to discuss the proposed projects
- Identify additional information necessary for the project to be considered by the LPC for DRI funding

## Consultant Team will:

- Draft and finalize all content, renderings, photographs, graphics, etc.
- Work with project sponsors and the LPC to support development of the project profiles

# Technical Assistance and Financial Resources

A project sponsor may need assistance beyond the consulting team in situations where:

- Additional funding is needed to complete the project
- The project sponsor does not have site control or the approval/support of the property owner
- The project sponsor is an individual, not a municipality, business, or nonprofit entity
- The project sponsor lacks the administrative capacity to develop and/or implement the project
- The project sponsor lacks a business or operating plan



# DRI Project Form Contents



# DRI Project Form

## 1. Project Sponsor

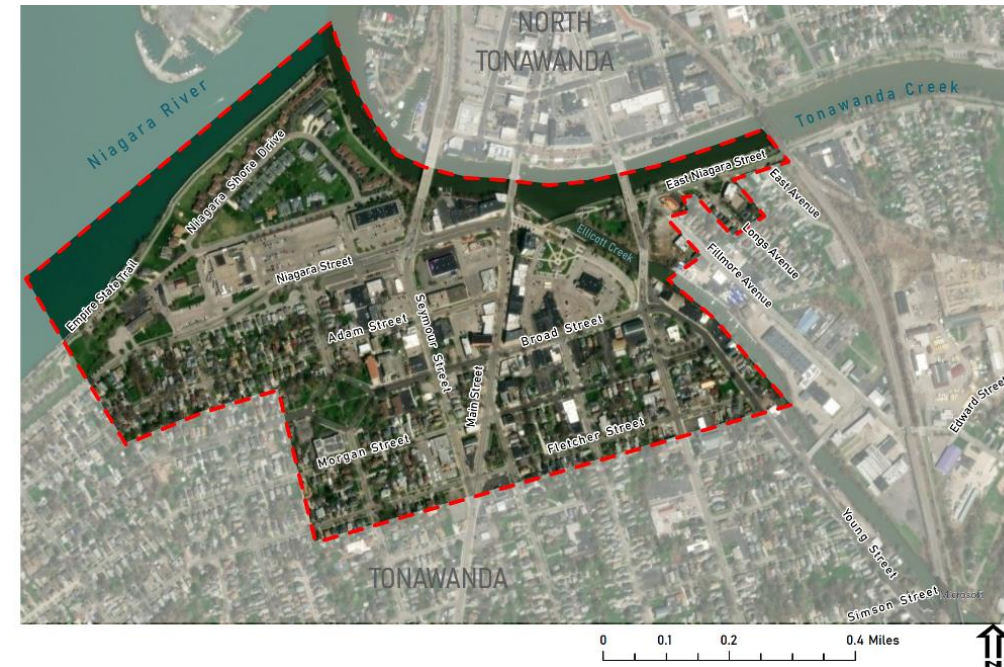
- Must be a legal entity (not an individual) and have legal authority to undertake the project
- The project sponsor can be different from the property owner

## 2. Project Location/Address

- Within the DRI boundary (see map)
- Note the LPC may consider minor boundary adjustments

## 3. Project Type

- Public Improvement;
- New Development;
- Redevelopment and/or Renovation of an Existing Building(s);
- Small Project (Less than \$75,000 in Total Cost); or
- Branding and Marketing



# DRI Project Form

## 4. Existing Conditions

- Describe the project site's existing conditions, including why the project is needed

## 5. Project Title

- Describe the “what” and “where”
- Begin with an action, name the location, name the outcome
- *Example: “Renovate 10 Main Street into a Childcare Center”*

## 6. Project Description

- Proposed use (e.g., commercial, industrial, public improvement, mixed-use)
- Goal of the project
- Any work or planning done previously
- Size/scale of the project
- Types of activities to be completed

# DRI Project Form

## 7. Project Alignment with Vision and Goals

- Describe how the project helps advance the community's vision and goals
- Refer to Tonawanda's DRI Vision Statement and DRI Goals

## 8. Property Ownership

- Identify the owner of the property where the project will be located
- If the project sponsor and property owner are not the same, describe how the sponsor will obtain legal authority to implement the project

## 9. Capacity

- Describe the project sponsor's experience in implementing similar projects, including any experience with grant administration
- Describe any partner entities that will help implement the project (e.g., funding, operating, or business partners)

# DRI Project Form

## 10. Preliminary Funding Estimate

- Indicate the total project costs and total DRI/NYF request
- Complete the budget table, identifying each project activity, its cost, the funding source, and the status of funding
- Funding status definitions:
  - **Secured:** the source and amount of funding is guaranteed
  - **Anticipated:** the funds are reasonably expected at time of implementation but not currently available
  - **Requested:** a formal request has been submitted to a funding entity
  - **Undetermined**

Action	Cost	Funding source	Status of Funds
<b>Total DRI funding request</b>	\$		
<b>Total funds from other sources</b>	\$		
<b>Total project cost</b>	\$		

# DRI Project Form

## 11. Project Readiness and Timeframe for Implementation

- Describe any work that is underway or has already been completed to advance the project
- Describe the proposed implementation timeline including project milestones
- Discuss any environmental requirements, required permits, and issues that may affect implementation

## 12. Supplemental Information

- If available, provide supplemental information such as:
  - Images of the existing project site
  - Images/renderings of the proposed project
  - Documentation of project readiness
  - Other available information that may assist the LPC in reviewing the project

## 13. Decarbonization

- Decarbonization requirements are only applicable to new construction, building additions, and renovations equal to or greater than 5,000 square feet; consult the DRI/NYF Guidebook for details

# DRI Project Form is Developed into Project Profile

- Project profile includes all relevant information needed to evaluate the project
- Developed using the information provided in the Project Form and through consultant follow-up
- Documents the status of the project and alignment with program goals
- Included in the SIP if recommended by the LPC for funding
- Each profile should be able to stand on its own

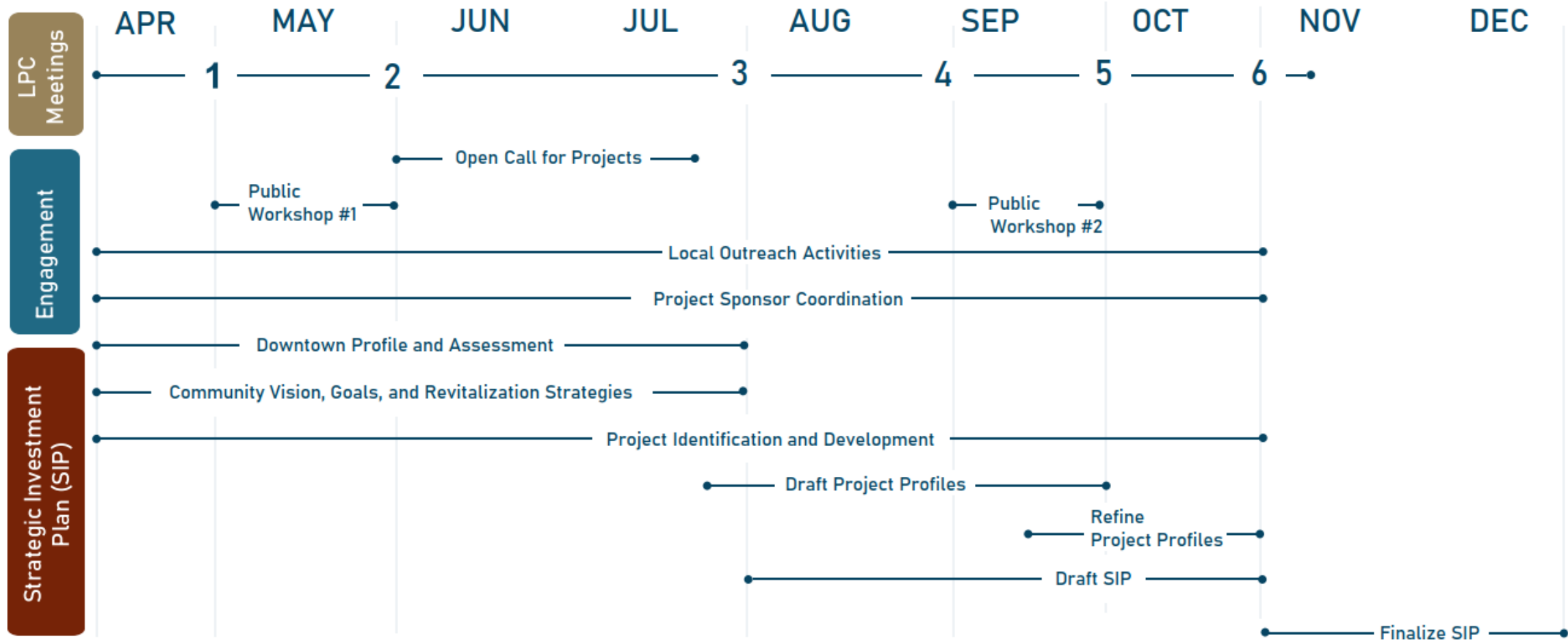




# Next Steps



# Tonawanda DRI Process and Schedule



# Project Development Milestones

- **LPC Meeting #3:** July 25, 2024  
Initial presentation of submitted projects to the LPC
- **Public Workshop #2:** Mid-September, 2024  
Collect public feedback on proposed projects
- **LPC Meeting #5:** September 26, 2024  
LPC decides on preliminary slate of projects
- **LPC Meeting #6:** October 24, 2024  
LPC determines final slate of project to be recommended to NYS for funding

# Completing the Tonawanda DRI Project Form or Small Project Fund Interest Form

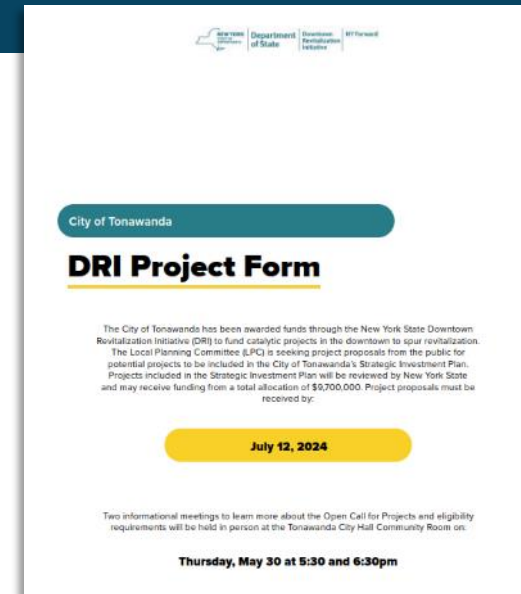
Tonawanda DRI Project Form and Small Project Fund Interest Forms are available:

- Online at [www.TonawandaDRI.com/#projects](http://www.TonawandaDRI.com/#projects)
- Paper applications at City Hall

Information and further assistance:

- Open office hours on Wednesday June 12, 10am-2pm, City of Tonawanda Public Library Meeting Room

Contact Bob Gibson with follow-up questions or requests for technical assistance at [Bob.Gibson@wsp.com](mailto:Bob.Gibson@wsp.com).



# Questions?

