

City of Tonawanda Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI)



Local Planning Committee (LPC) Meeting #5
September 25, 2024, 6:00-7:30 PM
Senior Citizens Center



Downtown
Revitalization
Initiative



Downtown
Revitalization
Initiative

Welcome & Introductions

Co-chairs

- Honorable John White, Mayor
- Paul Brown, WNY Regional Economic Development Council
- Marty Grunzweig, City of Tonawanda Local Development Corporation
- Skip Johnson, Historical Society of the Tonawandas
- Nhi Kha, Sativa Remedy
- Debbie Jaeger, Erie Heights Apartments
- Alice Roth, City of Tonawanda Planning Board
- Michelle Lockett, Niagara River Greenway Commission
- Mark Saltarelli, Tonawandas Gateway Harbor, Inc.
- Joan Horn, City of Tonawanda Board of Visual & Performing Arts
- Jeffrey Ross, Chamber of Commerce of the Tonawandas
- Suzanne Zuchlewski, Resident

Welcome & Introductions

Name

State Partners

Ben Bidell	NYS Department of State
Angela Keppel	NYS Department of State
Erin Corrado	Empire State Development
Mo Sumbundu	Governor's Office
Leonard Skrill	NYS Homes and Community Renewal

Name

City of Tonawanda

Sharon Stuart	Administrative Assistant to the Mayor
Judy Kurtzworth	Executive Secretary to the Mayor

Code of Conduct Preamble

Each Local Planning Committee Member is reminded of their obligation to disclose potential conflicts of interest with respect to projects that may be discussed at today's meeting. If you have a potential conflict of interest regarding a project you believe will be discussed during the meeting, please disclose it now and recuse yourself from any discussion or vote on that project. For example, you may state that you, or a family member, have a financial interest in the project, or you are on the board of the organization proposing the project. Please inform the LPC co-chairs during the meeting if the need to disclose a conflict arises unexpectedly, and then recuse yourself from discussion or voting on the project.

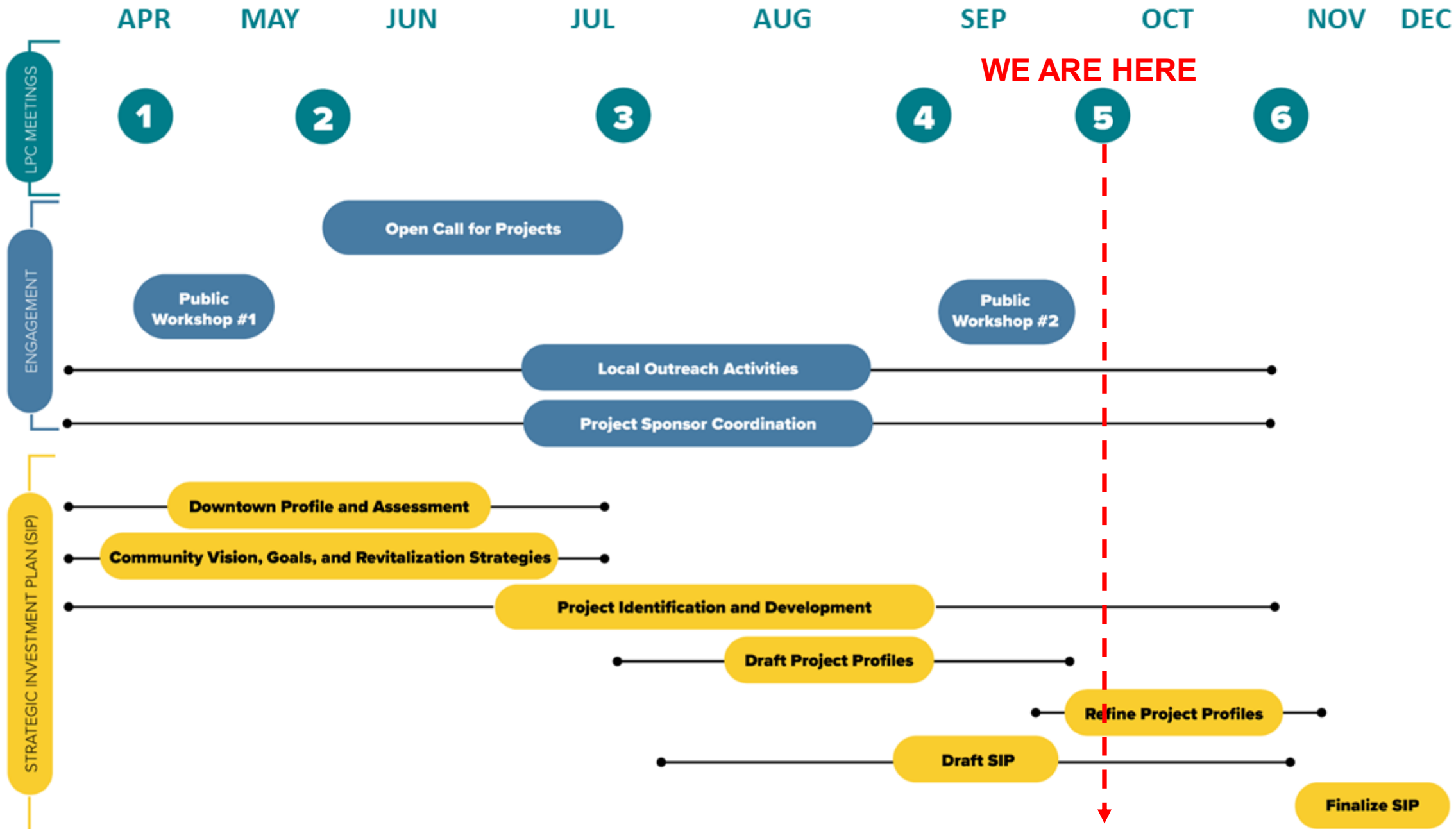
Code of Conduct Preamble

The conflicts of interest we have on file are listed below. Do any other LPC members need to make a disclosure to the Committee? Thank you. Please inform the LPC co-chairs during the meeting if the need to disclose a conflict arises unexpectedly, and then recuse yourself from discussion or voting on the project.

- Alice Roth, Volunteer and Trustee for Historical Society of the Tonawandas, Conflict: Enhance the Historic Long Homestead and Preserve the Historical Society of the Tonawandas Museum*
- Skip Johnson, Member and Treasurer of the Historical Society of the Tonawandas Conflict: Enhance the Historic Long Homestead and Preserve the Historical Society of the Tonawandas Museum*

Planning Process and Engagement Updates





LPC Meeting #4 Summary (Last Meeting)

- Planning process and engagement updates
- Market findings from Downtown Profile and Assessment
- Four-minute presentations from project sponsors
- Project evaluation criteria and evaluation process
- Public comment

LPC Meeting #5 (Today's Meeting)

- Welcome and introductions
- Code of Conduct preamble
- Planning process and engagement updates
- Project updates since last meeting
- Summary of project evaluations and public feedback
- Preliminary slate of projects to recommend for funding
- Additional questions and project information needs
- Next steps including final meeting
- Public comment

LPC Meeting #6 (Next Meeting)

- Planning process updates
- Project updates and final draft project profiles
- Review project evaluation criteria again
- Finalize slate of projects to recommend for funding
- Next steps and DRI roadmap
- Public comment

Project Feedback Form

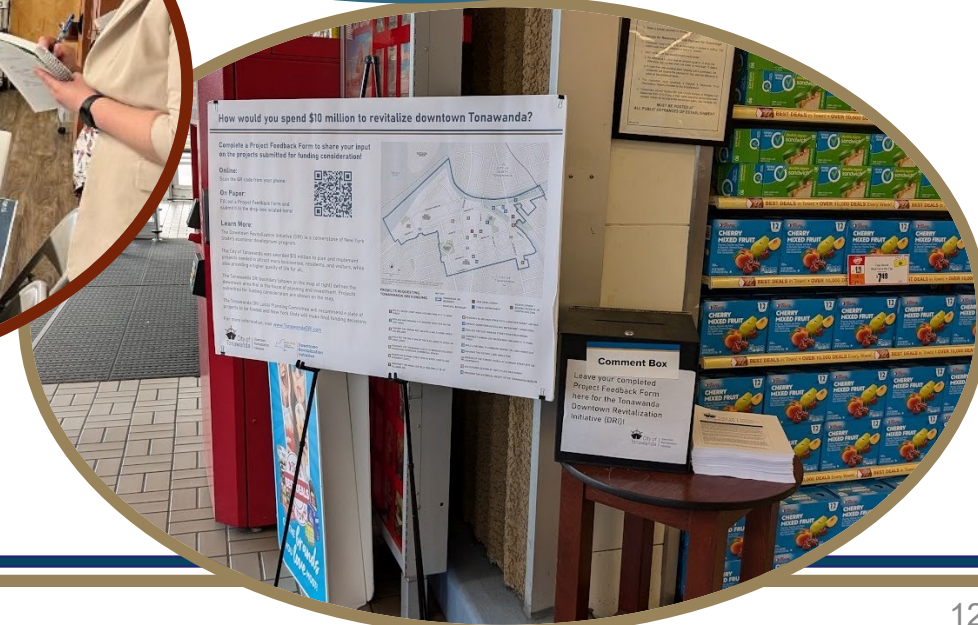
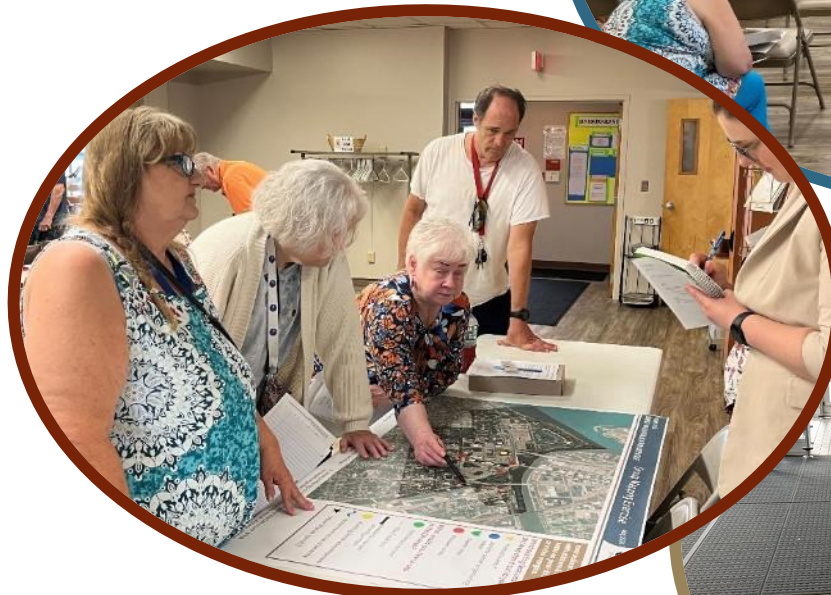
- Project Feedback Form was open from August 6 to September 11
- Available online and in paper form at:
 - Tops grocery store on Niagara Street
 - Tonawanda City Hall
 - City of Tonawanda Public Library
- 320 responses received
- Project Feedback Form results were distributed to LPC for reference

Feedback Form Questions:

1. Does the project align with the Tonawanda DRI Vision and Goals? (Yes or No)
2. Will the project transform downtown Tonawanda? (Yes or No)
3. Level of support for the project: (Scale of 1-10)
4. Additional comments

Engagement Updates

- **Project Feedback Form**
 - Closed September 11
- **Pop-up events**
 - Food Truck Thursday event, September 5



Project Updates



Construct the Mixed-Use "Elli" Building at 20-40 Fillmore Avenue

Applicant: JC Tonawanda Tower QOZB, LLC

Project Type: New Development

Description: Construct a new 124-unit, mixed-use, multistory building with studios, one- and two-bedroom residential units, ground floor commercial space, restaurant and cafe, event space, and common area.

Location: 20-40 Fillmore Avenue

Total Project Cost: **\$41,971,000**

DRI Funding Requested: **\$4,000,000**

Requested Percentage: **10% DRI**



Build a Seven-Story Mixed-Use Building at 17-31 Adam Street

Applicant: Niagara Development Group

Project Type: New Development

Description: Redevelop a city parking lot into a seven-story, mixed-use complex with 40 residential units, multiple restaurant and commercial spaces, banquet hall and rooftop bar with underground parking.

Location: 17, 27, 31 Adam Street and 106 Broad Street

Total Project Cost: \$17,000,000

DRI Funding Requested: \$3,500,000

Requested Percentage: 21% DRI



Project withdrawn from DRI consideration

Convert the Former Rite Aid into a Multi-Story Mixed-Use Building

Applicant: REMHY, LLC

Project Type: Redevelopment and/or Renovation of an Existing Building(s)

Description: Transform a vacant, single-story building into a 3-5 story mixed-use building with possible brand name hotel, Airbnb accommodations, signature restaurant, retail spaces, and apartment units.

Location: 47 Niagara Street

Total Project Cost: **10,200,000**

DRI Funding Requested: **\$2,000,000**

Requested Percentage: **20% DRI**



Redevelop 60 Main Street into an Event Center and Overnight Suites

Applicant: RZ Real Estate, LLC

Project Type: Redevelopment and/or Renovation of an Existing Building(s)

Description: Redevelop the vacant former American Legion building into an event center for 350-400 people, a bar, and nine overnight suites, including renovations to the building façade and signage. DRI requests include the overnight suites and elevator (phase 2).

Location: 60 Main Street

Total Project Cost: **\$1,352,000**

DRI Funding Requested: \$1,012,000

Requested Percentage: **75% DRI**



Improve Downtown Access and Waterfront Connections

Applicant: City of Tonawanda

Project Type: Public Improvement

Description: Reconstruct the city parking lot adjacent to the Intermodal Hub with new paving, landscaping, lighting, and ADA accessibility; commission a local artist to fabricate and install a sculpture on Canal Street Plaza; design and install seasonal sidewalls on the public pavilion; and improve branding and wayfinding signage.

Location: Canal Street Plaza and adjacent parking lot

Total Project Cost: **\$1,700,000**

DRI Funding Requested: **\$1,700,000**

Requested Percentage: 100% DRI



Construct a Mixed-Use Waterfront Building at 77 Young Street

Applicant: JKMR, LLC

Project Type: Redevelopment and/or Renovation of an Existing Building(s)

Description: Redevelop 77 Young Street by constructing a mixed-use building housing four townhouse-style apartments, a commercial space, and waterfront deck.

Location: 77 Young Street

Total Project Cost: **\$1,580,000**

DRI Funding Requested: \$500,000

Requested Percentage: **32% DRI**



Redevelop the Former Church at 116 Broad Street into Six Apartments

Applicant: 116 Broad, LLC

Project Type: Redevelopment and/or Renovation of an Existing Building(s)

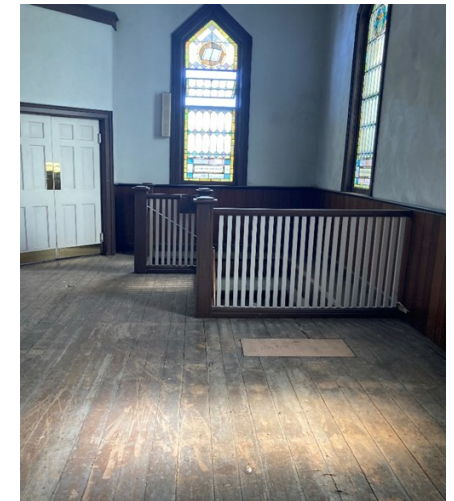
Description: Redevelop a vacant former church into six 2-bedroom apartments to include new windows, doors, roof, and energy efficient features.

Location: 116 Broad Street

Total Project Cost: **\$1,071,000**

DRI Funding Requested: \$296,000

Requested Percentage: **28% DRI**



Create a Small Project Fund

Applicant: City of Tonawanda

Description: Create a Small Project Fund to provide grants of approximately \$25,000 to \$100,000 for interior and exterior building renovations, capital equipment, public art, and related soft costs. Eligible projects include commercial, mixed-use, and multi-family buildings. Grants require a 25% match. Project sponsors will apply through an application process to be established later on by the City of Tonawanda.

Location: Must be located within the DRI boundary

Total Project Cost: \$720,000+

DRI Funding Requested: \$600,000

Representative projects: The Elks Lodge – 55 Main St, \$ tbd
Eldredge Bicycle Club – 17 Broad St, \$75,000
Fiorella’s Garden Center – 55 Delaware St, \$56,000



Project Evaluations



Project Evaluations

Project Feedback Form

- Public feedback on projects (aligns with DRI vision and goals, will transform Tonawanda, overall level of support)

Consultant Evaluations

- Objective evaluation of projects using the same state and local criteria as the LPC
- Provided to LPC members to help inform their individual evaluations

LPC Evaluations

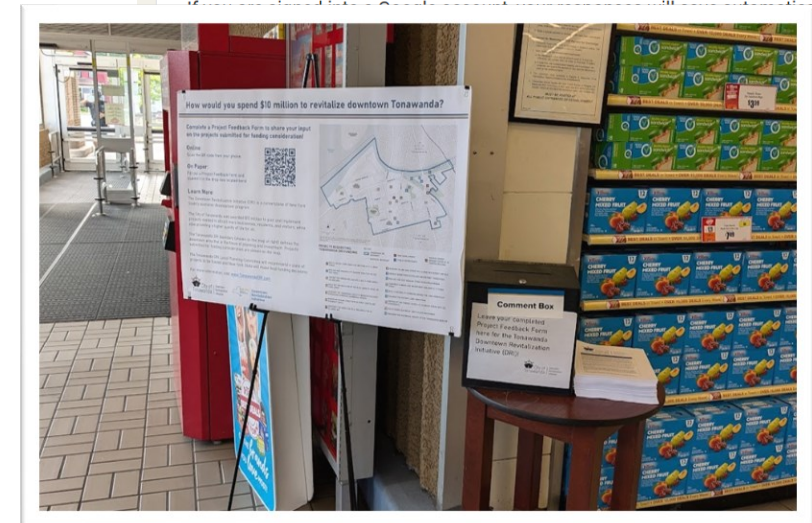
- Available from September 19 to September 24
- Draft project profiles, results from Project Feedback Form, and consultant evaluations provided for reference
- Results are a tool to help inform final decisions



Tonawanda DRI LPC Project Evaluation Form

Please complete the Tonawanda DRI Project Evaluation Form for each of the 15 projects proposed for DRI funding.

There are five questions for each project. Each project takes roughly five minutes to evaluate. Please expect to spend approximately 1.5 hours to complete your evaluations for all 15 projects.



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LPC Evaluation Form Questions

1. Does the project align with the DRI Vision and Goals?
2. Does the project align with the State DRI Goals?
3. Does the project align with WNY Regional Economic Development Council Strategies?
4. Is the project consistent with State Evaluation Criteria?
5. Is the project consistent with Local Evaluation Criteria?

Public Feedback

High public support

- Create a Small Project Fund
- Build a Natural Playground behind the Long Homestead
- Convert the Former Rite Aid into a Multi-Story Mixed-Use Building
- Construct the Mixed-Use "Elli" Building at 20-40 Fillmore Ave
- Redevelop 60 Main Street into an Event Center and Overnight Suites

Medium public support

- Improve Downtown Access and Waterfront Connections
- Replace the East Niagara Street Pedestrian Bridge
- Replace and Enhance City Docking Facilities on the Erie Canal
- Preserve the Historical Society of the Tonawandas Museum
- Renovate the Tonawanda Castle to Reignite the Event Center and Introduce Commercial Spaces

Low public support

- Renovate 98-100 Main Street into a New Restaurant and Bar
- Construct a Mixed-Use Waterfront Building at 77 Young Street
- Redevelop the Former Church at 116 Broad Street into Six Apartments
- Enhance the Historic Long Homestead
- Add Outdoor Seating at Joey's Place Restaurant



Consultant Evaluations

Highly aligns w/ criteria

- Construct the Mixed-Use "Elli" Building at 20-40 Fillmore Ave
- Redevelop 60 Main Street into an Event Center and Overnight Suites
- Improve Downtown Access and Waterfront Connections
- Replace and Enhance City Docking Facilities on the Erie Canal
- Construct a Mixed-Use Waterfront Building at 77 Young Street

Moderately aligns w/ criteria

- Renovate the Tonawanda Castle to Reignite the Event Center and Introduce Commercial Spaces
- Enhance the Historic Long Homestead
- Redevelop Former Church at 116 Broad Street into Six Apartments
- Renovate 98-100 Main Street into a New Restaurant and Bar
- Replace the East Niagara Street Pedestrian Bridge
- Build a Natural Playground behind the Long Homestead

Slightly aligns w/ criteria

- Preserve the Historical Society of the Tonawandas Museum
- Add Outdoor Seating at Joey's Place Restaurant
- Convert the Former Rite Aid into a Multi-Story Mixed-Use Building



LPC Evaluations

Highly aligns w/ criteria

- Construct the Mixed-Use "Elli" Building at 20-40 Fillmore Ave
- Redevelop 60 Main Street into an Event Center and Overnight Suites
- Improve Downtown Access and Waterfront Connections
- Create a Small Project Fund
- Replace and Enhance City Docking Facilities on the Erie Canal

Total: \$9,890,000

Moderately aligns w/ criteria

- Renovate 98-100 Main Street into a New Restaurant and Bar
- Convert the Former Rite Aid into a Multi-Story Mixed-Use Building
- Replace the East Niagara Street Pedestrian Bridge
- Renovate the Tonawanda Castle to Reignite the Event Center and Introduce Commercial Spaces
- Enhance the Long Homestead
- Construct a Mixed-Use Waterfront Building at 77 Young Street
- Redevelop Former Church at 116 Broad Street into Six Apartments

Total: \$5,834,000

Slightly aligns w/ criteria

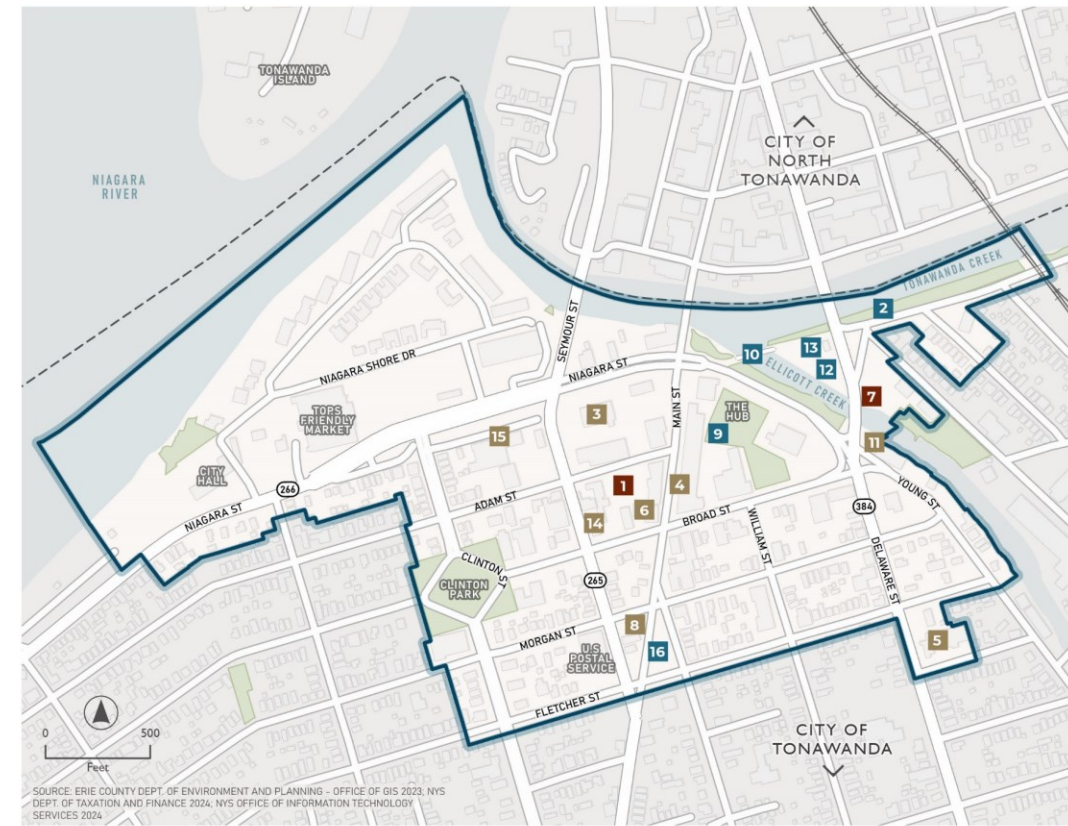
- Preserve the Historical Society of the Tonawandas Museum
- Build a Natural Playground behind the Long Homestead
- Add Outdoor Seating at Joey's Place Restaurant

Total: \$680,000

Select Preliminary Slate

Potential Projects

- 14 projects plus Small Project Fund
- Total DRI Request: \$16.4M
- Total Project Cost: \$67.8M
- Project Types:
 - 6 Public Improvement Projects
 - 1 New Development Project
 - 7 Redevelopment/Renovation of Existing Buildings
 - 1 Small Project Fund
- Available Funding: \$9,700,000, including up to \$600,000 for the Small Projects Fund
- Strategic Investment Plan: Recommends \$12-\$15 million in projects



SOURCE: ERIE COUNTY DEPT. OF ENVIRONMENT AND PLANNING - OFFICE OF GIS 2023, NYS DEPT. OF TAXATION AND FINANCE 2024, NYS OFFICE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES 2024

PROJECTS REQUESTING TONAWANDA DRI FUNDING

MAP KEY:

- TONAWANDA DRI BOUNDARY
- MUNICIPAL BOUNDARY
- NEW DEVELOPMENT
- PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT
- REDEVELOPMENT / REHABILITATION OF AN EXISTING BUILDING

- | | |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 BUILD A SEVEN-STORY MIXED-USE BUILDING AT 17-31 ADAM STREET 2 REPLACE AND ENHANCE CITY DOCKING FACILITIES ON THE ERIE CANAL 3 CONVERT THE FORMER RITE AID INTO A MULTI-STORY MIXED-USE BUILDING 4 BUILD OUT THE 2ND FLOOR OF THE ELKS LODGE TO HOUSE AN EVENT SPACE 5 RENOVATE THE TONAWANDA CASTLE TO REIGNITE THE EVENT CENTER AND INTRODUCE COMMERCIAL SPACES 6 REDEVELOP 60 MAIN STREET INTO AN EVENT CENTER AND OVERNIGHT SUITES 7 CONSTRUCT THE MIXED-USE "ELLI" BUILDING AT 20-40 FILLMORE AVE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8 RENOVATE 98-100 MAIN STREET INTO A NEW RESTAURANT AND BAR 9 IMPROVE DOWNTOWN ACCESS AND WATERFRONT CONNECTIONS 10 REPLACE THE EAST NIAGARA STREET PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE 11 CONSTRUCT A MIXED-USE WATERFRONT BUILDING AT 77 YOUNG STREET 12 BUILD A NATURAL PLAYGROUND BEHIND THE LONG HOMESTEAD 13 ENHANCE THE HISTORIC LONG HOMESTEAD 14 REDEVELOP THE FORMER CHURCH AT 116 BROAD STREET INTO SIX APARTMENTS 15 ADD OUTDOOR SEATING AT JOEY'S PLACE RESTAURANT 16 PRESERVE THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF THE TONAWANDAS MUSEUM |
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Project Review: Available Options

- Recommend for DRI funding directly
- Recommend for Small Project Fund (if appropriate)
- Keep as a priority project in the plan, but recommend for other funding
- Remove from funding consideration and do not include in the plan
- Request more information (tabled until next meeting)

Suggested Slate of Projects

The following suggested slate was developed by the consulting team based on the results of the Project Feedback Form, Consultant Evaluations, and LPC Evaluations. The recommendations would be as follows:

Recommend for DRI Funding

- Construct the Mixed-Use "Elli" Building at 20-40 Fillmore Ave***
- Replace and Enhance City Docking Facilities on the Erie Canal
- Improve Downtown Access and Waterfront Connections
- Renovate the Tonawanda Castle to Reignite the Event Center and Introduce Commercial Spaces***
- Redevelop 60 Main Street into an Event Center and Overnight Suites
- Renovate 98-100 Main Street into a New Restaurant and Bar***
- Replace the East Niagara Street Pedestrian Bridge
- Construct a Mixed-Use Waterfront Building at 77 Young Street
- Enhance the Historic Long Homestead
- Redevelop Former Church at 116 Broad Street into Six Apartments***
- Small Project Fund

Total: \$13,124,000

***Additional information needed:

- Construct the Mixed-Use "Elli" – **Can the project be undertaken with less DRI funding?**
- Renovate the Tonawanda Castle – **Can the project be undertaken with less DRI funding?**
- Renovate 98-100 Main Street – **Does the project sponsor have proof of matching funds?**
- Redevelop Former Church at 116 Broad Street – **Does the project sponsor have proof of matching funds?**

Suggested Slate of Projects

Recommend for the Small Project Fund

- Add Outdoor Seating at Joey's Place Restaurant
- Preserve the Historical Society of the Tonawandas Museum

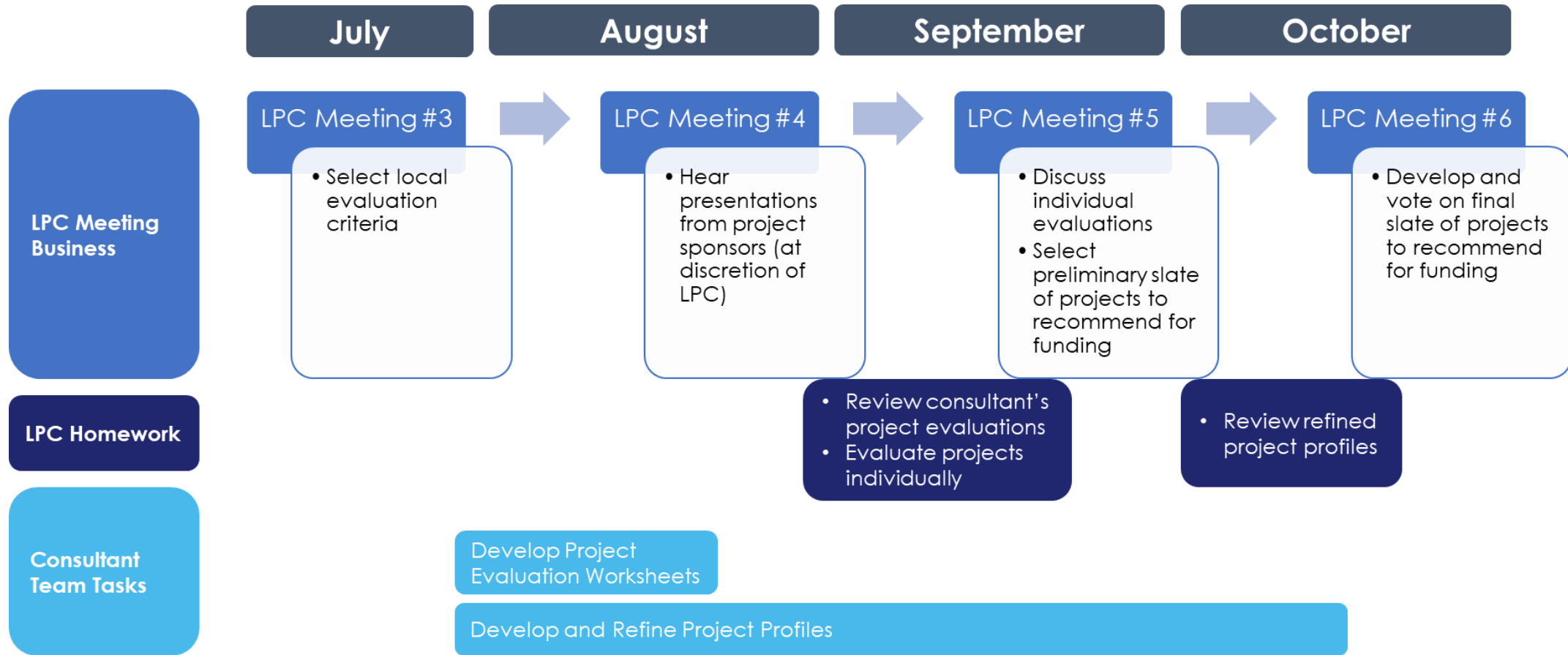
Keep in the plan but recommend for other funding

- Build a Seven-Story Mixed-Use Building at 17-31 Adam Street
- Convert the Former Rite Aid into a Multi-Story Mixed-Use Building
- Build a Natural Playground behind the Long Homestead
- Convert Kohler Pool to Splash Pad and Improve Building
- Improve Niagara Street Corridor between City Hall and Main Street

Next Steps



Project Evaluation Timeline



Remaining Meetings

FINAL MEETING: LPC Meeting #6 (October 24, location TBD):

- Remaining project updates (if any) and final draft project profiles
- Reiterate project evaluation criteria used to select projects
- Finalize and vote on slate of projects to recommend for funding
- Discuss DRI Roadmap recommendations
- Next steps in DRI process
- Public comment

Upcoming Deliverables

- Public Project Feedback Summary
- Final Draft Project Profiles
- Final Draft Downtown Profile and Assessment
- Draft Strategic Investment Plan
 - Executive Summary
 - Downtown Profile and Assessment
 - Summary of Public Engagement
 - Community Vision, Goals, and Strategies
 - Projects Recommended for DRI Funding
 - Pipeline Projects
 - DRI Roadmap

Public Comment