

**City of Tonawanda
Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI)**



Local Planning Committee Meeting #1

NYS Department of State | Office of Planning, Development & Community Infrastructure



**Department
of State**

**Downtown
Revitalization
Initiative**

Agenda

1. Welcome & Introductions
2. Code of Conduct Review
3. DRI Program Overview
4. DRI Planning Process & Schedule
5. Role & Responsibilities of LPC
6. Public Engagement Strategies
7. Tonawanda's DRI Application
8. Next Steps

***Thank you for serving
on the Local Planning
Committee for your
community!***

Welcome & Introductions

Code of Conduct Review

What is the DRI Code of Conduct?

- Guidelines, standards and procedures for Local Planning Committee (LPC) members to follow throughout the planning process
- All LPC members are required to serve and act in the public interest.
- LPC members will receive and **must** sign the *Code of Conduct for Members of New York State Downtown Revitalization Initiative and NY Forward Local Planning Committees (Code of Conduct)*.

Remember...

- Members should use the Code of Conduct to guide service and actions while on the Local Planning Committee:

D.

**Disclose conflicts
of interest**

A.

**Act in the public
interest**

D.

**Disqualify as
necessary**

Documenting Conflict(s)

- Members must identify if they have a potential conflict at the first meeting in which the matter giving rise to the conflict is discussed.
- When a potential conflict is identified, LPC members must complete and submit a formal Recusal Form.
- LPC members may not vote, or attempt to influence, a discussion or vote on any project(s), where a potential conflict of interest exists.



Recusal Form

LPC Member Name _____ Date _____

DRI or NYF Name _____

Applicable Project Title(s) _____

Reason(s) for Recusal

(Check all that apply.)

- I or a relative or family member have a financial interest in the project. (Describe below.)
- I or a relative or family member have an interest as a board member, owner, officer, employee, or investor in the project sponsor. (Describe below.)
- I or a relative or family member have an interest as a board member, owner, officer, employee, or investor in a potential competitor of the project. (Describe below.)
- Other: _____

Please provide a description of each conflict. (Be complete and specific. Attach additional pages if necessary.)

Member Signature _____

Documenting Conflict(s)

- The LPC co-chairs will remind members of their obligation to recuse at each meeting of the committee.
- A list of recusals together with the recusal form completed by each recused member will be maintained for each project for the duration of the DRI planning process.
- The recusal list will be updated at each meeting.

Voting on Recommended Projects

- All LPC members will vote on a slate of projects to be recommended to the state for DRI funding.
- Voting will take place via an official LPC ballot to be submitted to the State.
- LPC members must recuse themselves from voting on individual projects where a conflict of interest exists.
- LPC members must follow the determinations made by the Ethics Officer in accordance with the Code of Conduct and other applicable laws.

Preamble

- A Preamble will be read by a LPC co-chair at the beginning of every LPC meeting reminding members of their obligation to act in the public interest and recuse if necessary

Are there any general or clarifying questions we can answer now?

If you have specific questions regarding your situation or need advice, contact the New York State Department of State Ethics Officer:

Acting General Counsel David Gonzalez
(518) 474-6740



DRI Program Overview

Roles and Responsibilities

State Agency Team

Department of State

Ben Bidell

Benjamin.Bidell@dos.ny.gov

Empire State Development

Erin Corraro

Erin.Corraro@esd.ny.gov

NYS Homes and Community Renewal

Lenny Skrill

Leonard.Skrill@hcr.ny.gov

- Provide guidance and support for the DRI planning process
- Manage and assist the consultant team
- Participate in preparation and review of DRI documents
- Engage other State agencies, when needed

Consultant Team

Lead

WSP, Stephanie Camay and
Katie O'Sullivan

Sub-Consultant Team

Highland Planning

Prospect Hill Consulting

BJH Advisors

Patriot Design & Consulting

- Lead all public engagement
- Prepare program documents
- Assist LPC with identification, development, and evaluation of potential projects
- Conduct research, as necessary.

Local Planning Committee

LPC Co-chairs

- Hon. Mayor John White, City of Tonawanda
- Paul Brown, WNY Regional Economic Development Council

Members

- Marty Grunzweig, City of Tonawanda Local Development Corporation
- Skip Johnson, Historical Society of the Tonawandas
- Nhi Kah, Sativa Remedy
- Debbie Jaeger, Erie Heights Apartments
- Alice Roth, City of Tonawanda Planning Board
- Joan Horn, City of Tonawanda Board of Visual & Performing Arts
- Jeffrey Ross, Chamber of Commerce of the Tonawandas
- Mark Saltarelli, Tonawandas Gateway Harbor, Inc.
- Bob O'Brocta, Boys and Girls Club of the Northtowns
- Michelle Lockett, Niagara River Greenway Commission
- Suzanne Zuchlewski, Resident
- Julia Ann Davis, Cats Like Us

- Participate in LPC meetings
- Provide direction on planning efforts
- Provide feedback to consultant team and State
- Review documents
- Assist with community engagement and outreach

Program Goals and Timeline

What is the DRI + NY Forward?

- Two complementary programs with common goals
- Programs recognize the unique qualities and sizes of various communities throughout the State
- State-wide investment to reinvigorate local and regional economies by revitalizing downtowns



DRI Goals



**Enhance downtown living
and quality of life**



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



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



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



**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**

DRI Program from Start to Finish



APPLY

**September 2023 –
March 2024**

- Communities prepared and submitted applications to REDCs
- REDCs nominated communities
- State announced winners



PLAN

April – December 2024

- **Local Planning Committees are established**
- **Community vision and goals are refined**
- **Projects are identified and refined**
- **LPC recommends projects to State**

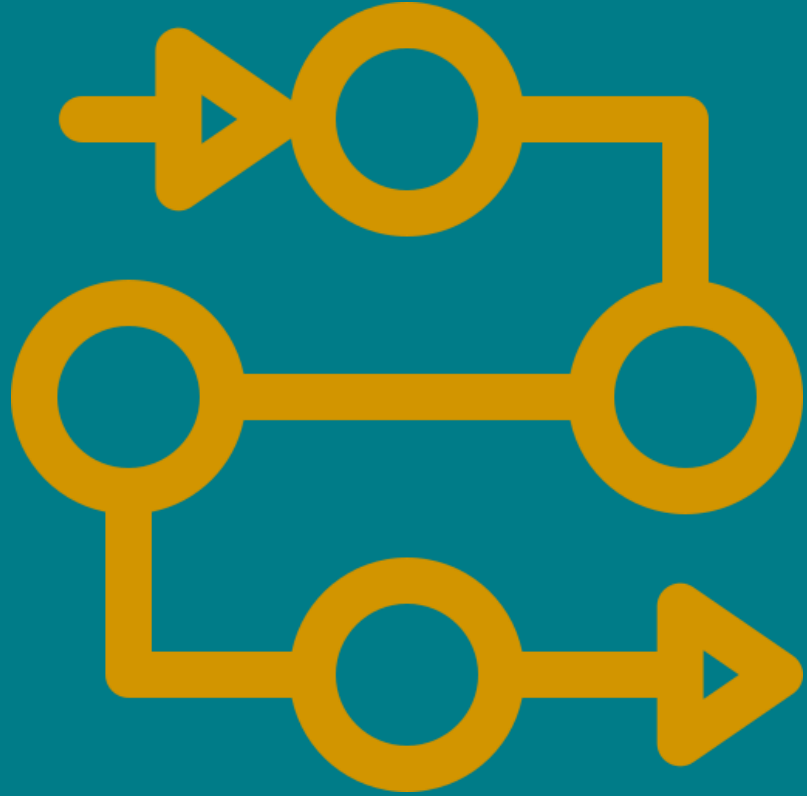
YOUR FOCUS IS HERE!



IMPLEMENT

2025 - 2030

- Final plans are submitted to the State
- Projects are selected and awarded



DRI Planning Process & Schedule

Planning Process



Visioning

Refine the community's future vision, establish priorities and gather input



Opportunities + Challenges

Understand the community's unique characteristics and key opportunities



Project Development + Evaluation

Identify, develop, and evaluate potential projects



Project Recommendations

Recommend projects that align with the community's goals

8-9 Month Timeframe (April – December 2024)

- Each community is led by a consultant team to guide the planning process, develop projects to recommend to the State, and document in a Strategic Investment Plan
- This process helps ensure all voices are heard and projects are carefully considered.

Proposed Schedule

April

- **LPC Training**
- **LPC Meeting #1**

April 17 and April 23
April 30

May

- **Public Workshop #1 / Immersive Engagement**
- **Open Call for Projects Starts**
- **LPC Meeting #2**

Week of May 13
Week of May 27
May 30

June

July

- **Open Call for Projects Ends**
- **LPC Meeting #3**

Week of July 8
July 25

August

- **LPC Meeting #4**

August 22

September

- **Public Workshop #2**
- **LPC Meeting #5**

Week of September 9
September 26

October

- **LPC Meeting #6**

October 24

Proposed LPC Meeting Dates:

- LPC Meeting #1: Tuesday, April 30
- LPC Meeting #2: Thursday, May 30
- LPC Meeting #3: Thursday, July 25
- LPC Meeting #4: Thursday, August 22
- LPC Meeting #5: Thursday, September 26
- LPC Meeting #6: Thursday, October 24

What are the 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/Activities

- **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.

Project Match Requirements

- **All Projects.** Project minimum of \$75,000 total.
- **Privately-Sponsored Projects.** Minimum match of 25% of total project cost.
- **Public or Non-Profit-Sponsored Projects.** No minimum match requirements.
- **Small Project Fund Only.** No minimum or maximum, requires a 25% match.

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.

How are projects identified?



**Projects included in the
community DRI application**



**Projects solicited through
the Open Call for Projects**

**The LPC will evaluate all projects based on the DRI
Program criteria and community goals. Not all solicited
projects will be included in the final Strategic
Investment Plan.**

Open Call for Projects

Open Call Information

- Provides all business and property owners with an opportunity to submit a project for funding consideration
- Private, non-profit, and public entities are eligible to submit applications
- We are looking for projects that are well-defined and ready to be implemented in the near term
- Applicants must complete a submission form with required information (available online or in hard copy at accessible location)
- Submission period will be open for (6) weeks

We are looking for projects that are ready to be implemented in the near-term, are transformational, and are feasible!

Submission Form Components

- Project Sponsor Contact Information
- Project Location
- Existing Conditions
- Project Title and Description
- Property Ownership
- Funding Estimate
- Capacity
- Project Readiness and Timeframe for Implementation
- Supplemental Information

How are projects evaluated?

- **Alignment with Local and State Goals.** Projects must advance the goals established by the LPC and the State for the DRI community.
- **Catalytic Effect.** Projects must have a significant positive impact on the revitalization of downtown Medina.
- **Project Readiness.** Projects should be well-developed and ready to proceed as soon as possible upon the award of funding.
- **Eligible Project.** Projects must be one of the eligible project types.
- **Cost Effectiveness.** Projects must represent an effective and efficient use of public resources.
- **Co-Benefits.** Projects must result in benefits to the community, beyond just the project developer, such as: additional economic activity and improved quality of life.

Project Evaluation Worksheet Examples

Yes	No	maybe	COMMUNITY SUPPORT
			The project is supported by the community and in line with its DRI vision.
Yes	No	maybe	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. The sponsor has the capacity to implement and maintain the project.
Yes	No	maybe	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.
Yes	No	maybe	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.
Yes	No	maybe	COST EFFECTIVENESS
			There is a demonstrated needs for DRI funds and investment of public DRI funds in the project would represent an effective and efficient use of public resources.

Catalytic Effect*

Will this project have a significant positive impact on downtown Medina? Can it spur additional public and private investment?

▼

-Please select-

High

Medium

Low

Unknown

break ground within 2 years?

Cost Effectiveness*

Is this project a good use of public funds? Is the budget realistic? Is the NYF request reasonable?

▼

-Please select-

What is the end goal of the planning process?

- Consensus on a recommended list of projects for implementation
- Submission of a Strategic Investment Plan to the State containing recommended list of projects
- Momentum and direction for downtown revitalization



VILLAGE OF TANNERSVILLE **Strategic Investment Plan**

Capital Region Economic Development Council

New York State
Downtown Revitalization Initiative

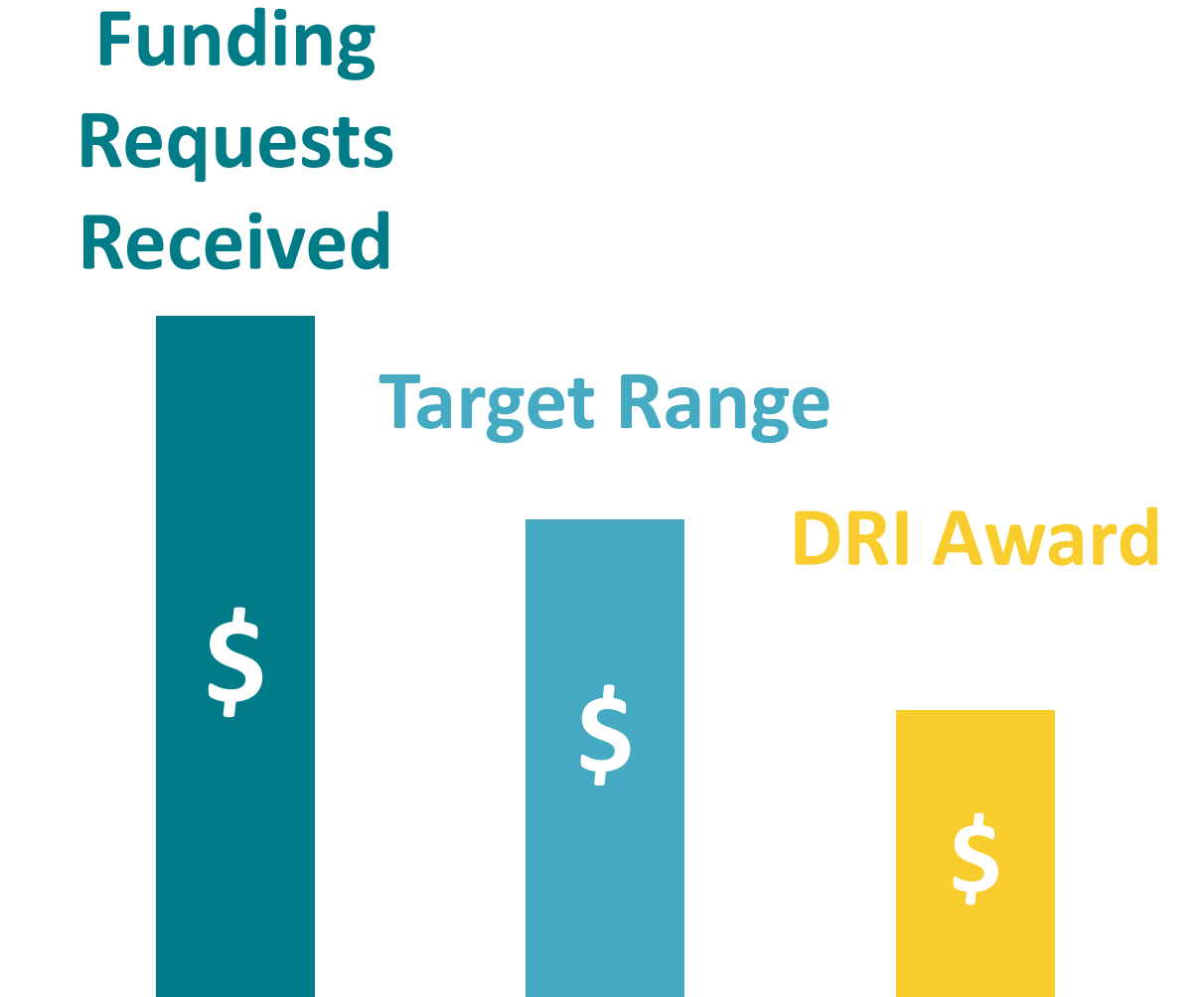
August 2022



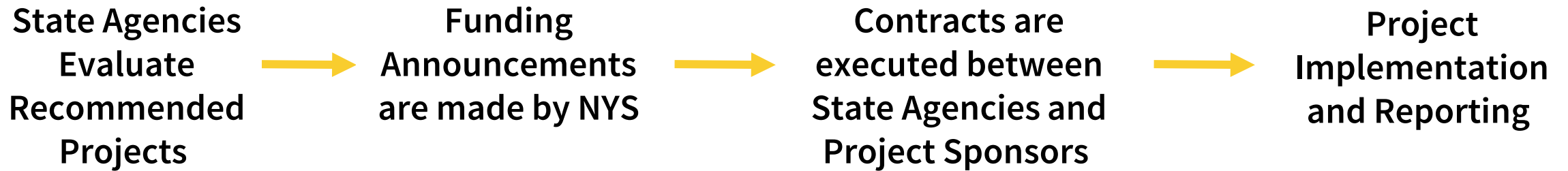
**Downtown
Revitalization
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Final Slate of Recommended Projects

- Final slate of projects takes into consideration feedback from the public and is finalized by the LPC
- The total amount of requested DRI funds will have a higher dollar amount than what will be awarded



What happens after the planning process ends?



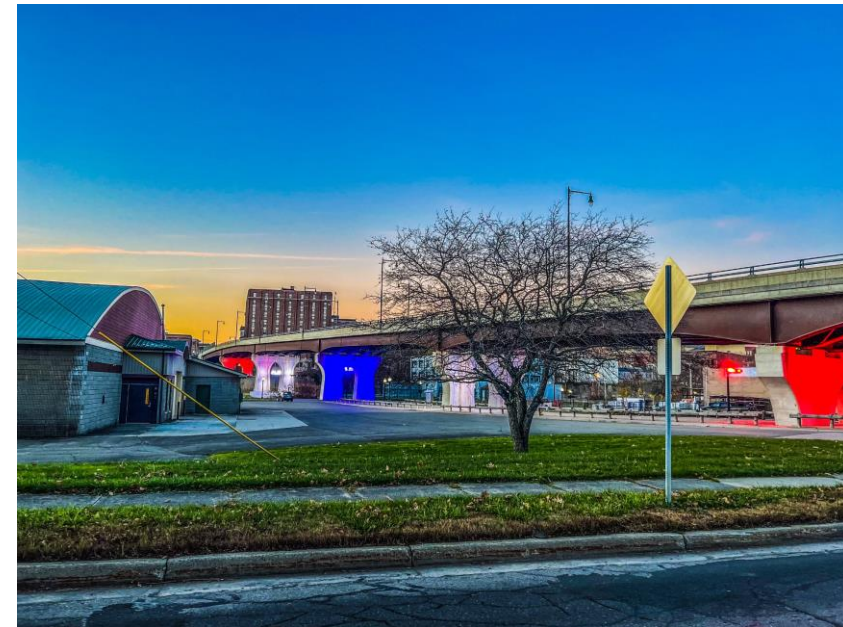
- Announcements are typically made in the months following submission of SIPs
- Projects begin implementation as soon as possible

Project Implementation

- All awards are provided as a reimbursement grant – project sponsors must complete work before monies are provided
- Project sponsors will likely need to secure bridge financing to cover costs while project is being completed
- All awards are subject to State requirements, including MWBE goals, competitive procurement, etc.

WNY Project Examples

Jamestown Riverwalk Illumination (DRI Round 1)



Olean N. Union Street Enhancements (DRI Round 2)



319 & 321 N. Union Street in Olean (DRI Round 2)



Lockport South Street Enhancements (DRI Round 3)



Niagara Falls National Heritage Area Murals (DRI Round 4)



North Tonawanda Railroad Museum (DRI Round 5)



Buffalo Broadway-Fillmore Lederman Building (DRI Round 5)





Role & Responsibilities of the LPC

What is the Local Planning Committee?

- Group of diverse community and regional stakeholders nominated by the municipality and others. Confirmed by NYS.
- Ambassadors of the DRI program and their respective communities
- Led by co-chairs – typically the local chief elected official and a REDC member/designee
- Ensure the community vision is met and the public interest is served



Your ultimate responsibility is to...

- Identify best ways to communicate with and engage the community
- Recommend key stakeholders and groups/organizations we should hear from
- Provide guidance and direction on documents
- Help identify potential projects for funding
- **Offer input on and assist with project evaluation / selection**



We want you all to be active participants in this process and hear your opinions!

What should you expect?

- Generally monthly meetings approximately 1.5 – 2 hours in length
- Regular emails from state representatives and/or consultants with meeting materials
- Assistance with and participation in public engagement sessions
- Provide input on documents prepared by consultants



We will establish a schedule of meetings at a time that is most convenient for members.



As a reminder, all LPC members will abide by the Code of Conduct. We ask that you respect the opinions of others, engage in civil discussions, and be polite to all participants.



Public Engagement

Public Engagement

- **Critical component of the DRI planning process!**
- Lead by the consultant team
- Takes place throughout the process and is tailored specifically to each community's needs
- Activities should encourage participation from a broad and diverse population



How does Public Engagement Help This Process?

- Helps to craft / refine the downtown's vision, goals, and strategies
- Input on project types and community needs
- Feedback on proposed projects and transformative potential in downtown



Public Engagement Methods

- LPC Meetings
- Open Call for Projects
- Public Workshops (x2)
- Local Outreach Activities
- Online Engagement

Are there important community groups or stakeholders we should reach out to?

Do you have any advice on meeting locations, specific activities, notification methods, etc?

Tonawanda's DRI Application

Proposed DRI Boundary



0 0.1 0.2 0.4 Miles



Community Vision and Goals

Draft DRI Vision: *Downtown Tonawanda will become a commercial and cultural hub at the confluence of the Erie Canal and Niagara River, 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 historically rich waterfront community, downtown Tonawanda will be sustainable; a vibrant place to live, work, and gather; and a unique destination to connect with history and nature.*

Community Goals (2018 Comprehensive Plan):

1. Maintain the safety, quality of life, public health, and safety and sustainability of our Community
2. Support the preservation of environmental resources and features within the City
3. Maintain and enhance the quality of neighborhoods and neighborhood centers, and ensure a diverse housing stock that meets the needs of all residents
4. Promote sustainable and well-planned economic development opportunities that support year-round activity
5. Ensure a safe and efficient multi-modal transportation system throughout the City
6. Ensure that the facilities and services required by residents and businesses are well-coordinated, high quality, well-maintained and cost effective to support a sustainable community
7. Institute best management practices to enhance the efficiency and efficacy of City government and planning processes, and strive to improve interaction with other communities and agencies.

Overview of Proposed Projects



0 0.1 0.2 0.4 Miles



Transforming the Niagara Street Corridor

Scope

City Hall to Seymour Street

- Addition of bike lanes
- Driveway & parking reconfiguration at City Hall
- Realignment of Niagara St. southwards
- Installation of round-a-bout at Clinton St. intersection
- Realignment of Seymore St. intersection
- Relocate traffic signal utilities

Seymour Street to Main Street

- Modify northern curb line to facilitate dedicated bike lane & expanded sidewalk
- On-street parking spaces
- Extended access driveways to Niagara Street

Project Cost

\$7,000,000

Proposed DRI Funds

\$6,300,000

City Funds

\$700,000



Streetscapes on Main Street

Scope

- Repave Main Street from Niagara to Morgan
- Four intersection bumpouts
- Upgrade sidewalks
- Repaint crosswalks with ADA-compliant ramps
- Designated on-street bike lanes
- New street furniture & decorative plantings

Project Cost

\$1,700,000

Proposed DRI Funds

\$1,530,000

City Funds

\$170,000



Enhanced Canal Docking Facilities

Scope

- Design & construct permanent docking pier
- Install improved access features

Project Cost

\$800,000

Proposed DRI Funds

\$720,000

City Funds

\$80,000



Historic Pedestrian Bridge

Scope

- Bridge to be replaced
- Wayfinding and signage

Project Cost

\$2,750,000

Proposed DRI Funds

\$355,000

Matching Grants

\$2,120,000

City Funds

\$275,000



“The Canal Remembered” Sculpture

Scope

- Contract with local artist to fabricate metal sculpture
- Install sculpture with City assistance

Project Cost \$80,000

Proposed DRI Funds \$72,000

City Funds \$8,000



Long Homestead and Historical Museum Improvements

Scope

- Consult with NYS SHPO
- Construct access driveway to Long Homestead and at least four parking spaces
- Construct a park-like pavilion behind Long Homestead
- Replace and install period-relevant windows at the Long Homestead and Historical Society Museum

Project Cost

\$275,000

Proposed DRI Funds

\$247,500

City Funds

\$27,500



Downtown Parking Improvements

Scope

- Repave and stripe 3+ acres of parking area
- Raise sewers level with parking lot

Project Cost

\$500,000

Proposed DRI Funds

\$450,000

City Funds

\$50,000



The “ELLI”

Scope

- Prepare site for construction
- Construct six-story mixed-use venue

Project Cost

\$30,000,000

Proposed DRI Funds

\$1,000,000

Private Capital

\$29,000,000



Residential Redevelopment of 77 Young Street

Scope

- Demolish existing structure
- Prepare site for construction
- Construct a two-story residential establishment

Project Cost \$1,750,000

Proposed DRI Funds \$175,000

Private Capital \$1,575,000



Mixed-Use Redevelopment of 81 Young Street

Scope

- Stabilize Ellicott Creek shoreline
- Construct mixed-use affordable housing and commercial space

Project Cost \$5,000,000

Proposed DRI Funds \$500,000

Private Capital \$4,500,000



Downtown Events Center

Scope

- Extend elevator access to the third floor
- Second-floor renovations create a 300-person event space, bar and restaurant
- Third floor renovations to create 8-10 boutique style guestrooms

Project Cost

\$2,000,000

Proposed DRI Funds

\$1,000,000

Private Funds

\$1,000,000





Next Steps

Next Steps

- Review the DRI Guidance Document
- Review the City's DRI application
- Watch the recorded LPC Training (if you have not already completed it)
- Review, sign and return the Code of Conduct
- Help spread the word!

**Program resources can be found
at:**

**[https://www.ny.gov/programs/
downtown-revitalization-
initiative](https://www.ny.gov/programs/downtown-revitalization-initiative)**