



Downtown Revitalization Initiative

NY Forward

HOW TO APPLY

AN INFORMATIONAL WEBINAR:
SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS & EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR
THE DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE (DRI) & NY
FORWARD (NYF) PROGRAMS

AUGUST 2024

AGENDA

This informational webinar will provide a detailed overview of the DRI / NY Forward application requirements, evaluation criteria, and submission requirements.

PART 1: About the DRI + NY Forward Programs

PART 2: Program Eligibility + Process

PART 3: How to Approach Application Development

PART 4: Submission of a Complete Application

PART 1:

ABOUT THE DRI + NY FORWARD PROGRAMS



FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

Governor Hochul has announced the eighth round of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative as well as the third round of NY Forward. These programs will invest in NYS communities.



DRI

**\$100 million in
10 communities across the state.**

One community winner in each REDC region.



NYF

\$100 million across the state.

Two \$4.5 million awards in each REDC region.

**Not applicable to NYC region*

PROGRAM GOALS



Creating
an active
downtown



Attracting
new
businesses



Enhancing
public
spaces



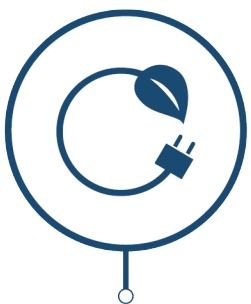
Building
a diverse
population



Growing the
local property
tax base



Providing
quality of life
amenities



Reducing
greenhouse
gas emissions
+ enhancing
climate resiliency

DRI OVERVIEW

The Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) is a cornerstone of the State's economic development program.

The DRI program...

- **Was launched in 2016 to accelerate revitalization of downtowns in all ten regions of the State**
- **Transforms downtown neighborhoods into vibrant centers that offer a high quality of life and become magnets for redevelopment, business growth, job creation, and economic and housing diversity**
- **Has invested over \$1 billion in communities across the State**

DOWNTOWN CORTLAND



DRI OVERVIEW

Community Characteristics

Larger, walkable, more dense geographical areas with amenities that serve the regional community

Multi-modal transportation, including mass transit options, making Transit Oriented Development possible

Employment center for the regional economy

Larger, urban tourist center with more attractions to offer spread out over several blocks of development — walkable between multiple nodes of activities/attractions

Higher-density development, with potentially more than one commercial strip in the community

Existing or potential for multi-story buildings with opportunities for upper story housing

STOCKADE BUSINESS DISTRICT IN KINGSTON



**These descriptions of communities are intended to be representative. Recognizing that each of the State’s downtowns and regions are unique, not every community may be fully captured by this description.*

DRI OVERVIEW

Community Selection and Funding

\$10M in each region — either to one community or a joint application from two to three smaller, contiguous communities with a single unified vision
NYC Region will receive one \$20M DRI award

A portion of funds from each regional award will be used for professional consulting services through the planning phase

REDCs nominate communities

Potential Projects

Larger private, mixed-use projects

Adaptive reuse

New construction projects on developable properties, creating new spaces

Projects that elevate urban- and employment-based downtown qualities and enhance the regional draw of the DRI area

Communities must demonstrate more than \$10M of shovel ready revitalization projects / high potential in leveraging capital investments in their applications

Wayfinding projects to connect the network of amenities and attractions distributed over several commercial corridors

NY FORWARD OVERVIEW

NY Forward supports a more equitable downtown recovery for New York's smaller and rural communities.

The NY Forward program...

- **Is intended to invigorate and enliven downtowns that are smaller or more rural than their surrounding region**
- **Focuses on hamlets, villages, and neighborhood-scale municipal centers**
- **Will attract more businesses, residents, and visitors, while also providing a higher quality of life for residents to these smaller downtown**

NY FORWARD OVERVIEW

Community Characteristics

- Smaller, walkable, less dense geographical areas (relative to surrounding region) with amenities that serve the immediate local community
- More vehicle dependent with limited public transportation potential – patrons mainly arrive by car
- Community center that is service-oriented. Services may include maintaining employment and job growth
- Small-town charm – with heritage, antiques, cottage, agriculture and other niche based tourism.
- Low-density; building height, units, acres, etc. tight commercial strip
- Two to four story buildings with opportunities for upper story housing

**These descriptions of communities are intended to be representative. Recognizing that each of the State’s downtowns and regions are unique, not every community may be fully captured by this description.*



NY FORWARD OVERVIEW

Community Selection and Funding

\$10M in each region - two \$4.5M awards (*not including NYC region*)

NYF funds used toward technical assistance, capacity building webinars, and private consultant teams will not be deducted from community awards

REDCs nominate communities

Potential Projects

Smaller projects focused more on building renovation / redevelopment and activation of upper-stories rather than new construction

Adaptive reuse

Projects that deal primarily with vacancy rather than the creation of new space

Projects that elevate specific cultural, historical qualities that enhance the feeling of small-town charm

Application must demonstrate \$6-8M in multiple synergistic projects. Final project award cannot be used for one sole project

Tight commercial activity area with opportunity to enhance cultural heritage through signage of historic markers

HOW TO USE THE APPLICATION PACKAGE

REQUEST FOR APPLICATION SECTIONS

SUBMISSION STEPS



PART 2:

PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY + PROCESS

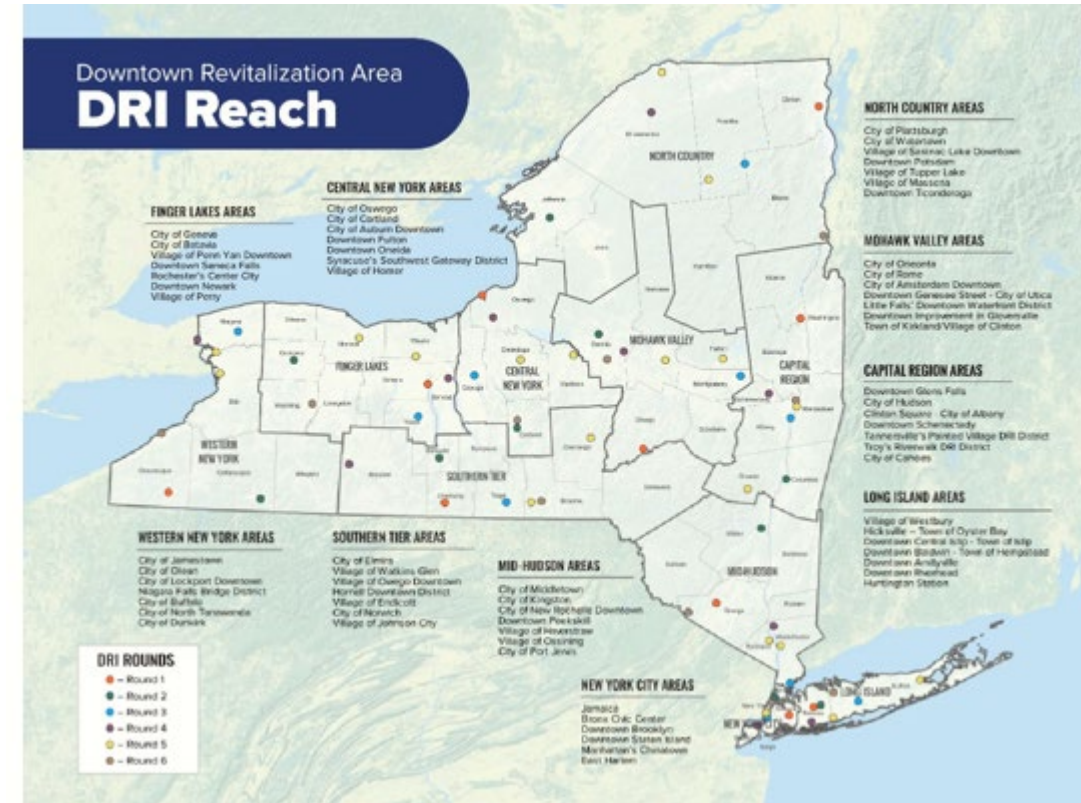


ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Who can apply to the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) and NY Forward programs?

- **Any New York State town, city, or village is eligible to apply for the DRI and NY Forward programs.**
 - Although municipalities are permitted to apply for both the DRI and NY Forward programs in the same grant cycle, they are urged to determine which program is the best fit.
- **Joint applications for two or three downtowns in the same REDC region with a single vision will be accepted (DRI only). Communities and boundaries must be contiguous.**
- **Municipalities that received a DRI award in a previous round are eligible to apply for DRI and/or NY Forward programs for a different area.**

DRI COMMUNITIES IN PAST ROUNDS



NEW YORK CITY ELIGIBILITY AND PROCESS

Who can apply to the New York City REDC?

- **Official applicants are the offices of the Borough Presidents**
 - Organizations interested in proposing an area for DRI funding should submit their application to the respective office of the Borough President.

What happens after applications are submitted to the Borough President?

- **Each office of the Borough President will develop and submit up to two applications for DRI Round 8**

CHINATOWN DRI APPLICATION

Chinatown Downtown Revitalization Application

to the 2021 New York State
Downtown Revitalization Initiative



PRESENTED BY THE

*Manhattan
Borough
President*

*Coalition to
Revitalize
Chinatown*

PART 2: PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY + PROCESS

PRO-HOUSING CERTIFICATION

Eligibility requirements for applicants are provided below.

Prior to applying for DRI / NYF:

Cities, towns and villages must either be already certified as a Pro-Housing Community

OR

have submitted a Letter of Intent or be in the process of submitting an application be certified to the Office of Homes and Community Renewal

Prior to Award Announcement:

All cities, towns and villages must be a certified Pro-Housing Community

****All applicants must be certified as a Pro-Housing Community prior to award announcement (Pro- Housing webinar hosted by HCR will be held on August 22)**

APPLYING TO BOTH THE DRI AND NY FORWARD PROGRAMS

CONSOLIDATED FUNDING APPLICATION

APPLICATION HELP PRINT LOG OUT REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCILS CFA PROJECT INFO

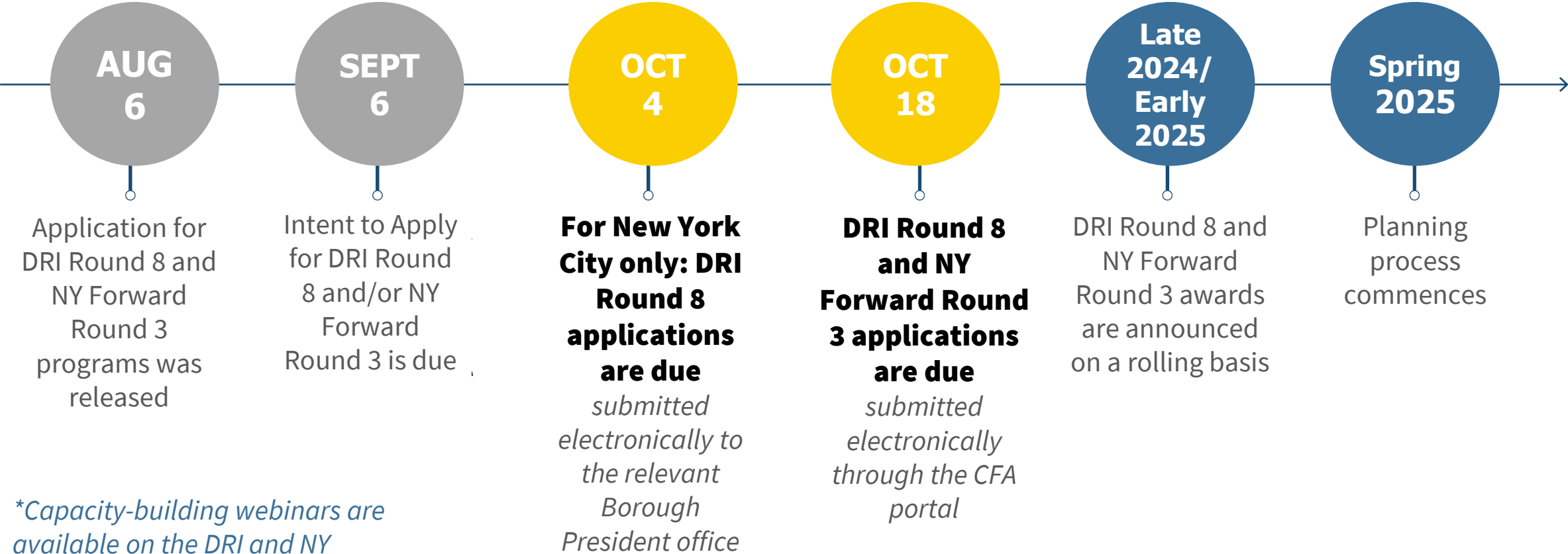
Economic Development Programs

☐ Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI)
[Show program description](#)

☐ New York Forward (NYF)
[Show program description](#)

****If applying for both the DRI and NYF programs, you must submit an application package under both the DRI and NYF CFA portals.**

SCHEDULE



**Capacity-building webinars are available on the DRI and NY Forward program webpages.*

ONE-ON-ONE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

By submitting an Intent to Apply, municipalities applying for DRI or NYF will be eligible to register for office hours with technical experts.

Additional information regarding one-on-one technical assistance:

- **Technical experts can provide advice and guidance on application development.**
- **A Calendly link for office hours will be provided after submitting a completed letter of intent form.**
- **Intent to Apply submissions received after September 6 will not be guaranteed access to the office hours.**



CAPACITY-BUILDING WEBINARS

DOS and the Land Use Law Center of Pace University previously recorded webinars for community use to assist with application development:

- **Introduction / Community Inventory**
- **Visioning, Goal Setting and Outreach**
- **Community Needs Assessment**
- **Placemaking Strategies and Early Project Identification**
- **Project Development**
- **Implementation of a Revitalization Plan**

Upcoming Webinars

Register for upcoming webinars to help form strong DRI / NYF applications.

- August 22nd – Pro-Housing Community Certification
- August 29th – Transforming Downtowns with Strong Revitalization Projects

To view or register for available webinars, go to:

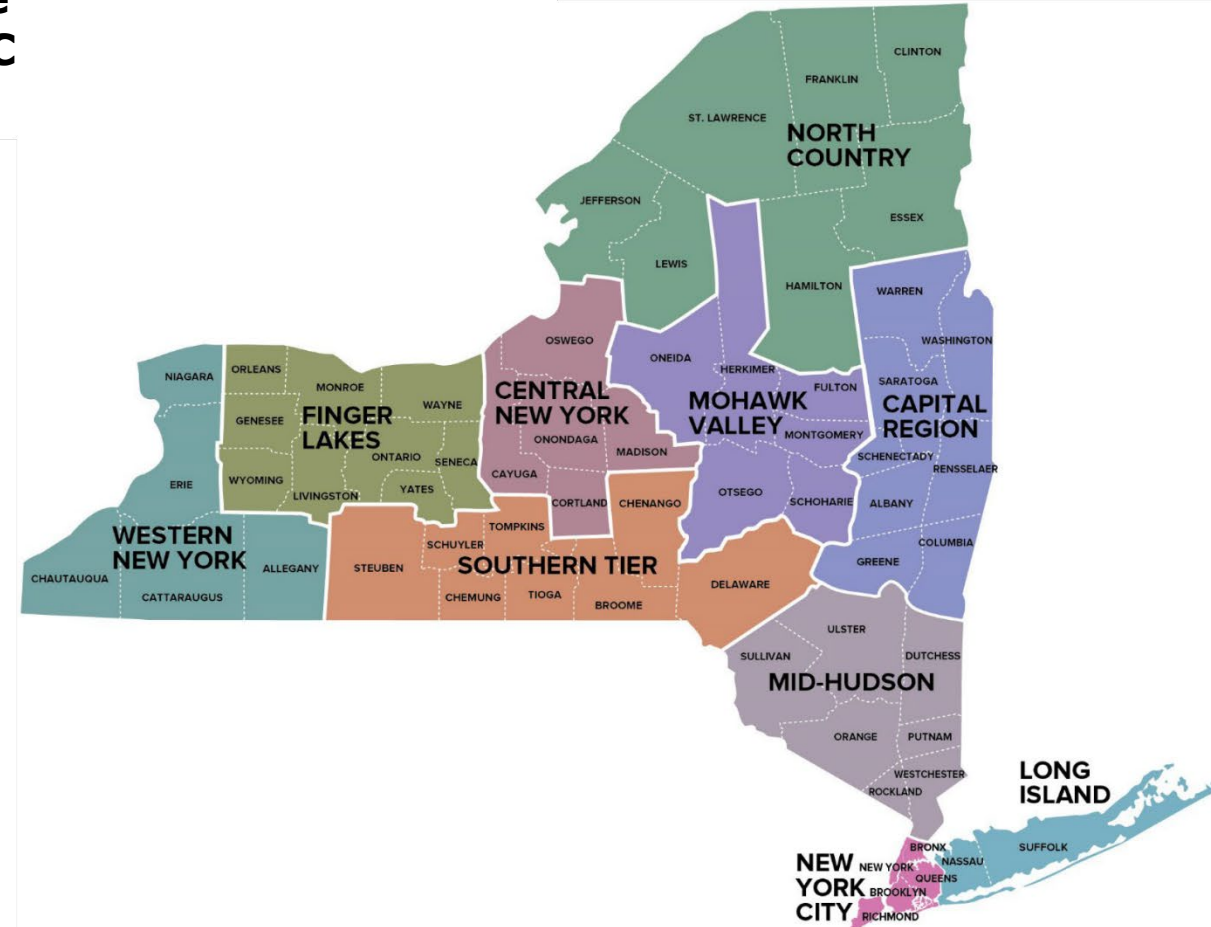
www.ny.gov/ny-forward/capacity-building-webinars

CONTACT INFORMATION

All questions related to application development should be directed to the relevant REDC. The following lists the REDC contact information:

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

REDC REGION MAP



PART 3:

HOW TO APPROACH APPLICATION DEVELOPMENT

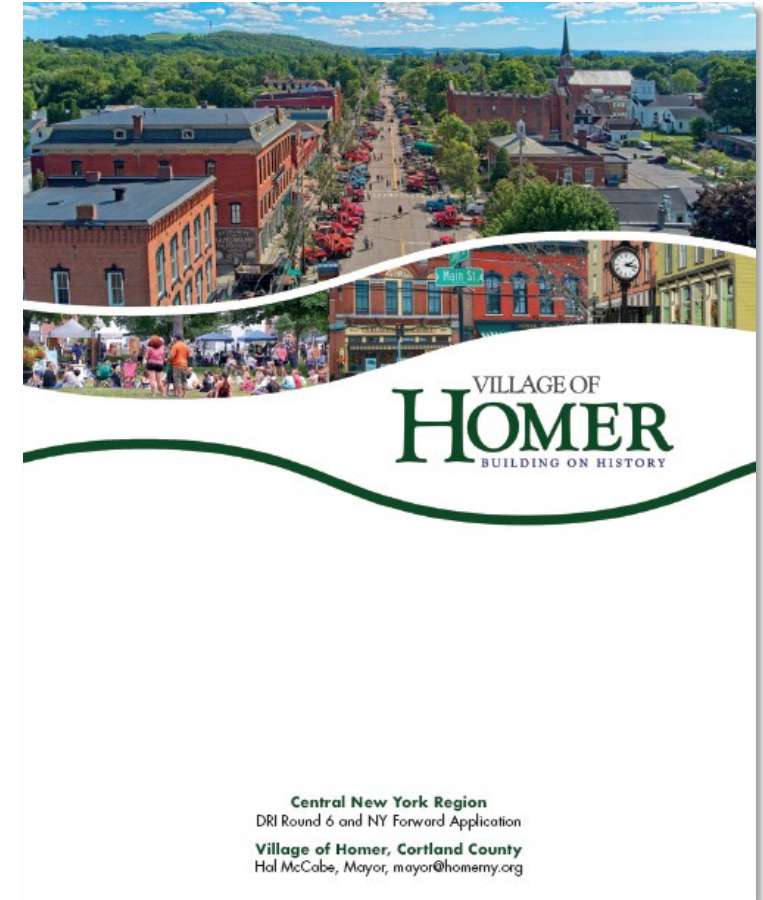


TRAITS OF A STRONG APPLICATION

Applications selected to receive funding are characterized by the following traits:

- **Complete, concise, and thoughtfully considered responses**
- **Informed by robust community engagement**
- **A compelling community-based vision for revitalization**
- **Projects are well-aligned with the community vision and present a holistic approach to revitalization**
- **Projects are feasible and have been developed in coordination with project sponsors / property owners**

VILLAGE OF HOMER DRI APPLICATION



APPLICATION CHECKLIST

- ☐ 1. Application Cover Page
- ☐ 2. Geographic Area and Justification
- ☐ 3. Vision Statement
- ☐ 4. Past Investment and Future Potential
- ☐ 5. Recent or Impending Job Growth
- ☐ 6. Quality of Life
- ☐ 7. Supportive Local Policies
- ☐ 8. Public Support
- ☐ 9. Transformative Project Opportunities
- ☐ 10. Administrative Capacity
- ☐ 11. Letters of Support (optional)

RESPONDING TO APPLICATION QUESTIONS

☒ 1. Application Cover Page.

Applicants must include the following information on the cover page of the application:

- ✓ **REDC REGION**
- ✓ **PROGRAM(S) TO WHICH YOU ARE APPLYING**
- ✓ **MUNICIPALITY NAME(S)** – *If a joint DRI application, please list all municipalities*
- ✓ **DOWNTOWN NAME(S)** – *NYC communities should be specific in identifying the portion of a neighborhood in which the DRI would be a focus*
- ✓ **COUNTY NAME**
- ✓ **APPLICANT CONTACT(s)** (name, title, and email address) - *If a joint application, identify the primary contact*
- ✓ **PRO-HOUSING COMMUNITY STATUS** – *Whether the community is certified or the date application for certification was submitted*

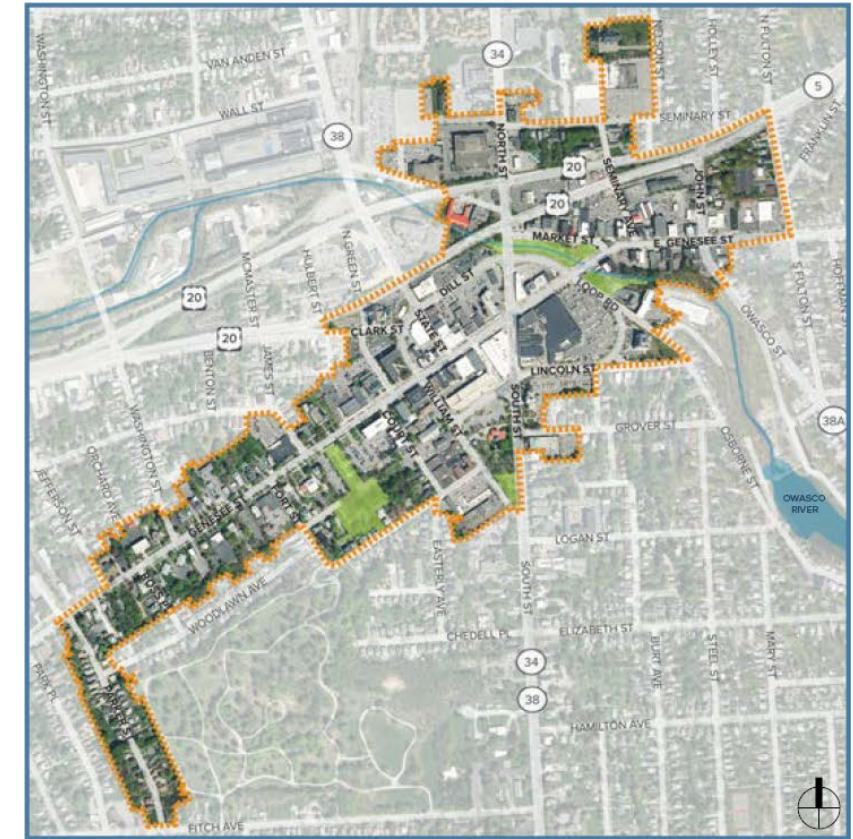
RESPONDING TO APPLICATION QUESTIONS

☑ 2. Geographic Area and Justification.

Applicants should clearly define the DRI and/or NY Forward area and are required to include a map that shows the proposed area. Areas can range from a corridor or a few blocks of a neighborhood to the municipality's traditional central business district. Although there is no absolute minimum or maximum size, the geographical area:

- **Must be concentrated and distinct.**
- **Should be easily walkable.**
- **Should follow parcel lines or roadways to the greatest extent possible.**
- **If submitting a joint DRI application, please show municipal boundaries.*

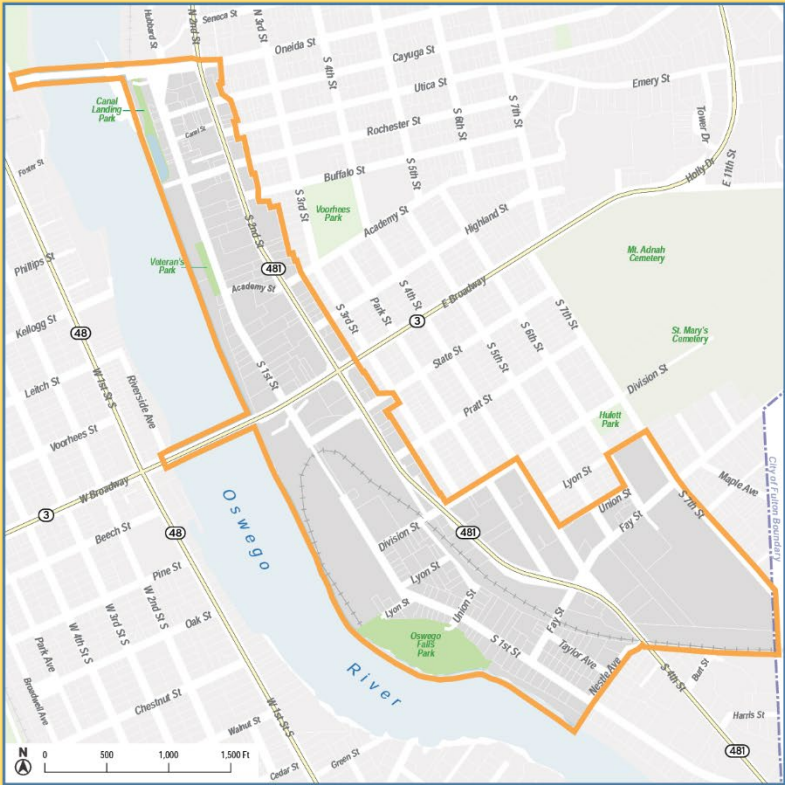
AUBURN DRI AREA BOUNDARY MAP



EXAMPLES OF DRI AND NYF AREA BOUNDARIES



SENECA FALLS DRI AREA
BOUNDARY MAP



FULTON DRI AREA
BOUNDARY MAP



LANCASTER NY FORWARD AREA
BOUNDARY MAP

RESPONDING TO APPLICATION QUESTIONS

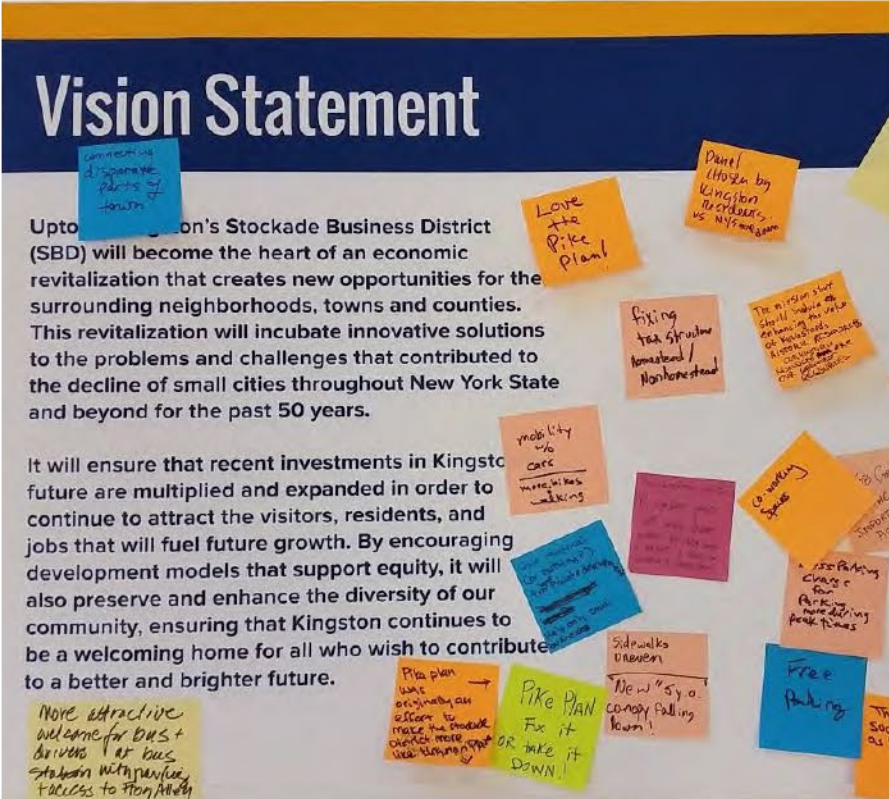
3. Vision Statement.

Applicants should provide a vision statement for downtown revitalization, using information gathered through community outreach.

The vision statement should be:

- **Reflective of the unique nature of the downtown and the aspirations of the community**
- **Compelling, cohesive, and inclusive**
- **Clearly related to the potential projects identified in the community’s application**
- **Based on broad and diverse public engagement**

VISION STATEMENT FEEDBACK IN KINGSTON



EXAMPLES OF DRI AND NYF VISION STATEMENTS



Set against the scenic backdrop of the LaChute River, Lake George and Lake Champlain, **Ticonderoga** is a hub for Adirondack and Champlain Valley recreational opportunities and experiences. The downtown is a vibrant, regional business and cultural hub that looks to the future while recognizing its identity as a historic community. At the heart of the downtown is Montcalm Street, a pedestrian-friendly corridor that features charming specialty shops and restaurants, a mix of heritage tourism and pop culture venues, arts and entertainment attractions, and contemporary services. The corridor is surrounded by natural beauty and public open spaces that offer visitors and residents an opportunity to experience a variety of outdoor activities within walking distance of downtown.

Downtown Newark and the Erie Canal District will be a cultural and commercial center to the Finger Lakes region, serving regional residents, workers, and guests with unique urban vibrancy, blending downtown with the beauty of the surrounding rural landscape and the Erie Canal. As the heartbeat of a lively, world-class Village, downtown serves as a destination for those seeking to live in a unique setting, shop, and work in a vibrant commercial center, and visit a community reflective and central to all that the Finger Lakes has to offer.

Downtown Sleepy Hollow will be a vibrant, welcoming, and easily accessible community in the Mid-Hudson region that showcases its legendary history, celebrates its cultural diversity, and offers a model for sustainable living. Made famous by Washington Irving's short story, the Village of Sleepy Hollow will become a year-round destination for residents and visitors alike by building upon its strengths—a charming and walkable mixed-use district located near to public transit, thriving immigrant-owned small businesses, and the beautiful Hudson River waterfront. In doing so, the Village will cultivate a downtown that expands opportunities for all.

RESPONDING TO APPLICATION QUESTIONS

☑ 4. Past Investment and Future Potential.

Applicants should detail investments in and around the DRI and/or NY Forward area to demonstrate that it is able and ready to capitalize on prior public and private investment or catalyze future investments.

In addition to detailing specific planned or undertaken investments, readiness for the programs is evidenced by:

- **Continuity with REDC vision and recent planning efforts**
- **Application of Smart Growth principles**
- **Existing properties and infrastructure to support development**
- **Anchor institution involvement and growth potential**
- **Municipal investment commitment in the downtown**
- **Potential for development of energy efficient projects and opportunities for green jobs**
- **Investment in arts and cultural institutions and activities**

AN ANCHOR INSTITUTION IN LOCKPORT



RESPONDING TO APPLICATION QUESTIONS

☑ 5. Recent or Impending Job Growth.

Applicants should highlight recent (past 5 years) or impending job growth within or near the downtown. This may include:

- **The presence of major job-creating projects and initiatives near the downtown**
- **The existence of new and expanding employers**

Applicants should also detail how this growth will:

- **Attract a diverse workforce and population**
- **Support redevelopment efforts**
- **Make growth sustainable in the long-term**

THE HUB RETAIL AND OFFICE CLUSTER IN THE BRONX CIVIC CENTER



RESPONDING TO APPLICATION QUESTIONS

☑ 6. Quality of Life.

Applicants should identify the potential for the DRI and/or NY Forward area to be an attractive and livable community for diverse populations of varying ages, income, ability, mobility, and cultural background. Examples of desirable qualities include:

- **Housing for all ages at different levels of affordability and type**
- **Commercial and retail main street businesses**
- **An assortment of food choices**
- **Decarbonized buildings**
- **Walkability, bikeability and multi-modal transportation**
- **Accessible recreational amenities**
- **Access to health care facilities**
- **Community spaces, institutions and events**
- **Academic, cultural and entertainment amenities**

MOHAWK VALLEY GATEWAY OVERLOOK
PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE IN AMSTERDAM



RESPONDING TO APPLICATION QUESTIONS

7. Supportive Local Policies.

Applicants should detail municipal policies that increase livability and quality of life for all New Yorkers. Policies may be established or able to be created and implemented through near-term efforts. Examples of local policies, policy documents, standards and related policy implementation tools include:

Comprehensive plans and other planning and implementation documents

Modern zoning codes and development standards

Adoption of New York State Stretch Codes

Clean Energy and/or Climate Smart Communities designations

Use of a downtown management structure or local land bank

Complete streets policies and transit-oriented development policies

Presence of expansive non-discrimination laws and/or other protections of diverse populations

Policies that would make the community eligible for Age-Friendly Community Certification from AARP/WHO

Policies that support the development of new and affordable housing options

RESPONDING TO APPLICATION QUESTIONS

☑ 8. Public Support.

To develop the vision statement and build support for the application, applicants should conduct meaningful community outreach. Specifically, *at least one public event must be held during the development of the DRI / NY Forward application.* Other opportunities for engagement during the development of the application include:

- **An open call for project proposals to solicit project ideas from the community**
- **A website or webpage dedicated to the municipality's DRI and/or NY Forward application**
- **Tabling at local events or presenting at standing community meetings**

Applicants should describe the public participation conducted as well as any recent engagement efforts focused on downtown revitalization.

PUBLIC MEETING IN SARANAC LAKE



RESPONDING TO APPLICATION QUESTIONS

☑ 9. Transformative Project Opportunities.

Applicants are required to identify a range of transformative projects and opportunities that are poised for implementation. Projects can be public or private and should meet project requirements as well as align with the community vision and State goals. Robust and feasible transformative projects are:

- **Led by a project sponsor with the ability to implement and sustain the proposed project / administer a State grant**
- **Ready for implementation in the near-term**
- **Publicly supported**
- **Demonstrate benefits to the broader community, not just the project sponsor**
- **Leverage other funding sources to the greatest extent possible**

Webinar Opportunity

There will be a DRI 8 / NYF 3 webinar available specifically related to crafting transformative projects for downtown revitalization. Visit the link below to register:

<https://www.ny.gov/ny-forward/capacity-building-webinars>

RESPONDING TO APPLICATION QUESTIONS

✓ 10. Administrative Capacity.

Applicants should identify the local capacity to manage the planning process and implementation of projects. Applicants should describe how existing staff and resources will be used to oversee contracts for awarded municipal projects and maintain and operate projects once constructed.

Ask yourself questions, such as:

- **What individuals, departments or organizations will help to oversee state contracts after awards are made?**
- **Who will be the local point of contact for correspondence with project sponsors and state agencies?**
- **What similar contracts or processes has the local community successfully completed?**

LPC MEETING IN BALDWIN



RESPONDING TO APPLICATION QUESTIONS

☑ 11. Letters of Support (optional but encouraged).

Applicants may submit letters of support as part of the application. These letters provide an opportunity to detail the commitment among local leaders and stakeholders to:

- **Advancing the community's vision**
- **Participating in the DRI/NY Forward planning process**
- **Supporting the implementation of the DRI/NY Forward grant program**

COMMUNITY INPUT STATION AT THE HARVEST FESTIVAL IN PEEKSKILL



PART 4:

SUBMISSION OF A COMPLETE APPLICATION



GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

All applications should be as complete and succinct as possible. General requirements include:

- **Application Length:**

- Applications shall be limited to 20 pages, inclusive of all maps and graphics. The cover page and letters of support do not count toward the page limit.

- **Application Format:**

- Applications should be submitted as a single PDF document and should not exceed 30MB in size to enable transmission of the application via the CFA Portal.
- Applicants will also be required to submit a map of the area as a separate document in the CFA Portal.

Applying to Both DRI / NYF

If applying to both the DRI and NYF programs, one application may be submitted if the NYF area is the same as or a subset of the DRI area. If the NYF area is not fully contained within the DRI area, please submit two separate applications (one for the NYF area and one for the DRI area).

DRI / NY FORWARD APPLICATION SUMMARY SNAPSHOT

The 11 components to include in an application are as follows:

1. Application Cover Page.
2. Geographic Area and Justification. *Clearly define the proposed DRI and/or NY Forward area and explain why the area is ready for the DRI/NY Forward investment and how that investment would serve as a catalyst for revitalization.*
3. Vision Statement. *Provide a brief statement of the municipality's vision for downtown revitalization.*
4. Past Investment and Future Potential. *Describe how the DRI and/or NY Forward area will leverage prior private and public investment and catalyze future investments.*
5. Recent or Impending Job Growth. *Describe how recent job growth will leverage the DRI and/or NY Forward investment.*
6. Quality of Life. *Describe the defining characteristics of the DRI and/or NY Forward area that make it a desirable place to live, work, and visit.*
7. Supportive Local Policies. *Describe any local policies in place that increase quality of life and advance the State's decarbonization goals.*
8. Public Support. *Describe public participation in the development of the DRI and/or NY Forward application and recent past engagement, including how these engagement efforts shaped the downtown vision statement and the project list.*
9. Transformative Project Opportunities. *Identify and describe project opportunities that build on the community's strengths and needs and have the potential to be transformative in the DRI and/or NY Forward area.*
10. Administrative Capacity. *Describe the municipality's capacity to oversee implementation and ensure the long-term success of projects.*
11. Letters of Support (optional). *Document the support of local leaders, stakeholders, and organizations.*

APPLICATION DEADLINES

All DRI and NY Forward applications must be **submitted through the Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) portal** by:

**4 PM on Friday
October 18, 2024**

** In New York City, applications must be submitted via email to the office of the Borough President no later than*

***4 PM on Friday
October 4, 2024***

Submit Letters of Intent to Apply by September 6, 2024 to be eligible for one-on-one office hours.

Submission Requirements

Applications should be submitted as a single PDF document and should not exceed 30MB in size.

Submission of a stand-alone map is required to be uploaded.

CFA Portal login will need to be created if you don't already have one.

Please visit to the link to access the CFA:
<https://apps.cio.ny.gov/apps/cfa/>

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT:

WWW.NY.GOV/PROGRAMS/NY-FORWARD

WWW.NY.GOV/PROGRAMS/DOWNTOWN-REVITALIZATION-INITIATIVE

CFA PORTAL GUIDE:

[HTTPS://REGIONALCOUNCILS.NY.GOV/FILE/2023-CFA-APPLICATION-MANUAL](https://REGIONALCOUNCILS.NY.GOV/FILE/2023-CFA-APPLICATION-MANUAL)



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Revitalization
Initiative**

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