



## **Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) Instructions**

The North Country Regional Economic Development Council (NCREDC) is accepting Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) applications through May 27, 2016 at 4:00 p.m.

Completed applications can be e-mailed to [NYS-NORTHCOUNTRY@esd.ny.gov](mailto:NYS-NORTHCOUNTRY@esd.ny.gov)

Answers to each question on the DRI application are limited to 5,000 characters.

If an answer to a DRI application question references an attached document or addendum, please reference the page number in the answer to the question to allow reviewers to consult the material.

## **DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE - DOWNTOWN TEMPLATE**

### **BASIC INFORMATION**

**Regional Economic Development Council ( REDC) Region:** North Country

**Municipality Name :** City of Plattsburgh

**Downtown Name :** Durkee St / Dock St Corridor

**County:** Clinton

Downtown Description - Provide an overview of the downtown and summarize the rationale behind nominating this downtown for a Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) award):

Just as where things move prosperity occurs, where people gather defines downtown. The downtown that people have defined for Plattsburgh is about one-sixth of a square mile from Oak St. to Lake Champlain and from Cornelia St. and Cumberland Ave to Broad and Hamilton Streets.

This is the downtown that is included in the City of Plattsburgh Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan. It contains 95% of the downtown Commercial & General Business Zones, an Arts Corridor, recreational areas, historic areas, monuments, marinas, boat launch, restored Railroad Station, and a Historic Zone. In addition, it has 3,500 feet of lakeshore and 2,500 feet of river frontage. It is Clinton County's gathering place, hosting the parades, events, and fireworks by which we commemorate our history and celebrate our promising future. It is a gateway for our Canadian visitors, who dock in our marinas. It is home to services: County and City government, six banks, Community Action Agency, Joint Council on Economic Opportunity, a thriving Farmers' Market and an expanding Food Co-op. It has the Strand Performing Arts Center and Strand Gallery, diverse dining and both large and small storefronts.

The authentic downtown has space available: 3 ½ acres of property at the waterfront ripe for development, with a parking lot already in place and 6 more acres adjacent to that parking that could be repurposed to housing. Most important to Plattsburgh's vision for downtown

development, it has, at the very center of all of this activity, a 2 ½ acre parking lot that borders river, walking/biking trails, business, and Arts. This area will be transformed into a City Center that will become the central gathering place, a recreational access space, a space to expand seasonal Farmers' Market to year-round, increased retail and multi-use housing - the heart of the City. Plattsburgh features the very rare asset of a stretch of waterfront that runs the entire length of the City. This lot will become the heart of the City from which the next stage of downtown development will begin, allowing both the downtown and greater Plattsburgh area to continue to become a destination to live, work and play.

The concept of "Greater Plattsburgh" is critical to defining the value of this downtown. Historically, downtown was where industry grew. In the last century, industrial production moved away from downtown, and the last half century growth occurred just outside the City boundaries in the Town of Plattsburgh. Rather than detract from downtown's importance, this new dynamic makes a vibrant downtown all the more important in the regional economy. Together, this "Greater Plattsburgh" combination of Town and City becomes the uptown and downtown portions of our community.

People can live in a city, with city services and walkability or they can live in a suburban setting with both modern and traditional shopping, dining and services to be found not far away. They can work at businesses large or at a small business. And they can play together or in a more solitary manner. Yin and Yang. A truly complete Greater Plattsburgh needs both.

## **DOWNTOWN IDENTIFICATION**

This section should be filled out with reference to the criteria set forth in the DRI Guidelines. Answers to each question on the DRI application are limited to 5,000 characters.

- 1) Boundaries of the Downtown Neighborhood.** Detail the boundaries of the targeted neighborhood, keeping in mind that there is no minimum or maximum size, but that the neighborhood should be compact and well-defined. Core neighborhoods beyond a traditional downtown or central business district are eligible, if they can meet other criteria making them ripe for investment.

The City of Plattsburgh selected the Dock St/Durkee St. Downtown area as the target neighborhood for the DRI as identified in the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program. (LWRP, p. 28 - 32) This site includes a portion of the waterfront from Lake Champlain at the southern bank of the Saranac River, along the lakeshore to Hamilton Street and crossing the Saranac River westward between Broad St. and Cornelia St. to Oak St. The area includes a national register historic district, the Point Historic District, which is bounded by Pike, Bridge, Jay and Hamilton Streets and consists of 38 structures built between 1815 and 1880.

Durkee St. (and the connected parking lot) is centrally located in the designated neighborhood. Surrounding Durkee St. is the only Ashley Furniture Store in the country located in a downtown, the North Country Food Co-op, the County Department of Social Services, and Gateway Building with high-end office space, 69 small businesses with second and third story residences. CVPH Medical Center has its General Practice Medical Residency program downtown. The area also has a variety of small businesses that contribute to a healthy lifestyle including yoga studios and two sports focused shops, Maui North and Kinetic Running. Downtown boasts two book stores, one recently opened, a music shop and 16 restaurants; a variety that creates a walkable community that allows visitors and residents to enjoy all Plattsburgh has to offer.

Plattsburgh's downtown has three identities, as successful downtowns do. During the day, it is home to office workers, shoppers and employees. In the evening, it is a place for arts and entertainment and family activities; later in the evening it is a place where revelers gather. This plan seeks to accelerate the development of those first two faces for our City Center.

- 2) **Size.** Outline why the downtown, or its catchment area, is of a size sufficient to support a vibrant, year-round downtown, with consideration of whether there is a sizeable existing, or increasing, population within easy reach for whom this would be the primary downtown.

The demand for space, for activities, races, marches, and concerts has exceeded its availability. Downtown needs space to accommodate more than the current ceiling of about 2,000 people. We need space to allow the activities that currently must be cramped into a small park or cause street closures. Our market study (Attached) shows that we need more retail space and more mixed income housing. Creation of the City Center is necessary first to meet current demand and to allow future demand. According to Transit-oriented design **guidelines, walkability of a city is measured in a ¼ and ½ mile circle around a development.** The focus on this neighborhood and the development of the Durkee St. parking lot in particular, allows for a sizeable existing population and would make this an easy-reach, primary downtown area for both residents and visitors alike.

The City launched a Discover Plattsburgh series of events in 2015, built on several long standing events (Battle of Plattsburgh and Mayors Cup) and aims to hold events throughout the year to engage both residents and visitors. Both Battle of Plattsburgh and Mayor's Cup draw 2,000 people at a time to downtown each day. The inaugural Irish Festival in March, held in the Durkee St. project area as a test for the City Center viability, was a success with 1,000 people attending. The City also organized a holiday parade in December, which drew 1,500 people downtown. Growth is not about creating the market; it is about meeting its current demands and allowing for its expansion.

During the 1950's the greater Plattsburgh area grew dramatically with the creation of Plattsburgh Air Force Base: in the 1990's the population contracted as the Base closed. Extracting the effect of PAFB, from 1940 to 2010, census data shows that the greater Plattsburgh area had a consistent 6% a year population growth. Since the City's borders are fixed and little City property was available for horizontal growth, most of that population increase occurred in the Town in the 20th century. However, the trend back towards downtown living is reflected by the fact that the City and Town growth 2000 - 2010 both tracked at 6%.

There are 7,017 residents, aged 18 - 59, who are within the walkable area identified above. Along with this existing core of residents in the immediate area, SUNY Plattsburgh's main campus is within the existing walkable area, with an undergraduate enrollment of 5,377 students, 341 graduate students, and international enrollment of 339, representing 65 countries. This is a target population for the long-term sustainability of the Greater Plattsburgh area. Engaging students and connecting them with a vibrant downtown may help in keeping them in the area after graduation, thereby replacing brain-drain, which affects small cities, with brain-gain. The diversity of the student population will contribute to the quality of life of the full time residents by supporting cultural events in the City.

The location of the expanding municipal marina created a new draw for tourists, a gateway that will feed visitors to downtown. The draw of downtown will also help keep visitors in the area for longer stays, thereby helping sustain a year - round downtown. Of particular note are the number of visitors from Quebec that visit and stay in the greater Plattsburgh area.

Over half (58%) of visitors surveyed came from Quebec. Another 17% traveled from other regions of New York and 10% from the Northeast but outside of the state. The Adirondack coast and greater Plattsburgh area is situated to take advantage of the large growth industry of Canadian visitors to the region.

Clinton County has seen steady growth in workforce that shows that the Plattsburgh Downtown is sustainable within the region. The number of individuals employed has grown from 39,418 to 41,796. Income from labor has risen to \$1.866 billion from \$1.693 billion. The annual growth rate of economic output was 3.76%, on pace with the U.S. average of 3.7%. Regional fishing tournaments have and will continue to help the marina. Tournaments have generated \$2,168,655 in direct and indirect spending to the region. Each tournament participant represented approx. 2.43 travelers, bringing an estimated 1,740 visitors to the community.

**3) Past Investments & Future Investment Potential** . Describe how this downtown will be able to capitalize on prior, and catalyze future, private and public investment in the neighborhood and its surrounding areas.

The first step in downtown development has been restoring what we have. Decades of investment in downtown buildings, facades, and upper story residences has accomplished much of that task. The worst street in the City 40 years ago is the postcard picture today, and a sought after residential area. Plattsburgh was awarded a number of projects through the REDC and the CFA process. Most recently, Plattsburgh was awarded two 2015 grants: a NY Main Street Anchor Program to renovate and expand services provided by the North Country Food Co-op, and another, through NYSP, to rebuild and repurpose the Saranac Street bridge, addressing crucial structural issues and transforming the bridge into a STEAM Learning Lab on the Saranac River Trail. In addition, the Strand Center for the Arts was awarded funding to expand capacity by hiring a director of development who is creating and implementing the organization's annual funding plan and continues to build the organization. The Strand has leveraged a number of awards from the NCREDC in 2011, 2012, and 2013 to repair and restore the theatre.

Plattsburgh has received funding from both the Dept. of State (DOS) and Empire State Development (ESD) for planning and feasibility studies directly linked the project neighborhood. The City and the DOS are completing an update to the Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan, now in final review stage by DOS. The LWRP has identified the Durkee/Dock St area as one that is ready for development and would be catalytic for the City and region. The LWRP notes that "the current parking lot area on Durkee St. has the potential as the gateway to the downtown and a focal area in linking downtown to the waterfront on Dock St." The project capitalizes on approx. \$1.9 mil in EPF investment since 2000 (For details see Draft LWRP, p. 28 - 29.) In addition to the lake connection, the Saranac River runs through the project area and has been identified for development of active recreation in the heart of downtown; on hold only because the NYSEG river cleanup must be completed first.

In 2014, ESD awarded the City an incentive grant to study the Durkee St. lot, our burgeoning City Center. Durkee St. is located on a 5 acre site located in the southeast corner of Plattsburgh's downtown district. The site is currently home to a 380 vehicle municipal lot, Gateway Office Building, the Farmer's Market and a remediated former gas station. This site has the potential to serve as the gateway to downtown and will be key to linking the downtown to the waterfront at Dock Street. The City has completed necessary environmental remediation at the site, and it has been identified by both the LWRP and

market analysis to be a prime location for mixed use development, parking, and river access. This site provides a connection to both the arts corridor from Oak St. and the Plattsburgh City Marina and Boat Basin, which will bring boaters up from the marina and into Center City.

Improvement is underway for better walkability to and from the downtown. The Saranac River Trail is set to link the two segments of the trail that are currently divided. One section runs about 1 mile from Plattsburgh High School, through the SUNY Plattsburgh Campus and ends at the old Saranac Street Bridge; the other portion of the trail runs from Peace Point Park at the new City Marina and ends at the development site. With the Saranac Bridge redevelopment and the connection of the two segments, a person would be able to walk, bike or run from the Lake, through downtown and onto the SUNY campus. Construction is slated to begin in 2016 and completed next year.

The Plattsburgh City Marina opened in 2015 and has 2 more phases of development. Currently, there are 32 slips and 25 moorings, rented to capacity. Expansion to 94 of slips is planned for the next two years and does not require DRI funds.

There is infrastructure in place to serve the development of the site. Both water and sewer lines have adequate capacity for development along with the necessary storm water catch basins. (See attached infrastructure maps.)

The current and past investments form the foundation for development of the City Center. The lot can accommodate a 5 story, commercial/residential structure across the street from the North Country Food Co-op. The new construction would allow for the development of a year round farmers' market to compliment and coordinate with the expansion of the Co-op, retail space and mixed income housing to diversify the downtown. In addition, the development would create public gathering space, access to the river for kayaks/canoes, and performance space. The City would also work to make the area "smart" by adding WiFi so that visitors and residents can have access via the network. This is particularly attractive to visiting Canadian travelers as they would be able to make WiFi calls and avoid international phone rates.

- 4) Job Growth.** Describe how recent or impending job growth within, or in close proximity to, the downtown will attract professionals to an active life in the downtown, support redevelopment, and make growth sustainable in the long-term.

Greater Plattsburgh has strong, sustainable job growth reflected in April unemployment for the Plattsburgh Micropolitan Statistical Area this year dropping to 5.4%, continuing a five-year trend: 9.3%, 8.8%, 6.8%, 6.2%, 5.4%.

Norsk Titanium has announced plans to locate at the former Clinton County airport. The facility will bring state of the art manufacturing jobs to Greater Plattsburgh. The project was officially announced after the adoption of the State Budget, which included \$125 million sought for SUNY Polytechnic to build the facility. Norsk brings high tech jobs, using 3D printing to produce titanium components used in the aerospace industry. The facility is located within a 10 min (3 mile) commute of the proposed downtown, making the Durkee/Dock St. development area a prime location for housing the professionals that Norsk will bring to the region.

In addition to the new jobs created with the arrival of Norsk, the City is the home to 2 large manufacturers, Mold Rite Plastics and Bombardier Transportation. Mold Rite is the largest of our plastics manufacturing cluster, producing caps, jars, and specialty closures serving nutritional, pharmaceutical, household, food and beverage markets. Mold Rite has served these markets for 34 years and employs 350 people. The plastics cluster shows signs of growth this year, although numbers are not yet available.

Bombardier Transportation's Plattsburgh facility is the final assembly and test center for rail cars in the U.S. market. The Plattsburgh facility employs 250 people and is expected to boost employment over the coming year. Bombardier has leveraged previous NCREDC projects to expand operations. In 2011, \$2.5 million to expand the production facility by 57,000 sq. ft. and the railcar test rack by 2,100 ft. The move increased efficiency and capacity to secure new contracts. In 2013, an education award, \$40,922 going to the facility to train 97 workers. Bombardier is part of the Transportation Cluster that includes highway, rail and aerospace.

Laurentian Aerospace Corporation may soon join the Transportation cluster, with a new Maintenance Repair and Overhaul (MRO) facility. The project will transform the region through the introduction of the state of the art facilities, docking technologies and practices. Over 5 years, the facility expects to have 840 employees, many in high tech positions. In addition to the direct jobs created, a number of suppliers and services are anticipated to locate in the region, in support of the 273,000-square-foot hangar with two bays. Economic & Policy Resources Inc. analyzed the project and estimates that 1,860 permanent full time direct and indirect jobs will be created.

There are approx. 9,500 workers employed within the City boundaries. The workforce **population within ½ mile of the site is approximately 3,850; 788 age 29 or younger; 2,152 age 30 to 54; 902 age 55 or older.** 25.1 % of the workforce in the area earns \$15,000 or less a year; 34.6 % earn above that to \$40,000; and 40.3% earn more than \$40,000. The predominant industry for the immediate area is public administration (32%) followed by educational services (15%). Accommodations/Food services and Health care/ social assistance make up 10% each.

In the region, there is positive growth in the manufacturing sector. The following data from the University at Buffalo Regional Institute (UBRI) report of 2015 indicates positive growth in transportation manufacturing in the region with the largest cluster of manufacturers located in the Clinton County area. In the North Country:

The transportation equipment cluster added 300 net new jobs 2011-2013 (Source - ESD & NYS DOL). Export value growth in the cluster was \$41 million, an increase of 59% 2009-2012 (Brookings Institute). Average wages in the cluster grew 18% to \$58,399 2009-2013 (source NYS DOL) - regional average wage is \$34,287. From the UBRI Deep Dive on Transportation Equipment and Materials Cluster: Location quotient for employees the cluster is 1.26. This is higher than the NYS average. Location quotient for wages is 1.43. This is higher than in the concentration for this cluster in NYS as a whole. Both numbers are lower than the national average, showing room for growth (ESD and NYS DOL)

A short distance from the City Center, CVPH is a 341 bed community hospital employing over 2,500; including 34 at the Downtown Medical Residency Center.

SUNY Plattsburgh brings diversity to the City both in the students that attend school and the faculty/staff that work at the university. According to an economic impact study done by the university in 2012, the estimated total economic impact of SUNY Plattsburgh on the area's

economy in fiscal year 2010-2011 was more than \$203 million, including the direct employment of 1,729 people with an additional 557 indirect jobs created or sustained.

- 5) **Attractive ness of the Downtown.** Identify the properties or characteristics the downtown possesses that contribute or could contribute, if enhanced, to the attractiveness and livability of the downtown. Consider, for example, the presence of developable mixed-use spaces, housing at different levels of affordability and type, healthy and affordable food markets, walkability and bikeability, and public parks and gathering spaces.

As mentioned earlier, storefronts, facades and residences have been updated and restored throughout downtown. Research and anecdotes both show that improvements foster improvements. Building retail, office, and residential space that is both modern and pays homage to existing architecture will inspire the completion of the downtown revitalization. Driven by market study, conceptual drawings are attached.

Converting Durkee St. parking lot to City Center is the first step. The City owns the 5 acre lot that houses 380 parking spaces and the Farmers' Market. The lot has the needed infrastructure to handle mixed use development and provides river access in the heart of downtown Plattsburgh. By year's end, the Saranac River Trail will connect with downtown on the sidewalk side. With proper realignment, the trail can shift and follow the flow of the river, connecting the 2 sections of the River Trail and making it a destination for lunch or recreation.

The area is connected to the arts corridor through another parcel of City-owned property, a transitioning park that provides a path from the Strand Center for the Arts to the City Center. The park will be integrated into City Center and connect mid-block to the many Margaret Street Restaurants. This corridor to the river improves quality of life for those that live and work downtown.

The City is committed to accessible and affordable housing for all residents. The City used its revolving loan fund to assist with the development of Catherine Garden Apts. in 2009 and 2014. Catherine Gardens is a 43 unit development within walking distance of the targeted downtown that provides affordable housing for low to moderate income people. Using a similar model and in partnership with Plattsburgh Housing Authority the development at Durkee St. would create more mixed income housing in the heart of the City.

City Center will increase the availability of local, healthy foods. A small outdoor Farmers' Market operates at the site May - September; there is a wait list for vendors to set up in the Market. The Market also accepts WIC/EBT cards so that low to moderate income families have access to locally produced food. The project looks to expand the capacity of the Market, allow for year round operation and move it closer to the Food Co-op, which is expanding into additional space and equipment. This will provide downtown grocery shopping with the ability to offer more options. The combined Market and Co-op presents a unique solution to downtown healthy food availability. The Co-op is on track for a 7.4% increase in sales this year.

There are parcels of land at the waterfront, near the Marina, ready for development. Dock Street landing offers great potential for redevelopment and could incorporate mixed use development to complement the boat launch. The area can create a regional draw and act

as a gateway to Plattsburgh's downtown from the marina. The City's Municipal Lighting Dept. could be relocated, allowing for development of mixed use housing on the lake. The space near the marina, adjacent to a parking lot created with funding from DOS can be transformed into conference space as well as a possible satellite site for the Lake Champlain museum.

To create a smart infrastructure and allow for WiFi access throughout the downtown, the City of Plattsburgh will leverage existing network capability to deploy wireless access points where feasible, and to fill in gaps where needed, partner with area businesses to harness and exploit existing internet connections that local businesses may be willing to share. The City plans to work with downtown businesses to purchase WiFi access points to be placed into partner businesses in as many points as needed, configured and managed using cloud technology as a single downtown-wide hotspot. With some assistance the entire corridor can be made into a smart area. Plattsburgh is looking to and moving towards the future. To start, and in partnership with area businesses, WiFi can be installed along the route so that individuals can access WiFi as they make their way to and from the downtown to the marina. It is imperative that smart infrastructure is built into the plan.

There are 3 parks in the immediate project area (Trinity, Macdonough Monument and Champlain Monument) and 18 parks located throughout the City. A bike path follows the lake north into the heart of the City from the south, and a bike path likewise extends from the City beach on the north side down onto N. Margaret St. (which was re-designed two years ago to expand biking accessibility), where it continues to downtown. These existing bike paths contribute to the characteristic of Plattsburgh as a green city where an individual can walk or bike around most places in the City, particularly lakeside. The path also connects downtown to the museum campus, home to Clinton County Historical museum, Battle of Plattsburgh, Air Force, Champlain Valley Transportation Museum and Kid's Station.

- 6) Policies to Enhance Quality of Life.** Articulate the policies in place that increase the livability and quality of life of the downtown. Examples include the use of local land banks, modern zoning codes, complete streets plans, or transit-oriented development. If policies achieving this goal are not currently in place, describe the ability of the municipality to create and implement such policies.

In 2014 the City, in partnership with NYS Department of State and Saratoga and Associates, began updating the City's Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan. The consultants met with the 11 member PAC, DOS officials, City staff, and City residents to develop a new vision for the City's waterfront. The updated plan for the waterfront expands the LWRP district to include the Arts Corridor, historic battlefield sites and all of the Durkee St. parcel. The LWRP makes zoning and infrastructure recommendations along with outlining development opportunities and constraints. The process also included creating a vision statement for the City. The statement is as follows:

The City of Plattsburgh is a community extraordinary in its orientation to Lake Champlain and the Saranac River that possesses rich environmental, recreational, historical, cultural, artistic and economic resources. Our trails, parks, marinas, and boat launches maximize access to our waterways, creating unforgettable recreational experiences and optimizing permanent public access.

Our inviting and vibrant city offers strong linkages to the rest of our region making it the hub of the "Adirondack Coast" (Regional Marketing Campaign).

We promote development that fosters the area's educational, cultural, artistic, recreational, dining and retail opportunities and attracts both residents and visitors throughout the year. We are stewards of our land and water and of the rich heritage that has shaped our community. We forge lifelong connections among all who live, work, and recreate here that will endure for generations.

The City Council has been discussing Complete Streets and has accomplished major road "diets" continuing the City's commitment to green growth and for continued commitment to making the City pedestrian/bike friendly. Complete Streets integrates with the Saranac River Trail, together creating a pedestrian/bike path that runs the length of the City.

In April, the City adopted legislation that expands outdoor retail and dining opportunities in downtown; a means for residents to enjoy the outdoors while shopping/dining and keeping the sidewalks ADA accessible so that all residents and visitors can enjoy Downtown. The City has also approved a food and arts gathering in Trinity Park, to run for 13 weeks over the summer. With more than 20 vendors and 400 people participating each week they anticipate cumulative vendor sales of over \$40,000 during the season. This repeating event, crammed into a small park, is more evidence of a need for City Center.

Like many cities with a waterfront, the water treatment plant for the City of Plattsburgh is located in the lowest lying area in the city, on our waterfront. Our City's forward thinking Environmental Services staff has implemented comprehensive upgrades to the wastewater treatment plant in order to be a better downtown and waterfront neighbor by mitigating odors and noise plus improving aesthetics. Touring this protector of the environment has become part of our Talks, Treks, and Trails.

Clinton County Public Transit (CCPT), with a fleet of sixteen buses, provides approximately 150,000 rides per year linking the more remote towns within Clinton County to the City of Plattsburgh. CCPT provides riders with access to shopping, medical services, and employment while simultaneously reducing the number of vehicles on the road.

Plattsburgh International Airport provides residents and visitors with an accessible, affordable means of air travel. In 2015 there were 150,000 enplanements and with the airport expansion happening this year, the FAA expects 300,000 enplanements for 2017-2018. It is also important to note that 82% of travelers to the Plattsburgh Airport are from Canada.

The City of Plattsburgh is an active partner with the Lake Champlain Basin Program (LCBP) efforts to increase water quality of Lake Champlain. LCBP's mission is to protect and restore the Basin's natural environment. In addition to important water quality work, human health, aquatic invasive species, and ecosystem integrity are critical components of the program and the City is proud to be a part of this important, innovative work to preserve and protect its natural assets.

The City has developed a draft Inter-municipal agreement with the Town of Plattsburgh based on the uptown/downtown nature of the interrelationship of these two municipalities. The agreement outlines a memorandum of understanding, expressing how the two municipalities will collaborate to promote individual strengths and expand their local, regional, state, and international profile by having a seat at the table for each other. It is slated to be signed by both municipalities in July.

- 7) **Local Support.** Set forth the local and community support that exists for the revitalization of this downtown and the commitment among local leaders and stakeholders to building and implementing a strategic investment plan. Identify an initial local lead for the program that

will work with outside experts to convene a local DRI Planning Committee to oversee the plan.

The concept of a City Center has been part of the Plattsburgh lexicon for decades. In 1978, it was fashioned as a mall duplicate; today it is the vision in this narrative, but it is all about Durkee Street riverfront. (attached Arvay newspaper) Over the past 15 years, Plattsburgh has participated in and conducted over 18 studies and planning processes focused on different aspects of the City's waterfront. The City has a strong history of successful public-private partnerships, particularly with regards to the downtown corridor. The Gateway Building, built in 2006, was the first step in realizing the vision of a new City Center at Durkee St. The concept of the City Center was included in the Strand Theater redevelopment planning. The City Center is the reason that Ashley Furniture located its only downtown store here. The LWRP public sessions are included in this vision as well. It is not been a question of "if" for many years; it has been, merely a question of "when?" The answer is "Now!"

There is strong support at all levels for the revitalization of downtown Plattsburgh. The Mayor and the City Common Council have worked towards building on the strengths of the area. Members of the Council sit on advisory committees for downtown projects, including the Project Advisory Council for the LWRP and the Durkee St. advisory council for the Market feasibility study. In addition, the Mayor and Mayor Pro Tem have guided the process for the DRI and have solicited feedback from various City depts., as well as community partners. The Council held a public work session to discuss the proposed downtown DRI project and downtown revitalization to gather public input on the potential direction of development.

Project advisory committees have been formed to guide the planning process for the funded projects at Durkee St. as well as the LWRP and Beach/Crete Center study. The PACs are made up of a variety of stakeholders, both from the City and partner organizations. The role of the PAC in each project is to provide input and work with the consultants to create a plan that connects all aspects of City development into a cohesive and executable project that impacts the economic, social, and recreational goals of the city. Members of the PACs include City councilors, community development experts, engineers, local business leaders, reps from downtown anchor organizations, Chamber of Commerce, County and Town officials, SUNY colleges and the director of Adirondack Coast Visitor's Bureau.

During development of the preliminary draft of the LWRP, two public sessions were held where residents were able to provide feedback on proposed plans for the waterfront. The first public session was held on Oct 28th 2015. Approx. 70 people attended and provided input for development opportunities at the Durkee/Dock St. site. Following the in person event, an online survey was made available so that those who could not attend could be given the chance to review the plan and provide comments. 40 surveys were received. (Comments can be viewed in LWRP, p. 220 -230)

The second public event was held on Dec 9th 2015. The feedback from both online and in person events was incorporated into the project. The event on Dec 9th was a chance to review changes to ensure that public input was reflected in the updated plans. In addition to public input from residents, the Town of Plattsburgh Project Advisory Committee was included in the discussion as it is vital that the Town and City work together to further develop the vision of the region.

Public input as well as key stakeholder input was gathered for the Market analysis of Durkee St. Camoin Associates conducted in person and telephone interviews with commercial and

mixed use property developers, economic development professionals, licensed real estate professionals and local business to understand the current environment in downtown Plattsburgh. Along with the interviews, additional information was collected through a survey conducted by the City of Plattsburgh Community Development office. (Data from the survey in survey attachment.)

Paul DeDominicas, Director of Community Development for the City of Plattsburgh will be the initial local lead for the project. Paul has had extensive experience with grants at the Federal, State and local level through his time with Clinton Community College, and now with the City. During his time at Clinton, he wrote and was part of the initial implementation of the \$12.7 Million SUNY2020 project. He is currently engaged in the Durkee St. Feasibility study, LWRP, and beginning Phase II of the City beach redevelopment.

**8) Other.** Provide any other information that informed the nomination of this downtown for a DRI award.

As the retail hub of the northeastern side of the REDC, Greater Plattsburgh's downtown is vital to the success of the region. The proposed project will identify the type and quantity of housing, retail and mixed use development that the space can support. This will result in construction jobs, long-term retail and business employment opportunities, improved housing, significant private sector investment and a revitalized downtown.

A revitalized downtown Plattsburgh will serve as a key selling point for recruiting new businesses based in Plattsburgh or outside the City limits, by offering diverse recreational opportunities, a range of dining experiences, cultural events at the Strand Arts Center and local museums, and a diverse retail and housing base.

Plattsburgh continues to move in a direction of growth. The City has a built a strong foundation of development, and the downtown is poised to see big changes over the coming years.

The City is not alone in seeing the potential:

- ✓ Foreign Direct Investment magazine: Plattsburgh ranked the #2 micropolitan city for economic development in North and South America!
- ✓ Niche.com: Plattsburgh in the top 10 towns in New York to live for millennials!
- ✓ Site Selection Magazine, Named a Top Micropolitan City for Economic Development Success!

The access to high quality education is key to the economic success of the area by providing a quality workforce for larger companies that are located in the greater Plattsburgh area (Nova Bus, Georgia Pacific, Mold Rite Plastics, Bombardier Transportation), and at the same time making the region an attractive place for incoming firms (Norsk Titanium). Small businesses, which form the backbone of the downtown economy, also benefit from the 2 colleges located in the City. Both colleges, along with Champlain Valley Educational Services (BOCES), work with employers to develop specialized training programs to help companies find the talent they need and individuals gain the skills they need to compete for available jobs.

The City of Plattsburgh is in discussion with SUNY Plattsburgh, Clinton Community College (CCC) and CITEC to find space for the development of a business incubator space in the heart of the revitalized downtown district. The space would be more than a traditional incubator space, in that it would connect students and faculty to the City, allow for startups to

access the expertise of multiple partners and provide a space for businesses to grow. The space would be flexible, creating a business pipeline from the incubator with SUNY programs in Cyber Security and Robotics to the Institute of Advanced Manufacturing at CCC.

As a compliment to the Incubator, the Strand Center for the Arts would be an ideal location for a proposed makerspace in the Downtown Plattsburgh area. Makerspaces were first conceptualized and created to provide a central point that offers resources for like-minded communities to develop ideas, work together on projects, and share tools to build and bring their ideas to life. The principle of a makerspace is to bring an artist or inventor out of isolation from their own basements and garages and invite them into an environment rich with possibilities and resources.

Census data indicates that as of 2009, Plattsburgh had a poverty rate of 30.8%, which is 12% higher than the state median and 15.2% higher than the national average. The growth in the downtown that would be leveraged by the state's DRI investment in Plattsburgh would bring job opportunities to this population.

The proposed DRI target area is also home to the Joint Council on Economic Opportunity of Clinton and Franklin County, and the Clinton County Department of Social Services. Plattsburgh's downtown is the regional center for the Head Start, food security, weatherization and similar programs that help North Country residents overcome the barriers that have prevented them from improving their economic circumstances. Downtown improvements will benefit the individuals who visit these agencies on a regular basis.

Plattsburgh is on the move. A vision for the City has been developed from the bottom up, building on conversations with residents, visitors and businesses both large and small. A strong foundation is already in place, and new business investment and new residents are leading indicators of good things to come. The state's DRI investment in Plattsburgh will leverage this investment and provide exponential benefits to the economy of the greater Plattsburgh region, Clinton County, and the entire North Country.