SOUTHERN TIER REDC
2021 DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE

CITY OF ITHACA & DOWNTOWN ITHACA ALLIANCE

DOWNTOWN ITHACA
TOMPKINS COUNTY

DIVERSIFYING, CONNECTING & EXPANDING FOR A RESILIENT & SUSTAINABLE FUTURE
DOWNTOWN ITHACA DRI

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Ithaca's DRI Vision

For nearly 25 years, Downtown Ithaca has had a longstanding vision for itself and its management organization:

"Downtown Ithaca is the economic, social, and cultural heart of Tompkins County....as the region's center for banking and finance, business and professional offices, government and community services, downtown residences, and as a retail and dining destination highlighted by unique specialty shops, restaurants, arts, and entertainment..."1

Today, this vision seems practical and functional but incomplete. As we prepared this 2021 DRI application for submission, our 34-member DRI Advisory Group discussed and identified what is truly important for Downtown Ithaca's future. Also, the Covid-19 pandemic forced us to reevaluate and redefine a vision for Downtown that builds in resiliency and sustainability.

Our new vision for Downtown Ithaca builds upon this early foundation started in 1998 and now in 2021 includes the following:

- To be economically and environmentally sustainable,
- To redefine the downtown boundaries,
- To be an inclusive and multicultural place,
- To attract entrepreneurial and technological expertise derived from our great institutions of higher education,
- To encourage new start-ups and retain talent in Ithaca and the Southern Tier,
- To be a place where serving the needs of the community, visitors, and tourists happen simultaneously,
- To be a place where historical and contemporary infrastructure will complement one another,
- To be a curated, aesthetically delightful and memorable, place to discover and explore,
- To diversify and densify our attractions,
- To ensure we have the necessary infrastructure to continue growing and leveraging more investment,
- To be a renowned destination to work, live or visit.

This is our new vision of Downtown Ithaca. It will guide how Downtown Ithaca grows. The 23 potential projects outlined in our DRI align with this vision.

Supporting Our Vision

Ithaca is proposing a $10 million DRI. While our list of 23 possible projects exceeds more than $10 million in total, we have prepared this collection of vetted projects to show the range of initiatives that can be accomplished with a $10 million investment from the Southern Tier REDC. If awarded a DRI, Ithaca would utilize every option to seek other grant funds from other sources to supplement DRI funding—hoping to leverage a DRI award to the maximum.

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1 Downtown Ithaca Alliance (DIA) vision statement adopted initially in 1998.
JUSTIFICATION

DOWNTOWN ITHACA’S TARGET AREA OVERVIEW

Ithaca’s DRI target area is carefully curated to reflect our community’s planning needs and requirements for the coming decades. The selected target area reflects Ithaca’s natural and historic Downtown as seen in Figure 1. It includes extensions to the southeast and the west to accommodate the growth and development this DRI effort will create in the coming years.

The entire target area radiates six blocks westward and six blocks southeast from the Commons to the Chain Works (former Emerson Power Transmission) industrial redevelopment complex. The whole area is easily walkable, and it creates a new definition of Ithaca’s Downtown that will serve it into the coming decades.

Figure 1
Developing the 2021 DRI boundaries

For years, the Ithaca community has focused on the traditional Central Business District (CBD), a 22-block area surrounding the Ithaca Commons pedestrian mall three blocks in any direction. This traditional CBD has seen much of Ithaca’s recent urban growth and development. However, the area needs further expansion to allow growth and development to continue. The logical corridors for this growth are westward along the West State Street corridor and southeast up to the massive Chain Works redevelopment site. This DRI application seeks to jump-start this expansion to these developable areas.

COVID-19 IMPACT

The COVID-19 pandemic hit the entire State of New York and the Southern Tier with a vengeance. The pandemic disproportionately affected specific sectors more than others. Ithaca felt and continues to feel the impacts of COVID-19. This pandemic experience guided our new vision and shaped the application.

Two of the key drivers of our economy, higher education and tourism/hospitality, were among the most severely affected sectors. When our three institutions made the switch to remote learning, that public health and safety decision removed thousands of students and staff — potential visitors and residents — from our local economy. The loss of the higher education student and faculty population, coupled with unprecedented decreases in tourism/hospitality, severely impacted the Ithaca economy and its Downtown.

- Pedestrian counts on the Commons pedestrian mall were down over 73% (2020 vs. 2019);
- TCAT bus ridership, which hubs out of Downtown, was down nearly 95% (2020 vs. 2019);
- Room tax collections were down 75% (2020 vs. 2019);
- Even today (September 2021), 50% of Downtown office workers remain working from home;
- Downtown bars & restaurants are still in the process of reopening. Now faced a lack of essential workers.
The pandemic showed the vulnerability of Ithaca’s economy and its disproportionate reliance on higher education and tourism/hospitality. While these sectors remain key to the health and viability of Ithaca and Tompkins County, the need to diversify our economy to include more technology-based trade industries and to launch efforts to grow a small-scale manufacturing base became crystal clear. In addition, our community, led by our DRI Advisory Group, has realized the importance of finding a way to allow Downtown growth and development to continue.

In Table 1, 2020 Census data shows that Downtown Ithaca helped to lead new population growth in the community. Spurred by proactive policies such as density through zoning and tax abatement incentives that encouraged and promoted urban core development, Ithaca sought to centralize new investment and growth into the urban core. That approach worked. Yet today, growth and development are jeopardized by the relatively small size of the traditional Downtown Ithaca footprint. Downtown Ithaca’s historic center is surprisingly small—it encompasses a mere three-block radius surrounding the Commons. Most other cities have downtowns at least twice that size. This lack of expansion capacity has resulted in the City and civic leaders recognizing the necessity to grow the definition of Downtown and include adjacent corridors, which in turn provides space for future growth and development.

Table 1
2010-2020 Ithaca/Tompkins County Population Census Data

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WE ARE PROPOSING TWO PRINCIPAL GOALS:

- To help diversify the Downtown (and community) economy; and
- To help expand the current definition of Downtown Ithaca by doubling its current size.

These are bold goals that, if achieved, can fundamentally transform Downtown Ithaca, positioning it to be successful in the years and decades to come.

HOW WE WILL MEET THESE GOALS AND ACHIEVE THIS TRANSFORMATION

First, we have identified the outstanding needs of Downtown Ithaca. These include:

- Insufficient housing for all;
- Lack of public transportation infrastructure;
- The need for more opportunities to attract, hold and retain foot traffic;
- The lack of placemaking around and beyond the Commons; and
- Insufficient public parking infrastructure;

We assembled a list of DRI project proposals to address most of these needs.

Second, we attempted to devise DRI project proposals that address the two key goals that our Advisory Committee advanced. While we may start at a different place from other applicants, our project needs are great and numerous. As evidenced by their cost, these change-inducing projects are beyond the scope of our local funding capacity. We need DRI assistance to jump-start these activities.

DRI funding for any combination of our 23 proposed projects will transform our community.
Among the highlights of these projects are:

- New streetscape to expand Downtown Ithaca westward from the Commons to Route 13 and the Waterfront;
- New streetscape to expand and link Downtown Ithaca southward to the Chain Works redevelopment site;
- A new Downtown intercity bus and transportation center;
- Projects to create new space and growth opportunities for technology businesses;
- The redesign of Dewitt Park;
- The creation of a Six Mile Creek trail connecting Downtown to Route 13 and to the Six Mile Creek gorge;
- Support for possible new Downtown housing, including more affordable housing;
- Added amenities to make Downtown a more desirable place to live, work and visit.

We divide our projects into three categories:

- Economic Growth and Diversification
- Transformational Infrastructure
- Downtown Amenities

This package of projects addresses the chronic needs of Downtown and can help position Downtown to be a healthy and vibrant part of the Southern Tier for years and decades to come.

**DOWNTOWN ITHACA’S DEFINING CHARACTERISTICS**

The City of Ithaca is located at the southern tip of Cayuga Lake and surrounded by three large hills. They are East Hill, South Hill, and West Hill. Downtown Ithaca is nestled at the base of East and South Hills and is roughly one mile removed from the lakefront. The Cayuga Inlet channeling storm and flood water run-off from East and South hill to Cayuga Lake is an important natural connection between Downtown and the Cayuga Lake waterfront.

Ithaca’s surrounding hills limit and control the spread of growth and development. Our long-established urban residential neighborhoods seen in Figure 2 surround Downtown—Southside, Northside, Washington Park, Fall Creek, East Hill Historic District, and South Hill residential neighborhoods cannot add to the commercial real estate.

These neighborhoods provide daily foot traffic for Downtown, representing a distinct opportunity for business and commerce. These same neighborhoods, which are zoned residential, are prohibited from developing commercial properties. This proposed Downtown expansion to the west and southeast makes meaningful sense because an expansion will allow some commercial growth closer to those communities. Creating commercial development closer to our residential neighborhoods is crucial to the future growth of Downtown Ithaca. These corridors represent a primary growth option for the CBD.

**A RICH AND STORIED PAST**

When Downtown Ithaca was created in the early 1800s, it was built at the edge of the southern marshlands abutting Cayuga Lake. During the mid-1800s, a massive reclamation effort filled the marshland, creating the Flats area that today occupies the land between Downtown and the new southern boundary of the Lake. Today, the lakefront sits roughly one mile.
or ten blocks from Downtown. As development occurs in Downtown and the lakefront area, connecting these two growth nodes becomes important. The strongest connection uses West State Street to link to the Cayuga Inlet flood control channel which travels to the Lake.

Aside from its geography, Downtown is characterized by the following attributes:

Much of the target area is included in one or more local and national historic districts, designed to celebrate and protect the area's historic character. These districts include the Commons commercial block facades, the Dewitt Park area landmark properties including the 1820 Clinton House, formerly a hotel, the 1929 Masonic Temple, and properties along the West State Street corridor as seen in Figure 3. During the 1960s, nearly 50% of the historic fabric of the Downtown was destroyed as part of urban renewal. This permanent loss of infrastructure is one reason why new construction has been such an important part of Ithaca's recent growth and development.

Today, historic preservation and new development sit side by side; old and new are working together to craft a new identity and persona for the Downtown.

**MULTIPLE AREAS IN THE DOWNTOWN BID:** The Ithaca Commons, DeWitt Mall, Press Bay, Aurora Street/Restaurant Row, East State Street, West State Street, and Six Mile Creek all present areas to explore in our Downtown.

**Pedestrian Mall --The Ithaca Commons**
If Downtown Ithaca is known for one asset, it's the Ithaca Commons pedestrian mall, created in 1975. A three-block, car-free zone filled with shopping and dining, the Commons has become Downtown's major attraction.

DIA-sponsored electronic pedestrian counters recorded over 2 million footfalls in 2019, making the Commons one of the region’s most pedestrian-utilized places. The Commons has special protective zoning that requires any new construction to mirror the historic building heights and requires active ground floor uses. The Commons is home to many small and independent boutique shops and restaurants. It is maintained jointly by the City and DIA and is known for its beautiful flowers and landscaping. To effectively work, this area needs constant reinvestment and maintenance.

**Additional Areas of Downtown**
The DeWitt Mall, Press Bay area, Restaurant Row and the Aurora Streathy area, the East State Street area, the West State Street corridor area, and Six Mile Creek— each provides unique street-level character. While all are marketed as Downtown Ithaca, each sub-area features its own vibe and energy. As Downtown expands it will strengthen some of the existing subareas and generate new ones. One of the existing subareas we are looking to strengthen is Six Mile Creek.

**Six Mile Creek**
Three rivers/creeks which flow off the hills into Cayuga Lake bisect the City. One of these, Six Mile Creek, flows through Downtown, creating the southern border of the traditional Downtown. While channelized to prevent flooding, the riverfront area has had only sporadic improvement. Two sections that traverse Downtown received some hardscaping in the past two decades, but these areas are not connected. The creek turns into a gorge immediately east of Downtown, but it's been nearly 100 years since efforts have occurred to create accessibility to this gorgeous natural area.
COMMITMENT TO DENSITY WITH CHARACTER
Ithaca is a metropolitan statistical area (MSA), an urban center surrounded by a rural landscape. Downtown Ithaca serves as the hub of this MSA, and the community has decided to adopt zoning that allows for urban density. To many visitors, the density of Downtown comes as a surprise, tall buildings clustered tightly together. This density; however, is accompanied by a community commitment to character, a walkable, pedestrian-scale urban environment. Policies and ordinances help encourage and promote this pedestrian-scale character. As we consider the expansion downtown, we remain committed to this concept of density with character.

ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT OFFERINGS
Ithaca is known for its arts and entertainment offerings and Downtown houses a number of these assets: the historic State Theatre, the avant-garde Kitchen Theater, the Cinemapolis five-screen art movie house, the Community School for Music and Arts (CSMA), the Tompkins Center for History and Culture, its nightclubs and bars, and its art galleries.

PUBLIC ART
A commitment to including public art throughout Downtown has existed for several decades. This commitment has resulted in a significant collection of murals and three-dimensional art pieces throughout the target area. One goal of the DIA has been for each downtown visitor to experience public art every time they visit.

RESIDENTIAL POPULATION
Our community is growing. Each year, more students and additional people want to live here. While our community added 1,000 housing units during the past decade, Downtown seeks more housing opportunities.

IT’S A COLLEGETOWN
Cornell University, Ithaca College, and Tompkins Cortland Community College all house satellite locations — offices and classrooms — in the urban core, drawing thousands of current students and alumni to live, work, and/or attend classes downtown.

WHY IS ITHACA READY & PREPARED TO RECEIVE DRI FUNDING?
We have the administrative capacity to manage a DRI process. The City Planning and Development Department and the DIA have institutional expertise and knowledge in grant administration and management, urban planning and policy, and strategic planning.

We will be able to use a DRI award to jump-start and catalyze significant future development and investment, ensuring that this DRI will foster transformation and desired change in our Downtown that will come from expansion and readiness for diversification. Ithaca is on the precipice of becoming an economic engine for the Southern Tier region.

We have undertaken much of the planning required to diversify our economy and to expand our Downtown. We have the people and the expertise to work with the State of New York. We lack only the financial resources to launch this initiative.

As a result of the pandemic, our community has taken a solid and painful blow to our economy. The traditional
engines of economic growth for Ithaca: higher education and tourism/hospitality, have suffered significantly during the past 18 months of the pandemic. We’re working toward recovery, but we need help to re-strengthen these pillars of our economy and diversify our local marketplace. As a community, we are ready and prepared to do this now.

HOW WILL ITHACA’S DRI PROGRAM BE CATALYTIC FOR DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION?

Addressing the two fundamental tenets of our Downtown Ithaca DRI proposal will fundamentally transform Downtown Ithaca as we know it and serve as the spark for further and future private investment and growth.

**TENET 1:**
More than double the size of our Downtown by expanding to the west and the southeast.

**TENET 2:**
Diversify the Downtown economy. Learning significant lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic, diversifying our economic base so it is built on more than higher education and tourism. These two sectors were devastated by the pandemic, and this negative impact lingers with the community and Downtown. It is clear—we need diversification beyond higher education and tourism to be the resilient and prosperous community for which we aspire.

The DRI program can help us achieve these two key goals. Overcoming one will be outstanding; overcoming both will be transformational and catalytic. With the investments proposed in this application, we believe we can leverage significant new development and investment for years to come, and also position Downtown Ithaca to be a booming regional center in the years ahead.

OUR UNMET NEEDS

Downtown Ithaca faces five key challenges that it can overcome with DRI funding to become a diversified city:

**HOUSING FOR ALL MARKET SEGMENTS**
Downtown Ithaca is significantly short of housing in key market segments. We struggle to build affordable, middle-market, and workforce housing due to financing gaps driven by the economics of these segments. Without public support to fill financing gaps, the middle market, workforce, and affordable sectors will continue to lag in our community. (See Danter Housing Study in Appendices)

**PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE**
The City lacks a central bus depot to accommodate intercity buses arriving from all over the northeast. A bus depot will serve as a welcoming center for intercity bus travelers and connect them to local transit and micro-mobility options.

**PLACEMAKING LACKS KEY ATTRIBUTES**
We need an effective wayfinding system to connect Downtown to other areas of interest in Ithaca, universal free WiFi, enhanced recreational trails and greenspaces, as well as streetscape improvements.

**MORE EXPERIENTIAL ATTRACTIONS**
Ithaca’s educated and younger demographics are online shoppers; we must provide them and others with diversified experiential opportunities to encourage them to visit and enjoy Downtown.

**PARKING INFRASTRUCTURE**
We have a parking shortage in the urban core. We’ve had to turn away companies with extensive in-house workforces due to the limited parking supply. Increasing our inventory of public parking spaces is critical to the future growth and success of Downtown Ithaca.
BOUNDARIES OF PROPOSED DRI AREA

The target area for this DRI includes the traditional downtown core connected by the West State Corridor, and the West End that links our traditional Downtown district to the Cayuga Inlet and Cayuga Lake waterfront.

It also includes the Chain Works Connection Corridor that abuts the southeast corner of the downtown BID as seen in Figure 4. The combined areas make up the boundaries of our DRI.

The proposed DRI area remains easily walkable, radiating 5 to 6 blocks from the Commons.

Significant public investment is required to develop strong physical and psychological connections from the West End and Southside back to the Commons.

Figure 5 shows Downtown Ithaca’s DRI boundaries were created to facilitate new growth and development within the targeted area and better connect Ithaca.
THE ORIGINAL ITHACA BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (BID)
Downtown Ithaca is located at the base of East Hill, which is home to Cornell University, and South Hill, which is home to Ithaca College. Its boundaries are traditionally defined by the Downtown Business Improvement District shown in Figure 6.

For years, the Ithaca community has focused on the traditional Central Business District (CBD), a 22-block area surrounding the Ithaca Commons pedestrian mall three blocks in any direction. This traditional CBD has seen much of Ithaca’s recent urban growth and development. However, the area needs further expansion to allow growth and development to continue. The logical corridors for this growth are westward along the West State Street corridor and southeast up to the massive Chain Works redevelopment site. This DRI application seeks to jump-start this expansion.

The BID encompasses 22 blocks that comprise the heart of Ithaca’s urban core. If the Ithaca Commons is the central hub, the balance of the BID area stretches a mere three blocks in any direction and is easily walkable and compact.

WEST END CHARACTERISTICS
The West End area is a walkable, flat, commercial area that can be well connected to the Commons pedestrian mall. Moreover, the West State Street corridor was rezoned as a central business district (CBD) to expand Downtown into this abutting area. CBD zoning eliminates parking requirements and allows for more height, land coverage, and density.

The land use map seen in Figure 7 for the West State Street corridor shows more room and capacity for development opportunities. The West End Zone lies on the western edge of the DRI target area between Fulton and Meadow Streets extending from Purity Point at the North to Clinton Street on the South. At just half a mile distant, or a nine-minute walk from the Ithaca Commons, this area is closely connected to the traditional Downtown via State Street. The area hosts several large commercial lots in transition and underutilized properties and has been experiencing gradual redevelopment over the past several years. It is also the most heavily trafficked transportation corridor, and as such, serves as a crucial gateway poised for investment and improvement. Incorporating the West State Street Corridor and West End into the DRI will transform Ithaca and align with other planning efforts. This expanded definition of Downtown is included in the soon to be completed City and DIA 2030 Strategic Plan.

THE CHAIN WORKS CONNECTION AREA AND CHAIN WORKS SITE CHARACTERISTICS
Cayuga Street, one of the connection streets to the Chain Works site, travels uphill as you travel south from the urban core. It is a tree-lined street densely populated with residential properties. A sidewalk on the western side of the street provides walkable access to the site.

To the southeast of the Commons, our border is Turner Place which is the other main access point to the Chain Works site. One of the DRI projects includes streetscape projects for on both of these access streets.

The Chain Works District (CWD) is an important piece of property in downtown. The CWD, which served as the Emerson Power & Morse Chain Industrial Complex, is a 95-acre property and currently has 35 buildings that were constructed beginning in 1906. When complete it will have the capacity to accommodate 1.7 million square feet of total new rehabbed growth with 915 units of housing and several buildings split between commercial, residential, and industrial uses. The first phase (Phase I) of redevelopment will consist of four buildings generally located at the northern and southernmost ends of the complex of existing buildings. These first four buildings (21, 24, 33, and 34) are approxi-
Figure 7
Future Land Use Map, City of Ithaca

Future Land Use Map
mately 331,450 sq. ft. and will house office, a mix of office or residential, and industrial uses. The existing buildings are currently vacant (since 2011) and are being maintained until redevelopment is scheduled. The Chain Works District started renovations and construction this year, with occupancy of some buildings available immediately. The project will be developed using LEED-Neighborhood Development (ND), with walkability, high quality of life, neighborhood amenities, sustainability, a microgrid, fiber optics, and solar energy. In our DRI proposal, we request support for the redevelopment of building 21 to make way for an innovation center. More information about it can be found in Section 7.

THE NEED TO EXPAND

We are purposefully expanding our definition of Downtown in recognition of the opportunity for growth and development that can occur on the western side and south side of Downtown. Downtown's major east/west road is State Street (combined with Green and Seneca Street), and the central North-South traffic corridor is Route 13 along Fulton and Meadow Streets. Several blocks of State Street were converted into our Ithaca Commons pedestrian mall. Beyond the Commons to the east, State Street extends up East Hill and connects with Collegetown and Cornell. To the west of the Commons, State Street traverses the West End of Ithaca and links to the waterfront/flood control canal area.

When combined with the traditional CBD, this Downtown expansion for the future presents significant opportunity and capacity for growth—a total of at least 8 development parcels. Our DRI proposal encompasses this new opportunity. The consolidated map of our DRI boundaries is shown in Figure 6. It is 60% larger than our traditional downtown BID and connects the Commons area with the emerging waterfront area and to the Chain Works District site to the south of the BID.

A WALKABLE DOWNTOWN

Even with our expanded boundaries, Downtown Ithaca remains a very walkable, pedestrian-scale place. One characteristic trait of Downtown Ithaca that facilitates walkability is the proximity and connectivity of Downtown with its surrounding neighborhoods. In many urban places, the Downtown is often geographically separated from other residential areas. In Ithaca, the residential neighborhoods physically abut Downtown, creating the easy flow of residents into the downtown core. This trait exists in the West State Street corridor and West End area as well. Figure 8 shows this relationship between our downtown boundaries and the surrounding neighborhoods (East Hill Historic District, Fall Creek, Northside, Southside, South Hill).

The national walk score (walkscore.com) measures the walkability of places throughout the United States, utilizing such factors as availability of medical, groceries, transit, and food & beverage. At 98, Downtown Ithaca's score is one of the highest in the state. (Figure 9).

A CONNECTED DOWNTOWN

A downtown should be well connected to its catchment area, beginning with nearby neighborhoods and other commercial districts. This DRI proposal is designed, in part, to help Downtown Ithaca improve its connections to other areas surrounding the urban core.
Three meaningful connections are crucial to the future of Downtown Ithaca:

- Connection with the emerging waterfront area along Ithaca’s flood control channel into Cayuga Lake;

- Connection to the proposed Chain Works project which will provide homes and jobs to hundreds of individuals;

- Connection with Cornell University and Collegetown.

Linking these areas to Downtown is a logical and essential need for the community in the years ahead.

These connections will be facilitated through the expanded downtown boundary that forms the basis of our Strategic Planning work and this DRI proposal.
SECTION 2: PAST INVESTMENT, FUTURE INVESTMENT POTENTIAL

REINVENTING PLACE

If Downtown Ithaca is the body, complex and multi-faceted, the Commons is its heart. The Ithaca Commons is a unique three-block pedestrian mall with more than 100 independently owned and operated shops and boutiques, restaurants, art galleries, service providers, street vendors, and entertainers. The Commons is also lined with some of the city's most interesting and historic architectural facades, featuring the beautifully designed Raimondo DeVincentis Water Fountain and the recently constructed Bernie Milton Pavilion. The Commons is the centerpiece of Ithaca's engaging social and civic life.

In 2015, with the support of the Southern Tier Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) and the Tompkins County Industrial Development Agency (IDA), the City of Ithaca completed renovation of the Commons pedestrian mall, a $14 million investment in the Downtown core.

The new Commons, combined with creative rezoning, design and street level character standards, the Community Investment Incentive Tax Abatement Program (CIITAP), and a program that provides an extra 3 years of incentives for projects that meet 140% of the NYS energy code, helped spark a resurgence in Downtown growth and development.

HOTELS

The Tompkins County IDA enabled the renovation of the 171-room Hotel Ithaca (the former Holiday Inn and for a long time the only hotel Downtown), expansion of the 125-room Canopy by Hilton boutique—one of only 11 in the world — and the construction of both the 104-room Hilton Garden Inn and 159-room Ithaca Marriott, a full-service hotel Downtown. Combined, the four hotels represent a $108 million investment in attraction and accessibility. (See Table 2)

Harolds Square mixed use development
HOUSING
The Tompkins County IDA facilitated the construction of the 192-unit City Centre and 80-unit Harolds Square mixed-use developments. Each features a blend of retail, restaurant, and commercial space on the first floor with market-rate housing on the floors above. Together, they comprise a nearly $100 million investment in retail and rental apartments. Plus, IDA enabled the Carey Building’s five-story expansion which was a $5.7 million investment that created 20 housing units.

HUBS
Located between the Commons and Ithaca’s transit hub, Press Bay Alley is a shopping hub comprised of independently owned micro-retail spaces in a converted row of storage bays. Similarly, members of Rev: Ithaca Startup Works (REV), an incubator that offers business mentorship and connections, state-of-the-art workspaces, and startup resources supports startups that collectively raised $36.9 million in capital, generated $36.5 million in revenue, and hired 202 new employees in 2020.

Today, the interest in development continues along the Ithaca Commons. The Tompkins County IDA is helping with the construction of The Ithacan, a $65-million rental housing and parking garage replacement project. Other housing projects include McKinley (300 units), Library Place (55-and-over community), and Asteri Ithaca. The latter is a $110 million investment in affordable housing (a critical need Downtown), a parking garage, and a regional conference center. Along with others, these projects are transforming the Ithaca Commons from a tired and declining area into the center of action and community: a place where life, work, and play all collide.

RISE OF TECH
The community’s universities play a key role in supporting innovation. Fueled by Cornell University and supported by Ithaca Area Economic Development (IAED), Tompkins County has a burgeoning tech sector that features scientific and technical research, computer systems and software design, and testing and analysis of industry materials. Together, they produce nearly 10% of jobs and help spread the area economy beyond the predominant eds and meds. Whereas larger, production-oriented firms reside in the airport tech park, Downtown Ithaca is a veritable breeding ground for smaller startups. REV’s presence and success accelerated this trend.

Created by a collaboration between Cornell, Ithaca College, and Tompkins-Cortland Community College, REV is incredibly important to economic growth in Downtown Ithaca. REV focuses on high-growth firms, providing flexibility, an 'entrepreneur in residence' model, and business development services to startups; it currently serves 31 such firms. From REV has launched several tech- and software-related firms, including Rosie Applications (mobile- and web-based grocery platform, allowing independent stores to sell online), GiveGab (digital fundraising platform), Ursa Space Systems (satellite intelligence company that provides businesses and governments on-demand access to analytics), Singlebrook Technology (certified woman-owned custom digital products and web development and design firm), and Exotanium (cloud computing optimization and management platform). In all cases, at least one member of each company’s executive leadership has direct connections to Cornell.
Those aren't the only early-stage companies outgrowing their space, however. Nor is REV the only incubator in town. The **Praxis Center for Venture Development** is Cornell's on-campus incubator for startups in engineering, digital and physical sciences. Likewise, the **McGovern Center** helps develop young Cornell life science companies. Both focus in their respective fields on accelerating client companies' technologies or products, validating business plans, and strengthening management teams.

However, rural college towns with major research institutions often struggle to retain startups and human capital as graduates relocate to major cities in search of jobs.

The **Center for Regional Economic Advancement (CREA)** at Cornell, which powers economic growth and diversity through entrepreneurship and innovation, has identified that sophisticated and well-developed economies, although not well-diversified, like those in college towns, grow by complementary businesses co-locating near one another. That means the economic benefit of an educational institution can stretch beyond local spending by students, faculty, and staff to building a talent pool for new and growing industry employers. The renewed vibrancy of Downtown, both in terms of amenities and possibility, is Ithaca's best bet at a fresh future.

**RADIATING OUT**

It is undeniable that the Ithaca Commons radiates a flow of energy and a spirit of innovation stemming from its multiple mixed-use developments and scenic pedestrian mall. Now, it's reaching out into the neighboring entry corridors to the Downtown core, all defined by commonality and walkability.

The West State Street corridor, for instance, includes **327 West Seneca**, a $2 million mixed-use development featuring 12 units of affordable housing. An example of future investment for this corridor includes an additional housing project which is outlined in Section 7.

The city's West End has also seen a reawakening. This area is even more integral because it serves as the gateway from Downtown to one of Ithaca’s greatest assets, the waterfront. Mixed-use development projects like **City Harbor** ($45 million) and **Carpenter Park** ($90 million), as well as the **GreenStar Food + Co-Op** ($15 million), are examples of expanding investment. Future investment for this area includes a West State Street streetscape project presented in Figure 13.

Just as accessible is the **Chain Works District (CWD)** located just five blocks from the Commons. This 95-acre site, home of the former Emerson Power Transmission Plant, includes 850,000-square feet of existing, highly flexible space, with plans to add approximately 900,000-square feet of new development for a total of 1.7 million square feet. What’s more, the neighborhood intends to be a “live, work, play” multi-use district, uniting invention, high-tech, manufacturing, housing, and community space. Initial development will begin in 2021, with walkability, quality of life, and amenities (including a microgrid, fiber optics, and solar energy) as key elements. Several new or nascent firms in Ithaca are vying for opportunities to get started, and the sky is the limit.

One other emerging player in the expanding Downtown core and Central Business District (CBD) is the **ReCast City** initiative. Small-scale manufacturing businesses employ between 1-50 people and produce any tangible good, from hot sauce to hardware and handbags. Their modest size allows them to fit into most community blocks because they are clean, quiet, and make good neighbors. They also tend to be locally owned and operated, reinvesting in the community and drawing on skills from every population while also paying employees 50-100% more than their service or retail counterparts.

The City of Ithaca recently contracted a consultant which identified four steps to improve the small-scale manufacturing climate, including:

1. Identify small-scale/artisanal manufacturing businesses and inventory their needs, growth potential, and real estate or economic development tools to support them;

2. Engage property owners to understand their challenges and how small business or shared spaces may align with their respective strategies;

3. Design and implement support for entrepreneurship and training; and

4. Develop a clear strategy that builds off existing investments to support micro-business owners build wealth, support a thriving community, and create a more robust, more vibrant downtown as a regional destination.
The City of Ithaca is now transitioning into the implementation phase. This DRI opportunity and the spaces, places, and people outlined above align perfectly to fit a reimagined future, one which capitalizes on previous investments and plays to its strengths.

**FUTURE INVESTMENT POTENTIAL**

23 different projects proposed in our DRI comprise future investment potential. If all these projects are completed, Downtown Ithaca could see up to **$147,000,000** in future investment in Downtown. Figure 10 identifies developable sites within the DRI boundaries. The complete list of projects in this DRI include:

**THE FOLLOWING ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DIVERSIFICATION PROJECTS COULD LEAD TO $14,750,000 IN TOTAL INVESTMENT POTENTIAL:**

1. Downtown Technology Leasehold Improvements
2. Ithaca Vanguard Innovation Center at Chain Works
3. BIPOC small business support program
4. Co-working spaces for new and emerging businesses
5. Small Scale Manufacturing Scatter Site/Gateway CREA Programs
6. Downtown Small Business Loan Program
7. Office space conversion program

**THE FOLLOWING TRANSFORMATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS COULD LEAD TO $64,000,000 IN TOTAL INVESTMENT POTENTIAL:**

8. Streetscape Improvements: West State Street Corridor
9. Streetscape Improvements: South Cayuga Street/Chain Works Corridor
10. Six Mile Creek/Winter Village Trail and Creekwalk
11. Downtown Shared Electric Micro-Mobility Program
12. Transportation Center/Intercity Bus Depot
13. DeWitt Park Redesign
14. Downtown Pedestrian & Vehicular Wayfinding Program
15. Electric Corridor: West State Street Corridor

**THE FOLLOWING DOWNTOWN AMENITIES PROJECTS COULD LEAD TO $68,850,000 IN TOTAL INVESTMENT POTENTIAL:**

17. Downtown Community Free WiFi
18. 409 West State Street Affordable Housing
19. 401 East State Street Housing
20. Downtown Transit Circulator/On-Demand Transit Program
21. Center Ithaca Revitalization
22. Family Fun Center/Childcare Facility
23. Walk-In Health Clinic

The highlighted projects in the list above are included on the Developable Site map on the follow page (Figure 13).
Figure 10
Future Investment in Downtown Ithaca - Map of Developable Sites & Transformational Projects
SECTION 3:
RECENT OR IMPENDING JOB GROWTH

Tompkins County has a relatively stable and growing economy that supports approximately 60,000 jobs. It is clear from Figure 11 Education and Healthcare are the predominant industries. Academic institutions, including Cornell, Ithaca College, Ithaca City School District, and Cayuga Medical Center, account for 50% of all jobs (n = 30,017 as of Q1 2021); their steadiness has been the cornerstone of the economy.

The top 10 industries account for nearly 88% of all jobs (n = 52,717 as of Q1 2021), and include retail; food, beverage, and hospitality; professional, scientific, and technical services; and manufacturing (Figure 14). A robust tourism industry, high-tech, and manufacturing are important traded sectors.

In the year preceding the pandemic, Tompkins County enjoyed a 3.6% unemployment rate, illustrated in Figure 12, lower than New York State (3.8%) and the Southern Tier Region (4.4%) over the same period. The stellar performance is consistent with trends going back decades and extending into the recovery as seen in Figure 11, largely due to the county seat: Ithaca. Over 9,000 people work in the greater Downtown area, mainly in hospitality and food service, retail, and public administration sectors. Whereas those and most other Top 10 industries contracted since the onset of the pandemic, two have exhibited job growth: construction (+ 20) and professional, scientific, and technical services (+100). Indeed, a comparison of online job ads from Q2 2020 to Q2 2021 shows that "engineers" experienced a 148% increase in ads posted an 83% increase in ads closed (a proxy for hires); both are among the best in class.

Professional, scientific, and technical services (NAICS 54) require a high degree of expertise and training and include computer systems (software) design, research and development in nanotechnology, biotechnology, and physical and life sciences, and testing and analysis of industry materials. In Tompkins County, it supports nearly 6% of jobs (n = 3,369 as of Q1 2021). Not surprisingly, this sector requires higher levels of education and skills than is present in surrounding areas. This elevates the need for excellent schools and post-secondary training, creating a workforce that can capitalize on these career opportunities.

ITHACA HAS THAT AND THEN SOME

Cornell University is a world-class institution with global programs and groundbreaking research. Entrepreneurs who maintain relationships with either Cornell or Ithaca College drive...
Downtown's innovation and creativity. Graduates are equipped to go almost anywhere, yet many choose to stay locally because of access to state-of-the-art research and development technology and their mentors behind it. Still, others returned to realize the same opportunities in the novel virtual environment. Harnessing the startups and spinoffs' economic possibility and commercialization potential associated with higher education is key to Ithaca's future prosperity. A great example of that is REV.

REV ITHACA STARTUP
When establishing REV in 2014, CREA deliberately chose to locate it in Downtown so members could benefit from the entrepreneurial ecosystem and services found there. That decision was as fortuitous as it was fruitful. From 2018–2020, REV members have flourished, see growth in Table 4. The rise of REV and associated entrepreneurs contributed to a Number 13 ranking on USA Today's list of 25 Most Innovative Cities in November 2018, among other accolades.

REV isn't alone in supporting Ithaca's burgeoning tech sector, however. Ithaca Area Economic Development is a private non-profit economic development organization serving Ithaca and Tompkins County. It is New York's first and only Accredited Economic Development Organization, and one of only 70 across North America. Through strategic, customized services to traded sector industries, IAED strives to create a supportive business environment that attracts, grows, and retains companies that provide high-quality employment. Key to that end is tech. Since as recently as 2019, IAED has invested in 10 high-tech companies estimated to create 182 new jobs with a payroll of over $17 million, retain 305 jobs, and produce nearly $8 million in capital expenditures. Several more projects are in the works.

Table 4
REV Member Growth, provided by IAED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REV MEMBER COMPANIES’ GROWTH, 2018-2020</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revenue Generated ($ millions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018: $12.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019: $20.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020: $36.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capitol Raised ($ millions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018: $44.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019: $21.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020: $36.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Jobs Created</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018: 106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019: 136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020: 202</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DOWNTOWN EMPLOYMENT PROFILE
There are roughly 9,000 people who work in greater Ithaca area jobs. Hospitality, Food Services, and Retail Trade make up a quarter of the jobs, with Public Administration (18.5%), Health Care and Assistance (15.2%), and Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (8.1%) as the next largest downtown job sectors.1

According to DIA reports, approximately 3,500 people work in the 22 block Business Improvement District. This number grows when we look at jobs located within a one-mile walking radius of the Ithaca Commons. According to 2018 Claritas data, there are 9,198 people employed in this one-mile downtown area. Job types vary, from specialized high-tech positions to entry-level hospitality jobs.

This blend of job types is beneficial for the community and helps to provide both diversity and dynamism for Downtown Ithaca. Job mobility within and across industries is supported by the work of the Tompkins County Workforce Investment Board and Tompkins Workforce NY which provide a variety of job placement and training services and workforce development for targeted industries and populations. In addition, the regional Small Business Development Center recently expanded services in Ithaca by committing a staff person to be based out of Ithaca and operate out of TC3 Tioga Place on the Ithaca Commons three days per week, which will provide enhanced access to business counseling services for small businesses of all types.

1 2002-2015 LEHD Origin Destination Employment Statistics (LODES) provided by the Census Bureau.
The largest private employer in downtown Ithaca is Tompkins Financial at 300 jobs. The company in 2018 completed the construction of a new 110,000 SF corporate headquarters building on East Seneca Street. In addition to Tompkins Financial, CFCU Community Credit Union completed renovation of the first two floors of 202 The Commons (also known as Bank Tower), establishing a new downtown credit union branch and adding 20 jobs related to the new branch, and relocating 20 administrative jobs to the downtown, for a total of 40 new jobs downtown. Floors three through seven were recently built out to create additional opportunities for businesses to locate as new office space in the newly renovated space in this historic building in the heart of downtown. People who work in Ithaca commute in from a variety of places, including other regional counties. (Figure 12)

ACCESSIBILITY WILL DRIVE FUTURE JOB GROWTH

Downtown jobs are highly accessible across the greater Ithaca area by foot and by transit, although we recognize that more investment is needed to make transportation work more seamlessly for all modes. In our Projects Section, we have three projects dedicated to improving mobility and accessibility to downtown.

Ithaca enjoys one of the highest ‘walk-to-work’ rates in the entire county (more than 40%), and its transit system TCAT is rated one of the best in North American, with its primary hub directly downtown on Green and Seneca Streets. A privately operated bike-sharing was part of the community from April 2018 to March 2020, with more than 70,000 rides taken in the first several months alone. We are working with Bike Walk Tompkins and the Center of Community Transportation to institute a new locally managed bike share program. We have also recognized a need to further enhance our Transportation Demand Management efforts and as such launched a three-year effort to develop a comprehensive and sustained TDM program for the downtown with the support of the DEC’s Climate Smart Communities program.

To become a diversified City, we need to ensure that car-free options are readily available. Eight-two percent of millennials feel it is important that the city offer opportunities to live and work without relying on a car.2 Further, 50% of Americans aged over 55 want a bus stop within a mile of where they live, and drivers over 55 ranked making streets more pedestrian-friendly as one of the top five community priorities, according to a 2014 AARP survey.

"Locally produced goods—from hardware to handbags to hot sauce—that can be sold both in storefronts and online are a vital asset for reinvestment. These businesses can be the backbone of downtown development because they create a unique, authentic experience.

Small-scale manufacturers give people a reason to come together. Some, like craft breweries, provide a gathering point; others form a collective destination. They diversify the local economy, build community wealth, and create good jobs for people with a wide range of skills. Small-scale manufacturers also fill storefronts and generate business ownership opportunities. And the diversity of products that result from the local assets, skills, and history will ensure that each city can build a downtown that people are proud to call home.”

---Ilana Preuss, ReCast City, quoted from August 19, 2021 Planetizen Article

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Source: The Rockefeller Foundation and Transportation for America, 2014.
Small Scale Manufacturing Will Lead to More Jobs

The City of Ithaca Office of Economic Development, with its partners the Downtown Ithaca Alliance, Ithaca Area Economic Development and REV, are currently working with national consultant ReCast City on developing strategies for growing small scale manufacturing as an economic development and neighborhood revitalization tool for the West End, West State Street corridor and Chain Works (former Emerson) neighborhoods in the City of Ithaca, downtown areas that are part of this DRI application.

Small-scale manufacturing includes any product that can be replicated and packaged. In a recent Planetizen article by Ilana Preuss, our consultant partner on this project, we are looking to leverage “sparks of economic vitality in a burgeoning community of artisans creating products at home and small product businesses”.

This initiative aims to grow local ownership, living wage jobs, women and minority-owned businesses, and overall economic diversity while attracting and supporting a more diverse, vibrant collection of businesses that attract pedestrian activity and repeat visitors. We aim to use small scale manufacturing to create pockets of unique growth and revitalization where people are comfortable and want to relax, visit and live, but with commerce and bustle too, to show that these targeted areas are places that are capable of growing and changing, not stagnant, with the whole community involved in creating a dynamic destination with a unique identity.

Small-scale manufacturing is a priority in our local economic recovery strategy and comprehensive plan as it supports the creation of living-wage jobs, small business ownership, economic diversification, and neighborhood revitalization. It is anticipated this industry will bring hundreds of jobs to our region during the next decade.

There is a particular emphasis on supporting female and BIPOC-owned businesses. Match funding for implementation of this support will be sought from the City of Ithaca, Tompkins County, Ithaca Area, Downtown Ithaca Alliance, and Cornell University.

In addition to engaging with dozens of local small business owners and entrepreneurs making a tangible product and having a vision for growth, we are in conversation with several supportive property owners.

Activities will include small business support (mentorship, training, tailored incubation support), and supportive programming (events, branding, promotion), policy changes like modifying zoning to allow for light manufacturing uses in these neighborhood commercial areas, and support for suitable spaces. DRI funds will be used to work with local property owners to help create appropriately sized and outfitted spaces, affordable units that work for flexible uses such as combined retail and light manufacturing/assembly, and shared incubator space such as a shared commercial kitchen.

Local makers and entrepreneurs will benefit from having affordable appropriate-sized locations, supportive policies, all-inclusive wrap-around support for financing, technical assistance, and being part of a community of maker-entrepreneurs who are exciting and full of energy.

Jobs Created by the 2021 Proposed DRI Projects

Our 23 proposed DRI projects could create up to 210 new jobs downtown scattered mostly between the technology, transportation, healthcare, small-scale manufacturing, construction, and family entertainment industries thus further diversifying downtown Ithaca's industries and workforce.
SECTION 4:

QUALITY OF LIFE

An inexorable link exists between Downtown revitalization and quality of life. New development and investment are meaningless without the appropriate and acceptable quality of life. The residents, employees, and guests need to desire to explore downtown and the various projects we create for them. To make downtown a desirable place requires a quality of life for downtown that is appealing, attractive, and enduring.

HOW WE APPROACH DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION

1. DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION IS A GROUP EFFORT
   Our work over the years has reminded us that downtown revitalization is a group/partnership effort. Downtown is the intersection of multiple community interests, and almost always, a project or an initiative requires numerous partners. These partnerships help to ensure success and also help to add an element of diversity to downtown. We also accomplish more when we work together.

2. MIXING USES IS IMPORTANT
   A vibrant downtown needs to have multiple uses intermingled and mixed throughout it. This mix includes services, shopping, dining, entertainment housing, and cultural experiences. When you have this combination, the unique and powerful essence of downtown is manifested. We strive to accomplish this in Ithaca as much as possible, even if it is more difficult to achieve.

3. IN-FILL DEVELOPMENT IS IMPORTANT
   In-fill development seeks to complete the gaps in the existing fabric of the district rather than undertaking wholesale redevelopment. We seek to utilize in-fill development whenever possible so that even our new buildings fit into the context of the neighborhood and the block.

4. PARKING SHOULD NOT DOMINATE
   For decades, Ithaca's CBD zoning has not required parking. Instead, the intent is for urban projects to use structured garage public parking and promote the use of walking, biking, and public transit. This method frees up land and lots for in-fill development and results in a more complete and robust downtown. This approach is more challenging but provides for a more walkable and dense urban experience.

5. WE TRY TO CURATE THE EXPERIENCE
   Downtowns benefit from a curated mix of retail, dining, entertainment, and recreation. If left to marketplace trends to dictate the collection, it often does not provide the best experience. DIA and City work to shape the character and image of Downtown Ithaca, to make it a more dynamic and vibrant place.

6. WE TRY TO CLUSTER TRAFFIC GENERATORS
   Downtowns thrive off of pedestrian foot traffic, and great downtowns are characterized by having numerous foot traffic generators near each other. In Ithaca, we strive to locate as many foot traffic generators in the urban core as possible so that this combined pedestrian traffic can better sustain our downtown economy.
WHY LIVE, WORK, AND VISIT DOWNTOWN ITHACA

Many factors create a desire for people to want to use Downtown Ithaca. Some of these are summarized below.

AREAS OF INTEREST
Downtown Ithaca has several commercial sub areas that are packaged and branded as one downtown:

- The Ithaca Commons
- DeWitt Mall
- Press Bay Alley & Court
- Restaurant Row & 300 Block of E. State St.
- West State Street

RETAIL
Downtown Ithaca remains one of the places in Upstate New York with a significant collection of retail stores and boutiques. Currently, there are 52 retail establishments in Downtown Ithaca, nearly all of them are small and independently owned businesses. We continue to seek ways to increase Downtown foot traffic to support the businesses and ensure that this cluster of retailers remains strong and continues to grow. (Figure 13).

DINING
Dining remains the number one reason people come to Downtown Ithaca. With 69 different food and beverage venues, eating and drinking represent an significant part of the Downtown Ithaca experience.

The pandemic severely impacted this industry despite the Food & Beverage industry developing creative ways to get food and beverage to their customers when restaurants weren't allowed to be open. Now, the labor shortage is affecting hospitality and food & beverage businesses. Even still, eateries find our community an attractive place to do business and we continue to see new establishments open in our community.

Figure 13
Categories of Retail & Dining in Downtown Ithaca provided by DIA
ENTERTAINMENT AND CULTURE
Downtown Ithaca has several major entertainment venues that contribute to our quality of life. These include: This sector has also suffered significantly during the pandemic. Our nightclubs and performance venues shuttered for over a year. One of our nightclubs closed permanently.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATE THEATRE</th>
<th>A 1,600 seat historic performing arts theater</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KITCHEN THEATRE</td>
<td>An avant-garde small format live theater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMMUNITY SCHOOL OF MUSIC &amp; ART</td>
<td>Offering art &amp; music classes + venue for performances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MUSIC &amp; NIGHT CLUBS</td>
<td>The Range, Bike Bar, Lot 10, Moonies, Sacred Root</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ART GALLERIES</td>
<td>State of the Art, CAP Artspace, and the Mink Gallery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CINEMAPOLIS</td>
<td>Five screen independent art cinema house</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CENTER FOR HISTORY &amp; CULTURE</td>
<td>History &amp; culture museum + visitor center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOMPKINS COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY</td>
<td>70,000 SF library with regular programming</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

HOSPITALITY
Downtown has four (4) hotels, totaling 562 rooms. Construction of a 50,000 SF community conference center is underway, with expected occupancy in late 2023.

ACCESS TO TRANSPORTATION
As the geographic center of both Ithaca and Tompkins County, Downtown Ithaca serves as the transportation hub for the community. Tompkins Consolidated Area Transit (TCAT), our public transit authority, has its two major community stations downtown, on both sides of the Commons. Intercity buses use Downtown Ithaca as their origin and destination for trips to New York City and other major cities.

Ithaca Carshare, a fee and membership-based car sharing service, stations multiple vehicles around the urban core to make it easy for downtown residents and guests to secure a vehicle for travel.

During the pandemic, we lost our public bikeshare program; however, the team at the Center for Community Transportation which includes Bike Walk Tompkins is seeking a new bike-sharing program.

RECREATIONAL AMENITIES
The DRI area also has recreational opportunities, including:

- The Carl Sagan Planet Walk
- Outdoor art and sculptureS
- Six Mile Creek
- Dewitt Park & Tuesday farmers’ market
- Cascadilla Gorge trail (Cornell to Downtown)
- Strolling on the Ithaca Commons
- Tioga Street Bike Boulevard
SPECIAL EVENTS
The Ithaca Commons hosts six major events and dozens of promotions. These activities enhance the quality of life by providing family-friendly experiences. Combined, these events attract up to 200,000 visitors to Downtown throughout the year.

IMPROVING DOWNTOWN QUALITY OF LIFE
As much as we work to promote and manage a strong quality of life for Ithaca and its Downtown, a lot of work remains to be done to fully revitalize the community. This DRI application represents a way to support our community in achieving many of its quality of life goals and aspirations. Among these aspirations are:

WALKABILITY
Downtown Ithaca's walkability scores are high--98 out of 100. Yet, as we expand downtown, we confront new challenges to maintain this robust walkability that has come to define our community.

The DRI target area stretches six blocks from the Commons westward and southeasterly. Making these areas work and flow together as a single unified place through better streetscape and mobility options is key to our aspirations.

PARKING
For as long as we have private automobiles, parking will be a concern for downtown areas. In Ithaca, we are most concerned about parking supply, ensuring we have the parking we need to satisfy our patrons and visitors/guests. We also need to make sure our residents and employees have access to parking and alternative mobility solutions designed for them or they may seek alternative places to live and work.

Currently, we are rebuilding one downtown parking garage and one of our proposed projects in this application is slated to include additional garage parking opportunities. Also, our GO ITHACA transportation demand management (TDM) program intends to help alleviate parking demand by shifting participants to other transportation modes.

MOBILITY
How people move around the urban core is a key question for the future of Downtown Ithaca. We aspire to work with our public transit authority to create a more comprehensive way to ensure that people can easily move from subarea to subarea, attraction to attraction when they want, and as simply as possible. With TCAT, we have been exploring the feasibility of a Downtown/Flats circulator and/or a Downtown area on-demand micro transportation program. This amenity would transform the quality of life for downtown residents, workers, and visitors.

PUBLIC SAFETY
Our community needs to be safe and welcoming for all. This need remains a significant aspiration for our City and Downtown.

The City of Ithaca, Tompkins County, and Downtown Ithaca Alliance currently fund a Community Outreach Worker program that puts trained social service
workers on the streets and sidewalks to help our most vulnerable and needy where and when they need help. We continue to seek ways to ensure that all Downtown users—residents, workers, visitors, students, and patrons—will meet their public safety needs.

**HOUSING SUPPLY**

In Ithaca, housing supply is a major concern. Our large student population absorbs most of the housing in the community, creating a shortage that was estimated back in 2018 to be as much as 7,000 units.

As a community, we have made a significant effort toward addressing this housing supply shortage. During the past decade, City Centre, Harold’s Square, Breckenridge were each constructed and the Carey Building was expanded to help fill this need. However, there is a lack of housing at all price points. Our DRI application includes several proposed housing projects that could add a significant number of new affordable and market-rate units to downtown.

**HOUSING COST**

While housing supply is a serious concern, housing cost represents another part of the housing problem in Ithaca. Building affordable units is both costly and challenging due to the need for substantial subsidies. Housing tax credits are one source of funding, as are competitive federal and state programs. The CIITAP tax abatement program managed by the Tompkins County IDA requires projects to include affordable housing set-asides as part of their projects.

**WHAT’S MISSING?**

Quality of life is a constantly evolving quest. Changing lifestyles and trends require downtowns to continually plan for what residents, workers, and patrons/visitors will desire next.

We need to fill fundamental gaps in our existing downtown marketplace. There are missing elements that our community has told us we would benefit from filling. These gaps include:

- A Food Hall
- Workspace for new/emerging businesses
- More affordable housing
- Easier & accessible ways to travel from one part of downtown to another
- Better & more lighting
- A Family Entertainment Center
- Improved streetscapes beyond the Commons

Our 2021 DRI proposal addresses these gaps.
SECTION CONTENTS:

- Key planning principles that drive future development
- Key public and public/private partnership interventions affecting future development
- The Downtown CIITAP Program community benefits
- City policies that affect the downtown quality of life
- Planning and development policies
- Placemaking policies
- Smart growth principles guiding future development
- Energy efficiency and sustainability
- The Downtown Ithaca BID and quality of life
- Other specific plans and policies that increase livability and quality of life

KEY PLANNING PRINCIPLES THAT DRIVE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

The City has compiled a tool kit of key planning principles that guide all Downtown development when planning for the future. These principles are reflected in The City’s comprehensive plan, Plan Ithaca, and are also part of the strategic plans for Downtown.

MIXED-USE
Single uses can segregate and separate people. Mixed-use creates a cacophony of interactions and synergies that are crucial for successful downtowns.

IN-FILL
Rather than raze entire blocks or areas and start fresh, in-fill development calls for integrating new development into the existing fabric of the neighborhood or street. In Ithaca, in-fill is the development process of choice.

DENSITY
There are only certain places in a community where it is appropriate and suitable for dense development. Downtown cores tend to be one of these places. Density calls for optimal utilization of the site, allowing maximal heights and massing. This is a core principle of the City comprehensive plan for Downtown.

HISTORIC CHARACTER
Building for the future does not mean forsaking the past. In Ithaca, we value the historic fabric of our buildings passed down to us. We seek to integrate new development and historic properties to give presence and respect to both. Most of Downtown falls within a national registry of historic buildings. Portions are also local historic districts.

DESIGN STANDARDS
The City has passed and is now using Downtown Design Guidelines to help ensure that projects will meet basic standards and reflect the character of the surroundings.

STREET LEVEL CHARACTER
We seek density while striving for an eye-catching street-level character. It is not enough to build a project. Whether the project is new or historic, the street level needs to promote walkability and needs to promote and complement retailing. To this end, The City has passed a ground floor active use ordinance that is in place in much of Downtown Ithaca.
WALKABILITY
Walkability is a pillar of a good downtown. In Ithaca, we ask our projects to consider and reflect walkability. We seek to cluster activities and attractions within a walkable zone. The results—our national walk score is 98 (out of 100).

CONNECTIVITY
Downtown projects and development need to complement and facilitate connectivity.

PLACEMAKING
Place-making is all about making dynamic, exciting, and sensory-stimulating places. We try to work with developers to ensure that placemaking is part of their core planning.

KEY PUBLIC & PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP INTERVENTIONS AFFECTING FUTURE DEVELOPMENT
The Downtown Ithaca Alliance is the community’s Downtown Business Improvement District. The organization, formed in 1997, undertakes a comprehensive approach to Downtown revitalization. Its annual operating budget of $1 million funds work in five key areas:

• Business Attraction & Retention
• Downtown Operations
• Marketing
• Special events
• Transportation

Some communities have chosen to only use their IDA capacity for industrial projects. In Ithaca and Tompkins County, we have purposefully opted to include Downtown projects that contribute to urban density. The City of Ithaca, Tompkins County, DIA, and the IDA all collaborated to create a special Downtown incentive program known as CIITAP, the Community Investment Incentive Tax Abatement Program. Over the years CIITAP has helped fill gaps in more than a dozen Downtown projects, helping to make nearly all of Downtown’s major projects more feasible.

THE DOWNTOWN CIITAP PROGRAM: COMMUNITY BENEFITS
Quality of life considerations also find their way into the development support program for Downtown known as the Community Investment Incentive Tax Abatement Program or CIITAP. This gap funding program is designed to help downtown projects bridge the often large funding gaps that need to be overcome for projects to move forward. The CIITAP program has been modified over time to provide additional community benefits and benefits that directly affect the developer. Eligibility for the program has also expanded geographically over time just as our definition of Downtown has expanded to include the West End and West State Street corridor. Community benefits include the requirement to hire local labor, a requirement to undertake a diversity plan for the project, a green energy option that enables projects to receive extra incentives for achieving 140% of state code energy requirements, and a new policy to encourage and promote the inclusion of affordable housing or payment-in-lieu for any housing project receiving an abatement. Several projects have also committed to providing living and enhanced wages for specific workers. Such community benefits further improve the quality of life for the residents of Ithaca.

CITY POLICIES THAT AFFECT THE DOWNTOWN ITHACA QUALITY OF LIFE
To help the community strive toward its quality of life goals, Ithaca has enacted and utilized a number of policies that enhance the quality of life in Downtown. These policies include:
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT POLICIES:

CBD Zoning
Ithaca's CBD zoning allows multiple uses, hence helping to create a melting pot of different uses all near each other. This sometimes requires careful management, but the result is always exciting and dynamic. CBD zoning also has no parking requirement, hence freeing Downtown from an abundance of surface parking. CBD zoning also requires buildings to be built at the front lot line—resulting in strong, character-laden buildings that hug the sidewalk. Height Up-zoning: Ithaca has up-zoned Downtown, to allow for taller buildings. This enables us to pack more activity into a smaller area, again increasing vibrancy.

Active Ground Floor Use
Ithaca has adopted an ordinance for key parts of Downtown that require buildings to have active street-level uses--- retail, restaurants, or some other traffic-generating business. Offices and ground floor housing are prohibited. We want the street to be active and alive.

Design Guidelines
Density with character is one of our key concepts. Design guidelines allow Downtown to retain and enhance the character of its built environment. CIITAP: The Downtown tax abatement program is a key policy that provides an important tool for helping to fill financial gaps in projects. Rather than watch development gravitate to the suburbs, the CIITAP program enables us to provide some form of funding assistance to level the playing field with greenfield development.

PLACEMAKING POLICIES

Commons Rules
The pedestrian mall has its own set of codified rules and regulations, all designed to make the Commons a place people will find safe, secure, and welcome. Rules govern everything from sidewalk vendors, to street performers, to signage and store displays.

Parking Policy
The City's parking policies are designed to strike a balance between revenue generation and to provide needed support and assistance to the businesses of Downtown. Weekends, the busiest shopping days, remain free for all parking.

No Smoking Zones
Significant portions of Downtown Ithaca are designated by code as smoke-free zones, providing places where people will be free from second-hand smoke.

Shared compactors
The City has provided shared trash and recycling compactor service, reducing the number of dumpsters, hence beautifying the downtown landscape.

Aggressive panhandling ordinance
Laws are in place to regulate how people are allowed to solicit and panhandle. Aggressive panhandling is defined and prohibited.

Community Outreach Worker Program
The City, County, DIA, and the regional hospital (CHS) collaborate on a novel program designed to help provide referrals and support direct services to people who are on the street—homeless, folks battling substance abuse, youth, and folks with mental disabilities. The outreach worker meets these people on the street, reducing police calls, defusing possible problem situations, and improving outcomes.
Pay It Forward
The DIA manages a novel program that helps people in need receive emergency food, drink, and personal items from participating Downtown stores at no costs and without paperwork or judgment.

Public Art
The City supports an active public art program which has led to the proliferation of murals, sculptures, and even art bike racks in Downtown.

SMART GROWTH PRINCIPLES GUIDING FUTURE DEVELOPMENT
Along with key planning principles, Ithaca also embraces the importance and significance of smart growth policies and principles. Downtown revitalization is viewed by the community as important because it is an essential part of smart growth. There are several other important aspects of Ithaca's smart growth portfolio.

COMPLETE STREETS
Wherever possible, Ithaca now looks to create complete streets when they undertake street and road restorations. Density By advocating for density, Ithaca is able to concentrate more people in its central core than might otherwise be the case, improving usage of public transportation, biking, and walking.

TRANSIT & TDM
TCAT, the community's public transit system, is an essential part of the Downtown environment. Nearly all community trips cycle through the Downtown Seneca and Green Street bus stations. In addition, the DIA has taken the lead in initiating an ongoing transportation demand management (TDM) program – Go Ithaca! - to help encourage people to move from single-occupancy vehicles to alternative modes of travel. TDM is considered an important tool in addressing our chronic parking shortage, which is expected to return as more people return to offices downtown post-pandemic. We are also actively working on bringing shared electric bicycles back to Ithaca after a successful experience with Lime bikes in 2018 and 2019.

WE ARE SERIOUS ABOUT ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND SUSTAINABILITY
In Ithaca and Tompkins County, people genuinely care about energy policy and energy efficiency. This passion is evidenced in local policy at both the City and County level. These policies affect all development, including downtown development.
CIITAP INCENTIVES
The Downtown CIITAP tax incentive program provides for an extra three years of incentives for projects that commit to meeting 140% of the State's current energy code. For example, the City Center housing/retail project utilized heat pumps rather than natural gas, saving the project and helping it meet the 140% target.

GREEN BUILDING POLICY
The City of Ithaca has adopted a local Green Building Policy and the City's new Energy Code Supplement now requires all new and renovation projects within the City to meet net-zero new construction by 2026. The goal of the policy is to help the City meet its energy reduction goals, by working with the built environment.

GREEN NEW GREEN DEAL
Mayor Myrick announced a New Green Deal plan for Ithaca which sets a goal of making Ithaca a carbon-neutral city by the year 2030. This policy includes having the City meet all of its government operation electricity needs with renewable energy by 2025; adopted the green building policy for new buildings by 2019 and for existing buildings by 2021. The City has recently hired a full-time Sustainability Director to support the implementation of the City's sustainability initiatives. One of the Sustainability Director's Green New Deal initiatives is a Net-Zero Energy Commercial Building Assistance Program, which is included in our DRI projects.

The community participates in the 2030 District Ithaca energy reduction program, dedicated to achieving energy reduction goals in existing buildings and sharing best practice information among building owners.

THE DOWNTOWN ITHACA ALLIANCE BID & QUALITY OF LIFE
Making Downtown an attractive, vibrant, and economically viable place is the day-to-day assignment of the Downtown Ithaca Alliance, the business improvement district (BID) for Downtown Ithaca. The organization has been designated a 501(c)3 tax-exempt charitable nonprofit and is governed by a board of 27 Downtown and community representatives.

The DIA operates a comprehensive Downtown program utilizing a network of five topical committees that engage some 50 + stakeholders regularly. The five principal committees are: business retention and development, downtown operations, marketing; special events; and transportation. The DIA prepares ten-year strategic plans for Downtown development and revitalization and is working with the City on a third plan – a Downtown 2030 Strategic Plan. Each year the organization creates annual work plans that enumerate the many programs and tasks to be addressed. A typical yearly work plan will contain between 100 and 110 separate programs and tasks. The DIA's programs are all designed to enhance and improve the quality of life in Downtown Ithaca. The organization is the major presenter of special events in the County, managing events that annually attract over 150,000 people. These events include: Chili Cook-Off in February, Summer Concert Series from June through September, Apple Harvest Festival at the end of September, Winter Light Festival, and Chowder Cook-Off in December.

OTHER SPECIFIC PLANS AND POLICIES THAT INCREASE LIVABILITY AND QUALITY OF LIFE
There are a number of other specific plans and policies that increase livability and quality of life Downtown, as listed and described below.

ITHACA NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSING SERVICES (INHS) COMMUNITY HOUSING TRUST
https://www.ithacanhs.org/communityhousingtrust - this INHS program uses a housing land trust model to keep CHT homes affordable, not just for the first buyer, but for all future buyers as well. Several scatter site homes are in the DRI area.

PLAN ITHACA
https://www.cityofithaca.org/165/City-Comprehensive-Plan
Plan Ithaca is Ithaca's comprehensive plan. Adopted in 2015, the Plan is a fundamental part of the City's decision-making processes, serving as both an inspiration for a broad range of City actions and a standard by which they can be measured. It articulates a large number of goals and recommendations across a wide variety of issues impacting quality of life and livability including land use, economic vitality, community livability, mobility and transportation, natural and cultural resources, and sustainable energy and water and food systems.
CITY OF ITHACA PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN
https://www.cityofithaca.org/618/Parks-Recreation-Master-Plan
The plan provides a system-wide approach to managing and operating the City's nearly 380 acres of parkland and more than three miles of publicly accessible waterfront. It provides recommendations to achieve the community's vision for the park and recreation system and achieve greater financial sustainability without sacrificing the value of the park assets and amenities or reducing the level of experiences and services available to users. The improvements recommended in the Parks Master Plan for Dewitt Park are included in this DRI.

CITY OF ITHACA ZONING
https://www.cityofithaca.org/151/Zoning
The City uses modern zoning codes and development standards that promote smart growth principles such as a mix of uses and compact development transit-oriented development, shared parking, and walkability. A planned unit overlay district exists to allow for greater flexibility in zoning for larger projects dealing with multiple parcels. A creative approach that allows for enhanced community benefits to be provided by the developer. The Chain Works project at Emerson had its PUD approved early this year.

CITY OF ITHACA DOWNTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES
August-31-2017, Adopted in 2017, the City's Downtown Design Guidelines provide guidance for all new development and major renovation projects in Downtown. The guidelines are intended to promote high-quality construction and exceptional urban design. They are used by the Planning Board, City staff, residents, developers, property owners, architects, and others in the design review process. The document also serves as an educational tool to demonstrate Downtown design objectives and expectations.

ITHACA LANDMARKS PRESERVATION ORDINANCE, LOCALLY DESIGNATED LANDMARKS, AND HISTORIC DISTRICTS
https://www.cityofithaca.org/184/Historic-Preservation
The City of Ithaca's Landmarks Preservation Ordinance and the Ithaca Landmarks Preservation Commission (ILPC) it established preserves and protects physical reminders of Ithaca's history — those visual characteristics that make our city unique, identifiable, and familiar to both residents and visitors. There are seven Historic Districts (including the Clinton Block and Dewitt Park Historic Districts in the DRI Boundary Area) and numerous individual landmarks. The goal of the Landmarks Preservation Ordinance is to ensure exterior changes to locally designated historic properties are compatible with the historic character of the individual property itself and, if the property is located within a historic district, of the district as a whole. The City also has local property tax incentives available for historic preservation, which provides for a ten-year window of tax relief following the substantial rehabilitation of a designated historic structure.

HISTORIC DISTRICT AND LANDMARK DESIGN GUIDELINES
The City of Ithaca’s Design Guidelines for Historic Districts and Individual Landmarks provide general guidance to property owners, architects, developers, and tradespeople in planning appropriate repairs, renovations, and alterations to Ithaca’s historic built environment. These Guidelines also serve as the basis for the ILPC’s decisions regarding regulated changes to locally designated historic properties.

ITHACA URBAN RENEWAL AGENCY (IURA) URBAN RENEWAL ACTIVITIES
The IURA regularly uses its extensive experience with the urban renewal process to support sale of public land for public/private partnership urban renewal projects, including very recently for the Green Street Garage Redevelopment project downtown.

CDBG CONSOLIDATED PLAN AND ANNUAL ACTION PLANS
http://www.cityofithaca.org/558/Consolidated-Plans
http://www.cityofithaca.org/557/Action-Plans
Each of the City of Ithaca's Consolidated Plans identify top priority community needs for five years. They describe the general over-arching community development needs of the City and strategies for addressing these needs. Each year, the IURA develops an Action Plan that contains a description and budget for individual activities to be undertaken with funding made available through the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (“HUD”). The activities of the Action Plan address the needs identified in the Consolidated Plan.
The City's goals for the 2019-2023 Consolidated Plan are to:

- Improve and Expand Affordable Housing Options
- Develop Economic and Employment Opportunities
- Remove Barriers to Opportunity
- Strengthen Neighborhoods
- Meet Essential Needs for Food, Shelter, and Safety
- Affirmatively Further Fair Housing

ASSESSMENT OF FAIR HOUSING AND FAIR HOUSING ACTION PLAN

http://www.cityofithaca.org/583/Fair-Housing

In 2017, the City of Ithaca researched and generated the Assessment of Fair Housing (AFH). The AFH employs HUD-provided data and local information to:

1. Assess housing issues
2. Identify contributing factors that create, contribute to, perpetuate, or increase the severity of one or more housing issues.
3. Develop goals to address barriers to fair housing.

The AFH is an updated approach to looking at the fair housing landscape in order to set locally determined fair housing priorities and goals (e.g., are Ithaca residents able to achieve their housing goals; have Ithaca residents ever been treated unfairly in regard to housing; what could improve Ithaca residents' housing situations).

DOWNTOWN PARKING STUDY AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN AND CITYWIDE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

The City has engaged a national consultant, Stantec, to help develop a parking study and implementation plan for Downtown, along with a comprehensive citywide transportation plan. Background data collection has already begun on the plan and a variety of supporting policies and actions are likely to stem from these linked efforts, the first of their kind in many years.

CLIMATE SMART COMMUNITY

The City of Ithaca and Tompkins County are both certified DEC Climate Smart Communities. As part of the certification, they have demonstrated their commitment to strategies and actions that cut energy use, reduce emissions, and adapt to climate change.

GO ITHACA TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

https://www.goithaca.org/

Go Ithaca is a membership-based program housed at the Downtown Ithaca Alliance that provides sustainable and affordable transportation solutions to improve commutes to Downtown and complete errands while supporting a healthy lifestyle, reducing vehicle pollution, and decreasing traffic congestion in our community. A key goal of this DEC Climate Smart Communities grant-funded initiative is to establish an ongoing Transportation Management Association (TMA) to leverage local institutional and employer investment to provide TDM services ongoing.

TOMPKINS COUNTY ECONOMIC RECOVERY STRATEGY

https://ithacaareaed.org/initiatives/

When the Covid-19 pandemic arrived in Ithaca, local economic development service partners were ready. Ithaca Area Economic Development and its active network of economic development service providers mobilized resources and helped stabilize at-risk businesses. The group also identified key actions to rehab, rebuild and grow the economy. Their work, summarized in the Tompkins County Economic Recovery Strategy, is as much recapping a record year as it is looking forward and into the future. The strategy includes a number of recommended actions for Downtown recovery and revitalization.

CITY OF ITHACA NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

https://www.cityofithaca.org/561/Civil-Rights

The City of Ithaca operates its programs and services without regard to race, color, national origin, disability, and other protected categories in accordance with Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, and the New York State Human Rights Law. In addition, the City, under the Human Rights Protection chapter of the Ithaca City Code, is committed to ensuring that no person is excluded from participating in or denied the benefits of its public services based on actual or perceived age; creed; color; disability; ethnicity; familial status; gender; gender expression; height; immigration or citizenship status; marital status; national origin; race; religion; sex; sexual orientation; socioeconomic status; or weight.
SECTION 6:  
PUBLIC SUPPORT

The Ithaca/Tompkins County community is squarely aligned behind this effort to secure a DRI grant for Downtown Ithaca. Public support is evidenced from the following six steps the community has undertaken to prepare for this DRI grant application:

1. Planning/grant writing core group
2. Creation of a stakeholder advisory group
3. Public Survey
4. Integration of the DRI application planning into the City/DIA strategic planning effort
5. DIA Board of Directors
6. Letters of Support

GRANT WRITING CORE GROUP

Even at the planning, drafting, and writing of the DRI application level, this is a broad-based community effort. Three different organizations were actively involved in the planning and drafting of the Ithaca DRI application: The City of Ithaca, The Downtown Ithaca Alliance, and Ithaca Area Economic Development.

Darlene Wilber, Downtown Ithaca Alliance Communications and Grant Development Director  
Allison Graffin, Downtown Ithaca Alliance Marketing Director  
Gary Ferguson, Downtown Ithaca Alliance Executive Director  
Tom Knipe, City of Ithaca Economic Development Director  
Kurt Anderson, Ithaca Tompkins Area Economic Development Director of Development and Strategy

This reflects the interest on the part of the community at all levels (County, City, and BID,) to prepare, submit and receive a DRI award.

STAKEHOLDER ADVISORY GROUP

To help the DRI working group best frame a revised downtown vision and to help develop a theme and strategy for creating transformational change downtown, a stakeholder advisory group was assembled and met virtually during the application planning process. This advisory group consisted of key community and economic development leaders who were tasked with:

1. Defining a downtown vision to take us to a new and higher level of prosperity and success
2. Creating preliminary theme(s) and strategies that will respond to and address our vision.
3. Assist us with further developing our proposed projects

The advisory group included representatives from the City of Ithaca, Tompkins County, the County Tourism Program, Ithaca Area Economic Development (our countywide economic development program), the arts and entertainment sectors, the Downtown Ithaca Alliance, the lodging sector, the retail sector, Cornell University and REV, Ithaca College, developers and property owners, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Convention and Visitor Bureau.
STAKEHOLDER ADVISORY GROUP MEMBERS ARE:

1. JOANN CORNISH
   City of Ithaca, Planning and Economic Development Division

2. THOMAS KNIPE
   City of Ithaca, Planning and Economic Development Division

3. DUCSON NGUYEN
   Ithaca Common Council,

4. ERIC HATHAWAY
   City of Ithaca Parking and Transportation Division

5. LUIS AGUIRRE-TORRES
   City of Ithaca, Sustainability Division,

6. TIM LOGUE
   City of Ithaca, Engineering Division,

7. PEGGY COLEMAN
   Ithaca/Tompkins County Convention and Visitors Bureau

8. JENNIFER TAVARES
   Tompkins Chamber of Commerce

9. FERNANDO DE ARAGÓN
   Ithaca Tompkins County Transportation Council

10. NICK HELMHOLDT
    Tompkins Department of Planning and Sustainability

11. LISA MONROE
    Tompkins County Office of the Aging

12. MATTHEW YARROW
    Tompkins Consolidated Area Transit,

13. MEGAN BARBER
    Community Arts Partnership,

14. TOM SCHRYVER
    Cornell University Center for Regional Economic Advancement & REV Ithaca Startup Works

15. SUSAN RILEY
    Cornell University, and DIA Board of Directors

16. DR. SUSAN SALAHSHOR
    Ithaca College Physician Assistant Program

17. FROST TRAVIS
    Travis Hyde Properties

18. JOHN GUTTRIDGE
    Urban Core, LLC

19. TERI TARSHUS
    Hilton Garden Inn, and DIA Board of Directors

20. CATHY HART
    Ithaca Marriott Downtown on the Commons, and DIA Board of Directors

21. DOUG LEVINE
    State Theatre

22. BRETT BOSSARD
    Cinemapolis, and DIA Board of Directors

23. EMILY PETRINA
    Firehouse Architecture Lab, and DIA Board of Directors

24. FRED SCHOEPS
    property owner, and DIA Board of Directors

25. SETH ADAMS
    property owner, Wagner Way, and DIA Board of Directors

26. LISA SWAYZE
    Buffalo Street Books

27. SCOTT DOLPHIN
    15 STEPS and Breathe

28. ADRINA GRAHAM
    Adrina Dietro, and DIA Board of Directors

29. ASHLEY CAKE
    The Watershed, The Downstairs, and DIA Board of Directors

30. JASON SIDLE
    Tompkins Cortland Community College, Coltivare, and Board of Directors

31. DARLENE WILBER
    Downtown Ithaca Alliance

32. KRISTINA THELEN
    Downtown Ithaca Alliance

33. ALLISON GRAFFIN
    Downtown Ithaca Alliance, DIA Board of Directors

34. GARY FERGUSON
    Downtown Ithaca Alliance,
2021 DOWNTOWN ITHACA REVITALIZATION PUBLIC INPUT SESSION & SURVEY

In an effort to expand the planning and input to the entire community, the working group held a virtual public input session on September 1, 2021, and distributed a public input survey. Members of the public were briefed on the DRI application process at the meeting.

Community participants included business owners and employees, residents, visitors, and downtown property owners. Public participants were asked to provide feedback on three core questions:

1. What would make Downtown Ithaca a more attractive and desirable place to visit and patronize?
   - More Family Entertainment
   - Wayfinding / directional signage for motorists and pedestrians
   - Fill vacant storefronts
   - More Parking

2. What would make Downtown Ithaca a more attractive and desirable place to WORK and LIVE?
   - Affordable Housing
   - Bus Depot
   - Year-round indoor family entertainment center
   - More safe bicycling areas and walking trails
   - Opportunities for small business funding

3. If you can have one type of business from this list, what would it be?
   - Food Hall
   - Family Fun Center
   - Small Scale Manufacturing
   - Multicultural center
   - Technology-based business
   - Walk-in Health Clinic
   - Community Commissary Kitchen
   - BIPOC Business Support Center
   - Performance Arts Center

4. If money were not an issue, I would add the following amenity to the greater downtown Ithaca area (select top 3)
   - Bus Depot
   - Public Art
   - Public Skating Rink
   - Improved landscaping/seating in areas surrounding the Commons
   - Additional housing
   - Shuttles/electric trolley
   - A larger concert venue
   - Brighter and more lighting
   - A permanent outdoor “Streatery”
INTEGRATION OF DRI APPLICATION INTO THE CITY/DIA DOWNTOWN
2030 STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

This DRI process was integrated into the City/DIA 2030 Downtown Strategic Plan process that began in early 2019. The DRI proposal includes input from this 2030 process that was and will continue to inform and help guide our DRI application and implementation planning if selected.

The 2030 planning process was conducted to achieve two important outcomes:

1. Create a new City sub-area comprehensive plan for the greater Downtown area, which includes the Downtown BID plus the West State downtown growth corridor, and

2. Create a new DIA/City 2030 Downtown Strategic Plan to guide growth and development and to assist in both policy formulation and resource allocation.

This 2030 planning process is rich in public outreach, which is being shared with our DRI application process. There has been a major public stakeholder visioning session, the start of outreach sessions with over 30 different neighborhoods, groups, and organizations, and hands-on charrettes with underdeveloped portions of downtown. Data and findings from all of these sessions have been used in the creation and formulation of this application document.

This planning process continued through 2019 and the availability of DRI consultant assistance to implement this plan will be invaluable to the process. We are undertaking most of this work with local staff since we are unable to afford consultants. The DRI planning process dove-tails perfectly into our 2030 outreach and planning, augmenting, strengthening, and validating our efforts to “take downtown to another level” and “to create a diversified community and expand downtown”. Involving the DIA Board of Directors

The DRI application planning process also involved engaging the Downtown Ithaca Alliance (DIA) Board of Directors. This elected representative body represents Downtown stakeholders and effectively serves as the “neighborhood association” for Downtown.

The 27-member board includes property owners, retail and business tenants, residential tenants, City officials, County officials, and representatives from the Chamber of Commerce/CVB, Cornell University, Ithaca College, and TC3.

The DIA Board was asked to weigh in on the vision and themes for this DRI application and their comments and input have been incorporated into this proposed plan.

COMMUNITY LETTERS OF SUPPORT

Our letters of support reflect the broad community interest and enthusiasm for undertaking a DRI project. A total of 23 letters of support are attached in Section 9. These letters come from a wide range of community leaders who welcome an opportunity to help take downtown to another level and who stand prepared to participate in a DRI planning process. The letters represent 14 different community sectors.
Letters of support for the 2021 DRI were provided by the following individuals:

1. Mayor Svante Myrick
   Mayor
   City of Ithaca

2. Joann Cornish
   Planning and Economic Development Division, City of Ithaca

3. Anna Kelles
   Assemblywoman
   New York State

4. Ducson Nguyen
   Ithaca Common Council
   Alderperson, City of Ithaca

5. Lisa Holmes
   Interim County Administrator
   Tompkins County

6. Leslyn McBean Clairborne
   Legislative Chairperson
   Tompkins County

7. Peggy Coleman
   VP, Tourism & Community Relations
   Ithaca/Tompkins County Convention & Visitors Bureau

8. Nick Helmholdt
   Director, Tourism Program
   Tompkins County

9. Fernando De Aragon
   Executive Director
   Ithaca Tompkins County Transportation Council

10. Scot Vanderpool
    General Manager
    Tompkins Consolidated Area Transit

11. Jennifer Tavares
    President/CEO
    Tompkins County Chamber of Commerce

12. Megan Barber
    Director
    Community Arts Partnership

13. Gary Stewart & Susan Riley
    Community Relations
    Cornell University

14. Tom Schryver & Ken Rother
    REV Ithaca Startup Works
    Cornell University

15. La Jerne Terry Cornish
    Interim President
    Ithaca College

16. Dr. Susan Salahshor
    Director, Physician Assistant Program
    Ithaca College

17. Teri Tarshus
    Commercial Property Manager and DIA Board of Directors
    Hilton Garden Inn

18. David Lubin
    Unchained Properties LLC, (UP)

19. Brett Bossard
    General Manager
    Cinemapolis

20. Seth Adams
    Downtown property owner and DIA Board of Directors
    Warner's Way Real Property

21. Lisa Swayze
    General Manager
    Buffalo Street Books

22. Emily Petrina
    Founder, Owner, and DIA Board of Directors
    Firehouse Architecture

23. John Fracchia
    Board President
    One World Market, Inc.
SECTION 7: TRANSFORMATIVE OPPORTUNITIES & READINESS

Ithaca is applying for a $10 million DRI award. While the cumulative possible DRI share far exceeds $10 million, this is purposefully done to ensure that there is a strong and sufficient selection of possible projects. If Downtown Ithaca is awarded a DRI, this collection would assist DRI consultants in the actual project selection process. We would work to seek grant funds from other sources to supplement DRI funding, hoping to leverage DRI funding to the greatest extent possible.

To supplement DRI funding, Ithaca would use the DRI planning process to identify these additional funding opportunities to leverage and match the DRI funds. This could include Canal Corporation funding as Ithaca is a designated canal community, ESD capital projects funding, ESD funding for jobs and business expansion, HCR funding, trails and bikeway funding, parks funding, transportation funding, and NYSERDA/energy reduction program funding.

The 23 projects selected for this application total $147,000,000 in possible new investment and have the capacity to create at least 210 new direct jobs. It is expected that many of these DRI projects will also serve as catalysts to attract even more investment and project activities.

TRANSFORM FROM WHAT: THE NEEDS WE SEEK TO OVERCOME

The planning and scoping efforts undertaken by our community to prepare for this application, coupled with our parallel work on our Downtown 2030 Strategic and Comprehensive Plan, helped us identify the following needs and problems that require partnership and public investment to overcome:

- Attraction and retention of talent (both on the employee and the business level)
- The need for more urban housing at all price points
- The need to better connect Downtown to other parts of the community and to the broader region
- Addressing the surplus of office and retail space
- Strengthening the pillars of our current local economy: higher education and tourism/hospitality
- Further diversifying our downtown local economy beyond the higher education and tourism
- Improving the streetscapes that connect the Commons to other portions of the downtown target area
- Improving the Downtown amenities that help us attract and retain talent and investment.
- Providing expanded growth opportunities by extending the boundaries of Downtown Ithaca

Our package of transformative projects are designed to help us address and overcome these needs and problems. In addition, the DRI Stakeholder Planning Committee suggested that all DRI projects should meet at least one of the following attributes:

- Create new jobs, investment, and/or wealth for the community;
- Result in a project that contributes to making Downtown Ithaca a more significant and memorable place;
- Add materially to the appeal of Downtown as a place to live, work, and/or visit.
- Create amenities that will enhance the quality of life; and
- Contribute to the community’s and the State of New York’s sustainability goals.
- Diversifying the Downtown Ithaca economy; and
- Doubling the size of Downtown to allow for needed growth and development opportunities.
We expect our projects to help make Downtown Ithaca a place to attract and retain individuals, businesses, and private investment. We also expect projects to contribute to at least one of the two key, over-arching goals of this DRI proposal:

- Diversifying the Downtown Ithaca economy; and
- Doubling the size of Downtown to allow for needed growth and development opportunities.

Our projects are divided into several different categories. Each represents a significant boost for Downtown Ithaca. Collectively, they represent a transformational and catalytic change.

Our project categories are:

- Economic growth and diversification
- Transformational infrastructure
- Downtown amenities that will encourage more people to live, work, and visit

**ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DIVERSIFICATION PROJECTS**

These are projects that are designed to help Downtown Ithaca strengthen and diversify its economy. They will create new jobs and absorb vacant office and retail space. Some of these projects are listed in navy blue on the Developable Sites & Transformational Projects Map found in Section 2.

1. Downtown Technology Leasehold Improvements
2. Ithaca Vanguard Innovation Center at Chain Works
3. BIPOC small business support program
4. Co-working spaces for new and emerging businesses
5. Small Scale Manufacturing Scatter Site / CREA Programs
6. Downtown Small Business Loan Program
7. Office space conversion program

**TRANSFORMATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE**

These proposed projects will provide a catalytic boost to Downtown, providing key pieces of infrastructure that encourage and promote additional private sector investment. Some of these projects are listed in teal on the Developable Sites & Transformational Projects Map found in Section 2.

8. Streetscape Improvements: West State Street Corridor
9. Streetscape Improvements: South Cayuga Street/Chain Works Corridor
10. Six Mile Creek/Winter Village Trail and Creekwalk
11. Downtown Shared Electric Micro-Mobility Program
12. Transportation Center/Intercity Bus Depot
13. DeWitt Park Redesign
14. Downtown Pedestrian & Vehicular Wayfinding Program
15. Electric Corridor: West State Street Corridor

**DOWNTOWN AMENITIES**

These are projects that make Downtown a more desirable place to live, work, and visit. Some of these projects are listed in pink on the Developable Sites & Transformational Projects Map found in Section 2.

Downtown Community Free WiFi

17. 409 West State Street Affordable Housing
18. 401 East State Street Housing
19. Downtown Transit Circulator/On-Demand Transit Program
20. Center Ithaca Revitalization
21. Family Fun Center/Childcare Facility
22. Walk-In Health Clinic

Collectively, this is a major package of projects that can transform Downtown and help it grow into the next several decades.
### TRANSFORMATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT MATRIX

These are projects that provide a catalytic boost to Downtown, providing key pieces of infrastructure that encourage and promote additional private sector investment.

#### ECONOMIC GROWTH & DIVERSIFICATION

These are projects that are designed to help Downtown Ithaca strengthen and diversify its economy. They will create new jobs and absorb vacant office and retail space.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROJECT NAME</th>
<th>EST. DRI FUNDING</th>
<th>TOTAL INVESTMENT</th>
<th>EST. # JOBS</th>
<th>NOTES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Downtown Technology Leasehold Improvements</td>
<td>$500,000</td>
<td>$1,250,000</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15 retained jobs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Ithaca Vanguard Innovation Center</td>
<td>$2,800,000</td>
<td>$7,000,000</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15 retained jobs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. BIPOC small business support program</td>
<td>$500,000</td>
<td>$1,000,000</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Co-working spaces for new and emerging businesses</td>
<td>$250,000</td>
<td>$500,000</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Small-Scale Manufacturing Scatter Site/Gateway CREA Programs</td>
<td>$400,000</td>
<td>$1,000,000</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Avg. 7 businesses served</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Downtown Small Business Loan Program</td>
<td>$500,000</td>
<td>$1,000,000</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Office space conversion program</td>
<td>$900,000</td>
<td>$3,000,000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SUBTOTALS** $5,850,000 $14,750,000 91

#### TRANSFORMATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE

These are projects that provide a catalytic boost to Downtown, providing key pieces of infrastructure that encourage and promote additional private sector investment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROJECT NAME</th>
<th>EST. DRI FUNDING</th>
<th>TOTAL INVESTMENT</th>
<th>EST. # JOBS</th>
<th>NOTES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8. Streetscape Improvements: W. State St. Corridor</td>
<td>$2,000,000</td>
<td>$3,000,000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Will serve as catalyst for indirect jobs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Streetscape Improvements: S. Cayuga St./Chain Works Corridor</td>
<td>$1,500,000</td>
<td>$2,500,000</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Will serve as catalyst for indirect jobs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Six Mile Creek Winter Village Trail and Creekwalk</td>
<td>$1,000,000</td>
<td>$2,000,000</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Downtown Shared Electric Micro Mobility Program</td>
<td>$400,000</td>
<td>$600,000</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>E-bikes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Transportation Center/Intercity Bus Depot</td>
<td>$3,000,000</td>
<td>$4,500,000</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. DeWitt Park Redesign</td>
<td>$500,000</td>
<td>$750,000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Downtown Pedestrian &amp; Vehicular Wayfinding Program</td>
<td>$150,000</td>
<td>$250,000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Electric Corridor- W. State St. Corridor</td>
<td>$200,000</td>
<td>$400,000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4 blocks @ $100,000 ea.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Net Zero Energy Commercial Building Assistance Program</td>
<td>$1,000,000</td>
<td>$50,000,000</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>DRI subsidizes interest; 1 job/$1,000,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SUBTOTALS** $9,750,000 $64,000,000 62

#### DOWNTOWN AMENITIES

These are projects that make Downtown a more desirable place to live, work, and visit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROJECT NAME</th>
<th>EST. DRI FUNDING</th>
<th>TOTAL INVESTMENT</th>
<th>EST. # JOBS</th>
<th>NOTES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17. Downtown Community Free WiFi</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
<td>$150,000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>50 units @ $250,000/unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. 409 W. State Street Affordable Housing</td>
<td>$1,000,000</td>
<td>$12,500,000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>For site amenities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. 401 E. State Street Housing</td>
<td>$500,000</td>
<td>$50,000,000</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Purchase of vehicles &amp; GIS software</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Downtown Transit Circulator/On-Demand Transit Program</td>
<td>$400,000</td>
<td>$500,000</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Center Ithaca Revitalization</td>
<td>$600,000</td>
<td>$1,500,000</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Family Fun Center/Childcare Facility</td>
<td>$480,000</td>
<td>$1,200,000</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Walk-In Health Clinic</td>
<td>$1,200,000</td>
<td>$3,000,000</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SUBTOTALS** $4,280,000 $68,850,000 57

**POTENTIAL PROJECTS TOTAL** $19,880,000 $147,600,000 210
**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

This project will involve a gut renovation of the ground floor of the former Ithaca Journal Building to build out new office space to accommodate the expansion of EmBark in Ithaca and retain their employees in NYS as they grow. EmBark is presently multi-city with a large office in Boston, but they would like to remain in Downtown for their science and R&D operations. This project will retain 15 jobs and add 20-25 jobs in this marketplace if it is completed. Without the grant support, they may consolidate operations into their Boston offices.

EmBark is the leader in dog genetics and has recently attracted the largest Series B funding round for any pet technology startup to date with a $75MM investment round lead by SoftBank’s Vision Fund 2.

*Embank Veterinary Announces $75M Series B Funding Led by SoftBank Vision Fund 2 (prnewswire.com)*

The project would involve gutting the entire floor and building out approximately 5,000 square feet of new class A office space for EmBark, together with approximately 500SF of ground-level active retail facing State Street. We would be upgrading the building heating and lighting systems to the latest high-energy efficiency technology using all LED lighting with advanced controls and the latest air source heat pumps.

New retail space will be created on the State Street façade, enhancing the streetscape on that block and bringing a more vibrant energy to our Downtown. Streetscape improvements will be made to allow barrier-free access to the new spaces and to enhance the public experience of the building.
PROJECT DESCRIPTION

In partnership with Ithaca Area Economic Development, REV Ithaca Startup Works, the Downtown Alliance, and local campuses, the developers are creating a business accelerator program at the site. This accelerator program would allow for the retention of businesses that are graduating from incubator programs in the area, and the ongoing support of the institutions where they got their start. It will also be an attractive site for businesses from outside the area who are looking to locate near to the skilled workforce that sets Ithaca apart and is seeking a high quality of life for their employees.

Business accelerator programs allow tenants access to mentorship, logistical, and technical support. These businesses have typically grown through their infancy and are viable on their own; however, they benefit immensely from networking, collaboration, and shared resources, including access to common investors.

Ithaca Innovation Center partners are working with consultants to identify clusters that would be collocated at the site including the areas of assistive technologies, agricultural, biotech, manufacturing, and energy businesses.

Building 21 has been selected for the Innovation Center as it is located at the entrance of the site, nearest to downtown, and could be renovated as soon as 2022. The building has 10,850 square feet per floor, with four floors, for a total of 43,400 square feet. Building renovation costs could range from $5.5 million to $10.7 million based on the needs of the businesses. At a higher rate, 10,850 square feet of high-tech laboratory space would be created. The building was formerly used as office and the center for technology for the power transmission plant and has ample parking. When businesses graduate from the accelerator program, the adjacent site buildings offer extensive square footage available for expansion and multiple uses at a cost that is far less than locating in urban centers.
3. BIPOC SMALL BUSINESS SUPPORT PROGRAM

Diversify or Expand: Diversify  
Problem(s) addressed: Diversification of the Downtown economy; Attraction and Retention of Talent; Filling vacant office/retail space  
New Jobs: 15  
Investment total: $1,000,000  
Public/Private: Private  
Amenity contribution: New jobs, equity for BIPOC community  
Sustainability contribution: Effort will be made to ensure that participating sites are part of the City’s new sustainability program  
Partners: Business Leaders of Colors (BLOC); SBDC; Downtown Ithaca Alliance; selected properties and landlords  
Likely DRI funding ask: $500,000

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Though technical assistance is available to BIPOC entrepreneurs through the Business Leaders of Colors (BLOC) program and the Alternatives Federal Credit Union (AFCU) RISE character-based lending program and SBDC, there isn’t a created program that will physically assist new and emerging BIPOC businesses with physical space. This project will provide a shared space and technical assistance arrangement to help young BIPOC businesses of all types to nurture and grow in a physical facility in the Downtown target area. Funds would be used for leasehold improvements to prepare the space for flexible use. The program will work with BLOC to utilize existing technical assistance capacity.

4. CO-WORKING SPACES FOR NEW AND EMERGING BUSINESSES

Diversify or Expand: Diversify  
Problem(s) addressed: Diversification of the Downtown economy; Attraction and Retention of Talent; Filling vacant Office/Retail Space  
New Jobs: 10  
Investment total: $500,000  
Public/Private: Private  
Amenity contribution: Flexible space for new and emerging businesses  
Sustainability contribution: Buildings to be included in sustainability program  
Partners: Tompkins County Chamber of Commerce; Downtown Ithaca Alliance; Harolds Square; other targeted area properties.  
Likely DRI funding ask: $250,000

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Downtown Ithaca currently has 120,000 SF of vacant office space spread among many buildings. This project represents the largest volume of office vacancy ever experienced by Downtown Ithaca. There is a need to reprogram and repurpose some of this space to provide more flexible and adaptive co-working spaces for the region’s new and emerging businesses.

This project would work with several properties, including Harolds Square, to repurpose and prepare traditional office space for small startup businesses. Leasehold improvements would enable the properties to provide expandable space and offer an array of support services to assist new and emerging businesses.
5. SMALL SCALE MANUFACTURING SCATTER SITE /GATEWAY CREA PROGRAMS

Diversify or Expand: Diversify
Problem(s) addressed: Diversification of the Downtown economy; Attraction and Retention of Talent; Filling Vacant Office/Retail Space
New Jobs: at least 15
Investment total: $1,000,000+
Public/Private: Private
Amenity contribution: Filling Vacant Space
Sustainability contribution: Participating buildings to be included in sustainability program
Partners: City of Ithaca Economic Development, Downtown Ithaca Alliance; IAED; REV; private landlords; selected area entrepreneurs; CREA
Likely DRI funding ask: $400,000

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The City of Ithaca has been contracting with Recast City LLC to prepare a strategy for promoting the growth of small-scale manufacturing. This initiative has determined a need for scatter site assistance with multiple properties within the DRI target area to provide these small-scale manufacturing businesses with grant and loan assistance. Funds will be used to adapt existing spaces into appropriate and efficient small-scale manufacturing spaces. The City managed program expects to work with at least ten individuals and businesses. Locations are identified throughout the DRI target area, including our traditional Downtown, the West State Street corridor, and the West End of Downtown.

We will also work to develop some of the 260,000 sq ft of manufacturing space at Chain Works to house small-scale manufacturing. As goods production-based small businesses grow in our community, facilities to support their growth are badly needed. The City of Ithaca, in partnership with the DIA, IAED, and REV, is working to identify the needs of these small-scale manufacturing businesses to help clear a path forward in their growth. Developing and retaining these businesses creates jobs and increased opportunities. Our goal is to develop a pipeline of expansion through improved facilities and support. We seek to encourage these production-based businesses to start here and stay here through their various stages of development.

The Center for Regional Economic Advancement (CREA) portion of this project is designed to also leverage the small-scale entrepreneurial technology expertise that resides in Ithaca. This initiative will provide lab space, including key equipment, to provide prototyping and early stage manufacturing space for Ithaca-area startup companies. This lab can support CREA’s successful Hardware Accelerator program. The Hardware Accelerator consists of two separate stages:

• Napkin to Prototype
• Prototype to Production

In addition, other companies and entrepreneurs not connected to the accelerator would have access to the lab. Read more about this project in the Appendix B.
6. DOWNTOWN SMALL BUSINESS LOAN PROGRAM

Diversify or Expand: Diversify  
Problem(s) addressed: Diversification of the Downtown economy; Attraction and Retention of Talent; Assistance to Existing Businesses  
New Jobs: 20  
Investment total: $1,000,000  
Public/Private: Private  
Amenity contribution: Retention of existing businesses  
Sustainability contribution: Encouraging participating buildings to be included in sustainability program  
Partners: City of Ithaca (IURA); Downtown Ithaca Alliance; participating existing businesses.  
Likely DRI funding ask: $500,000

PROJECT DESCRIPTION
Downtown Ithaca needs a recapitalized small business loan program. An existing program, managed by the City of Ithaca Urban Renewal Agency (IURA), has run out of funds and requires recapitalization. The program lends to priority Downtown area retail and commercial businesses. Demand for funds has expanded the current capital. This loan program has a strong and positive lending track record, and we seek additional funds to allow the program to serve the DRI target area. IURA Executive Director Nels Bohn would manage the fund. The IURA establishes priorities for lending in collaboration with the DIA.

7. OFFICE SPACE CONVERSION PROGRAM

Diversify or Expand: Diversify  
Problem(s) addressed: Diversification of the Downtown economy; Attraction and Retention of Talent; Filling Vacant Office/Retail Space; Converting Surplus Office Space  
New Jobs: 1  
Investment total: $3,000,000  
Public/Private: Private  
Amenity contribution: New housing  
Sustainability contribution: Buildings to be included in sustainability program  
Partners: Downtown Ithaca Alliance; Travis Hyde Properties; Other downtown property owners  
Likely DRI funding ask: $900,000

PROJECT DESCRIPTION
With 120,000 SF of vacant Downtown office space, the DRI target area currently has an 18% office vacancy rate, excluding any hybrid or new changes that might occur due to pandemic-related work from home scenarios. Typically, Ithaca has a 5% office vacancy rate.

While the DIA and City are mounting an office attraction program utilizing national software, Location One, proposed DRI projects absorb and utilize portions of this site, proposed DRI projects absorb and utilize portions of this size. We also realize that there will be a need to repurpose some of this space to new uses. This project will work with selected properties to provide incentive funding to facilitate the repurposing of surplus office space. One project already identified is the conversion of a floor of Gateway Plaza into new housing.

Gateway lofts: 20-30,000 SF conversion into 30-35 units; up to $3.0 million
8. STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS: W. STATE STREET CORRIDOR

Diversify or Expand: Expansion
Problem(s) addressed: Connecting different parts of Downtown; Expanding Downtown; Adding streetscape amenities
New Jobs: numerous indirect
Investment total: $3,000,000
Public/Private: Public
Amenity contribution: New streetscape
Sustainability contribution: Use of solar Big Belly trash cans; electric charging stations
Partners: City of Ithaca; Downtown Ithaca Alliance
Likely DRI funding ask: $2,000,000

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Downtown Ithaca’s best opportunity for growth and development rests with expansion to the west, along the West State Street corridor that connects the Commons with Route 13. This six-block corridor was rezoned by the City and included in growth-friendly CBD zoning. Several projects are anticipated for this area, including one project, 409 W. State St., part of this DRI application.

This project provides the infrastructure backbone needed to catalyze further growth and development – a corridor streetscape improvement program. Today, West State Street is not pedestrian-friendly and welcoming to potential visitors, patrons, residents, and workers. Street and pedestrian lighting are poor, and amenities nonexistent. This municipal-sponsored project will provide new street and pedestrian lighting, new sidewalks, pedestrian bump-outs, new crosswalks, new sidewalk amenities such as benches, landscaping beds, trash and recycling cans, and public art. The 100 block of West State will receive retractable bollards to enable the street to be easily opened and closed for special events.

The West State Street makeover is intended to extend the dynamism of the Commons area of Downtown into one of the City most underappreciated and utilized corridors.
DOWNTOWN ITHACA  ::  2021 DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE  ::  PAGE 50

9. STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS: S. CAYUGA STREET/CHAIN WORKS CORRIDOR

Diversify or Expand: Expansion
Problem(s) addressed: Connecting Commons to Chain Works; expanding Downtown
New Jobs: numerous indirect
Investment total: $2,500,000
Public/Private: Public and Private
Amenity contribution: New amenities in the streetscape
Sustainability contribution: Solar Big Belly Trash cans; e-bike stations at either end of the project
Partners: City of Ithaca; Chain Works; Downtown Ithaca Alliance
Likely DRI funding ask: $1,500,000

PROJECT DESCRIPTION
A walkable three blocks from Downtown’s Cayuga Street parking garage, the massive Chain Works redevelopment site today feel isolated and separated from the rest of Downtown. Chain Works, the former 1,000,000 SF Emerson Industrial complex, is being renovated and redeveloped in phases by developer L Enterprises. Our DRI application includes at least one project on this site. A need exists to better link and connects Chain Works with the rest of Downtown to help facilitate the redevelopment of the budding site. A significant elevation change (hill) makes this connection even more challenging and imperative.

The proposed municipal project would provide streetscape improvements and amenities to South Cayuga Street and Turner Place, creating an attractive corridor to link Chain Works with the heart of Downtown. The project will also provide docked e-bike/scooter stalls at either end of the corridor, allowing easy ascent/descent. Plus, new sidewalks, crosswalks, benches, street art, trash cans, and other pedestrian amenities are part of this project. A new artist-inspired staircase will be constructed in part of the hillside to add a tourist attraction and increase access. The property is also intersected by the Gateway Trail that runs through South Hill and is slated to soon connect the Black Diamond trail in the City’s Southwest area with the northern branch of the South Hill Recreation Way, providing another access point to the site. Previously a railroad line, this conversion to a walking and biking trail is part of the Rails to Trails initiative in Upstate NY.

Given the prospects for growth and new investment in the Chain Works area, this infrastructure represents a tremendous catalytic leveraging opportunity for the community and the Southern Tier.
10. SIX MILE CREEK/WINTER VILLAGE TRAIL & CREEKWALK

Diversify or Expand: Expansion
Problem(s) addressed: Connectivity between Downtown and neighborhoods to the south, west, and east; Expanding Downtown; adding a visitor attraction and amenity
New Jobs: 2
Investment total: $2,000,000
Public/Private: Public
Amenity contribution: New attraction; recreation/park space
Sustainability contribution: Buildings to be included in sustainability program
Partners: City of Ithaca; McKinley Development
Likely DRI funding ask: $1,000,000

PROJECT DESCRIPTION
Six Mile Creek is a distinguishing natural asset that passes through the southern part of Downtown Ithaca. Over the years, the community has hardscaped a portion of the riverway in the heart of Downtown. There have been hardscape sections built by both the Cayuga Green and Gateway projects. They do not connect and both dead end, leaving Six Mile Creek an underused asset.

This project will (a) connect the two existing hardscape sections in Downtown, (b) extend a trail eastward into the Six Mile Creek gorge up to the Mulholland Wildflower Preserve and (c) extend the trail southwesterly into the Southside neighborhood and the Route 13 big box section of the City, and connecting to the current waterfront and Black Diamond recreation trails. Studies were completed on the siting and feasibility of the more difficult eastward gorge portion. The southwestern part will run parallel to existing streets.

This project will serve Downtown in two ways: as a visitor attraction and recreation amenity and a new transportation connection/link to enable residents from the Southside, South Hill, and East Hill neighborhoods to access Downtown. The project will also allow Downtown residents to readily access the major grocery and national chain stores of the southwestern section of the City by foot and bike. See Appendix B for plan.

Figure 17
Map of Creek Walk expansion plan

Six Mile Creek Walk
11. DOWNTOWN SHARED ELECTRIC MICRO-MOBILITY PROGRAM

**Diversify or Expand:** Expansion  
**Diversify or Expand:** Expansion  
**Problem(s) addressed:** Connectivity between nodes; transportation sustainability  
**New Jobs:** 2  
**Investment total:** $600,000  
**Public/Private:** Private and Public  
**Amenity contribution:** E-bike mobility  
**Sustainability contribution:** Sustainability program  
**Partners:** Bike Walk Tompkins/Center for Community Transportation; City of Ithaca, Private donors  
**Likely DRI funding ask:** $400,000

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

We're proposing the creation of an electric micro-mobility program to help transport downtown workers, residents, and visitors around the urban core.

This project will consist of a fleet of locally owned and managed dockless bicycles, e-bikes, and scooters.

Bike Walk Tompkins/Center for Community Transportation will manage the program, and funds from DRI will be used to purchase the fleet of vehicles needed to launch and sustain this program. This micro-mobility program will resemble the former Lime Bike program that was active in Ithaca before the pandemic but instead will have local control and management. This program will provide creative ways to move people throughout the Downtown urban core and benefit front-line workers and people with limited incomes.
**12. COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION CENTER/INTERCITY BUS DEPOT**

**Diversify or Expand:** Expansion  
**Problem(s) addressed:** Connectivity within Downtown; Connectivity within the region and State  
**Construction Jobs:** est. 50  
**Permanent Jobs:** 5  
**Investment total:** $4,500,000  
**Public/Private:** Public; limited private  
**Amenity contribution:** New bus depot; community transportation hub  
**Sustainability contribution:** Building to be included in sustainability program; reduction of CO2 emissions.  
**Partners:** City of Ithaca, Tompkins County, TCAT, Intercity bus companies  
**Likely DRI funding ask:** $3,000,000

---

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

Students and visitors/tourists are the lifeblood of Ithaca and a primary way for both groups to access Ithaca is via intercity buses. The volume of intercity bus traffic to the City is noteworthy. In 2019, before the pandemic, there were 15 to 20 different bus trips into Ithaca each day, averaging over 100 trips each week. This volume exceeds the passenger counts at our important and refurbished Ithaca International Airport. Currently, intercity buses use two different blocks in Downtown Ithaca to pick up and drop off passengers. The community doesn’t have the proper amenities for travelers or shelter from the weather. The blocks are often overcrowded from the number of buses loading and dropping off, creating traffic back-ups and hazardous conditions. There is a chronic need for an intercity bus depot/transportation center for Downtown.

The community proposes to undertake a project to build a new transportation center that will accommodate an intercity bus depot and connect these travelers with local transportation options- TCAT public transit, bikes, ridesharing, and taxis.

There are two possible downtown locations under consideration for the transportation center—the ground floor of the Seneca Parking garage and/or the Block 14 surface parking lot on West Seneca Street. We propose to use the DRI planning process to determine the best location for this key piece of community infrastructure and use funds to seed its development.
13. DEWITT PARK REDESIGN

Diversify or Expand: Amenity to encourage both
Problem(s) addressed: Aging infrastructure; lack of
functional green/park space
New Jobs: 1
Investment total: $750,000
Public/Private: Public
Amenity contribution: Rebuilt park
Sustainability contribution: Big belly trash cans;
sustainably built kiosks
Partners: City of Ithaca, Presbyterian Church;
Downtown Ithaca Alliance; Dewitt Mall
Likely DRI funding ask: $500,000

PROJECT DESCRIPTION
Downtown Ithaca has one public park, Dewitt Park. This half city block urban green space has been part of Downtown
Ithaca since the founding of the City but has received little reinvestment or improvement over the years. It remains
an underutilized asset that can become an important part of the Downtown landscape... with proper redesign and
reinvestment.

This municipal project proposes to redesign and refurbish the Park. This project will create new sightlines and
landscaping beds, add new sidewalks, install a kiosk for pop-up commerce, add interpretive signage to highlight the
area's history, and provide key utilities and infrastructure for the farmers' market and other park users.

14. DOWNTOWN PEDESTRIAN AND VEHICULAR WAYFINDING PROGRAM

Diversify or Expand: Expansion
Problem(s) addressed: Visitor experience in Downtown;
connecting sections of Downtown
New Jobs: 0
Investment total: $250,000
Public/Private: Public
Amenity contribution: Signage
Sustainability contribution: Contributes to better
pedestrian experience
Partners: City of Ithaca, Downtown Ithaca Alliance,
Tompkins County Chamber of Commerce/CVB
Likely DRI funding ask: $150,000

PROJECT DESCRIPTION
Community members and visitors have complained
that it is difficult to navigate downtown streets whether
they're operating a vehicle or walking. Our large number of one-way streets do make wayfinding in Downtown Ithaca
a challenging proposition. To address this concern, we have proposed a project that will create an expandable and
replicable downtown wayfinding program that will apply to pedestrians and vehicles. A Tompkins County Wayfinding
and Interpretive Plan has provided Ithaca with a road map for creating, branding, and locating signs. This project will
focus on the Downtown target area and help our patrons and visitors navigate from Downtown to Cornell, Ithaca
College, and other nearby destinations. A link to the overall community wayfinding plan can be found in the Appen-
dices.
15. ELECTRIC CORRIDOR: WEST STATE STREET

Diversify or Expand: Expansion
Problem(s) addressed: Improving connectivity within Downtown; supporting sustainability efforts with electric mobility
New Jobs: 0
Investment total: $400,000
Public/Private: Public
Amenity contribution: New electric charging stations
Sustainability contribution: promotes electric mobility
Partners: City of Ithaca, NYSERDA
Likely DRI funding ask: $200,000

PROJECT DESCRIPTION
An overlay project for the West State Street corridor is a proposed “Electric Corridor” that would centralize and highlight electric charging opportunities for the Downtown community. This centrally located corridor intends to provide ready access to electric vehicle and micro-transit charging stations along the four (4) block corridor. This project would serve the broad downtown community and provide a demonstration model for other parts of the community.

16. NET-ZERO ENERGY COMMERCIAL BUILDING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Diversify or Expand: Diversify
Problem(s) addressed: Reducing costs of operating in Downtown; contributing to the City of Ithaca Green New Deal and sustainability efforts
New Jobs: 50
Investment total: $50,000,000
Public/Private: Public/Private
Amenity contribution: New building energy options
Sustainability contribution: Buildings to be included in sustainability program; Conversion of buildings from fossil fuels to renewable energy
Partners: City of Ithaca, private property/building owners, Downtown Ithaca Alliance
Likely DRI funding ask: $1,000,000

PROJECT DESCRIPTION
This project, spearheaded by the City of Ithaca Director of Sustainability, is designed to help Downtown Ithaca in two ways. First, the project helps our community meet its ambitious Green New Deal 2030 net-zero goals. Second, this program helps to convert buildings to more predictable and less expensive energy sources, making these properties more competitive in the regional marketplace. This project is expected to create 50 jobs in Downtown and throughout the City and will primarily rely on private equity of up to $50 million pledged from two national companies experienced in community energy programs. This project will focus on Downtown commercial properties. DRI funds will help to stimulate building participation.
17. DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY FREE WIFI

Diversify or Expand: Diversify  
Problem(s) addressed: The need for better access to internet connectivity in Downtown, especially for patrons and visitors  
New Jobs: 0  
Investment total: $150,000  
Public/Private: Public & Private  
Amenity contribution: Free public WiFi  
Sustainability contribution: Promotes pedestrian travel  
Partners: Downtown Ithaca Alliance; Skypackets, Inc.  
Likely DRI funding ask: $100,000

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

To make Downtown Ithaca as user-friendly as possible for everyone, especially technology firms and their workers, we propose providing free, community WiFi to the public spaces in our urban core. These areas include the Commons, the Streatery (100 North Aurora block), and other Downtown gathering places. This service can be provided free of charge to locals and visitors alike using devices located on key buildings throughout the Downtown.

This WiFi site plan places new Access Points (APs) in Ithaca Commons, located in downtown Ithaca, NY. These APs will form an outdoor neighborhood WiFi network that is managed by Sky-Packets in partnership with the Downtown Ithaca Alliance. The network will provide wireless internet access to visitors, residents, and employees in the surrounding area. See Appendix B for more project details.

18. 409 WEST STATE STREET AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Diversify or Expand: Expansion  
Problem(s) addressed: Adding needed affordable housing to Downtown, development in expanded downtown area  
New Jobs: 0  
Investment total: $12,500,000  
Public/Private: Private  
Amenity contribution: New housing  
Sustainability contribution: Building to be included in sustainability program  
Likely DRI funding ask: $1,000,000

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

To address the community's persistent housing supply and housing affordability deficiencies, we propose working with Visum Development on a 50-unit affordable housing project on the West State Street Corridor (409 West State). This project will require some subsidy to achieve the desired affordability. The property will include ground-floor commercial/retail along the corridor and help revitalize Downtown's West State Street area.
**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

A second proposed housing project is the 300-unit apartment project at 401 East State Street. Atlanta-based developer McKinley Development is proposing to build a six-story building that will include 240,000 square feet of residential space with 300 units, and 100,000 square feet of parking space. The parking area will house 318 parking spots on the site of a former one-story vacant industrial building sitting near the Six Mile Creek gorge entrance. McKinley has optioned the property from current owners Travis Hyde Properties and is working through the entitlement process. The project can be constructed as of right and will provide housing opportunities for young professionals, graduate students, and empty nesters.

DRI funds will help the project better integrate with the abutting Six Mile Creek walk and propose Six Mile Creek trail and connect the creek walk to East State Street/Route 79 via a series of steps and landscaped walkways through the property. The walk will also connect with a planned monument and exhibit featuring Alpha Phi Alpha, the nation’s first black fraternity.

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**DOWNTOWN ITHACA :::: 2021 DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE :::: PAGE 57**
20. DOWNTOWN TRANSIT CIRCULATOR/ ON-DEMAND TRANSIT PROGRAM

Diversify or Expand: Expansion  
Problem(s) addressed: Connectivity- connecting different parts of Downtown; reducing CO2 emissions, encouraging downtown expansion  
New Jobs: 5  
Investment total: $500,000  
Public/Private: Public  
Amenity contribution: Downtown circulator or on-demand program  
Sustainability contribution: Promotes non-SOV mobility throughout Downtown  
Partners: TCAT, Downtown Ithaca Alliance  
Likely DRI funding ask: $400,000  

PROJECT DESCRIPTION
Both businesses and community members have been asking for better ways to move around Downtown. As we expand our Downtown, easy, frequent, and reliable transportation options become essential. Working with TCAT, our community's transit company, we propose to add a new travel option that enables Downtown residents, workers, and patrons/visitors to seamlessly and efficiently move from one part of Downtown to another. This will be accomplished utilizing a combination of on-demand micro-transit and a Downtown Transit Circulator. Funds are required to purchase the electric vehicle and charging station equipment needed to service this program.

The combination of on-demand and fixed-route circulator will enable us to connect the Commons area with such attractions and destinations as the Ithaca Farmers' Market, Stewart Park, the Inlet Island waterfront area, Wegman's and other Route 13 big box stores, the Sciencenter, Ithaca Falls, remote parking lots along Route 13, and the emerging commercial areas in West End and West State Street portions of greater Downtown.
21. CENTER ITHACA REVITALIZATION

Diversify or Expand: Diversify  
Problem(s) addressed: Provide a requested amenity for people who work, live, and visit Downtown  
 Permanent Jobs: Approx. 12  
 Investment total: $1,500,000  
 Public/Private: Private  
 Amenity contribution: Food & beverage amenity  
 Sustainability contribution: Building to be included in sustainability program  
 Partners: Travis Hyde Properties/Center Ithaca  
 Likely DRI funding ask: $600,000

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Once the cornerstone of Downtown Ithaca, Center Ithaca is today in need of significant reinvestment and rehabilitation. Constructed in 1975 as part of the downtown growth spurt that included the original Commons pedestrian mall, the building has undergone several rounds of improvements in the past 45 years. In addition to its underperforming food court, the property also needs improvements to its residential and office spaces to bring them up to 2021 standards and expectations. This proposed project will assist the owners of Center Ithaca in undertaking this generational upgrade to assure that this key landmark property can remain an important Downtown asset for years to come.

Food halls have emerged as key amenities for downtowns across the country. There has been a food court in Downtown Ithaca since 1975. However, little has changed with this facility since 1975, and the current conditions are poor, with 50% vacancy and no new updated facilities and infrastructure. We propose to convert the aging food court in Center Ithaca into a modern, community-focused food hall. Building out a community kitchen commissary kitchen is a highly sought-after resource for emerging entrepreneurs in Ithaca. A contemporary food hall concept supported by a shared production community kitchen and a public bar/drink sales facility will be a vital addition to the livelihood of this overall facility. This project would convert an underused space into a bone-a-fide downtown attraction for locals, visitors, and students.
**22. FAMILY FUN CENTER/CHILDCARE FACILITY**

Diversify or Expand: Diversify  
Problem(s) addressed: Provision of added entertainment options for Downtown and the Ithaca community  
New Jobs: 25  
Investment total: $1,200,000  
Public/Private: Private  
Amenity contribution: Family entertainment  
Sustainability contribution: Building to be included in sustainability program  
Partners: Harolds Square/L Enterprises  
Likely DRI funding ask: $480,000

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

Another community and visitor desire is for additional family entertainment in Downtown. While our community hosts a well-established bar and club scene, it lacks year-round, in-door entertainment for families and teens. To address this need, the owners of Harold's Square are proposing to create a family entertainment center on the first and all of the second floor of the new building. This +/- 20,000 sf center could feature bowling, arcade games, food and beverage, and other entertainment for the entire family. This project will require steep front-end capital costs, and DRI funds could be used to help incentivize this enterprise that is responding to public calls for such a project.

Harolds Square also proposes to add a much needed childcare facility in its new space, to serve the needs of the community.

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**23. WALK-IN HEALTH CLINIC**

Diversify or Expand: Diversify  
Problem(s) addressed: Lack of Downtown primary health care service  
New Jobs: up to 10  
Investment total: $3,000,000  
Public/Private: Private  
Amenity contribution: Downtown primary medical services  
Sustainability contribution: Building to be included in sustainability program  
Partners: Ithaca College Physician's Assistant Training Program  
Likely DRI funding ask: $1,200,000

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

Earlier this summer, Ithaca College opened the doors to its newest educational program strategically located in Downtown Ithaca – its Physician's Assistant (PA) Training Program. Each year a class of 30 students is enrolled into the two-year program to be trained to become PAs. These graduates will help the region with its chronic lack of primary care providers.

While the program is underway, a lack of funding prevented the creation of the planned walk-in health clinic. This clinic will provide on-site training opportunities for students and provide our Downtown community with badly needed walk-in primary care. Such an amenity would help serve our new Downtown residents, our Downtown workers, and on occasion, visitors and guests. DRI funds could help bridge the fund gap that currently exists with this critical project.
SECTION 8: 

ADMINISTRATIVE CAPACITY

A TEAM APPROACH

Our 2021 DRI planning committee will form the basis for a DRI local planning committee (LPC). Core partners for this effort will be The City of Ithaca, led by its Department of Planning and Development; Ithaca Urban Renewal Agency, Ithaca Area Economic Development, and the Downtown Ithaca Alliance.

JoAnn Cornish  
City of Ithaca, Director of Planning & Development

Tom Knipe  
City of Ithaca, Director of Economic Development

Nels Bohn  
Ithaca Urban Renewal Agency, Executive Director

Heather McDaniel  
Ithaca Area Economic Development, President

Kurt Anderson  
Ithaca Area Economic Development, Director of Development & Strategy

Gary Ferguson  
Downtown Ithaca Alliance, Executive Director

Darlene Wilber  
Downtown Ithaca Alliance, Communications & Grants Development Director

Allison Graffin  
Downtown Ithaca Alliance, Director of Marketing

CITY OF ITHACA

The City of Ithaca will serve as the lead entity for developing and implementing the DRI plan and overall grant administration.

The City team is led by Mayor Svante Myrick, Director of Planning and Development JoAnn Cornish, Ithaca Urban Renewal Agency Executive Director Nels Bohn, and Deputy Director for Economic Development Tom Knipe. Other City staff who will play key roles in implementing a DRI program include: Senior Economic Development Planner Jennifer Kusznir, Superintendent of Public Works Michael Thorne, City Engineer Tim Logue, and City Clerk/Public Information Officer Julie Holcomb.

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

The City of Ithaca Department of Planning and Development has experience planning for and managing grants of varying sizes and complexities, including the large $15 million Ithaca Commons rebuild project, Restore NY grants, and CDBG funded programs (through the IURA).
Currently, the City Planning & Development Department oversees a DEC Climate Smart Communities grant devoted to Transportation Demand Management, a Local Waterfront Revitalization Program Grant for the Ithaca Farmers Market, and partners with the Downtown Ithaca Local Development Corporation in supporting the administration of the $5 million ESD incentive for the Ithaca Downtown Conference Center project. Robust fiscal oversight systems through the City Controller’s office are in place to ensure funds are accounted for and appropriately managed.

The City also has the capacity to work with developers, landlords, businesses, and organizations on the various projects that will be part of a DRI Implementation Plan. The City routinely works with the private sector and not-for-profit sector parties on various initiatives and can be an effective facilitator and convener.

**DOWNTOWN ITHACA ALLIANCE**

The Downtown Ithaca Alliance (DIA) will also serve as a key partner in the DIA planning and implementation process. Created in 1997, the DIA serves as the formal business improvement district for 22 blocks of downtown. The organization has technical capabilities in development facilitation, business retention and recruitment, transportation planning, marketing, downtown operations and management, and special events.

The DIA is governed by a 27-member board of directors representing a broad cross-section of stakeholder interests in downtown. Elections are contested as downtown property owners, businesses, and residents seek to help shape the future of Downtown. The DIA itself has extensive history and experience in grant administration and facilitation. The organization has received multiple New York Main Street awards and is also the contractor implementing a DEC Climate Smart Communities grant in conjunction with the City.

**ITHACA AREA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (IAED)**

Rounding out the oversight team will be representatives from IAED, our County’s economic development organization. IAED is the County Industrial Development Agency (IDA) administrator and has extensive background and expertise in grant management and facilitation. IAED has helped champion the CIITAP tax incentive program that has been so essential for downtown projects. Heather McDaniel serves as TCAD President and will be closely working with the DRI implementation process.

**KEY STAKEHOLDER PARTNERS AND LINKING THE DRI AND RECENT SHARED EFFORTS**

Several recent shared efforts also enhance Ithaca’s local capacity for the development and implementation of a DRI plan.

First, The City and DIA are currently working collaboratively on creating a neighborhood plan for Downtown that is part of the City’s comprehensive plan, Plan Ithaca. This plan is nearing completion and provides a great platform for identifying shared community priorities for downtown.

Second, the partners in this DRI proposal also recently worked closely together with IAED on the creation of a county-wide Economic Recovery Strategy (published June 2021) which includes several actions supporting downtown recovery from the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Finally, ongoing local pandemic economic response and recovery efforts since March 2020 have led to even greater collaboration between economic development service providers in the area, including the core team for this application and also the Alliance for Manufacturing and Technology, and the Binghamton Small Business Development Center. This inter-agency team has met regularly and frequently since the beginning of the pandemic, and many high-impact initiatives have been the result. Now more than ever before, collaboration and a team approach are a key attribute of the local practice of economic development. This capacity for collaboration will be leveraged for the DRI to lead to stronger implementation, easier identification of shared priorities, more efficiency, and greater impact.
### A. Letters of Support

The following letters of support are attached:

1. Mayor Svante Myrick
2. Joann Cornish
3. Anna Kelles
4. Ducson Nguyen
5. Lisa Holmes
6. Leslyn McBean Clairborne
7. Peggy Coleman
8. Nick Helmholdt
9. Fernando de Aragon
10. Scot Vanderpool
11. Jennifer Tavares
12. Megan Barber
13. Gary Stewart & Susan Riley
14. Tom Schryver & Ken Rother
15. La Jerne Terry Cornish
16. DR. Susan Salahshor
17. Teri Tarshus
18. David Lubin
19. Brett Bossard
20. Seth Adams
21. Lisa Swayze
22. Emily Petrina
23. John Fracchia
September 7, 2021

Robert Sweet, Regional Director
Southern Tier Regional Office
Empire State Development
44 Hawley Street, Rm. 1508
Binghamton, NY 13901

Dear Mr. Sweet:

I am writing to you on behalf of the City of Ithaca to express my enthusiastic support of the Downtown Ithaca Alliance and City of Ithaca’s application for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative grant program.

The 24 proposed projects in this year’s application will collectively have a transformational impact on the economy and viability of downtown Ithaca. These projects will create new jobs, build additional housing, improve mobility and accessibility, and attract more people downtown, thus encouraging more businesses to come here and helping existing businesses to grow. These projects will also improve connections to surrounding neighborhoods and enhance our urban landscape.

The DRI funding can provide Ithaca with the critical infrastructure and backbone needed for private investment to step forward and flourish. The DRI can help Ithaca serve the region as an employment center, an arts and entertainment center, and a learning and technology transfer center. This funding is an excellent opportunity for us to build on and strengthen our existing foundation.

Through our publicly supported local policies and shared eagerness for succeeding, we are a community that is truly ready to use DRI funds to create a diversified, expanded, and transformed downtown that will benefit the Southern Tier and beyond.

I strongly support this application and suggest that Ithaca is the best place in the Southern Tier Region to make this important grant investment. If I can be of further assistance, please don’t hesitate to contact me by phone at 607-274-6501 or email at mayormyrick@cityofithaca.org

Sincerely,

Svante L. Myrick
Mayor

"An Equal Opportunity Employer with a commitment to workforce diversification."
September 13, 2021

Mr. Robert Sweet  
Regional Director  
Southern Tier Regional Office  
Empire State Development  
44 Hawley Street, Rm. 1508  
Binghamton, NY 13901

Dear Mr. Sweet,

I take this opportunity to write on behalf of the City of Ithaca Department of Planning and Development to offer our strong support for the Downtown Ithaca Alliance’s application to the Downtown Revitalization Initiative Grant program.

As the Director of Planning and Development and as a lifelong resident of the City of Ithaca, I have been committed to our city’s revitalization efforts for nearly 30 years. Unlike other upstate areas in New York, Ithaca has continued to see a significant increase in major development projects. We continue to see numerous large construction projects in the core of the city.

Recognizing how fortunate we are, we also realize it is not enough just to construct buildings. The need to curate Ithaca as a place that will be a magnet for people and business must be ongoing. Ithaca is on the precipice of becoming one of the premier upstate economic engines through quality, affordable housing options, employment, innovative business opportunities, education, and tourism. A successful bid for a DRI grant will catapult Ithaca into the forefront of the upstate economy and result in a win for the entire Southern Tier Region.

The City of Ithaca is known as a place of great natural beauty, rich heritage, diverse and vibrant community life, small-city character, and steadfast pursuit of social equity, physical accessibility, livability, and environmental sustainability. With an increasingly older population, nearly 30,000 college and university students, and one of the top school districts in the country, we are seeking to attract retirees, homegrown, and graduating millennials, to our Downtown. While thousands of people are drawn to our walkable environment, to its shopping, dining, and entertainment, and the convenient public transit that connects Downtown to other key employment centers (such as Cornell, Ithaca College, and Cayuga Medical Center) each year, we are confident, with the DRI funding assistance for our projects, many more will choose our community as a place to live, work and visit.
Thank you for your consideration.

JoAnn Cornish

JoAnn Cornish
Director of Planning and Development
City of Ithaca
108 East Green Street
Ithaca, NY 14850
September 8, 2021

Robert Sweet, Regional Director
Southern Tier Regional Office
Empire State Development
44 Hawley Street, Rm. 1508
Binghamton, NY 13901

Re: Downtown Ithaca Alliance and City of Ithaca’s application for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative grant program.

Dear Mr. Sweet:

I am writing to express my strong and enthusiastic support for the Downtown Ithaca Alliance and City of Ithaca’s application for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative grant program. This project will provide a significant boost to Downtown Ithaca by fueling economic growth and building infrastructure that will transform and support the diversification of our community.

The city is a tourism draw in the Southern Tier and is a launching point for countless visitors each year that do day trips to areas throughout the region. Investments in Ithaca, thus bring economic prosperity to the entire area. However, Ithaca, and the downtown area in particular, has struggled for many years to support and maintain a strong daytime and nighttime diverse economy.

The City of Ithaca and the Downtown Ithaca Alliance DRI application showcases a clear forward-thinking vision to unite the downtown commercial zone with other critical city sites like the west end and Emerson property. This DRI proposal will build stability into the community by diversifying beyond an education-dependent economy. By absorbing vacant office and retail space, the city will create accessible spaces for our growing tech sector and offer a centralized hub for small businesses highlighting the city as a tourist destination and economic hub for the region. Through this DRI grant, the city will create new jobs, build additional housing, and improve mobility and accessibility connecting the community in which people can live, work, and visit. Crucially, this project will also contribute to our sustainability goals here in New York. Simply, the city has substantial unrealized potential that could benefit the entire region but cannot be realized without State support.

Thank you for considering the Downtown Ithaca Alliance and City of Ithaca’s application, which I know will serve the needs of my constituents in the 125th District. I strongly support this application and suggest that Ithaca is the best place in the Southern Tier to leverage this important grant investment and promote needed regional economic development to help us recover from this protracted period of economic recession due to the pandemic.
If I can be of further assistance, please don’t hesitate to reach out.

Most Sincerely,

Anna Kelles, Ph.D.
Member of Assembly
125th District
Dear Mr. Sweet,

I’m writing you as a member of the City of Ithaca’s Common Council that represents Downtown Ithaca and I enthusiastically support the Downtown Ithaca Alliance and City of Ithaca’s application for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative grant program.

There is no place in the Southern Tier where the impact of every dollar invested is greater than in the City of Ithaca. The areas of focus detailed in the application are primed for growth from both tourism and a growing population, but additional investments are required to realize their maximum potential.

Long underutilized, we have an opportunity to leverage Downtown Revitalization Initiative grant funds to transform a city corridor into a vibrant and innovative economic driver of jobs and sustainability. Transportation improvements will make it easier for visitors to access these resources and contribute to our economy. The return on investment in Ithaca is unparalleled in the Southern Tier.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Ducson Nguyen
City of Ithaca Ward 2 Alderperson
September 7, 2021

Robert Sweet, Regional Director
Southern Tier Regional Office
Empire State Development
44 Hawley Street, Rm. 1508
Binghamton, NY 13901

Dear Mr. Sweet,

I am writing to you on behalf of Tompkins County to express my enthusiastic support of the Downtown Ithaca Alliance and City of Ithaca’s application for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative grant program.

The City of Ithaca is the County seat for Tompkins. Our municipal government supports human services, public safety, workforce, housing and economic development, and important community agencies and services – all of which are deeply connected to the City of Ithaca. In particular, I am pleased that the plans outlined in this application serve to further connect our communities. Downtown Ithaca has always served as a hub, seated at the geographic and cultural center of our County. Improved access and connections will further enhance the work we do in service to all Tompkins County residents.

Tompkins County is committed to downtown Ithaca and offers our full support for this application. This application reflects strategic and critical investments that will revitalize areas at the heart of our community. The plans to build a diversified community, invest in infrastructure, further beautify and make areas more welcoming, and support our community members most in need with housing and access to services will prove to be a boon for the success of our entire area. I see this as an investment in our entire County.

I am in strong support this application. Downtown Ithaca is the best place in the Southern Tier Region to leverage this investment to make transformative and people-centered change.

If I can be of further assistance, please don’t hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely,

Lisa A. Holmes
Interim County Administrator
September 9, 2021

Robert Sweet, Regional Director
Southern Tier Regional Office
Empire State Development
44 Hawley Street, Rm. 1508
Binghamton, NY 13901

Dear Mr. Sweet,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Tompkins County Legislature to express our sincere support of the Downtown Ithaca Alliance and City of Ithaca’s application for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative grant program through Empire State Development.

Here at Tompkins County, we are committed to doing all that we can to help our communities thrive. Our county government serves just over 100,000 Tompkins County residents, one-third of whom reside in the City of Ithaca, located at the heart of our County. The City of Ithaca, and specifically downtown and the West Martin Luther King Jr. Street corridor, house various County offices and buildings that serve the public. Hundreds of Tompkins County employees work in downtown Ithaca.

The goal of making Downtown more equitable, affordable, user-friendly, accessible, and beautiful is at the core of this proposal. Choosing downtown Ithaca to receive DRI funding will unlock millions of additional private investment dollars and will help to catalyze these dozens of transformative projects. The Downtown Ithaca Alliance and the City of Ithaca have a proven record of developing thoughtful plans that serve our community well.

We are in full support of this application and believe that choosing Ithaca would have the most impact in the Southern Tier Region.

If I can be of further assistance, please don’t hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely,

Leslyn McBean-Clairborne
Chairwoman, Tompkins County Legislature
lmcbean@tompkins-co.org
September 7, 2021

Robert Sweet, Regional Director
Southern Tier Regional Office
Empire State Development
44 Hawley Street, Rm. 1508
Binghamton, NY 13901

Dear Mr. Sweet:

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support of the Downtown Ithaca Alliance and City of Ithaca’s application for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative grant program.

Visit Ithaca is the official destination marketing organization for Tompkins County, representing and promoting. Tourism is a critical economic engine for Tompkins County and the entire Southern Tier region. We work to provide authentic and memorable experiences that engage people to visit. Quite often, repeat visitors become residents. They love the destination so much that they look to move themselves and their businesses to the region.

The application submitted by the Downtown Ithaca Alliance and City of Ithaca will provide additional reasons for guests to visit. The last eighteen months have demonstrated that many people want to leave congested areas and move to more open spaces. Increased Wi-Fi capacity and co-working spaces will allow for visitors to not only vacation here, but also to work remotely here. The proposed transportation center will create a safer environment to welcome guests as well as a safer experience for our regional residents who commute to work.

I strongly support this application and believe that Ithaca is the best place in the Southern Tier region to make this important grant investment.

Sincerely,

Peggy Coleman
VP Tourism, CVB Director
Peggy@VisitIthaca.com
September 3, 2021

Robert Sweet, Regional Director
Southern Tier Regional Office
Empire State Development
44 Hawley Street, Rm. 1508
Binghamton, NY 13901

Dear Mr. Sweet,

The Tompkins County Tourism Program strongly supports the City of Ithaca’s application for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative grant program.

Ithaca is a very livable community, unique in its ties with higher-education and abundance of natural beauty and recreational opportunities. As the County seat, Ithaca is an integral component of efforts to position Tompkins County as a premier place to live, work, and visit. The Tompkins County Tourism Program specifically supports efforts to enhance downtown Ithaca as it is the center of the county’s hospitality and leisure sector and a primary attraction for visitors.

The vision outlined in the DRI proposal will expand our downtown area for future growth and accelerate efforts to diversify our economy and community. The DRI will provide funds to help the City create an expanded infrastructure backbone that will be able to meet the needs of new growth and development for years to come.

This proposal aligns well with the principles and policies outlined in the Tompkins County Comprehensive Plan, most significantly, that “Tompkins County should be a place where new development is focused in compact, walkable, mixed-use communities” and “where economic prosperity is accessible to all.” It also furthers the goals of the Cleaner Greener Southern Tier Regional Sustainability Plan, including to “strengthen and revitalize existing cities, villages, and hamlets” and the related priority action to “encourage development and strategic investment in cities, villages, and hamlets.”

In addition, there is a strong sense of collaboration and cooperation within Tompkins County that sets us apart, with public, not for profit and private interests all working cooperatively to bring projects to fruition. Having State funds available to our community to re-imagine and revitalize Ithaca would be a very strong investment in the future of Ithaca and the Southern Tier region of New York State. For these reasons, I urge you to please give this proposal your full consideration and support.

Sincerely,

Nick Helmholdt, AICP
Principal Planner / Tourism Program Director

CC: Kelli Cartmill, Chair of Strategic Tourism Planning Board
August 24, 2021

Robert Sweet, Regional Director
Southern Tier Regional Office
Empire State Development
44 Hawley Street, Rm. 1508
Binghamton, NY 13901

Dear Mr. Sweet,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Ithaca-Tompkins County Transportation Council (ITCTC) to express my enthusiastic support of the Downtown Ithaca Alliance and City of Ithaca’s application for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative grant program.

The ITCTC in the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Ithaca Urban Area. Our planning area encompasses all of Tompkins County. The ITCTC plans and programs for the use of federal surface transportation funds implementing a collaborative process with multiple community partners.

The proposed Downtown Revitalization Initiative request supports many of the goals and objectives in the ITCTC’s 20-year Long Range Transportation Plan - https://www2.tompkinscountyny.gov/itctc/lrtp. This document recognizes the importance of downtown Ithaca as a cultural and economic engine for, not only Tompkins County but for our larger multi-county region. Downtown Ithaca and the adjacent Cornell University form the largest employment center in the region. As a result, Tompkins County employs over 15,000 workers from neighboring counties including >700 from Broome; >1,300 from Chemung; >1,700 from Schuyler; and >3,000 from Tioga. The proposed Downtown Revitalization Initiative will help protect and maintain the heart of this economic engine, critical to the livelihood of thousands of Southern Tier families.

I strongly support this application. The positive outcomes in Ithaca and Tompkins County over the last 20 years should not be taken for granted, nor expected to continue without reinvestment. Right now, Ithaca is the best place in the Southern Tier Region to make this important grant investment.

If I can be of further assistance, please don’t hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

[Signature]
Policy Committee:
Meloney McMurry, Chair
Don Hartill, Vice Chair
David Smith, Secretary

Executive Director:
Fernando de Aragón

Planning Committee:
Tim Logue, Chair
Ray Burger, Vice Chair

Fernando de Aragón, Ph.D., Staff Director
Ithaca-Tompkins County Transportation Council
Dear Mr. Sweet,

On behalf of Tompkins Consolidated Area Transit, Inc. (TCAT), I whole-heartedly support the Downtown Ithaca Alliance (DIA) application to the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) Grant program.

At one time, TCAT was named the best small city transit agency in North America, serving a county with three colleges and a population of approximately 104,000 with an annual ridership of about 4 million trips. We have a high-frequency route that connects Downtown with Cornell University, providing 10-minute service between downtown Ithaca and upstate New York's largest employer. Today, TCAT is working steadily to recover from the effects of the pandemic and are eager to rebuild ridership and see new City plans come to fruition.

The DIA has assembled 24 different projects that collectively will result in a strengthened and diversified economy and viability for downtown Ithaca. These projects focus on economic growth and diversification, transformational infrastructure, and downtown amenities that will encourage more people to live, work and play in Ithaca. We believe exciting projects like a BIPOC small business support program, a transportation center/intercity bus depot, more affordable housing within the city, and Free WiFi for the downtown community, will position TCAT's major hub, downtown Ithaca, as a dynamic and sustainable regional center.

TCAT and the DIA are actively engaged in transportation demand management (TDM) efforts to alleviate the need for additional parking and to help meet energy saving and carbon reduction goals. Specifically, to reduce single-occupancy vehicles in exchange for more efficient modes of travel, as evidenced by projects such as the downtown pedestrian and vehicular wayfinding program, a downtown transit circulator, or an on-demand transit program. I strongly support the DIA application, and believe Ithaca is the best place to leverage this important grant investment in the Southern Tier.

Best Regards,

Scot Vanderpool
General Manager
September 7, 2021

Robert Sweet, Regional Director
Southern Tier Regional Office
Empire State Development
44 Hawley Street, Rm. 1508
Binghamton, NY 13901

Dear Mr. Sweet,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Tompkins County Chamber of Commerce to express my enthusiastic support of the Downtown Ithaca Alliance and City of Ithaca’s application for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative grant program.

The Tompkins Chamber has long partnered with the City of Ithaca and Downtown Ithaca Alliance to pursue investments in projects and community initiatives which will improve our quality of life and create shared economic prosperity for our community and region. Through these partnerships and many others, we’ve attained consistent growth in investment and jobs, enhanced our infrastructure, improved transportation access, and added amenities such as the Cayuga Waterfront Trail. But we have much more work to do and require state investment to accomplish the next phase of our plans, as well as a sustainable economic recovery.

We understand that the need across the Southern Tier is great, and you are likely once again looking at a group of very deserving applicants. As a growing city in upstate New York, however, Ithaca needs significant investment in our infrastructure to support continued growth; we have an opportunity to attract and retain workforce and residents to the area that should be captured; a renewed need to diversify our local economy; and desire to continue in our role as a major economic driver for the region.

I strongly support this application and would suggest once again that Ithaca is the best place in the Southern Tier Region to make this important grant investment. As an economic developer; as Chamber President; with many other hats I wear regularly—I can tell you that while Ithaca has had many successes and seems well-positioned for growth, we also need support from New York State in order to capture and maximize our growth opportunities to the benefit of the entire Southern Tier Region.

If I can be of further assistance, please don’t hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Tavares, CEdC
President & CEO

904 East Shore Drive • Ithaca, NY 14850
Phone: (607) 273-7080 • Fax:(607) 272-7617
tompkinschamber.org
August 27, 2021

Robert Sweet, Regional Director  
Southern Tier Regional Office  
Empire State Development  
44 Hawley Street, Rm. 1508  
Binghamton, NY 13901

Dear Mr. Sweet,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Community Arts Partnership of Tompkins County to express my enthusiastic support of the Downtown Ithaca Alliance and City of Ithaca’s application for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative grant program.

The Community Arts Partnership strengthens the arts in Tompkins County by providing services and resources for artists and arts groups, and leads collaboration among the arts, government, education, business, and the community at large. We do this by connecting artists and audiences, funding the arts, and helping artists make a life here.

We are very excited about this application because of its emphasis on making downtown a place that people want to both live and work. The emphasis on tech as a business development focus area makes sense in our community and we expect that the influx of workers and entrepreneurs and their families will jumpstart the creative economy. We are excited to lend our support to the place making efforts, connecting local artists to public art opportunities generated by this proposal.

I strongly support this application, and again suggest that Ithaca is the best place in the Southern Tier Region to make this important grant investment.

If I can be of further assistance, please don’t hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely,

Megan Barber
Executive Director
director@artspartner.org
607.273.5072
September 8, 2021

Robert Sweet, Regional Director
Southern Tier Regional Office
Empire State Development
44 Hawley Street, Rm. 1508
Binghamton, NY 13901

Dear Mr. Sweet,

We are writing to you on behalf of Cornell University Community Relations to express our support of the Downtown Ithaca Alliance and City of Ithaca’s application for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative grant program.

As active board members with the Tompkins County Chamber of Commerce, and the Downtown Ithaca Alliance, our office has always been engaged in the health and well-being of downtown’s present and future.

Cornell University has been an enthusiastic partner of downtown revitalization here in Ithaca, believing that a strong and vibrant city center benefits both Cornell University and our entire greater Ithaca community. Over the years we have invested in a landmark redevelopment project, Seneca Place, which served as a catalyst for much of the subsequent new development that has emerged here in Ithaca. We likewise invested in REV, our community’s downtown business incubator program, which has been an important economic development engine for the region.
Downtown Ithaca reflects the increasing diversity of Cornell and Ithaca, where students, staff, and faculty from 70 nations make their home, on campus, and in town, with downtown at the center.

Our great university would not prosper if downtown Ithaca wasn’t vibrant and progressive, and as is the case on both East Hill, and downtown, there will always be shared challenges and opportunities. We are proud that Downtown Ithaca and all its diverse components are essential partners.

We strongly support this application and suggest that Ithaca is the best place in the Southern Tier Region to make this important grant investment.

If we can be of further assistance, please don’t hesitate to contact us.

Cordially,

Gary Stewart
Gary Stewart
Associate Vice President, Cornell University Relations

Susan Riley
Susan Riley
Deputy Director, Cornell Community Relations
Board member, Downtown Ithaca Alliance and Tompkins County Chamber of Commerce
September 10, 2021

Robert Sweet, Regional Director
Southern Tier Regional Office
Empire State Development
44 Hawley Street Rm. 1508
Binghamton, NY 13901

Dear Mr. Sweet,

I am writing on behalf of Rev: Ithaca Startup Works to offer our support for the application of Downtown Ithaca to the Downtown Revitalization Initiative Grant program.

Rev: Ithaca Startup Works is a partnership between Cornell University, Ithaca College, and Tompkins Cortland Community College. When planning the incubator, we deliberately chose a site in the heart of downtown Ithaca – our home. We are committed to helping grow the economy of the area and region, and rooting ourselves in downtown is a critical part of helping support a vibrant and thriving economy. Our experience working with startups has shown that the attractiveness and livability of Ithaca play a critical role in their choosing to locate their business and remain in the region.

By providing Downtown Revitalization Initiative funding to downtown Ithaca, New York state can help Ithaca become a beacon for innovation and quality of life, drawing visitors from around the United States and beyond, and attracting them to all that upstate New York has to offer. I hope that you will recommend this proposal for support.

Sincerely,

Ken Rother
Director

Tom Schryver
Executive Director
September 8, 2021

Robert Sweet, Regional Director
Southern Tier Regional Office
Empire State Development
44 Hawley Street, Rm. 1508
Binghamton, NY 13901

Dear Mr. Sweet,

I write to express my enthusiastic support of the Downtown Ithaca Alliance and City of Ithaca’s application for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative grant program.

Ithaca College was founded in 1892 by a violinist with a big vision. Originally the Ithaca Conservatory of Music, the college now serves a diverse student body providing a liberal arts education fused with our professional programs of excellence. At our core, we are an institution driven by the creation of a learning environment that seeks to continually evolve and transform itself and our surrounding community.

Our vision is to be a global destination for bold thinkers seeking to build thriving communities. This vision guides our strategic plan and is fully aligned with and will benefit from the Downtown Revitalization Initiative proposed by the Downtown Ithaca Alliance. This grant investment places the economic growth and diversification of our community at the center while transforming our area’s infrastructure.

I strongly support this application and believe that Ithaca is the best place in the Southern Tier Region to leverage this important grant investment. This initiative will no doubt encourage more people to live, work and learn here.

If I can be of further assistance, please don’t hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely,

La Jerne Terry Cornish, Ph.D.
Interim President
September 2, 2021

Robert Sweet, Regional Director
Southern Tier Regional Office
Empire State Development
44 Hawley Street, Rm. 1508
Binghamton, NY 13901

Dear Mr. Sweet,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Ithaca College Physician Assistant (PA) Program to express my enthusiastic support of the Downtown Ithaca Alliance and the City of Ithaca’s application for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative grant program.

Ithaca College PA Program is a medical education program whose mission is to educate, engage, and empower PAs to achieve excellence through medical theory, clinical practice, and exemplary professional performance in the communities we serve. Our PA Program is focused on population and community health, behavioral and mental health, and rural primary care. Our program will provide medical care to those in need in the Ithaca community and the Southern Tier.

The PA Program recruited a diverse class of PA students in its first class. We have 23 students who identify as female and 7 students who identify as male. Of these 30 students, 7 are Asian American, 7 are African American/Black and the rest are White. Therefore, we seek to stimulate the growth of businesses that reflect our class now and into the next 10 to 15 years. Our students have shared that there are opportunities to keep them in the area if there is additional business focused on BIPOC. The average PA salary is ~$95,000.00 and if we can retain these students after graduation, it would increase diversity in the region. We support the project because one of our areas of focus is to encourage people to live and work in the region. In addition, we have built space to have a health clinic to serve the community and its visitors in our instructional site in Downtown Ithaca.

I strongly support this application, and again suggest that Ithaca is the best place in the Southern Tier Region to make this important grant investment.

If I can be of further assistance, please don’t hesitate to be in contact.

Sincerely,

Susan Salahshor

Susan M. Salahshor, Ph.D., PA-C, DFAAPA
Assistant Professor and Founding Program Director
ssalahshor@ithaca.edu
607-274-1936
August 25, 2021

Robert Sweet, Regional Director
Southern Tier Regional Office
Empire State Development
44 Hawley Street, Rm. 1508
Binghamton, NY 13901

Dear Mr. Sweet,

I am writing to you on behalf of Seneca Place on The Commons and The Hilton Garden Inn-Downtown Ithaca, to express my enthusiastic support of the Downtown Ithaca Alliance and City of Ithaca’s application for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative grant program.

Seneca Place on The Commons is a multi-use building located in downtown Ithaca and home to not only the Hilton Garden Inn but also, several area businesses, two restaurants, Starbucks and Cornell Alumni Affairs and Development. Our original build project helped kick off the downtown Ithaca development growth our community has been fortunate to see over the past 15 plus years.

I strongly support the DIA’s efforts for this grant, I believe in the continued growth of Ithaca as a community and a city with a vision for more connectivity to our Urban Core, the greater city areas and the county as a whole. Again, I suggest that Ithaca is the best place in the Southern Tier Region to make this important grant investment.

If I can be of further assistance, please don’t hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely,

Teri Tarsus, CHA
Director of Property Management
ttarshus@emeraldhospitality.com
607-375-6490
September 9, 2021

Robert Sweet, Regional Director
Southern Tier Regional Office
Empire State Development
44 Hawley Street, Rm. 1508
Binghamton, NY 13901

Dear Mr. Sweet,

I am writing on behalf of L. Enterprises to express my support of the Downtown Ithaca Alliance and City of Ithaca’s application for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative grant program.

L. Enterprises, in partnership with McGuire Development, developed the Harold’s Square building on the Ithaca Commons, completed in 2021. The mixed-use building has 78 units of housing, four floors of office space, and one floor of retail.

L. Enterprises, under Unchained Properties, LLC., is also the developer of the Chain Works District, located at the former Emerson Power Transmission site, slated to begin in 2022. The 95-acre 1.7 million square foot project will be developed into a mixed-use neighborhood that will provide jobs and growth in the area, including space for manufacturing and technology uses.

Ithaca’s economy has been greatly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. With stalled tourism, construction shutdowns, and educational institutions going remote, the area has suffered significant losses. The DRI funding will help to support growth and innovation and assist with recovery.

Ithaca’s ability to leverage funds to produce greater impact makes this application a solid choice for funding in the Southern Tier Region, and I support it wholeheartedly.

If I can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to call or email. I can be reached at lubin2@ver.com or (607) 738-3826.

Sincerely,

David Lubin
Managing Partner
L. Enterprises

225 COLONIAL DRIVE, HORSEHEADS, NY 14845 (607) 739-3826
August 17, 2021

Robert Sweet, Regional Director
Southern Tier Regional Office
Empire State Development
44 Hawley Street, Rm. 1508
Binghamton, NY 13901

Dear Mr Sweet:

I am extremely pleased to express my support for the DRI application being submitted by the Downtown Ithaca Alliance. We operate a five-screen art house cinema adjacent to the Ithaca Commons pedestrian mall. Businesses like ours depend on a thriving downtown environment with active pedestrian traffic. The plans set out in the Ithaca DRI application will grow that foot traffic, creating exciting new opportunities for business development and cultural growth.

As a business operator in Ithaca’s urban core, I can attest that our downtown is poised to be a model for the next generation of upstate communities — a walkable destination with abundant housing opportunities and easy access to shopping, dining, entertainment, and services. With the DRI award support, Ithaca has the opportunity to create a dynamic downtown that will attract new businesses and tourists. Plus, the proposed projects will help retain current residents looking to retire in a vibrant arts and culture hub.

I’m thrilled to be part of the downtown Ithaca envisioned in the proposal, and I look forward to seeing this award be used to leverage the private investment that will transform our community into a sustainable year-round downtown. Should you need any further information or words of support, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Brett Bossard, Cinemapolis Executive Director
September 2, 2021

Robert Sweet, Regional Director
Southern Tier Regional Office
Empire State Development
44 Hawley Street, Rm. 1508
Binghamton, NY 13901

Dear Mr Sweet,

As Managing Member of Warner’s Way Real Property Services LLC, I am writing to you on behalf of our company to express my sincere and enthusiastic support of the Downtown Ithaca Alliance and City of Ithaca’s application for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative grant program.

“Warner’s Way” specializes in investment and management of mixed/adaptive re-use development projects of historically designated properties in city centers in the region; among them Ithaca, Corning and Elmira.

As a native of Western New York and having built businesses in North Texas for 35 years, my wife and I “came home” to the Ithaca area in 2007 for its tremendous education-driven dynamism, the region’s existing infrastructure and enormous stock of city center historic buildings —begging for rehabilitation. It has been our work since, to do our part in investing and re-building these beautiful cities and towns for future generations to love. Without question, a transportation-driven DRI program would be the key to unlocking the full potential of Ithaca from a regional notable to world-class hub --connecting the I-90 corridor to NYC and beyond. From decades of participating in and witnessing the visionary public supported interplay of regional synergies, I can think of no other upstate city that has a greater potential to unlock the gates of major investments to the region—than a strong, thriving, growing and connected —Ithaca, New York.

If I can be of further assistance, please don’t hesitate to reach out to me at any time.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Seth J. Adams, Managing Member
Warner’s Way Real Property Services LLC
817.313.5929 * seth@warnersway.com
September 2, 2021

Robert Sweet, Regional Director
Southern Tier Regional Office
Empire State Development
44 Hawley Street, Rm. 1508
Binghamton, NY 13901

Dear Mr Sweet,

I am writing to you on behalf of Buffalo Street Books to express my enthusiastic support of the Downtown Ithaca Alliance and City of Ithaca’s application for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative grant program.

Buffalo Street Books is celebrating 10 years of being Ithaca’s community-owned independent bookstore, but like many small businesses and especially independent bookstores, it’s a struggle to survive. Independent bookstores at their best make less than 2% profit, and yet we are the heart of our communities, offering literacy programming and support to local schools and nonprofit organizations, along with selling books.

I believe some of the efforts in the Downtown Revitalization Initiative grant program proposal are critical to the ongoing success of businesses like Buffalo Street Books. We are in an older part of town in the Dewitt Historic district and the Dewitt Building. All of the small businesses in my neighborhood are struggling to connect to the rest of our downtown and bring traffic in, and the DRI grant initiative would help us greatly. In particular, we will benefit from initiatives that help connect disparate parts of our city, especially as that relates to tourism. It’s also critical to my business’s success that more jobs come downtown to bring more shoppers for our retail ventures.

I strongly support this application, and again suggest that Ithaca is the best place in the Southern Tier Region to make this important grant investment.

If I can be of further assistance, please don’t hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely,

Lisa Swayze
General Manager
lisa@buffalostreetbooks.com
607-273-8246
September 3, 2021

Robert Sweet, Regional Director
Southern Tier Regional Office
Empire State Development
44 Hawley Street, Rm. 1508
Binghamton, NY 13901

Dear Mr Sweet,

I am writing to you on behalf of Firehouse Architecture LAB to express my enthusiastic support of the Downtown Ithaca Alliance and City of Ithaca’s application for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative grant program.

Firehouse Architecture LAB is a woman-owned contemporary architecture firm founded in 2014. Our focus is on residential and small commercial projects in the Ithaca and Finger Lakes region, encompassing ground-up designs, renovations, and advisory work. The firm name was inspired by its physical location (a renovated historic firehouse) and a passion for integrating unique and modern design aesthetics and materials.

We choose to offer support for the DIA and the City of Ithaca’s application because we believe that Ithaca has the opportunity to be the hub of the Finger Lakes Region, and indeed one of the great cities of Upstate New York. Ithaca is currently experiencing unprecedented growth, and this is the time to implement the DIA’s strategies toward enhanced transportation, safer nightlife solutions, and a more strategic approach to tourism.

I strongly support this application, and again suggest that Ithaca is the best place in the Southern Tier Region to make this important grant investment.

Sincerely,

Emily M. Petrina, RA LEED AP BD+C
Owner / Architect
Firehouse Architecture Lab, PLLC
136 W State Street
Ithaca, NY 14850
607.592.9385
September 14, 2021

Robert Sweet, Regional Director
Southern Tier Regional Office
Empire State Development
44 Hawley Street, Rm. 1508
Binghamton, NY 13901

Dear Mr. Sweet,

I am writing to you on behalf of One World Market, Inc. to express my enthusiastic support of the Downtown Ithaca Alliance and City of Ithaca’s application for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative grant program.

For over twenty years, One World Market, has operated a fair trade retail store on the downtown Ithaca Commons. As a 501(c)3 non-profit organization, our work provides artisans from all over the world with a fair and living wage. As a living wage employer in Tompkins County, we bring this same ethos to our home community. We believe in being good stewards of resources and civically minded in our engagement within our community. We support this grant because it is consistent with these values.

With the Ithaca Commons serving as a strong foundation for a thriving downtown community, a DRI grant will help in several key areas. These could include building more environmentally focused transportation options such as electric busses and bicycles, infusing smaller entrepreneurial businesses and maker spaces with traditional retail spaces, addressing issues of downtown housing affordability, and increasing public access to free or low cost broadband technologies. All of these possibilities will lead to a more sustainable and, moreover, equitable community.

On behalf of the One World Market board, I urge you to support the grant application of the Downtown Ithaca Alliance and the City of Ithaca. Additionally, as an elected official in an Ithaca adjacent community, the Town of Caroline, I believe that Ithaca is the best place in the Southern Tier Region to make this investment in order to achieve the goals that this grant seeks to facilitate.

If I can be of further assistance, please don’t hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely,

John Fracchia
President, One World Market, Inc.
jfracchia@frontiernet.net
(607) 539-3095
B. SUPPORTING STUDIES REFERENCED IN APPLICATION & SUPPORTING PROPOSALS FOR TRANSFORMATIONAL PROJECTS

The following studies referenced in the DRI Application may be found at the following hyperlinks:

1. DANTER HOUSING STUDY

2. CHAIN WORKS DISTRICT PLAN
   https://f1e5bd32-36ec-481a-af50-37b2f33367184.filesusr.com/ugd/d5fd45_a89ea2bd6d014dcba1147b351c-c1c38b.pdf

3. SIX MILE CREEK TRAIL WORK PLAN
   http://www.cityofithaca.org/DocumentCenter/View/10245/Six-Mile-Creek-Trail-Work-Plan

4. WAYFIND AND INTERPRETIVE SIGNAGE PROJECT: PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN
   https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1aT7PV8sDGDHAFsQ2v9d4kv7coM8Pm4kj?usp=sharing

The following studies referenced in the DRI Application are attached here

5. SMALL-SCALE MANUFACTURING: GATEWAY CREA PROGRAM - ATTACHED

6. SKY-PACKETS DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY FREE WIFI PROPOSAL- ATTACHED
Proposed Project: Ithaca Prototyping and Early Stage Manufacturing Lab

Project Description: Lab space, including key equipment, to provide prototyping and early stage manufacturing space for Southern Tier-area startup companies.

Background: This Ithaca-based prototype lab can support programs across the Southern Tier, as well as multiple CREA programs, including its successful Hardware Accelerator program. The Hardware Accelerator consists of two separate stages:
- Napkin to Prototype
- Prototype to Production

Ithaca is an hour or less drive from most Southern Tier locations. The facility can readily support entrepreneurs, companies and programs in Steuben, Chemung, Schuyler, Broome, Tioga, and Delaware Counties, as well as Tompkins County.

Purpose and Highlights:
Innovative manufacturing businesses start with successful prototyping, and with the ability to experiment with small yet economical initial manufacturing runs. Successful prototyping requires the right facilities and equipment

The prototyping lab will provide emerging manufacturing companies with
- Additional capabilities to allow companies to prototype:
  - larger concepts
  - with a far broader range of materials than currently possible at CREA's existing incubator space.
- The ability to produce small volume manufacturing runs.
- Dedicated workbenches and storage areas for work in progress and inventory.

Proposed Location: The Gateway Center, 401 E. State Street, Ithaca. Within one hour’s drive or less from Corning, Elmira, Cortland, and Binghamton, and 1.1 hours from Syracuse.

Location Advantages:
- Central/Downtown location
- Attractive warehouse/high-ceiling building
- Adequate on-site parking
Project Proposal:

Downtown Prototype and Early Stage Manufacturing Lab
From CREA (Center for Regional Economic Advancement, Ithaca, NY)
9.13.21

- Close to Downtown restaurants: highly-desirable worker amenities
- Walkable to inter-city and local bus lines
- Walkable from Cornell Campus and from all City of Ithaca locations
- 1 block from CREA's existing REV incubator
- Walking distance to all downtown hotels
- Attractive gorge location (iconic Ithaca scenery), perfect for photographs, attractive for out-of-region talent

Project Benefits:

- **A Clear and Compelling Economic Growth Pitch**: “Come to Ithaca/Southern Tier, and get your manufacturing business started in our facility”
- **Regional Manufacturing Strength**: Leverages entire Southern Tier and CNY historic strengths in manufacturing, and legacy infrastructure
- **Supports Existing Programs**: successful CREA hardware accelerator and business incubator programs
- **Local University Compliment**: Compliments Cornell, Binghamton U., and Syracuse U. engineering programs: a more seamless transition from education to manufacturing-focused entrepreneurship
- **Regional Spillover Effect**: Creates opportunities for other Southern Tier locations to entice companies to relocate there, as companies’ manufacturing demand outgrows early stage facility
- **Supports Local, Downtown Businesses**: Brings workers downtown, supports restaurants and shops, increases foot traffic.
- **Photo-Ops, Great Visuals**: Early-stage manufacturing and prototyping are tangible, action-oriented, visually compelling processes that make it easy to use media to communicate the program’s value and to show off its results
- **Additional Capital Sources**: Abundant opportunities to supplement DRI grant funds with additional sources of capital
  - Other state funding
  - Grant funding
  - County and municipal incentives
  - Corporate partnerships

**Industries and Domains Supported**: The Prototyping Lab will support a broad range of industries and fields, including
Ithaca Downtown Revitalization Initiative Grant Application

Project Proposal:

Downtown Prototype and Early Stage Manufacturing Lab
From CREA (Center for Regional Economic Advancement, Ithaca, NY)
9.13.21

- IOT (Internet of Things)
- Cleantech & Energy
- Farming and Ag Tech
- Health care
- Household items
- Transportation
- Wood & Metal decorative items

Capabilities:

- Large size 3D printing: plastics, nylon, resin, possibly metals
- Laser cutting: 24” x 48” high power CO2 laser & Air handler
- Milling & Metal Lathe: Soft metals, wood, HDPE, PCB
- CNC: 96 x 48 2.5 D

  Electronics Assembly
    - Surface mount pick-n-place
    - Surface mount oven
    - Electronics bench

- Woodworking tools & Dust collection
  - Drill press
  - Band Saw
  - Circular Saw
  - Wood Lathe
  - Sanding

- Sheet metal bending & Cutting
- Vacuum forming
- Casting
- Paint Booth & Powder Coating
- Large format printing
- Work Benches
- Basic tool sets
- Possibly Other
  - Fume hood
  - Knitting mill
  - Sewing equipment

Services:

- Equipment training & maintenance
- Cleaning
- Mentoring
- Dedicated work areas
Ithaca Downtown Revitalization Initiative Grant Application

Project Proposal:

Downtown Prototype and Early Stage Manufacturing Lab
From CREA (Center for Regional Economic Advancement, Ithaca, NY)
9.13.21

- Dedicated storage

Budget:

3 years rent at approx. $120,000 per year (Based on available space at Gateway Center)
Equipment $450,000 + $30,000/year maintenance
2 part-time instructors/interns $40,000/year
Space Buildout $50K (Dust collection, air handling, water)

Onetime setup costs: $500,000
Annual Operating Costs: $190,000

Costs can potentially be supplemented with additional funds from other sources, especially as this would enable the program to expand further as it demonstrates success

Jobs and Economic Impact:

A facility specifically focused on enabling new manufacturing business to gain a product development foothold is essential to the region’s manufacturing revitalization.

CREA’s Hardware Accelerator program has already posted significant substantive results. Since 2016, project teams and startups in which have participated in the Hardware Accelerators have gone on to:
- Create 69 new jobs
- Raise $21M in capital
- Raise 1.89M in SBIR/STTR awards
- Spend $1.2M in capital expenditures
- Generate total revenue of $2.14M and growing

The Prototype Lab’s addition would greatly increase these results, not only for CREA program participants, but for companies across the region that use the facility to accelerate their product and manufacturing production development.
Ithaca Commons Outdoor WiFi

Objective
This WiFi site plan places new Access Points (APs) in Ithaca Commons, located in downtown Ithaca, NY. These APs will form an outdoor neighborhood WiFi network that is managed by Sky-Packets in partnership with the Downtown Ithaca Alliance. The network will provide wireless internet access to visitors, residents, and employees in the surrounding area.

Overview
This preliminary WiFi site plan places Access Points (APs) on a variety of potential structures (light poles, buildings, etc). The APs are no more than 275' apart, which should result in 5GHz signal strength of -65dbi or better throughout the entire area. It is projected that approximately 5 APs would be needed to meet this signal quality.

It is extremely important to note that all AP locations shown on the attached map are estimated. This is not a final design, and it will change after proper site visits are completed and available assets are identified.

Internet Service
A fiber line will be installed in 171 East State Street (pending approvals). Sky-Packets will supply a managed router to distribute that service to the WiFi network. Since data service cannot easily be installed directly at each location, high-speed wireless point-to-point links can be used. Bandwidth could be distributed from the building’s roof to satellite locations using directional wireless antennas. As long as there is clear Line-of-Sight, high speed wireless connections can be established.

Proposed Access Points on Ithaca Commons
Sky-Packets would install new Ruckus T610 outdoor Access Points at several locations.

1. Two APs would be installed on the roof of 171 East State Street, and would be directly connected via CAT6 ethernet cable to a PoE switch housed inside the building. That switch would be connected to the router.
2. One AP would be installed on the Bernie Milton Pavilion. It would receive internet service through a wireless point to point link established with 171 East State Street.
3. One AP would be installed on a light pole in front of 104 East State Street. It would receive internet service through a wireless point to point link established with 171 East State Street.
4. One AP would be installed on a light pole in front of 224 East State Street. This AP would rely on a mesh connection back to 171 East State St.
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ruckus ZoneFlex T610 Omni</td>
<td>63 mW</td>
<td>158 mW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ruckus ZoneFlex T610 Omni 2.4GHz</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ruckus ZoneFlex T610 Omni 5GHz</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Milton Pavilion</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ruckus ZoneFlex T610 Omni</td>
<td>63 mW</td>
<td>158 mW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ruckus ZoneFlex T610 Omni 2.4GHz</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ruckus ZoneFlex T610 Omni 5GHz</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Signal Strength for Ithaca Commons

Signal Strength - sometimes called coverage - is the most basic requirement for a wireless network. As a general guideline, low signal strength means unreliable connections, and low data throughput.

2.4 GHz band

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Signal Strength</th>
<th>Color</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>≤ -90 dBm</td>
<td>Gray</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-67</td>
<td>Dark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>≥ -30 dBm</td>
<td>Green</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5 GHz band
Secondary Signal Strength

Secondary Signal Strength shows the second strongest RSSI on any given location on the map. This heatmap helps to ensure smooth roaming for clients and quality of service for certain latency-sensitive applications, such as VoIP calls.

2.4 GHz band

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Signal Strength</th>
<th>Color</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>≤ -90 dBm</td>
<td>Dark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-75</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>≥ -30 dBm</td>
<td>Light</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Projected Data Rate for Ithaca Commons WiFi

Data Rate is the highest possible speed (measured in megabits per second) at which the wireless devices will be transmitting data. Typically the true data throughput is about half of the data rate or less.
Proposed Hardware Types
Sky-Packets is proposing a Ruckus Outdoor WiFi solution, using hardware similar but not limited to the following devices.

**Ruckus T610 Outdoor WiFi Access Point**
The Ruckus Wireless Access Points provide public WiFi access. Omnidirectional APs will be installed in the horizontal position, shown at far left. Directional APs will be installed in the vertical position, as shown at near left. Final determination of exact mounting position will be discussed with property managers before installation begins.

**Wireless backhaul units (optional)**
Where a permanent physical data line cannot be installed, it may be necessary to add an additional device that will provide wireless backhaul to a given location. Two examples are pictured at left; one from Siklu and a second from Mimosa. Where appropriate, one of these or similar devices may be installed.

**Power Requirements**
All installed APs will require access to a standard 110 Volt power source located within 300’ of the mounting locations. A standard receptacle will provide power to an 802.3at Power over Ethernet (PoE) switch, and that PoE device will then deliver power to each AP via a CAT6 ethernet cable.

The proposed APs will typically require 10-15W, and no more than 30W each.

In each location, Sky-Packets will work with property managers to determine the nearest power source and the best route for any cables needed. We will take advantage of existing conduit and pathways wherever possible.

**Full specifications for each proposed device are attached to this document.**
Hardware Installation Methods

Each proposed location requires its own specialized install, and the devices and mounting hardware used will vary depending on criteria that would be determined after a comprehensive site visit. The devices and mounting options shown here are only a few examples of those used in Sky-Packets networks.

**Direct wall mount**

APs can be installed directly on a building façade, where permitted. If an AP is attached to the façade, Sky-Packets will work with site managers to determine the least visually intrusive method of installation. APs can be painted to match the surrounding wall, or a vinyl wrap could be applied to the AP. The latter method is described below.

**AP Wrapping**

The image to the left is an example of one method used to camouflage APs. If a device will be installed on a building façade, we can take a photograph of that wall and then apply the image to a permanent wrap on the AP. This helps disguise the AP, making it blend into the environment more effectively.

**Non-penetrating mount**

Free standing, non-penetrating mounts and masts are a good solution for temporary ground-level installations, or for permanent rooftop installations where it is important to ensure the integrity of the roof. No holes need to be drilled, since the sleds are held in place with cinder blocks.

**Existing infrastructure**

APs can also be installed directly on existing structural elements. Where a stable metal pole can be used, the APs would be attached with standard metal straps. Specialized mounting hardware can also be used where appropriate, like the I-beam clamps shown at left.
ADDENDUM

EV CHARGING INFRASTRUCTURE

The Downtown Ithaca Alliance is working together with the City of Ithaca as well as business owners to deploy EV charging infrastructure at strategic downtown locations. Currently, the City of Ithaca’s Green New Deal is projecting a three-fold increase of electric vehicles within the next 3 years. The existing infrastructure, which per capita offers above-average EV charging options, needs to evolve to include direct current fast-charging infrastructure (DCFC) for new EVs with bidirectional charging capability. It also needs to account for a secondary market of EVs, as the city prepares to roll out a credit enhancement program to expand the affordability and availability of second-hand light-duty electric vehicles, hence requiring the deployment of Level 2 charging stations.

The City of Ithaca’s long-term goal is to achieve a 1:16 ratio in terms of EV charging points per EV registered within the city. In Downtown, the city government is working with businesses such as REV, Dewitt Mall, Hilton Garden Inn, Tompkins County Public Library, The Hotel Ithaca, and the new development at the former Emerson Power Transmission Company to assess the feasibility of deploying DCFC and Level 2 charging stations.

As part of the City’s Electric Corridor (Section7, Project 15), currently under consideration along State Street, west of the Ithaca Commons, the city expects the deployment of electric bike charging racks, electric scooter charging bays, dynamic wireless charging systems for next-generation EVs, and the deployment of DCFC stations. At this point, a technical feasibility assessment is underway in collaboration with Cornell University’s Computer Science department, for which the University and the City of Ithaca have a partner in an application for potential funding from the US Department of Energy.

The map below shows the potential upper-bound and lower-bound sites for charging stations, including DCFC (upper-bound), Level-2 (lower-bound) charging stations, and dynamic wireless charging systems.