



## 2021 DRI Application, Round 5

### BASIC INFORMATION

<b>REDC Region</b>	Mid-Hudson
<b>Municipality Name</b>	Village/Town of Mount Kisco
<b>Downtown Name</b>	Village Center
<b>County Name</b>	Westchester
<b>Applicant Contact(s)</b>	Edward W. Brancati, Village Manager, <a href="mailto:ebrancati@mountkisco.ny.gov">ebrancati@mountkisco.ny.gov</a> Kenneth L. Famulare, Asst. Village Manager, <a href="mailto:kfamulare@mountkisco.ny.gov">kfamulare@mountkisco.ny.gov</a>

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### VISION FOR DOWNTOWN

Mount Kisco's downtown has a long and rich history that truly became energized with the arrival of the train line and station more than a century ago, establishing the Village as Northern Westchester's commercial and cultural hub. Mount Kisco's downtown has grown, experienced numerous changes, and benefitted from critical investments throughout its history. It is now ready to take another giant leap forward and become an even stronger engine of economic activity, job growth, diverse housing opportunities, and recreational activities for all of its residents in a livable, walkable, and sustainable community that is in demand.

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### DOWNTOWN IDENTIFICATION

#### 1) Boundaries of the proposed DRI area.

The boundaries of the downtown would begin at the intersection of E. Main Street (Rt. 117) and Dakin Avenue and proceed north along E. Main St. (Rt. 117) onto North Bedford Road (Rt. 117); turn west onto Jeff Feigel Square and south back to Main Street (Rt. 133); turn west along Main Street (Rt. 133) to the intersection with Maple Avenue; then turn south along Maple Avenue before turning east on Lieto Drive

and continue to Lexington Avenue; cross Lexington Avenue and continuing east onto Sarles Avenue and then east along Highland Avenue; Highland Avenue then turns north briefly to rejoin Dakin Avenue; finally turning east on Dakin Avenue and heading back to the intersection with E. Main Street. The Mount Kisco Downtown not only includes all properties located entirely within the boundaries of the area described above, but also all properties directly adjacent to described area. .

The Mount Kisco downtown is easily accessible for the more than 10,000 residents of the Village, many of whom live within a few blocks. There is also has significant parking to accommodate the more than 48,000 residents of the surrounding communities such as Bedford, New Castle, and North Castle. Lastly, the Metro-North Harlem Line train station in the heart of the downtown makes it accessible for visitors or employees from throughout the region as it is a little less than an hour from Grand Central.

Westchester County's Bee-Line Bus system has a route that travels through Mount Kisco's downtown, connecting the Village with Ossining, Briarcliff Manor, Pleasantville, Chappaqua to the south, and Bedford Hills and Katonah to the north – allowing our neighbors to take full advantage of Mount Kisco's vast commercial offerings.

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**2) Past investment, future investment potential.** Describe how this DRI area will be able to capitalize on prior private and public investment and catalyze future investments in the neighborhood and its surrounding areas. Describe recent planning efforts that support public and private investment in the proposed DRI area.

The Village has previously made significant investments in the infrastructure throughout the Village, such that public water is available throughout the Village as well as separate sewer and stormwater collection systems. The Village invested in a new public library that is located in the downtown, has a geothermal heating and cooling system, was completed in 2009, and serves as a tremendous community space. The Village has installed ADA compliant dropped curbs and ramps at most intersections throughout the Downtown as well as decorative lighting lamps that were converted to LED lighting. The Village has replaced all of its overhead street lights to LED, and has laid the groundwork for electric car charging stations near the train station.

The Village has also developed educational and recreational opportunities through three different historic and nature hiking trails that enable residents and visitors to walk from downtown to the top of Kisco Mountain to overlook the downtown, a trail that takes hikers into the middle of a beautiful wetland full of various plants and wildlife that is adjacent to Downtown, and a trail that takes people by various historic markers throughout the Village as well as through pristine wooded terrain along the Kisco River. The Village also made significant investments in the area when it built Shopper's Park more than fifteen years ago to improve parking, create additional greenspace and recreational opportunities, improve water quality, and increase pedestrian access and connections throughout the Downtown. In addition, the Village continues to make investments in streetscape improvements and sidewalks to enhance the downtown and ensure that it continues to be walkable and easily accessible for all people. Moving forward, the Village is prepared to make further infrastructure investments in supporting redevelopment of the Village's two main parking lots at the Metro-North train station known as the North Moger Lot and the South Moger Lot. These two lots comprise more than seven (7) acres of open paved land and are a tremendous opportunity to further revitalize the Downtown, attract new businesses, attract new residents through various housing options, increase economic activity and job creation, provide new greenspace, and cultural and community opportunities while maintaining the necessary parking. Redevelopment of

these two lots is consistent with our Natural Resources Inventory, our award winning comprehensive plan, and would certainly strengthen Mount Kisco and ensure a vibrant, livable, walkable, and transit oriented downtown for years to come.

The downtown has benefited from some past investments by not-for-profits such as the presence of the Open Door Family Medical Center (a Federally Qualified Health Center) at the corner of Main Street and Maple Avenue and whose mission for four decades has been “to provide high quality health care that’s affordable, accessible, and efficient,” as well as various houses of worship. The downtown continues to see vibrant commercial activity with national chains such as Chopt and Athleta among a rich dining community with new restaurants opening yearly, ranking Mount Kisco among the most diverse foodie destinations in our region.

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**3) Recent or impending job growth.** Describe how recent or impending job growth within or near the DRI area will attract a diverse workforce and population to an active life in the downtown, support redevelopment, and make growth sustainable in the long-term.

Mount Kisco is an employment and commercial center in the heart of northern Westchester County, with the greatest job density in the County, where people come to work. Retail and healthcare serve as the two largest employment sectors employing more than 2,000 people between the many retail businesses within the Village, Northern Westchester Hospital, CareMount Medical (formerly the Mount Kisco Medical Group), and other providers. The Village has a “Main Street” approach to retail development with a walkable downtown, as opposed to an indoor mall. In addition, the presence of the Metro-North Train station in the heart of the Downtown that residents can easily access on foot, bike, or car make many employment opportunities in New York City and communities all along the Metro-North Harlem line easily accessible as well. Redevelopment of Mount Kisco’s downtown, particularly the Village’s two parking lots would provide attractive and affordable housing options for Millennials who would be able to easily walk to the train station or Bee-Line Bus stop, and enjoy the many amenities within the downtown. Amenities include national, regional and local retail stores, a variety of excellent restaurants, fresh food and produce markets, recreational and cultural opportunities, the Village Library, houses of worship, banking, professional services, and close proximity to Northern Westchester Hospital and other medical providers, as well as the Village’s pool complex, basketball, and tennis courts in Leonard Park. In recent years the Village has welcomed Tesla, Captain Lawrence (Westchester’s largest brewery), and is soon to welcome Shoprite into the Village to add to the amount of jobs in Mount Kisco.

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**4) Quality of life.** Identify the properties or characteristics that the DRI area possesses that contribute, or could contribute if enhanced, to the attractiveness and livability of the downtown for a diverse population of varying ages, income, gender identity, ability, mobility, and cultural background. Consider, for example, the presence of developable mixed-use spaces, varied housing types at different levels of affordability, walkability and bikeability, healthy and affordable food markets, and public parks and gathering spaces.

The bones for a thriving, vibrant downtown in Mount Kisco exist. The Village is currently focused on a two-part approach for further revitalization – enhance what is here, and attract more people to experience what Mount Kisco has to offer.

The Village’s capital plan includes funding for sidewalk and streetscape improvements throughout the downtown based on work completed by the Village Planner in coordination with the Village Engineer that is expected to be phased in during the next four years. This project seeks to revitalize the Village’s downtown, compliment the efforts of the Comprehensive Plan update and redevelopment of the train

station parking lots, address concerns raised at public forums previously held to discuss issues within the downtown, and support efforts by the Economic Development Council, while helping local businesses attract and retain customers. This project will also help build upon improvements already completed such as the replacement of the Pedestrian Bridge in Shopper's Park and flood mitigation of Branch Brook. The first phase of this streetscape project is currently underway, and encompasses everything interior to Main Street, Green Street, and South Moger Avenue.

A possible vision of redevelopment for downtown Mount Kisco focused on the two existing parking lots that consume more than seven (7) acres of existing prime real estate would be to build a second deck of parking above a portion of the two existing lots that would free up space in both lots for the development of new mixed-use spaces. A second deck on the North Moger lot would have minimal impact due to the topography of the surrounding area which all sits at higher elevations and would also be partially blocked by the new mixed-use spaces or housing opportunities placed closer to Main Street and the train station. A second deck in the South Moger lot would make space available along the west side of South Moger Avenue to build three story mixed use space with retail on the first floor and housing on the upper floors. This would be consistent with the development that currently exists on the east side of the street. In addition, there is a Gazebo in the middle of the block that would be kept intact as it serves as one end of a pedestrian promenade that takes people from South Moger Avenue in between and among businesses into Shopper's Park, where they cross Branch Brook on a pedestrian bridge to Village Hall and the Mount Kisco Library, and finally to Main Street and its many businesses, restaurants, and personal service offerings. It is hoped that the pedestrian promenade could continue west from the Gazebo, where pedestrians could ascend by stairs or elevator to a green roof built over the second deck of parking in the South Moger lot. A green roof, similar to High Line Park in Manhattan, on the roof of two levels of parking in the South Moger Lot would provide an excellent opportunity to increase greenspace, and enable greater recreational, cultural, and community opportunities. The entire Village/Town of Mount Kisco is also within the New York City watershed and placing a green roof over parking areas would greatly improve water quality by allowing stormwater to travel through the green roof and into the Village's stormwater system rather than running across the paved impervious parking lots. The same could be done in the North Moger lot as well. The result is the transformation of the current seven acres of impervious parking surface into an attractive space for residents to walk, live, congregate, and hold various community events, while also increasing a diversity of housing opportunities, increasing commercial space to attract new businesses, and integrating the entire redeveloped area into the fabric of Downtown.

A downtown that is already part of a regional employment and commercial center, part of a vibrant "Main Street" commercial development that includes retailers with an eclectic mix of services, entertainment and restaurants, many of which are locally owned, part of a community served by an award winning school district and the exceptional Mount Kisco Elementary School which features a successful dual language program, and part of a community that is ready and excited to take another great step forward.

The Village also has and celebrates its exceptional diversity. The Village is a majority minority community; is economically diverse as it also meets the U.S. Housing and Urban Development's 51% low to moderate income threshold across the entire Village population; and has diversity in its housing stock where roughly one-third of units are valued at \$300,000 or less, one-third of the units are valued between \$300,000 and \$500,000, and one-third of units are valued at more than \$500,000.

The Mount Kisco Arts Council (MKAC), a 501(c)3 based in and supported by the Village, continues to create incredible art experiences in Mount Kisco. Just this past year, the MKAC hosted several pop-up art galleries, including the Fox Lane Fashion Makers (featuring the fashion design and garment work of Fox

Lane High School Students), Under Ten (showcasing creations no larger than ten inches), and This Won't Be Pretty, (a group show featuring esoteric, challenging pieces). The MKAC also hosted a number of free, outdoor concerts in the downtown area featuring an eclectic array of musicians.

In August 2021, a group of local business owners started a farmers market in downtown on Sunday mornings. Their initial program was a great success, and subsequent dates have been scheduled for the rest of the year.

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**5) Supportive local policies.** Articulate the policies in place that increase the livability and quality of life of the downtown. Examples include the use of local land banks, modern zoning codes or New York State Stretch Code, comprehensive plans, Clean Energy Communities or Climate Smart Communities designation, complete streets plan, transit-oriented development, non-discrimination laws, agefriendly policies, and a downtown management structure. If policies that support livability and quality of life in downtown are not currently in place, describe near-term efforts by the municipality to create and implement such policies.

In 2019, the Village/Town of Mount Kisco completed and adopted a Comprehensive Plan Update of its' 2000 Comprehensive Development Plan and a Zoning Update that created a form-based Downtown Overlay District that were both recognized for Outstanding Planning Achievement by the Westchester Municipal Planning Federation and by the New York Planning Federation with the Heissenbuttel Award for Planning Excellence, as well as the necessary environmental review through a Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS). The update seeks to reiterate and strengthen efforts to achieve alternative transportation options, Smart Growth principles, conservation of natural areas, and protection of public health and safety which have all been identified in the existing plan while also recognizing the Metro-North train station as a transit hub in the Downtown and utilizing Transit Oriented Development as an organizing theme to redevelopment, new development, and housing. The Mount Kisco Comprehensive Plan update also aligns with the Mid-Hudson Regional Economic Development Council's Strategic Plan in 12 out of 15 Goals (2-10, 12, 13, and 15).

The Village has also previously adopted legislation to become a Greenway Compact Community, enable Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE), and Community Choice Aggregation with 19 other municipalities in Westchester to help residents and businesses lower their utility costs and provide a 100% renewable energy option that is more affordable than current utility rates. The Village has also adopted the New York State Unified Solar Permit and updated its' building code and fire prevention program. The Village also has the ability to establish residential parking permit systems throughout the downtown and surrounding neighborhoods to ensure residents have a place to park. The Village Board of Trustees, Village Manager, and Village personnel are committed to the adoption and implementation of any policy that will contribute to the betterment of the Village and its residents.

The Village, in partnership with BQ Energy, NYSERDA, New York Green Bank, Sustainable Westchester, U.S. EPA, NYS DEC, NYC DEP, and ConEd, completed a .75 megawatt community solar farm with battery storage on its closed, capped landfill that generates \$105,000 in annual lease revenue to the Village and offer 100% renewable energy to residents at a 15% discount compared to what they pay currently under the Westchester Power (CCA) program. This community solar project is fully subscribed by residents that are taking advantage of this exciting new program.

In 2019, the Village became the first municipality in the region to establish a solar law, encouraging the use of solar energy structures on residential, commercial, and governmental buildings and properties. A solar farm has been built at the Oakwood cemetery in the Village, and Village government is engaging stakeholders to gauge interest in developing additional solar infrastructure.

The Village is also examining the possibility of providing free wi-fi throughout the Downtown area. In addition, the Village overhauled its website five years ago to enable greater access of Village government services by residents, visitors, businesses, and property owners to the Village's many services. The Village is looking at undertaking another update to the site and continuing to strengthen our active Facebook page.

In September 2020, the Village was named a bronze level Climate Smart Community for its many efforts to plan for and implement a transition to a cleaner energy future and is currently working towards silver level certification. The village has also been designated as Clean Energy Community under NYSEERDA's program that assists local governments to implement clean energy actions, save energy costs, and improve the environment.

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**6) Public support.** Describe the public participation and engagement process conducted to develop the DRI application, and the support of local leaders and stakeholders for pursuing a vision of downtown revitalization. Characterize the commitment among local leaders and stakeholders to preparing and implementing a strategic investment plan.

The Village/Town of Mount Kisco Board of Trustees are committed to investing in critical infrastructure throughout the entire Village of Mount Kisco, particularly the downtown. The Village is also working closely with the Mount Kisco Chamber of Commerce and meeting with property owners to find out ways in which the Village can be most helpful in their efforts to improve their properties. The Village continues to meet with realtors and potential developers interested in opportunities in Mount Kisco. The community certainly supports any effort that will help increase revenue, expand the tax base, help lower property taxes for everyone, increase job opportunities and a diversity of housing options for current and new residents, provide additional recreational and cultural opportunities, and enable the Downtown to perform as a powerful economic engine for Mount Kisco and the entire region.

Continuing the conversations had during the Village's award-winning 2019 Comprehensive Plan, the Village held several public hearings in 2020 to discuss potential downtown development scenarios with increased levels of specificity. Nearly 100 business owners and residents shared their views on potentially developing the downtown area, specifically the two large parking lots at the train station. The Village Board of Trustees remains committed to continuing conversations about the most desirable scenarios for the area.

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**7) Transformative opportunities and readiness.** Describe opportunities to build on the strengths described above by providing a list of transformative projects that could be ready for implementation with an infusion of DRI funds within the first one to two years (depending on the scope and complexity DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE 3 of the project). Projects may be public or private, and could address economic development, transportation, housing, and community development needs. Project descriptions should include demonstration of readiness, proposed cost and funding sources, and identification of the project sponsor. For private for-profit projects, DRI funds may not exceed 40% of the total project cost (with a 10% bonus available for projects that commit to meaningful carbon reduction goals, including full electrification and net-zero building performance). While DRI funding may be used to cover the entire cost of a public or not-for-profit project, leveraging of investment dollars from other sources (i.e., private, local, federal, or other state sources) is strongly encouraged. Also identify any other transformative opportunities that may be explored during the planning process, such as reuse of vacant and developable properties and underutilized buildings; projects to address unmet needs in the downtown, including housing, retail, and community services; and activities that will build upon regional strengths and trends. If a loan or grant fund is proposed, please identify who might be an appropriate entity with capacity to manage the fund. If candidate projects have been identified, please include them to demonstrate potential demand for the fund. Funds are typically capped at \$600,000. Please note that if your community is selected to participate in the DRI program, projects identified in the application, along with any others that may arise during the DRI planning process, will ultimately be vetted by the Local Planning Committee and the State to determine which projects receive DRI grants.

The following projects could be ready for implementation upon receipt of DRI funds:

Loop/circulator bus - \$350,000

The Village of Mount Kisco plans on creating an intercommunity bus route that will loop around the Village. The project includes purchasing a vehicle, creating a route, creating and installing signage, and installing approximately six (6) bus shelters (with lighting and trash receptacles.) The plan would be to have the route reach existing public transportation (Metro North, Bee Line Bus), access to municipal services (Village Hall, Library, Police, Court), access to Leonard Park, and access various commercial offerings. The project's expected outcomes are better engagement in Village offerings for all residents, particularly those not in the immediate downtown area, and also a reduction of vehicle traffic and emissions.

N. Moger Avenue and Main Street intersection improvements - \$350,000

Free downtown Wi-Fi - \$250,000

Train access improvement - \$2,500,000

This project would provide pedestrian access from the Maple Avenue Parking Lot on the west side of the Metro-North Harlem line tracks to the train platform. There is a need to create greater connectivity from the residential areas along Maple Avenue and west of the Metro-North train tracks to the train station and across South Moger, through the greenspace beyond Shoppers Park to Main Street. It would also link the areas west of the tracks to a new potential redeveloped South Moger Lot that would not only include a decked parking structure, residential units, commercial businesses, public green spaces, but also connection to the pedestrian promenade that takes people from South Moger Avenue in between and among businesses into Shopper's Park, where they cross Branch Brook on a pedestrian bridge to Village Hall and the Mount Kisco Library, and finally to Main Street and its many businesses.

Leonard Park to downtown bicycle path - \$500,000

Maple Avenue pocket park - \$300,000

Moger Avenue parking lot structures - \$2,500,000

Downtown streetscape improvement - \$2,500,000

The Mount Kisco Downtown Streetscape project is a public space design project that fosters an active pedestrian environment. An attractive and sophisticated streetscape can have a positive impact on business and the local economy, as merchants and patrons are attracted to an appealing and vibrant downtown. Attractive, welcoming, and increasingly accessible public spaces will serve as public gathering spaces and complement the diversity of surrounding land uses.

Planned improvements will include replacing and repairing integral components of the streetscape, including curbing, sidewalks, pavers, new or replacement street trees, tree pits, lighting, pavement markings, landscaping, and seating. The goal of this project is to develop a streetscape design that creates a thriving and active corridor, enhances the pedestrian experience, compliments bicycle and transit mobility, and supports commercial activity

Downtown wayfinding signage - \$75,000

Downtown electric vehicle charging stations - \$75,000

Downtown marketing campaign - \$100,000

Small business revolving loan program - \$500,000

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**8) Administrative Capacity.** Describe the local administrative capacity to manage this planning and implementation initiative, including the ability to oversee contracts for awarded municipal projects using existing staff and resources.

The Village has the capacity and capability, between the Village Board of Trustees, the Village Manager, an Assistant Village Manager, our excellent Village department heads and staff, Dolph Rotfeld/A.I. Engineering our consulting Village Engineer, Kellard Sessions our consulting Village Planner, and Delaware Engineering which is assisting the Village on various infrastructure projects. The Village is currently executing, managing, and planning numerous public works projects including water and sewer main replacements, additions and renovations to all three of our fire houses, renovations and additions to our DPW complex, a roof-top solar installation on our public safety facility, sidewalk improvements, paving work, improvements to Village Hall, beautification efforts around the Village, drafting and adopting local legislation to streamline our code and encourage economic activity, contract negotiations, shared service initiatives, and every other function of village government. The Village is in the second year of a second, five-year inter-municipal agreement with the Westchester County Department of Public Safety for the provision of police services, giving the community the highest level of public safety resources available. The Village is proudly served by a strong volunteer fire department housed in three buildings with planned multimillion dollar refurbishing, and with two new fire apparatus vehicles secured.

We have a highly efficient and effective team and as we complete many of these projects we are able to take on new initiatives and expect that if selected we would be able to transition our current efforts into a possible Downtown Revitalization Initiative effort.

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9) Other. Provide any other information that informs the nomination of this downtown for a DRI award.

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**10) \$20 Million Request.** For applicants wishing to be considered for \$20 million in DRI funding, provide a clear but concise justification of why your community should be awarded \$20 million. Justification should include identification of at least 1-2 large, transformational projects that will have a significant impact on the downtown and could be realized with a larger grant award. Project descriptions should include status of the following: site control, commitments from project partners, other funding sources, and zoning/regulatory requirements. Since a larger award amount will require heightened capacity on the part of your municipality, please identify the individual or entity that will coordinate DRI implementation. Also describe the capacity of any project partners to undertake the additional large-scale projects. Addendum: Opportunities for Electric Vehicle Charging Stations. DOS is soliciting feedback from communities on whether they may have locations suitable for electric vehicle (EV) fast charging stations in their downtowns, either at municipal or private parking lots. While responses to this question will not be included in the evaluation of applications for a DRI award, applicants are encouraged to consider opportunities for EV charging in their downtowns. Benefits to a host site community include becoming a destination for travelers to the downtown, resulting in additional spending/economic activity for DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE 4 businesses in proximity to the fast charging site. Public EV charging stations also provide charging opportunities for community members without access to home charging. Applicants should indicate any interest in having charging station(s) installed within their proposed DRI boundary and identify any locations that have the space requirements/ characteristics listed below. If it is a privately owned site, please indicate owner interest in participation. \* Upper-bound: 5 parking spaces able to dedicate to fast charging (e.g. become EV-only), with 32' x 16' additional space for supporting power somewhere in lot that can be either in parking spots or on grassy areas within the property lines. \* Lower-bound: 3 parking spaces able to dedicate to charging, with 22' x 16' additional space for supporting power somewhere in lot that can be either in parking spots or on grassy areas within the property lines.

 Proposed DRI Boundary

 Lot Line

100 200 Feet

