Norwich, NY
Downtown Revitalization Initiative 2021

Building a destination in the heart of New York
# Table of Contents

- Basic Information .............................................. 4
- Vision for Downtown Norwich .............................. 5
- Justification ...................................................... 6
- Downtown Identification .................................... 10
- Boundaries of the Proposed DRI Area .................. 11
- Past Investment, Future Investment Potential .......... 12
- Recent or Impending Job Growth .......................... 16
- Attractiveness of Physical Environment ................ 18
- Quality of Life Policies ...................................... 20
- Public Support .................................................. 22
- Transformative Opportunities .............................. 22
- Administrative Capacity .................................... 30
- Letters of Support ............................................ 32
- Norwich in the News ......................................... 69
Basic Information

Application Basics

REDC Region
Southern Tier

Municipality Name
City of Norwich

Downtown Name
Downtown Norwich

County Name
Chenango County

Applicant Contact(s) Name and Title
Kerri Green - President & CEO
Commerce Chenango
Development Chenango Corporation
kgreen@chenangony.org

Norwich at a Glance

Chenango County Population
47,200

City of Norwich Population
7,051

Norwich, the Chenango County Seat, is conveniently located within a 50-mile radius of Binghamton, Syracuse, Utica, Cooperstown and Oneonta.
Our Vision for Downtown Norwich

DRI investment in Norwich will:

> Create an inclusive and sustainable downtown environment that attracts residents, professionals, tourists and students
> Catapult existing projects and important local assets
> Leverage meaningful private investment in Norwich

Norwich will be a location of choice for modern, urban apartment living, high-quality professional space, diverse dining options and creative retail. It will serve as an authentic gateway to the area’s natural beauty for those with an active lifestyle. Our historic downtown will be a hub for information and access to our museums, festivals, performances and more.
A Changed Economy

Norwich is centrally located in New York’s Southern Tier region, within 50 miles of many upstate centers of commerce and tourism. It is the seat of Chenango County, which was purchased from the Oneidas in 1788. The county was formed the following year. Many of the early settlers were dairy farmers. As the land prospered, cheese factories, mills and other businesses sprung up along the county’s numerous rivers and streams. The ball peen hammer (Maydole Hammer factory, Pepto-Bismol, Chloraseptic, Borden’s Evaporated Milk, and the nation’s bestselling Greek yogurt, Chobani, were all created in Chenango County, lending the region a rich history of innovation and creativity that continues today.

Norwich has not been immune to the influence of globalization and other economic forces that have created difficulties across upstate New York. The DRI district as outlined in this proposal is located almost entirely inside a Federal Opportunity Zone and the Norwich Business Improvement District. Norwich’s downtown, despite ample natural beauty and an accessible, walkable layout, has sustained the loss of many businesses as technology and other factors have changed the way consumers shop. However, its residents and local leaders strive to envision a new future. As the U.S. economy shifts and the rise of the “creative class” continues, Norwich has worked to develop a new identity as an authentic and affordable “urban substitute.” The city stands ready for change with the capacity, infrastructure and enthusiasm to manage a major investment in its downtown.
Striving for Connection

Groups of committed city leaders have worked for decades to develop attractions and events in Norwich. Among the most successful are the Northeast Classic Car Museum, located in the northern part of the downtown district, the Colorscape Chenango Arts Festival, the Gus Macker Basketball Tournament, the Blues Festival Summer Concert Series and the Chenango County Blues Festival.

These efforts have resulted in a great boon of tourism and an influx of revenue for the City, and we are currently working toward improving connectivity between the center of downtown and the Museum's location. Unification of Norwich's downtown assets is a top priority.

“The city of Norwich offers much that appeals to families, professionals, and retirees. The surrounding natural beauty makes outdoor adventure easily accessible, while the city’s walkable downtown provides unique shopping and dining opportunities. The DRI grant would have a dramatic impact on our city to attract tourism and economic commerce to the region.”

Robert M. Jeffrey
Executive Director
Northeast Classic Car Museum
Supervisor, City of Norwich (Wards 4, 5, and 6)
Taking a New Approach

Like many cities across the state and indeed, the country, Norwich has pivoted to respond effectively to trends in workforce and business over the past several decades.

The proposed DRI district currently features the beginnings of the sense of place and community we envision. A significant investment from the DRI program would catapult ideas currently being explored from the planning stage to reality. These include the following:

Improving the Museum District

The Friends of the Museum District organization has invested heavily in a master campus planning process to develop the area around Norwich’s museums. The DRI investment would improve the connectivity between these blocks and the center of downtown. Work began on a streetscape improvement project in the neighborhood in early September.

Work began in September 2021 on significant streetscape improvements in the Museum District section of downtown Norwich.
UHS Chenango Memorial Hospital Upgrades
UHS Chenango Memorial Hospital is located in Norwich and is the only hospital in Chenango County. It serves the community with primary, emergency, surgical, maternity and a series of specialty care services, recently underwent a $25 million facilities upgrade that updated its emergency department and ambulance drop-off, created a new lab facility and re-opened its Walk-in Clinic service.

Building Stands Ready for New Hotel
In June of 2021, the Development Chenango Corporation announced its purchase of the former SUNY Morrisville Norwich facility located in the heart of downtown. The vision for the space includes a 45-unit boutique hotel with meeting space and a restaurant.

“A new hotel in downtown Norwich is a much-needed asset and is sure to benefit all our businesses and attractions. Local leaders, community members, and tourism professionals have all expressed how much they want this to happen, and I am so pleased that the Development Chenango Corporation board understands how this investment will enhance our downtown.”

Kerri Green
President & CEO
Commerce Chenango

New Broadband Service Coming to Downtown
Norwich is one of two municipalities in Chenango County that will be part of a $2 million investment to upgrade infrastructure for improved broadband access. Funding from the federal CARES Act (Corona virus relief) will support the work, which will involve the installation of wireless antennas atop tall structures throughout the area. It is expected to drastically improve access to broadband service for area residents in need.
Downtown Identification

The proposed Norwich DRI area is roughly one mile long and a quarter-mile wide at its broadest points. The life of Downtown Norwich centers around East and West Parks, from which much activity currently radiates. The Chenango County Courthouse, Chenango County Council on the Arts, Commerce Chenango, the iconic Colonia Theater and many more local businesses are all located in this city center.

The Northeast Classic Care Museum, the Chenango County Historical Society and the Bullthistle Model Railroad Museum are all located on Rexford Street, which is commonly known as the Museum District (located in the top right of the blue-shaded area on the graphic to the right). The museums in this part of downtown are currently disconnected from the center of downtown Norwich, and this is one of the problems our transformational plans aim to rectify. The proposed boundaries are largely within the existing Business Improvement District, which was established by the City in 1982 - one of the first BIDs in New York State.

Norwich is home to 7,051 people living within an area of just over 2 square miles. As such, its downtown can serve a critical purpose as a place all residents can enjoy, whether they live there, work there, or spend recreational or social time there with family or friends. Its parks and existing businesses and eateries are roughly 15 minutes (max) by foot from anywhere within the city limits.
Proposed Downtown Revitalization Initiative Boundary

Business Improvement District Boundary

Opportunity Zone Boundary
Past Investment

Norwich Studios East
An old school building is being transformed into chic new apartments and office space by Principle Design Engineering, owned and operated by Norwich natives (and brothers) Dan and Michael O’Reilly.

Eaton Center
A $3 million investment made The Eaton Center the ideal home for United Health Services’ physical therapy services and the Chenango County Court System. With offices as small as 200-square feet or as large as 10,000-square feet, it is currently home to physicians, dentists, and professional service providers as well as a café, fitness center and other businesses that make The Eaton Center an attractive place to work.

NBT Bank
More than $10 million in aggregate investment by NBT Bank Corp. to its facilities, technology, infrastructure and the addition of an operations center was supported by the hiring of additional workforce and associated professional development.
$500,000 to New Businesses, Agriculture

Development Chenango Corporation has made more than $500,000 in startup and agriculture loans to small businesses in Norwich since 2020. Despite the challenges related to the pandemic, the city and its residents are determined to move forward and turn to the next chapter.

$5.6 Million to Railroad

The Chenango County IDA received a $5.6 million investment through the Economic Development Agency to make infrastructure improvements to the 45+ miles of track that runs through Chenango County. The track is currently operated by NYS&W.

Historical Society

The Chenango County Historical Society, using local contributions, donations and foundation support, has invested more than $1.4 million into its campus. Improvements and additions have included the Loomis Barn project, the James S. Flanagan Research Center, and renovations throughout the property, all while keeping their historical integrity intact.

Friends of the Parks

$500,000 was raised by local leaders to improve East and West Parks in the heart of downtown Norwich. Relocation of the existing gazebo to ground level enabled the construction of a new performance stage. Additional amenities and benches throughout the parks make it an ideal spot for a relaxing lunch hour or gathering space.
Current Projects

Chenango Memorial Hospital
A recent $25 million upgrade to the Norwich hospital created a brand new emergency department and lab, expanded its ambulance drop-off point and re-opened the facility’s walk-in clinic. Specialty services were also enhanced and added to improve access to needed care for area residents.

Improved Broadband
$2 million in funding from the CARES Act will develop a wireless high-speed internet network covering the City of Norwich and one other municipality.

Clean Energy Development
Three major solar farms have been developed within five miles of Norwich since 2019, making it one of the state’s fastest-growing sources of sustainable, clean solar energy.
“Hotel Norwich”  
Development Chenango Corporation recently purchased a downtown building for $500,000 and plans to partner with a developer to create a 45-unit hotel in the center of Norwich.

Protection of the “Stone Quarry”  
Norwich’s former Stone Quarry is popular with hikers and other outdoor enthusiasts. The Chenango Greenway Conservancy has raised money to purchase and preserve this site.  
(Photo: Evening Sun)

Principle Design Business Park  
Built in 1946 as a new car dealership, this building was recently redeveloped to house the Principle Design Engineering headquarters with space for three additional businesses.

McLaughlin Building Ripe for Redevelopment  
Recently purchased by a local developer, this property is located in the center of downtown Norwich. The space has traditionally been used for retail but could be adapted as needed.
Recent or Impending Job Growth

Sustainable growth has been the focus in Norwich over the past decade as community groups have worked together with government and business leaders to build infrastructure and an economy that will last for generations.

Ulukaya announced in 2016 that he would give full-time employees shares worth nearly 10% of the value of the company’s growth between then and the time he might sell the company or take it public. An IPO could mean a major windfall for those employees now.

Chobani Files for IPO
The Chenango County-based Greek yogurt juggernaut filed for an Initial Public Offering that reports say could be worth as high as $10 million. Company Founder Hamdi

Unison Industries/GE Aviation Adds Jobs, Invests $28 Million
The company, which manufactures jet engine components for commercial and
military aircraft at its 160,000 square-foot Norwich plant, created 70 new jobs and retained 362 existing ones with the investment, which was bolstered by state funding in the amount of $4.2 million. The company invested in facility and equipment, as well as research and development.

**SUNY Morrisville Norwich Expands to Meet Growing Need**

Building on its well-respected program that features areas of study including nursing, applied psychology, dietetic technician/nutrition care, human performance and health promotion, massage therapy, and more, the college will soon be announcing new options for students looking for a career in health care.

The Norwich area’s major employers are stable and sustainable. Chenango County’s oldest company was founded in 1900 and employs almost 2,000 people here today. For more details, including contact information, visit tinyurl.com/majoremployers.
Attractiveness of Physical Environment

Nestled in the spectacularly beautiful Chenango River Valley, Norwich is a picturesque city brimming with the signs of an authentic small town experience. Historic structures date back to the 19th century and a number are being restored or rehabilitated.

The heart of downtown is located along NYS Route 12 (North and South Broad Streets) and extends east and west along Norwich’s Main Street. Restaurants, grocery stores, gift shops and other unique retailers, professional services and an iconic restored movie theater make up much of the occupied commercial space. Residences are located just steps away from the center of Norwich commerce, adding to the
city’s walkability (rated a 79 by walkscore.com) and the accessibility of its downtown.

Efforts are underway to increase the presence of public art throughout the city. Recent upgrades to the Greenway, including the development of a dog park, have made the city more inviting to pet owners. And a group is currently working to purchase and preserve the former Stone Quarry for recreational use.

Inter-denominational houses of worship, the Norwich Family YMCA, UHS Chenango Memorial Hospital and county offices bring visitors from around the area on a regular basis.

The city boasts a number of parks, many within the proposed DRI boundary. Residents and visitors alike enjoy the Chenango Greenway Conservancy’s River Walk Trail: six miles of interconnected and standalone multi-use, non-motorized, public recreational trails that trace the path of the Chenango River.
Quality of Life Policies

The City of Norwich strives to be a progressive community that is inclusive, open to new ideas, welcoming and supportive of all of its citizens, businesses and travelers alike. Steps have been taken to ensure Norwich continues to move forward in a positive way, implementing practices, protocols and improvements that will ensure its success.

Comprehensive Plan
The City of Norwich adopted a Comprehensive Plan in 2014 that outlined a progressive path forward for the community. Many of the goals outlined in this plan have been achieved or are in progress. The plan can be found online at https://www.norwichnewyork.net/index.php.

Transportation
Transportation to employment is a struggle for many in rural parts of the state and Chenango County has not been isolated from this. In addition to a local bus service, it was recently announced that Getthere, a program of the Rural Health Network of South Central New York (RHNSCNY), has received a $150,000 grant through the Appalachian Regional Commission to expand the “Transportation to Employment Program.” This program will expand its services into Chenango County and will provide short-term transportation assistance to individuals unable to afford the cost of transportation at the beginning of employment.

“Norwich will stand out for its physical and civic character, distinguished by its high level of citizen stewardship and leadership. Its generous volunteerism will support efforts to make it a vibrant community of choice that acts progressively to attract and retain both residents and businesses.”

City of Norwich Comprehensive Plan (2014) Vision Statement

Climate Smart Communities Program
In February 2019, NYSERDA designated Chenango County as a “Clean Energy Community.”

In March 2021, the Chenango County Planning Department enrolled the county in the Climate Smart Communities program, which provides incentives for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and...
adapting to climate change. Through the Clean Energy Communities Program, plans are underway to install three charging stations in the City of Norwich: one in partnership with SUNY Morrisville Norwich Campus, a second at the Northeast Classic Car Museum and a third at the County Office Building, for a total of six towers (12 ports). This project is a big step in accomplishing the NYS Clean Energy Standard and diversifying our transportation options.

Addressing Inadequate Child Care
The COVID-19 pandemic made the lack of child care opportunities in Chenango County clear even to those not already struggling with this issue. In response, Commerce Chenango began working on a county-wide approach to “child care deserts,” as well as coordinating with our regional partners in the Southern Tier. For the past 18 months, a committee of child care advocates, professionals and local service providers have been meeting to identify ways to address this issue.

Plans are underway to conduct a study and to seek out innovative opportunities to integrate child care into our business community, as well as address workforce development issues such as education and retention of child care service providers.

Improvements for Accessibility
The Norwich Business Improvement District has continued, in concert with the City of Norwich, to invest more than $1.6 million into a streetscape project to improve accessibility throughout downtown Norwich. $373,000 was also invested in accessibility improvements included talking crosswalks and lighted signs as recently as 2016. Curbs were lowered and access points made even with the pavement.

“While industry and demographics continue to change, Downtown Norwich remains the commercial, cultural and governmental heart of Chenango County. It offers much that appeals to families, professionals and retirees. The city’s walkable downtown holds unique potential for additional shopping and dining opportunities, and the surrounding natural beauty makes outdoor adventure easily accessible.”

John H. Watt Jr.
President & CEO, NBT Bank Corp.
Public Support

Norwich has engaged its residents, business and building owners, and community leaders in the development of this DRI proposal. Our Planning Committee includes Norwich’s mayor as well as representation from the City Council, SUNY Morrisville Norwich, the Chenango County Planning Department, local lenders, and more.

*indicates the individual has agreed to serve on Norwich’s Local Planning Committee should the city be awarded DRI funds during this round.
Local residents responded to a survey about their priorities and ideas for downtown, which the committee has used in its work to develop strategies and key initiatives. A series of meetings and presentations to groups around Norwich has also taken place to keep leaders updated on our progress and solicit feedback on the work we’ve done to prepare this application.
In order to maximize the potential DRI investment in downtown Norwich, the following key initiatives are proposed. Together, they will capitalize on existing investments, effectively leverage additional available dollars - now and in the future - and optimize the experience of living and working in and visiting downtown.

I. Establish a business and workforce training center that provides access to needed education and micro-credentialing opportunities to assist in growing and supporting Norwich’s workforce development program.

Together with lead partner SUNY Morrisville, Norwich will create a facility that meets the growing need for adult education that isn’t met by traditional secondary education offerings. The goal is to expand upon existing workforce development efforts now underway and partner with area employers to provide training and credentialing/licensure as needs evolve - in one central location. This service delivery takes a unique approach that helps remove barriers for working adults looking to take the next step in their career. Evening, weekend, and online educational offerings could help make professional education more accessible than ever before and bring tremendous value to Norwich area employers. A letter of support from SUNY Morrisville Norwich indicating their intention to partner on this endeavor is attached to this application.
II. Creation of a micro-retail space that will actively recruit and support entrepreneurs by offering services and programs to reduce barriers for those looking to conduct business in downtown Norwich.

- Space for rent, for production, storage, retail sales
- Coaching to help with start-up business planning

We envision space that would serve as a classic incubator, with more services and support than many traditional similar spaces boasts. Restaurateurs could use the space to develop a pop-up concept or a series of themed offerings. New retailers could occupy the space for a limited time to test ideas and viability thereof. And all the while, these entrepreneurs would be supported by a consortium of bankers, Chamber of Commerce professionals, longtime business owners, and industry-specific peers invested in the success of their newly minted colleagues. And residents and visitors would experience an exciting and ever-evolving collection of fresh ideas and new places to dine and shop. This space would be located in the center of downtown Norwich, which would improve downtown foot traffic and attract more visitors to the district.

Entrepreneurs are rarely short on ideas, but often lack capital, training, and access to critical elements of success such as real estate and business coaching. The Norwich Micro-retail Hub we envision would remove those barriers and support new business-people by providing the following:
III. Create improved accessibility and safety to and in upper floors of key downtown buildings, resulting in redeveloping opportunities for mixed-use office and residential space.

Like many upstate New York cities, Norwich has no shortage of historic buildings that are sadly underutilized due to their upper floors being unsafe for residential or professional use. Downtown is safe and accessible for people of varying physical abilities, but without significant upgrades to the structures in the district, the utility of the buildings will remain limited to first floor use. That must change. Creating a shared elevator bank that connects multiple key buildings along the main street of Norwich - and ensuring that the structures are up to code and compliant with all current fire safety requirements - will finally make it possible to recruit more residents and professionals to live and work downtown. We’ve communicated with the owners of buildings throughout the district and can see strong support for the work of bringing these historic buildings into the modern era.

Building on the investments made in East and West Park, among others, this expenditure would do more than almost anything to deliver what every downtown needs above all else: people. A district
Transformative opportunities full of apartments and offices would mean the sidewalks would be full of people in the morning, over the lunch hour, and after the workday is through. This concentration of population downtown would play a key role in supporting other proposed developments as well, including micro-retail and arts infrastructure.

IV. Development of arts in the park and maker-space concepts to attract audience members, visitors for work, exhibitions, performances and more in the district.

Part of making downtown attractive for residents, professionals and visitors is ensuring it is a beautiful, inviting space. We propose the development of a creative hub based at the current Arts Council facility near the end of West Park and the Public Library. The objective would be to build a space where artists can create, and center spaces where others can view, enjoy and appreciate their creations.

Key components would include:
- Create a maker-space inside the Arts Council facility
- Upgrade and expand performance spaces in the parks
- Develop a sustainable public art program that centers creatives and beautifies Norwich's public areas
- Execute key infrastructure improvements (lighting, electric, etc.) to support outdoor performances downtown
- Integrate with ongoing streetscape and landscaping upgrades as proposed elsewhere here to improve connectivity between the Arts Council building and the rest of downtown Norwich
V. Transform Norwich’s central green space into a single point of access and connection to key attractions including the Museum District, Chenango County Fairgrounds, parks, outdoor recreational facilities, festivals, events and more.

East and West Park are the heart of downtown Norwich. From them and their immediate surrounding area, many city attractions are connected. But the space and visitors to it would benefit greatly from some key upgrades that take into account the way people live, travel, and work today. Key components of this plan include:

- Create a strategic design for street and landscaping throughout the district that clearly define the area and help with way-finding and safe pedestrian movement through it
- Install device charging stations in key locations including parks to support recreational and professional use of public spaces
- Develop free, accessible, high-quality wireless broadband internet service throughout the district to support downtown’s residents, as well as visitors and today’s professionals who are more mobile than ever before
Transformative Opportunities

- Install bike racks and vehicle charging stations at key locations throughout the district to support environmentally friendly commuting practices and the growing number of electric/charge vehicles on the market.
- Develop an app that can be accessed via QR code posted throughout the district that provides information on nearby attractions and events.
- Develop a new Visitors’ Center (in collaboration with Commerce Chenango) to support Norwich’s tourism economy.

VI. Convert passages, walkways and common areas into inclusive, welcoming and attractive spaces that are safe and provide comfort and accessibility to downtown spaces and common areas.

No fewer than 8-10 tunnels, walkways, or alleys through downtown Norwich practically connect key areas of the district but are in need of significant upgrades to be safe and accessible. This will be especially important when the “Hotel Norwich” project advances, since the city will likely have more visitors staying in the center of downtown than ever before. To support the safe movement of all people through downtown, we propose the following:

- Integrate streetscape and paving strategy with other proposed upgrades.
- Install lighting to improve safety for all and phone boxes to support pedestrians who might need to call for help.
- Develop a pedestrian strategy for downtown that allows for the efficient movement of walkers/cyclists/skaters/etc. through the space and allows for the concentration of resources to support maintenance of said spaces.
Administrative Capacity

Development Chenango Corporation, as the lead agency in Norwich for the DRI projects, will bring to bear its team’s extensive experience and skills in project and contracts management should the city be awarded the DRI funding.

Further, the City of Norwich, Chenango County, SUNY Morrisville Norwich, and Commerce Chenango have all committed to collaborate on the management of DRI-funded projects. Practically speaking, this means each of those entities will combine personnel, hours and other resources to make DRI-funded projects manageable and successful.

Commerce Chenango’s President/CEO has 20 years of experience in the public sector and will be responsible for overseeing DRI project implementation at the highest level. Chenango County’s Director of Planning, a professional with 14 years of experience in government, will coordinate contracts and ensure all requirements are met. He will coordinate collaborations between Norwich and Chenango County governments, along with Norwich’s Planning Office and the Code Enforcement Officer, Norwich Mayor Shawn Sastri and members of the City Council. Together with leadership from SUNY Morrisville Norwich, they will also collaborate on design and compliance issues for all DRI projects.

Norwich also has excellent working relationships with the Chenango County IDA, as well as other local organizations and governmental bodies, and expects that to continue in support of DRI-funded projects.

“In addition to the support of the projects and application itself, the City of Norwich has agreed to designate assistance in the form of personnel to help with the implementation and administration of the grant.”

Shawn Sastri
Mayor, City of Norwich

“As a member of the DRI Steering Committee full of diverse skill sets, I am fully confident in our administrative capacity to implement all the initiatives outlined in the application and look forward to helping revitalize the City of Norwich. I am also willing to devote my time, as well as the time of my staff, to administer the grant should it be awarded.”

Shane H. Butler
Director, Chenango County Department of Planning and Development
Norwich BIDMA

A Resolution Supporting City of Norwich Application to 2021 Downtown Revitalization Initiative

WHEREAS, the Norwich Business Improvement District Management Association (BIDMA) has represented and advocated for the interests of property owners and businesses in downtown Norwich for more than twenty-five years; and

WHEREAS, the Norwich BIDMA has become aware of the City of Norwich’s desire to apply to the 2021 round of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) for grant funding to support much-needed development projects in the city’s core commercial area; and

WHEREAS, the Norwich BIDMA believes such application is in the best interest of the Business Improvement District (BID), members of the BIDMA, and the Norwich community; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Norwich BIDMA is pleased to offer its support for the City of Norwich’s application to the 2021 Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

Jamie Gaudreau-Moore, BID President

9/14/21
Date adopted
Letters of Support

The following letters of support have been submitted to accompany Norwich’s application for the 2021 Downtown Revitalization Initiative program. They represent endorsement from state, federal, and local elected officials, as well as key Norwich and Chenango County leaders - all of whom understand and support the vision we have developed for downtown Norwich.
September 7, 2021

Kerri Green
President & CEO
Commerce Chenango
15 South Broad Street
Norwich, NY 13815

To Whom It May Concern:

In my capacity as Mayor of the City of Norwich, I am fully in support of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative application that Commerce Chenango along with the City of Norwich are submitting for funding.

The proposed boundary of the DRI grant encompasses all of Norwich. That will allow us to connect our downtown in an effort to strengthen the local economy. If the City of Norwich is awarded this grant I can assure you that the funds would be used to complete a number of projects identified in the grant that are identified to give the City of Norwich a boost to attract tourism and new business to our community.

In addition to the support of the projects and application itself, the City of Norwich has agreed to designate assistance in the form of personnel to help with the implementation and administration of the grant.

The DRI funding will be a tremendous opportunity for our local businesses as well as new opportunities and positions the City for positive impact on our local economy for years to come. This DRI application demonstrates the committed collaboration between our local business owners, residents, community and government leaders to present a strong application for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Shawn Sastri

Mayor Shawn Sastri
September 3, 2021

Kerri Green
President & CEO
Commerce Chenango
15 South Broad Street
Norwich, NY 13815

Dear Kerri,

We are writing to offer our support of the 10-million-dollar Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) grant application that Development Chenango/Commerce Chenango and the City of Norwich are applying for, as part of the Southern Tier Regional Economic Development Council.

As the City of Norwich Common Council, we can attest to what this investment would mean to the City of Norwich in Chenango County and by extension the Southern Tier. These funds would be leveraged to accomplish a number of projects and ideas that would not only highlight the unique qualities that Norwich has but would work as an anchor to draw additional investment to our community.

Outlined in the DRI Application there are a number of transformative projects, including:
- The establishment of a business and workforce training center that provides access to needed education and micro credentialing opportunities to assist in growing and supporting our workforce development program.
- Creation of a micro-retail space that will actively recruit and support entrepreneurs by offering services and programs that will reduce barriers for those looking to conduct business downtown.
- Create improved accessibility and safety to and in upper floors of key downtown buildings, resulting in redevelopment opportunities for mixed-use office and residential space.
- Development of arts in the park and makerspace concepts to attract and engage artists and audience members, visitors for work, exhibitions, performances and more in the district.
- Transform Norwich’s central green space in a place that will serve as a single point of access, and connection to key attractions including the Museum District, Chenango County fairgrounds, parks, outdoor recreational facilities, festivals, events and more.
- Convert passages, walkways and common areas into inclusive, welcoming and attractive spaces that are safe, welcoming and provide comfort and accessibility to downtown spaces and common areas.

The Downtown Revitalization Initiative will expand and leverage the City of Norwich and work to help create an inclusive and sustainable downtown environment that works for residents, businesses, traveling professionals, tourists and students.
In addition to generating additional meaningful private investment, it will give us the opportunity to connect our downtown, create opportunities to build on current projects, and catapult the City of Norwich into the next level of economic development and sustainability.

The impact of the DRI funding will be long lasting, far reaching and our community and businesses are ready to work together, take this on and make the most out of this opportunity.

Thank you for your consideration.

City of Norwich Common Council

[Signature]
Robert D. Jeffrey, President – Ward 6

[Signature]
Matthew Caldwell, Alderman – Ward 1

[Signature]
Brian Doliver, Alderman – Ward 2

[Signature]
Nancy Allaire, Alderman – Ward 3

[Signature]
Linda Kays-Biviano, Alderman – Ward 4

[Signature]
David Zielo, Alderman – Ward 5
Ms. Kerri Green, President & CEO
Commerce Chenango
15 South Broad Street
Norwich, NY 13815

RE: City of Norwich - Downtown Revitalization Initiative

Dear Ms. Green,

I am writing in support of the Development Chenango/Commerce Chenango and City of Norwich Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) grant application. This application, which has been prepared in coordination with the Southern Tier Regional Economic Development Council, contains a series of enhancements that would be transformative for the city of Norwich and the entire region.

As state senator, representing a number of the Chenango County communities that surround the City of Norwich, I see great value in building our infrastructure. These projects are truly high-yield, synergistic investments. Building on the region’s storied history, its natural and human resources, and its unique economic ecosystem, the return would be far more than the sum of its individual parts, with socio-economic ripples being felt miles from downtown Norwich. A revitalized northeastern Chenango County would lead to both traditional and entrepreneurial investment to the region.

The elements of the Norwich DRI will serve as cornerstones for the region’s rebirth by creating an inclusive and interactive “public square” that reflects the attributes and serves the needs of the modern demographic. Norwich will once again serve as a magnet for the region’s residents, government and business leaders, working professionals, and students.

The impact of the DRI funding will be long lasting and far-reaching and I believe the community leaders, residents, and the businesses of this region are committed to working together to leverage this funding opportunity and build the Norwich and Chenango County of tomorrow.

Sincerely,

PETER OBERACKER
State Senator

PO:jbjtt
August 30, 2021

Kerri Green, President & CEO  
Commerce Chenango  
15 South Broad Street  
Norwich, New York 13815

Dear Kerri,

As the New York State Assemblyman of the 126th Assembly District, I am writing to offer my support of the 10-million-dollar Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) grant application that Development Chenango/Commerce Chenango and the City of Norwich are applying for, as part of the Southern Tier Regional Economic Development Council.

Although the City of Norwich itself is not in the 126th Assembly District, I can attest to what this investment would mean to all of Chenango County and by extension, the Southern Tier. These funds would be leveraged to accomplish numerous projects and ideas that would not only highlight the unique qualities that Norwich has, but would work as an anchor to draw additional investment to Chenango County in its entirety.

Outlined in the DRI Application there are numerous transformative projects, including:

▪ The establishment of a business and workforce training center that provides access to needed education and micro credentialing opportunities to assist in growing and supporting our workforce development programs countywide.
▪ Create improved accessibility and safety to buildings, resulting in redevelopment opportunities for mixed-use office and residential space.
▪ Development of arts in the park and makerspace concepts to attract and engage artists and audience members, visitors for work, exhibitions, performances and more.
▪ Transform the City of Norwich’s central green space in a place that will serve as a single point of access, and connection to key attractions including the Chenango County Fairgrounds, the Museum District, parks, outdoor recreational facilities, festivals, events and more.
▪ Convert passages, walkways and common areas into inclusive, welcoming and attractive spaces that are safe, welcoming and provide comfort and accessibility to downtown spaces and common areas.

The impact of the DRI funding will be long lasting, far reaching and our community and businesses are ready to work together, take this on and make the most out of this opportunity.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

John Lemondes  
Member of Assembly

JL: dah
September 7, 2021

Kerri Green, President & CEO
Commerce Chenango
15 South Broad Street
Norwich, NY 13815

Dear Kerri:

I’m writing in strong support of the $10 million Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) grant application that Development Chenango/Commerce Chenango and the City of Norwich are applying for as part of the Southern Tier Regional Economic Development Council.

As a proud representative of the Southern Tier, this investment would mean a great deal to the City of Norwich in Chenango County and the Southern Tier at large. I understand that these funds would be leveraged to accomplish a number of innovative projects and forward-thinking ideas that would not only highlight the unique qualities that Norwich has, but would also work as an anchor to draw additional investment to our community.

Outlined in the DRI Application, there are a number of transformative projects including the establishment of a business and workforce training center that provides access to needed education and micro credentialing opportunities to assist in growing and supporting our workforce development program as well as the creation of a micro-retail space that will actively recruit and support entrepreneurs by offering services and programs that will reduce barriers for those looking to conduct business downtown. Numerous other important infrastructure and public space improvements caught my eye that will be sure to transform how people view the City of Norwich and attract people to downtown spaces and common areas.

There’s no doubt that the Downtown Revitalization Initiative will expand and leverage the City of Norwich and work to help create an inclusive and sustainable downtown environment that works for residents, businesses, traveling professionals, tourists and students.
In addition to generating additional meaningful private investment, it will give our community leaders the opportunity to connect our downtown, create opportunities to build on current projects, and catapult the City of Norwich into the next level of economic development and sustainability. The impact of the DRI funding will be long lasting, far reaching and our community and businesses are ready to work together and make the most out of this opportunity.

Please accept this letter as my full support of your application.

Best wishes,

[Signature]

Frederick J. Akshar II
New York State Senator

FJA/blf
September 1, 2021

Ms. Kerri Green, President & CEO
Commerce Chenango
15 South Broad Street
Norwich, New York 13815

Dear Ms. Green:

Please accept this correspondence as my Letter of Support on behalf of the $10 million Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) grant application that Development Chenango/Commerce Chenango and the City of Norwich are applying for, as part of the Southern Tier Regional Economic Development Council.

As the representative for the 122nd Assembly District and long-time resident of Norwich, I can attest to what this investment would mean to the City of Norwich in Chenango County and by extension the Southern Tier. These funds would be leveraged to accomplish several projects and ideas that would not only highlight the unique qualities that Norwich has, but would work as an anchor to draw additional investment to our community.

Outlined in the DRI Application there are several transformative projects, which include:

- The establishment of a business and workforce training center that provides access to needed education and micro credentialing opportunities to assist in growing and supporting our workforce development program.
- Creation of a micro-retail space that will actively recruit and support entrepreneurs by offering services and programs that will reduce barriers for those looking to conduct business downtown.
- Create improved accessibility and safety to and in upper floors of key downtown buildings, resulting in redevelopment opportunities for mixed-use office and residential space.
- Development of arts in the park and makerspace concepts to attract and engage artists and audience members, visitors for work, exhibitions, performances and more in the district.
- Transform Norwich’s central green space in a place that will serve as a single point of access, and connection to key attractions including the Museum District, Chenango County fairgrounds, parks, outdoor recreational facilities, festivals, events and more.
- Convert passages, walkways and common areas into inclusive, welcoming and attractive spaces that are safe, welcoming and provide comfort and accessibility to downtown spaces and common areas.
The Downtown Revitalization Initiative will expand and leverage the City of Norwich and work to help create an inclusive and sustainable downtown environment that works for residents, businesses, traveling professionals, tourists and students. In addition to generating additional meaningful private investment, it will give us the opportunity to connect our downtown, create opportunities to build on current projects, and catapult the City of Norwich into the next level of economic development and sustainability.

The impact of the DRI funding will be long lasting, far reaching and our community and businesses are ready to work together to take this on and make the most out of this opportunity. I believe it is important that we support initiatives that benefit and enhance our local communities and all those that reside within it. I thank you in advance for your consideration to my request and look forward to a favorable outcome.

Sincerely,

Joseph G. Angelino
Member of Assembly
122nd District
August 31, 2021

Kerri Green
President & CEO
Commerce Chenango
15 South Broad Street
Norwich, NY 13815

Dear Kerri,

I am writing to offer my support of the 10 million dollar Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) grant application that Development Chenango/Commerce Chenango and the City of Norwich are applying for, as part of the Southern Tier Regional Economic Development Council.

As the Member of Congress for Chenango County and other parts of the Southern Tier, I can attest to what this investment would mean to the City of Norwich in Chenango County and by extension the Southern Tier. These funds would be leveraged to accomplish a number of projects and ideas that would not only highlight the unique qualities that Norwich has, but would work as an anchor to draw additional investment to our community.

Outlined in the DRI Application there are a number of transformative projects, including:

- The establishment of a business and workforce training center that provides access to needed education and micro credentialing opportunities to assist in growing and supporting our workforce development program.
- Creation of a micro-retail space that will actively recruit and support entrepreneurs by offering services and programs that will reduce barriers for those looking to conduct business downtown.
- Create improved accessibility and safety to and in upper floors of key downtown buildings, resulting in redevelopment opportunities for mixed-use office and residential space.
- Development of arts in the park and makerspace concepts to attract and engage artists and audience members, visitors for work, exhibitions, performances and more in the district.
- Transform Norwich’s central green space in a place that will serve as a single point of access, and connection to key attractions including the Museum District, Chenango County fairgrounds, parks, outdoor recreational facilities, festivals, events and more.
Convert passages, walkways and common areas into inclusive, welcoming and attractive spaces that are safe, welcoming and provide comfort and accessibility to downtown spaces and common areas.

The Downtown Revitalization Initiative will expand and leverage the City of Norwich and work to help create an inclusive and sustainable downtown environment that works for residents, businesses, traveling professionals, tourists and students. All of these will be vital to the successful rebound of the economy in Upstate New York following the COVID-19 pandemic that has ravaged our region over the past year and a half.

In addition to generating additional meaningful private investment, it will give us the opportunity to connect our downtown, create opportunities to build on current projects, and catapult the City of Norwich into the next level of economic development and sustainability.

The impact of the DRI funding will be long lasting, far reaching and our community and businesses are ready to work together, take this on and make the most out of this opportunity. For these reasons, I fully support this application for full DRI funding. Please do not hesitate to contact me at my Utica District Office at 315-732-0713 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Claudia Tenney

CLAUDIA TENNEY
Member of Congress
September 13, 2021

Kevin Younis
Chief Operating Officer and Executive Deputy Commissioner
Empire State Development
625 Broadway
Albany, NY 12245

Dear Mr. Younis:

I am pleased to write in support of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) grant application submitted by Commerce Chenango and the City of Norwich. This funding is essential for improving the vitality of this rapidly developing economic center in Chenango County.

The City of Norwich is in the heart of the rural region of New York’s Southern Tier and is the site of some of the area’s most exciting economic developments with renowned large employers like Chobani, Raymond Corporation, and NBT Bank. Funds through the DRI would not only build on these existing economic drivers, but also serve as an anchor to draw additional investment to this historic community. Specifically, funding will establish a business and workforce training center that provides access to needed education and micro-credentialing opportunities to assist in growing the workforce development program. In addition, Norwich plans to enhance the natural beauty of the downtown by improving existing green spaces, improving accessibility to other attractions in Chenango County, developing art spaces, and more. This would go hand in hand with similar efforts to leverage the City’s prime location in Upstate NY as a tourism destination and to transition city infrastructure to create a more walkable community that connects the downtown, fair grounds, parks, and other local attractions.

I applaud Commerce Chenango and the City of Norwich for the steps they have already taken in improving regional tourism and the ongoing economic development of the community and hope its application for funding meets with your approval.

Thank you for your consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact me or my grants coordinator in our Washington, DC office at 202-224-6542.

Sincerely,

Charles E. Schumer
United States Senator
September 13, 2021

Kerri Green, President & CEO
Commerce Chenango
15 South Broad Street
Norwich, NY 13815

Dear Kerri,

On behalf of NBT Bank, I am writing to voice strong support for the application by Development Chenango/Commerce Chenango and the City of Norwich for the Governor’s Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) as part of the Southern Tier Regional Economic Development Council.

At NBT Bank, we are proud that our history in Norwich dates back 165 years. Today, the city continues to serve as home to our corporate headquarters and our local employee base of more than 550 team members who support our network of 140 locations in seven states. We plan to continue to invest in our facilities here and the community for years to come.

While industry and demographics continue to change, Downtown Norwich remains the commercial, cultural and governmental heart of Chenango County. It offers much that appeals to families, professionals and retirees. The city’s walkable downtown holds unique potential for additional shopping and dining opportunities, and the surrounding natural beauty makes outdoor adventure easily accessible.

The $10 million DRI award will have a profound and long-lasting impact on Norwich, Chenango County and, by extension, the Southern Tier. Outlined in the DRI application for the City of Norwich are a number of transformative projects that will support workforce development, create new retail opportunities, give downtown buildings new life, develop arts in the park and makerspace concepts, and update greenspaces to connect key attractions while making downtown spaces more accessible and welcoming for all.

This type of investment will support small business, boost employment and help create an inclusive and sustainable downtown environment that works for residents, businesses, traveling professionals, tourists and students. The potential is exciting, and our community and local businesses are ready to work together to make the most out of this opportunity to build on current projects and achieve higher levels of economic development and sustainability.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

John H. Watt, Jr.
President and Chief Executive Officer
August 30, 2021

Kerri Green, President/CEO
Commerce Chenango
15 South Broad Street
Norwich, NY 13815

RE: Letter of Support – Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI)

Dear Kerri,

It is with great pleasure that I offer the support of both the Chenango County Department of Planning & Development and Lt. Warren E. Eaton Airport (OIC) for the City of Norwich Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) application.

As the Director of Planning, I can confirm the proposed projects within the DRI application are fully supported by the 2016 Chenango County Comprehensive Plan and complement our existing projects. Examples include:

- Goal #2.2 recommends municipalities “Investigate ways to enhance energy efficient transportation options to meet the needs of bicyclists, drivers, pedestrians, transit riders and community residents of all ages.” The DRI application meets this goal through the installation of vehicle charging stations, a project we are currently working on, bike racks, and improvements to bike/walking trails. These projects will not only improve the energy efficiency of transportation options, but also promote a healthier lifestyle for residents.

- Goal #2.8 recommends Commerce Chenango and others to “Support and submit grant applications for streetscape, housing development, commercial investment, and façade improvements.” The DRI application meets this goal through streetscape connectivity, development of improved accessibility and safety measures in upper-floor apartments and creating a workforce training center achieve this goal perfectly.

- Goal #2.11 recommends Commerce Chenango “Provide support to public and private facilities considered strategic to the people of Chenango County and its economic vitality.” The DRI application meets this goal by working with private owners to improve the accessibility and safety of upper-floor apartments, creating a micro-retails pace, and providing improvements in public owned parks.

- The Planning Department was recently awarded a $1.9 million wireless broadband expansion project to include the City of Norwich and Town of New Berlin.

As the Airport Administrator for Lt. Warren E. Eaton Airport in Norwich, NY, I am excited about the increase in activity at our airport which would result from making the City of Norwich a more attractive destination in the heart of New York State. In order to attend some of the prominent events in the area, visitors will occasionally
charter a jet to fly into Norwich. These visits mean substantial fuel sales, upwards of $1000 per fueling, furthering the sustainability of our county-owned and operated airport.

As a member of the DRI Steering Committee full of diverse skillsets, I am fully confident in our administrative capacity to implement all of the initiatives outlined in the application and look forward to helping revitalize the City of Norwich. I am also willing to devote my time, as well as the time of my staff, to help administer the grant should it be awarded.

If any additional information is requested, please feel free to contact me by phone at (607) 337-1640, or by email at shaneb@co.chenango.ny.us.

With Appreciation,

[Signature]

Shane H. Butler, Director of Planning & Airport Administrator
Chenango County Department of Planning & Development
Lt. Warren E. Eaton Airport (OIC)
9/3/2021

Kerri Green  
President & CEO  
Commerce Chenango  
15 South Broad Street  
Norwich, NY 13815

Dear Kerri,

I am writing to offer my support of the 10 million dollar Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) grant application that Development Chenango/Commerce Chenango and the City of Norwich are applying for as part of the Southern Tier Regional Economic Development Council.

As the Director of Tourism and Tourism Promotion Agency (TPA) for Chenango County, I can attest to what this investment would mean to the City of Norwich in Chenango County and by extension the Southern Tier.

Outlined in the DRI application there are a number of transformative projects that would work as an anchor to draw additional investment to our community. I also feel that in moving into a hopefully post-COVID quality-of-life, these funds could be used to accomplish a number of new ideas and projects that will boost our tourism economy, provide jobs, and highlight the unique assets that Norwich has.

Norwich’s central green space can serve as a single point of access and connect key attractions that are within walking distance. Development of arts and makerspace concepts will help to attract and engage budding artists, new exhibitions, and the expansion of a variety of live performances. Providing conversion of walkways and common areas into inclusive, welcoming, and attractive spaces that are safe for visitors and residents alike will help support local retail and restaurant businesses.

The impact of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative funding on our tourism industry and the City of Norwich will be long lasting and far-reaching. Our community and businesses are excited to work together to make the most of this opportunity.

Thank you for your consideration.

Audrey Robinson  
Director of Chenango County Tourism  
Commerce Chenango
September 2, 2021

Kerri Green, President & CEO
Commerce Chenango
15 South Broad Street
Norwich, NY 13815

Dear Kerri,

It is with great pleasure that I offer the Chenango County Historical Society's support for the $10 million Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) grant application that Development Chenango/Commerce Chenango and the City of Norwich are applying for as part of the Southern Tier Regional Economic Development Council.

As the Chenango County Historical Society's Executive Director, I can attest to what this investment would mean to the City of Norwich and Chenango County. These funds would be leveraged to accomplish a number of projects and ideas that would not only highlight the unique qualities that Norwich has, but would work as an anchor to draw additional investment into our community.

There are a number of projects outlined in the application which would greatly enhance the Chenango County Historical Society's ability to accomplish our mission, including:

- Transformation of the city’s central green space into a place that will serve as a single point of access, connecting key attractions, including the Museum District (home of the Chenango County Historical Society) with other landmarks, such as the Chenango County fairgrounds, outdoor recreational facilities, parks, and more.
- Development of cultural opportunities in the parks to attract and engage artists and audience members, visitors for work, exhibitions, performances, and more.
- Convert passages, walkways, and common areas into inclusive, welcoming, safe, and attractive spaces that provide comfort and accessibility between downtown spaces and the Museum District.

The Downtown Revitalization Initiative will help the City of Norwich create an inclusive and sustainable downtown environment that works for residents, businesses, traveling professionals, tourists, and students. In addition to generating additional meaningful private investment, this initiative gives our community new opportunities to improve connections, build capacity for current projects already underway, and catapult the City of Norwich into the next level of economic development and sustainability.

We wish you much success in this endeavor! If you have questions for the Chenango County Historical Society, please do not hesitate to contact us at (607) 334-9227.

Best Wishes,

Jessica Moquin, Executive Director
Chenango County Historical Society and Museum
August 31, 2021

Commerce Chenango
Attn: Kerri Green
15 South Broad St.
Norwich, NY 13815

Dear Kerri,

We are writing in support of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative grant application that is being put together by Development Chenango and the City of Norwich. This initiative would allow for the furtherance of many important local projects and build on the many investments our community has recently made in our downtown. Transforming our community so it is attractive for residents, businesses and tourists is critically important.

In our current role as co-chairpersons of Friends of the Museum District we have been able to channel significant community support into improvements in Norwich’s Museum District like sidewalks, lighting, accessibility and landscaping. The Downtown Revitalization Initiative would support the next phase of the redevelopment — connecting these improvements to downtown to form a seamless, walkable corridor that would spur redevelopment throughout the downtown district.

In addition to the Friends of the Museum District project we are aware of many other important projects the Downtown Revitalization Initiative would support like a loan/grant fund to improve accessibility for downtown buildings, establishment of a workforce training center and creation of micro retail space. These and other projects, taken together, will allow the City of Norwich to take a transformative step forward into a sustainable and prosperous future.

Wishing you great success we remain

Sincerely,

Pegi LoPresti
Co-Chair, Friends of the Museum District

Eric Larsen
Co-Chair, Friends of the Museum District
September 6, 2021

Kerri Green  
President & CEO  
Commerce Chenango  
15 South Broad Street  
Norwich, NY 13815

Dear Kerri,

I am writing to offer my support of the $10-million-dollar Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) grant application that Development Chenango/Commerce Chenango and the City of Norwich are applying for, as part of the Southern Tier Regional Economic Development Council.

The City of Norwich offers much that appeals to families, professionals and retirees. The surrounding natural beauty makes outdoor adventure easily accessible, while the city’s walkable downtown provides unique shopping and dining opportunities. The DRI grant would have a dramatic impact on our city to attract tourism and economic commerce to the Region.

The $10-million-dollar Downtown Revitalization Initiative award would stimulate placemaking that capitalizes on Downtown Norwich’s authentic business district, green spaces, and cultural attractions. The centrally located green spaces in Downtown Norwich will serve as a single point of access, and connection to key attractions including the Museum District, Chenango County fairgrounds, parks, festivals, and events. The DRI award will help to create an inclusive and sustainable downtown environment that works for residents, businesses, traveling professionals, tourists and students.

The City of Norwich is home to the Northeast Classic Car Museum and we plan to continue to invest in our Museum and look forward to making New York State proud of our beautiful city.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Robert M. Jeffrey  
Executive Director  
Northeast Classic Car Museum
August 30, 2021

Kerri Green  
President & CEO  
Commerce Chenango  
15 South Broad Street  
Norwich, NY 13815

Dear Kerri,

I am writing to offer my support of the 10 million dollar Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) grant application that Development Chenango/Commerce Chenango and the City of Norwich are applying for, as part of the Southern Tier Regional Economic Development Council.

As President and CEO of Preferred Mutual Insurance Company, I can attest to what this investment would mean to the City of Norwich in Chenango County and by extension the Southern Tier. These funds would be leveraged to accomplish a number of projects and ideas that would not only highlight the unique qualities that Norwich has, but would work as an anchor to draw additional investment to our community.

Outlined in the DRI Application there are a number of transformative projects, including:

- The establishment of a business and workforce training center that provides access to needed education and micro credentialing opportunities to assist in growing and supporting our workforce development program.
- Creation of a micro-retail space that will actively recruit and support entrepreneurs by offering services and programs that will reduce barriers for those looking to conduct business downtown.
- Create improved accessibility and safety to and in upper floors of key downtown buildings, resulting in redevelopment opportunities for mixed-use office and residential space.
- Develop makerspace concepts for the park to attract and engage artists, performances, and audiences.
- Transform Norwich’s central green space into a place that will serve as a single point of access, and connection to key attractions including the Museum District, Chenango County fairgrounds, parks, outdoor recreational facilities, festivals, events, and more.
- Convert passages, walkways, and common areas into attractive spaces that are safe, welcoming, and provide accessibility to downtown and common areas.

The Downtown Revitalization Initiative will expand and leverage the City of Norwich and work to help create an inclusive and sustainable downtown environment that works for residents, businesses, traveling professionals, tourists, and students.

In addition to generating additional meaningful private investment, it will give us the opportunity to connect our downtown, create opportunities to build on current projects, and catapult the City of Norwich into the next level of economic development and sustainability.

The impact of the DRI funding will be long lasting, far reaching and our community and businesses are ready to work together, take this on and make the most out of this opportunity.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Christopher P. Taft, CLC, CPA
President and CEO
September 7, 2021

Kerri Green  
President & CEO  
Commerce Chenango  
15 South Broad Street  
Norwich, NY 13815

Dear Kerri,

I am writing to offer my support of the 10 million dollar Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) grant application that Development Chenango/Commerce Chenango and the City of Norwich are applying for, as part of the Southern Tier Regional Economic Development Council.

As Chairman of the Chenango County Board of Supervisors I can attest to what this investment would mean to the City of Norwich in Chenango County and by extension the Southern Tier. These funds would be leveraged to accomplish a number of projects and ideas that would not only highlight the unique qualities that Norwich has but would work as an anchor to draw additional investment to our community.

Outlined in the DRI Application there are a number of transformative projects, including:

- The establishment of a business and workforce training center that provides access to needed education and micro credentialing opportunities to assist in growing and supporting our workforce development program.
- Creation of a micro-retail space that will actively recruit and support entrepreneurs by offering services and programs that will reduce barriers for those looking to conduct business downtown.
- Create improved accessibility and safety to and in upper floors of key downtown buildings, resulting in redevelopment opportunities for mixed-use office and residential space.
- Development of arts in the park and makerspace concepts to attract and engage artists and audience members, visitors for work, exhibitions, performances and more in the district.
- Transform Norwich’s central green space in a place that will serve as a single point of access, and connection to key attractions including the Museum District, Chenango County fairgrounds, parks, outdoor recreational facilities, festivals, events and more.
- Convert passages, walkways and common areas into inclusive, welcoming and attractive spaces that are safe, welcoming and provide comfort and accessibility to downtown spaces and common areas.
The Downtown Revitalization Initiative will expand and leverage the City of Norwich and work
to help create an inclusive and sustainable downtown environment that works for residents,
businesses, traveling professionals, tourists and students. The City of Norwich is the hub of
Chenango County. Revitalizing downtown Norwich will increase tourism throughout the county
and promote numerous local businesses.

In addition to generating additional meaningful private investment, it will give us the opportunity
to connect our downtown, create opportunities to build on current projects, and catapult the City
of Norwich into the next level of economic development and sustainability.

The impact of the DRI funding will be long lasting, far reaching and our community and
businesses are ready to work together, take this on and make the most out of this opportunity.

Thank you for your consideration.

George Seneck
Chairman Chenango County Board of Supervisors
Supervisor Town of Guilford
September 2, 2021

Kerri Green
President & CEO
Commerce Chenango
15 South Broad Street
Norwich, NY 13815

Dear Kerri,

I am writing to offer my support of the 10 million dollar Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) grant application that Development Chenango/Commerce Chenango and the City of Norwich are applying for, as part of the Southern Tier Regional Economic Development Council.

As Executive Director of Chenango Housing Improvement Program I can attest to what this investment would mean to the City of Norwich in Chenango County and by extension the Southern Tier. These funds would be leveraged to accomplish a number of projects and ideas that would not only highlight the unique qualities that Norwich has, but would work as an anchor to draw additional investment to our community.

Chenango Housing Improvement Program, Inc. (CHIP) owns and operates the Norwich Center Building at 27 West Main Street, just off Broad Street in downtown Norwich, New York. The building is home to The Chenango County Arts Council, The Norwich Theatre Group, Colorscape Chenango, Nate Gross Music, and CHIP’s Management office. In addition, we recently rented space to an up-and-coming entrepreneur. The building is an important center of activity for residents in Norwich, Chenango County, and visitors from out of the area.

In discussions with Alecia O’Neill, Executive Director of The Chenango Arts Council, we have identified areas in the building that would be perfect for further development of the arts, including, makerspace and areas to attract and engage artists.

In addition, there are several spaces that would allow for micro-retail spaces for recruiting and supporting entrepreneurs that would allow them to conduct business downtown.

In order to make these ideas a reality improving accessibility would be a priority. This beautiful historic building is important to the community but it’s in need of handicap access so that tenants and visitors could better utilize the space. Our goal would be to install a handicap entrance to the lower level and an elevator to reach the upper floors.

CHIP Inc. does not discriminate on the basis of handicapped status in the admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its federally assisted programs and activities.
I am excited about Chenango Housing Improvement Program, Inc. being part of The Downtown Revitalization Initiative. I believe the investment will allow this building to continue serving the community for many years to come.

The Downtown Revitalization Initiative will expand and leverage the City of Norwich and work to help create an inclusive and sustainable downtown environment that works for residents, businesses, traveling professionals, tourists and students.

In addition to generating additional meaningful private investment, it will give us the opportunity to connect our downtown, create opportunities to build on current projects, and catapult the City of Norwich into the next level of economic development and sustainability.

The impact of the DRI funding will be long lasting, far reaching and our community and businesses are ready to work together, take this on and make the most out of this opportunity.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Rose M. Oliver
Executive Director
August 31, 2021

Kerri Green
President & CEO
Commerce Chenango
15 South Broad Street
Norwich, NY 13815

Dear Kerri,

I am writing to offer my support of the 10 million dollar Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) grant application that Development Chenango/Commerce Chenango and the City of Norwich are applying for, as part of the Southern Tier Regional Economic Development Council.

As District Superintendent for DCMO BOCES I can attest to what this investment would mean to the City of Norwich in Chenango County and by extension the Southern Tier. These funds would be leveraged to accomplish a number of projects and ideas that would not only highlight the unique qualities that Norwich has, but would work as an anchor to draw additional investment to our community.

Outlined in the DRI Application there are a number of transformative projects, including:

- The establishment of a business and workforce training center that provides access to needed education and micro credentialing opportunities to assist in growing and supporting our workforce development program.
- Creation of a micro-retail space that will actively recruit and support entrepreneurs by offering services and programs that will reduce barriers for those looking to conduct business downtown.
- Create improved accessibility and safety to and in upper floors of key downtown buildings, resulting in redevelopment opportunities for mixed-use office and residential space.
- Development of arts in the park and makerspace concepts to attract and engage artists and audience members, visitors for work, exhibitions, performances and more in the district.
- Transform Norwich’s central green space in a place that will serve as a single point of access, and connection to key attractions including the Museum District, Chenango County fairgrounds, parks, outdoor recreational facilities, festivals, events and more.
- Convert passages, walkways and common areas into inclusive, welcoming and attractive spaces that are safe, welcoming and provide comfort and accessibility to downtown spaces and common areas.
The Downtown Revitalization Initiative will expand and leverage the City of Norwich and work to help create an inclusive and sustainable downtown environment that works for residents, businesses, traveling professionals, tourists and students.

In addition to generating additional meaningful private investment, it will give us the opportunity to connect our downtown, create opportunities to build on current projects, and catapult the City of Norwich into the next level of economic development and sustainability.

The impact of the DRI funding will be long lasting, far reaching and our community and businesses are ready to work together, take this on and make the most out of this opportunity.

Thank you for your consideration.

Perry T. Dewey III
District Superintendent
DCMO BOCES
September 8, 2021

Kerri Green
President & CEO
Commerce Chenango
15 South Broad Street
Norwich, NY 13815

Dear Kerri,

I am writing to offer my support of the 10 million dollar Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) grant application that Development Chenango/Commerce Chenango and the City of Norwich are applying for, as part of the Southern Tier Regional Economic Development Council.

As the Director of the SUNY Morrisville Norwich Campus I can attest to what this investment would mean to the City of Norwich in Chenango County and by extension the Southern Tier. These funds would be leveraged to accomplish a number of projects and ideas that would not only highlight the unique qualities that Norwich has, but would work as an anchor to draw additional investment to our community.

With community engagement being central to the campus’s mission, SUNY Morrisville will commit personnel resources, including professional staff and faculty as needed, in order to support the execution of the transformative projects outlined below:

- The establishment of a business and workforce training center that provides access to needed education and micro credentialing opportunities to assist in growing and supporting our workforce development program.
- Creation of a micro-retail space that will actively recruit and support entrepreneurs by offering services and programs that will reduce barriers for those looking to conduct business downtown.
- Create improved accessibility and safety to and in upper floors of key downtown buildings, resulting in redevelopment opportunities for mixed-use office and residential space.
- Development of arts in the park and makerspace concepts to attract and engage artists and audience members, visitors for work, exhibitions, performances and more in the district.
- Transform Norwich’s central green space in a place that will serve as a single point of access, and connection to key attractions including the Museum District, Chenango County fairgrounds, parks, outdoor recreational facilities, festivals, events and more.
- Convert passages, walkways and common areas into inclusive, welcoming and attractive spaces that are safe, welcoming and provide comfort and accessibility to downtown spaces and common areas.

The Downtown Revitalization Initiative will expand and leverage the City of Norwich and work to help create an inclusive and sustainable downtown environment that works for residents, businesses, traveling professionals, tourists and students.

In addition to generating additional meaningful private investment, it will give us the opportunity to connect our downtown, create opportunities to build on current projects, and catapult the City of Norwich into the next level of economic development and sustainability.

The impact of the DRI funding will be long lasting, far reaching and our community and businesses are ready to work together, take this on and make the most out of this opportunity. SUNY Morrisville is excited to partner in this initiative to continue and build upon the successes and momentum of the Norwich and Chenango County communities.

Thank you for your consideration.

Lindsey G. Lefevre
Director
SUNY Morrisville Norwich Campus
September 1, 2021

Kerri Green
President & CEO
Commerce Chenango
15 South Broad Street
Norwich, NY 13815

Dear Kerri,

I am writing to offer my support of the 10 million dollar Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) grant application that Development Chenango/Commerce Chenango and the City of Norwich are applying for, as part of the Southern Tier Regional Economic Development Council.

As Executive Director of the Chenango Arts Council, I can attest to what this investment would mean to the City of Norwich in Chenango County and by extension, the Southern Tier. These funds would be leveraged to accomplish a number of projects and ideas that would not only highlight the unique qualities that Norwich has, but would work as an anchor to draw additional investment to our community.

The Chenango Arts Council occupies the main floor of the Chenango Housing Improvement Project (CHIP) building at 27 West Main Street, just off Broad Street in downtown Norwich, NY. We operate a two-story art gallery, newly renovated hands-on arts classroom, wi-fi equipped conference room and offices, as well as a 514-seat state-of-the-art performance theater with dressing rooms and a kitchen. The building is also directly across the street from Guernsey Memorial Library Park, one block away from Norwich’s West Park, two blocks from East Park.

In discussions with Rose Oliver, Executive Director of CHIP, we have identified areas in the building on the lower levels (beneath the Soccer Center) that would be perfect for a Makers Space. In addition, the Arts Council has received a donation of equipment for a complete dark room, the perfect complement to an Arts Education Center.

Kerri, I am excited about the Chenango Arts Council being part of The Downtown Revitalization Initiative. I believe you will agree, we are ideally suited to be home-base for development of Arts in the Parks, Makers Spaces, and creative cooperative concepts that will attract and engage tourists, residents and employees to the exhibitions, performances and Arts Education available in Norwich.

The impact of the DRI funding will be long lasting, far reaching, and rewarding for generations to come. Our community and businesses are ready to work together, take this on, and make the most out of this opportunity.

Thank you for your consideration.

Very best regards,

[Signature]

Alecia ONeill
Executive Director

Phone: 607.336 ARTS (2787)  info@chenangoarts.org  ChenangoArts.org
Dear Kerri:

The Board of the Chenango Greenway Conservancy enthusiastically supports the Development Chenango application for the District Revitalization Initiative (DRI) grant, particularly the effort to expand access to green spaces in the vicinity of Norwich.

Over the last two decades the Chenango Greenway has worked with the City of Norwich and the Norwich City Schools to gradually develop the Chenango Riverwalk, an eight-mile network of public trails along five miles of the Chenango River. More recently it has been the recipient of two generous donations of land which help to secure public access to the river front and expand the possibilities for further development and preservation. The Greenway has also worked with the City to develop a children’s playground and public dog park at Greenway Park along the river. In the process, the Greenway has in many ways helped alter our relationship with the river, figuratively moving it from our common backyard into our community’s front yard – thereby becoming a focal point for further growth and development.

The Greenway is also working with neighboring organizations and communities in this region to add the Chenango Riverwalk to the proposed Chenango Canal Heritage Trail extending from Utica to Binghamton.

Simultaneously, the Greenway is finalizing the purchase of 190+ acres of undeveloped Stone Quarry land on West Hill, adjacent to the City of Norwich, a place that has long been open to public use and many childhood adventures, but recently became endangered of being sold for private use. The Quarry borders extensive land owned by Chenango County, the Norwich School District and the Mt. Hope Cemetery. With the purchase of this property the Greenway is working with the other landowners to develop improved public access to more than 500 acres of land that is becoming known as the Norwich Community Forest. In conjunction with the county government, school district, and the Galena Growlers mountain biking group, the Greenway has helped to transform this community forest into a regional mountain biking destination that has recently attracted hundreds of bikers and their families for two weekend races, providing significant economic and motivational support to our community.

Once again, the Chenango Greenway Conservancy enthusiastically supports this DRI application and looks forward to working with Development Chenango to increase public access to open spaces in the Chenango region.

Sincerely,

Sharon M. Pelosi
Chairperson
September 7, 2021

Kerri Green  
President & CEO  
Commerce Chenango  
15 South Broad Street  
Norwich, NY 13815

Dear Kerri,

I am writing in support of the ten million dollar Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) grant application that Development Chenango/Commerce Chenango and the City of Norwich are applying for as part of the Southern Tier Regional Economic Development Council.

As the current Executive Director of the Norwich Business Improvement District and retired City of Norwich Fire Chief I have a unique perspective of the area and can attest to what this investment would mean to the City of Norwich in Chenango County and by extension the Southern Tier in general. It’s my understanding that these funds would be utilized to accomplish a number of beneficial projects and thoughts that would not only highlight the unique qualities available in Norwich, but could also work as an anchor to draw additional investment to our community and the greater Norwich area as well.

Outlined in the DRI Application there are a number of transformative projects, including:

- The establishment of a business and workforce training center available to provide access to needed education and micro credentialing opportunities to assist in growing and supporting our workforce development program.
- Creation of a micro-retail space that will actively recruit and support entrepreneurs by offering services and programs that will reduce barriers for those looking to conduct business downtown.
- Create improved accessibility and safety to and in upper floors of key downtown buildings, resulting in redevelopment opportunities for mixed-use office and residential space.
- Development of arts in the park and makerspace concepts to attract and engage artists and audience members, visitors for work, exhibitions, performances and more in the district.
- Transform Norwich’s central green space as a place that will serve as a single point of access, and connection to key attractions including the Museum District, Chenango County fairgrounds, parks, outdoor recreational facilities, festivals, events and more.
- Convert passages, walkways and common areas into inclusive, welcoming and attractive spaces that are safe, welcoming and provide comfort and accessibility to downtown spaces and common areas.

The Downtown Revitalization Initiative will expand and leverage the City of Norwich and work to help create an inclusive and sustainable downtown environment that works for residents,
businesses, traveling professionals, tourists and students, while at the same time bring more business to the struggling local small business within the City of Norwich and surrounding area.

In addition to generating additional meaningful private investment, it will provide the opportunity to connect our downtown, create opportunities to build on current projects, and catapult the City of Norwich into the next level of economic development and sustainability.

The impact of the DRI funding will be long lasting, far reaching and our community and businesses are ready to work together, take this on and make the most out of this opportunity.

I sincerely thank you for your consideration of this grant. most respectfully, I am;

Tracy L. Chawgo, Executive Director
Norwich Business Improvement District
15 South Broad Street
Norwich, New York 13815
Email: BID@frontiernet.net
Phone: 607.316.5750
September 2, 2021

Kerri Green
President & CEO
Commerce Chenango
15 South Broad Street
Norwich, NY 13815

Dear Kerri,

I am writing to offer my support of the 10 million dollar Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) grant application that Development Chenango/Commerce Chenango and the City of Norwich are applying for, as part of the Southern Tier Regional Economic Development Council.

As Executive Director of Chenango Housing Improvement Program I can attest to what this investment would mean to the City of Norwich in Chenango County and by extension the Southern Tier. These funds would be leveraged to accomplish a number of projects and ideas that would not only highlight the unique qualities that Norwich has, but would work as an anchor to draw additional investment to our community.

Chenango Housing Improvement Program, Inc. (CHIP) owns and operates the Norwich Center Building at 27 West Main Street, just off Broad Street in downtown Norwich, New York. The building is home to The Chenango County Arts Council, The Norwich Theatre Group, Colorscape Chenango, Nate Gross Music, and CHIP’s Management office. In addition, we recently rented space to an up-and-coming entrepreneur. The building is an important center of activity for residents in Norwich, Chenango County, and visitors from out of the area.

In discussions with Alecia O’Neill, Executive Director of The Chenango Arts Council, we have identified areas in the building that would be perfect for further development of the arts, including, makerspace and areas to attract and engage artists.

In addition, there are several spaces that would allow for micro-retail spaces for recruiting and supporting entrepreneurs that would allow them to conduct business downtown.

In order to make these ideas a reality improving accessibility would be a priority. This beautiful historic building is important to the community but it’s in need of handicap access so that tenants and visitors could better utilize the space. Our goal would be to install a handicap entrance to the lower level and an elevator to reach the upper floors.
I am excited about Chenango Housing Improvement Program, Inc. being part of The Downtown Revitalization Initiative. I believe the investment will allow this building to continue serving the community for many years to come.

The Downtown Revitalization Initiative will expand and leverage the City of Norwich and work to help create an inclusive and sustainable downtown environment that works for residents, businesses, traveling professionals, tourists and students.

In addition to generating additional meaningful private investment, it will give us the opportunity to connect our downtown, create opportunities to build on current projects, and catapult the City of Norwich into the next level of economic development and sustainability.

The impact of the DRI funding will be long lasting, far reaching and our community and businesses are ready to work together, take this on and make the most out of this opportunity.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Rose M. Oliver
Executive Director
Chenango County Historical Society in Norwich NY hosts Women’s Equality Day celebration

Jessica Moquin  Special to the Mid-York Weekly USA TODAY NETWORK
Published 9:07 a.m. ET Aug. 16, 2021

The Chenango County Historical Society (CCHS) in Norwich and the Tri-County Chapter of New York State Women, Inc. will host a special program Aug. 26 in celebration of Women’s Equality Day. The evening will honor the legacy of Belva Lockwood and her influence on female public servants in Chenango County.

The Tri-County Chapter of New York State Women, Inc. will present brief vignettes beginning at 5 p.m. on three noteworthy local women politicians who were pioneers of their time.

Meta L Cowles (1858-1935) of Greene was the first woman practitioner in the U.S. Court in the local judicial district. Janet Hill Gordon (1915-1990) of Norwich became the first female elected to the New York State Assembly. She was also the first woman to give birth while serving in the State Legislature and she was the second woman elected to the State Senate.
Business

Upstate yogurt giant Chobani heads to an IPO that could lead to big payday for employees

Updated: Jul. 09, 2021, 11:20 a.m. | Published: Jul. 09, 2021, 11:10 a.m.
Upstate yogurt giant Chobani heads to an IPO that could lead to big payday for employees - syracuse.com

A Chobani employee stacks boxes of Greek yogurt at the company’s plant in South Edmeston. Chobani, LLC

588 shares

By Don Cazentre | dcazentre@nyup.com

Chobani, the privately owned Chenango County-based Greek yogurt company, has started the process of filing for an initial public offering that could be valued as high as $10 billion.

It could also generate a huge windfall for the company’s employees, who have been promised a share of the company if or when it is sold or becomes public.

Chobani this week filed paperwork with the federal Securities and Exchange Commission for a stock market listing, MarketWatch and other financial news services reported. That filing would be a first step to an IPO that would make Chobani a publicly traded company.
Chobani has been considering an IPO for some time, and that prospect heated up earlier this year as the company moved into the hot plant-based food sector. It recently launched its latest innovation, Chobani Zero Sugar.

Hamdi Ulukaya, an immigrant from Turkey, founded Chobani in 2005 in a former Kraft Foods yogurt plant in South Edmeston. It sold its first cup of Greek yogurt, which is thicker and tangier than standard yogurts, in 2007.

By 2011, Chobani had become the leading U.S. maker of Greek yogurt, a booming food category that had barely existed in the American market a few
years before. The company recently reported its sales are increasing at triple the rate of the rest of the Greek yogurt category.

In 2016, Ulukaya announced that he would give full-time employees shares worth nearly 10% of the value of the company’s growth between then and the time he might sell the company or take it public.

At that time, the company’s value was estimated at between $3 billion and $5 billion. That means the IPO could create $4 billion to $5 billion in growth, if the current projections are correct. Chobani’s 2,200 or so employees would then stand to earn 10% of the increased value, or $400 million to $500 million.

Details of how that would be shared are not known.

Chobani’s employees are split between its original operations in and around Norwich (headquarters) and South Edmeston (yogurt plant) and its second plant in Twin Falls, Idaho. The Idaho plant is the world’s largest yogurt making facility.
Norwich Spends $23,000 On Skate Park Repaving
Published: August 26th, 2021

NORWICH — Equipment being moved from the skate park in Norwich so it can be repaved. On August 17, Norwich council members approved the $23,000 repaving project, citing safety concerns and public inquiries as reasons for approval. Youth Bureau Director Bob Mason spoke at a council meeting earlier this month, expressing his support for the project.

"In order to keep this place going, keep it in safe condition, it should be resurfaced, or somebody’s gonna get hurt," he said.
New playground to be constructed in Greenway Park

By Alan Stevens
Sun Staff Writer
news@eveningsun.com

NORWICH – The Chenango Greenway Conservancy is building a new playground at Greenway Park with the help of volunteers, after delays due to weather and the COVID-19 pandemic.

The organization is currently looking for volunteers to help assist the construction on Thursday. People who are interested can send an email to contactus@chenangogreenway.org to sign up for a shift or get more information.

Christopher Sprague, a board member of the conservancy and Chairman of the Norwich Parks Commission, stated that the idea of building a new playground developed after the construction of Baker Dog Park.

“We had to remove some playground equipment, and that equipment was too old to be reinstalled because of newer safety standards. So we decided at that time that it would be appropriate to get a grant to replace the equipment that was lost with the new play structure.”

Sprague introduced the plans for building a playground after the organization received a $15,000 grant from the Roger Follett Foundation. According to Sprague, the planned location for the new playground will be at the Greenway Park, along River Street in Norwich. (Photo by Alan Stevens)

Continued on Page 2

Norwich Common Council agreed to fund the remainder of the playground’s construction cost on Aug. 26, 2019. The funding of the project will amount to $25,000.

Greenway Park’s new playground was originally planned to be built during 2019. Bad weather during planned construction days hindered the project, delaying it until 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic caused the conservancy to further delay the playground’s construction.

Employees at NBT Bank are volunteering to build the playground on Friday.

“Community involvement is absolutely one of the values we have here at NBT and so we do coordinate among our Norwich-based employees to provide volunteer support, so that’s what we’re up to this week,” said NBT Director of Corporate Communications Florence Dolder.

“We hope to have it completed by Saturday. Sunday at the latest. I don’t know that it’ll be open for public use until Monday,” Sprague stated.

Ward 5 Alderman Dave Zieno said he’s excited about the project.

“The abundance of parks in this city contributes greatly to the quality of life for our residents,” he said. “The dedication of our commission and the volunteers allows us to spread our resources even further while limiting the impact on taxpayers. This is what a community like Norwich does best.”
70 new jobs planned with Unison's Norwich expansion

Jeff Platsky pressconnects.com

Unison Industries will invest $28 million in its Norwich plant and add 70 jobs.

The project was announced by state and company representatives on Tuesday at the company’s location south of Norwich.

Over the next four years, the company will invest $10 million in facility and equipment upgrades and $18 million in research and development operations. Unison will receive a performance-based grant of $4.2 million from the state to assist with the project.

"This site has been part of this community for a long time, and this investment will help us continue to drive growth in our manufacturing and research operations into the future," said Dan Ketchum, general manager of the Norwich Unison site.

The Norwich plant has gone through several owners, formerly Simmons Precision, and later being sold to B.F. Goodrich Aerospace, and then acquired by the GE Aerospace division in 1997. The Norwich location is one of five major Unison manufacturing sites.

Unison's 160,000-square-foot Norwich plant manufactures power generation and control systems for gas turbine engines, metal encased ignition leads, sensors, pressure and limit switches, bellows, space ignition systems, and components for use by other Unison locations. Product engineering, new product development and testing is performed on site.

In addition to creating 70 new jobs, the investment will help retain 362 existing jobs, the state said.

Nine job openings for the Norwich location are currently listed on the company's website. Among the positions available are lead weld engineer, assembler/tester, CNC machine operators and fulfillment leader.

"This is a significant investment that will help boost New York’s advanced technology and aerospace industries," said Lawrence Wilcox, chairman of the Chenango County Board of Supervisors.
28th annual Blues Fest comes to a close

By Sarah Giglio
Sun Staff Writer
sgiglio@eesun.com

NORWICH — The 28th annual Chenango Blues Fest rocked the fairgrounds this weekend, drawing thousands of music lovers and host to stunning performances.

Chenango Blues Fest organizer Eric Larsen said the weekend event was nothing but positive, and that it seemed like everyone was happy to be back at the festival.

“People were just unfailingly gracious. I heard so many kind words from people. So many people said how happy they were to have us back and how great it was to be outdoors and enjoying music. It was very gratifying to both myself and all of our volunteers, how supportive and nice everybody was,” said Larsen.

While Blues Association officials do not have an official head count, Larsen said the amount of attendees was in the thousands.

“We don’t have an actual account right now, but it was probably around a couple thousand each day,” he said.

“Probably a few more Saturday than Friday. But all in all, quite a few both days and very similar kinds of crowds.”

He added that he believes the free Friday show drew “the most people we’ve ever had for a Friday.”

This year’s festival saw performances from many top-tier artists, but also gave fans a nice surprise: a collaboration between several of the weekend’s performers. One of which was between Robert Randolph and Christone “Kingfish” Ingram.

“Award winning blues singer and guitarist Christone “Kingfish” Ingram performing at the 28th annual Chenango Blues Fest. (Photo by Sarah Giglio)

“Robert Randolph, who was a last minute fill-in for Jimmie Vaughan, who put on an unbelievably good show I thought. And when he brought up ‘Kingfish’ Ingram, I’ve told a whole bunch of people this: I have had the good fortune to hear tons and tons of music in my life, a lot of great music at the Chenango Blues Fest. Those two, the song they did together was as good as anything I’ve ever heard, at our festival or any other festival. That stuff is just magic,” Larsen said.

Larsen also spoke to the overall atmosphere of the festival, calling it “a giant backyard party.”

“All the artists tell me, you can really feel the difference and the fact that this is a volunteer effort by people who just love the music. It’s so different than the more corporate events that are starting to dominate,” Larsen explained.

Overall, this year’s Chenango Blues Fest was a success with spectacular performances, a good crowd, and thousands of music lovers excited for the return of the annual festival.

“I did not hear a single negative word all day long. The opposite. I heard nothing but compliments and support,” said Larsen. “I talked to all of our volunteers- no one heard a single negative word all day. So that’s nice, you know?”
Commerce Chenango helps fuel the frontlines with food

By Zachary Meseck
Sun Staff Writer
meseck@evensun.com

CHENANGO COUNTY - Commerce Chenango is helping to support staff at Chenango Memorial UHS by providing them food with funds raised from the community.

According to Commerce Chenango CEO Keri Green, the “Fueling the Front Lines” initiative was formed as part of an effort to support first responders during the coronavirus pandemic.

Green said so far approximately $5,000 has been raised to provide UHS staff members breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

“We were just trying to find ways that we can connect more with and better support our community,” said Green. Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday are our delivery days, and we try to make sure we deliver the locally purchased food to Chenango Memorial Hospital at times when staff are changing shifts for breakfast, lunch, and dinner.”

“We make sure we’re buying food from local businesses, and they’ve been giving us food at a great price to help us with our mission, and we greatly appreciate that.”

Commerce Chenango Director of Membership and Programs Mary Miner also spoke on fueling the front lines, and said this is one way community members can show support to a group of people that are helping to keep everyone safe.

“Health care workers and first responders are risking their lives every day and working around the clock to help as many patients as possible recover from the virus. Now more than ever, it is critical to support the people on the front lines of the COVID-19 pandemic,” said Miner. “This program is designed to not only show support to our frontline workers, but to also help support our restaurants and caterers who are struggling.”

Together we can support each other and move Chenango forward.”

Through the Chenango Foundation, Commerce Chenango is accepting donations to help feed our Chenango County frontline workers who are battling the COVID-19 pandemic.

Green said in order to sustain the initiative, Commerce Chenango is accepting donations through check, along with donations on its, “Fueling the Frontline” Go Fund Me page by doing a search for Commerce Chenango.

She added that 100 percent of the proceeds will go to providing meals to our frontline workers in Chenango County, and if you would prefer to mail a payment, please send donations to The Chenango Foundation, 15 South Broad Street, Norwich, NY 13815 and please reference “Fueling the Frontline.”

“By making your charitable donation, you are not only helping to support our frontline workers, but we will use the funds to purchase meals from Chenango County restaurants, who are part of our struggling business sector,” she said.

Designated by Empire State Development as an Essential Business, our doors are still closed to the general public for safety purposes, but someone from the staff is here Monday-Thursday 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Green said if you have a business related question regarding COVID-19, contact Commerce Chenango at 607-334-1400 or email to commercecechenango@gmail.com.
Continue from Page 1

May 15th). Businesses will need to register, confirm that they have taken appropriate safety measures to protect their employees and customers. Detailed guidance on these safety measures are still being developed, but you can start by looking at three areas:

- Employees and customers: which includes possibly making adjustments to workplace hours and shift design to reduce density in the workplace, making sure social distancing protocols are in place and restricting non-essential travel for your employees.
- Physical workspace: This includes requiring all customers and employees to wear a mask if they are in frequent close contact with others, and making sure you implement strict cleaning and sanitation standards throughout your physical workspace.
- Policies and practices: The final area that businesses should be reviewing is policies and practices that will meet our current health obligations. This includes screening of employees, reporting confirmed positive cases and making sure your human resource policies reflect our current environment.

I encourage you to watch the governor’s daily briefing for the latest information, and stay in touch with local officials if you have questions or concerns. This week, Governor Cuomo announced the start of regional “control rooms”, and Chenango County businesses will be represented by Commerce Chenango. We are working closely with our county officials at the Chenango County Department of Public Health, and Chenango County Emergency Management services to ensure that we have the latest information and are being consistent with our messaging.

To that effect, I would like to invite you to participate in a free webinar at 2 p.m., Friday, May 15. The topic is “Reopening Guidelines and Strategies” and this is specifically for businesses and individuals who want to understand the reopening guidelines and criteria. There will be time for questions from area businesses at the end of the presentation. We are pleased to have representation from Empire State Development who will be able to help answer any questions you may have.

To register for this event, please send us an email to register@chenangony.org. The session will be recorded and shared via social media on Friday afternoon.

This is an exciting step for Chenango County and as long as we continue to practice health and safety guidelines, and follow the reopen plan as laid out by the state, we will continue to move forward, together.

If you have any questions, please call me at (607) 334-1400 or send an email to kgreen@chenangony.org.

— By Commerce Chenango President & CEO Keirri Green

Continued on Page 2
Commerce Chenango preparing application for DRI funds

By Sarah Giglio
Sun Staff Writer
sagiglio@evensun.com

Norwich — Commerce Chenango in Norwich is in the process of preparing an application for funding through the District Revitalization Initiative (DRI). The purpose of the funding is to provide renovations to “downtown districts,” according to Commerce Chenango CEO Kerri Green.

So it’s a competitive competition where one application in each region would win $10 million for what they consider downtown,” said Green. “Basically to redo your entire downtown district."

According to Green, New York State is broken up into regions, and each town within those regions can apply. Norwich is considered the Southern Tier, and is competing for the funding with every other applicant town in that region.

If Norwich’s application wins, the city would be given $10 million to improve the downtown area, which according to Green, spans from Redford Street, down Broad Street, to the SUNY Morrisville Norwich extension.

Green said a steering committee focusing on the application has been looking into what could be improved in that area.

“If we just had $10 million, what could we do? And so the committee has been working to identify what some of those areas are,” she said. “Where should we focus our energy to make our downtown more attractive, because ultimately that’s what this is all for, right? To make our downtown attractive, to bring people here, to add jobs to add workers into the workforce.”

On July 27, Governor Andrew Cuomo announced that, because no funds were allocated in 2020 due to the coronavirus pandemic, double the standard amount will be awarded this year. This means two districts could win $10 million, improving the chance that Norwich could be allotted funds.

“Because they didn’t do it last year they’ve actually allocated $200 million, which means each region is getting $20 million, and it’s up to each region how to use that money,” said Green. “They can award two $10 million awards, or give one area $20 million.”

Cuomo said of the program, “The DRI is a cornerstone of New York’s comprehensive economic development strategy to drive investment and job creation in downtowns across the state. Our investments will support new and existing businesses, drive new mixed-use developments and bolster the arts and cultural venues to help attract residents and visitors for years to come.”

Green said Norwich had applied for DRI funding in 2019, but ultimately wasn’t awarded the money. However, this is beneficial now, as she said the steering committee is looking at what may have hindered the past application.

“I feel like we’ve identified the issues with the last application and that we are going to be able to present it in a way that will be more successful. So I feel really positive about it,” said Green.

The steering committee is

Continued on Page 2
Continued from Page 1
also drafting ideas for how to use the money, Green said, as the application asks for a rough outline of what projects awarded towns have in mind.

“What they want to see is that we have not shovel-ready but ready to go projects,” Green explained. “Your application has to be broad enough that it gives you some flexibility, but specific enough that the state can see you have some projects ready to go.”

“They want to see that we’re creating, you know, a mix of dining and shopping and entertainment, tourism, arts, culture. You can use the funds to enhance public spaces so we could do sculptures, murals, walkways,” she added.

If Norwich is granted the money, local businesses and organizations within the revitalization zone can apply for portions of the funding to revamp their buildings and businesses.

“People will actually have to write in grants and write in applications to get that money,” said Green. “So, just an example, the museum district, just because they’re in that zone doesn’t mean the Friends of the Museum District is automatically going to get that money. They would have to actually submit an application to a council that’s appointed that will actually manage that $10 million.”

The application is due by September 15, and it is unclear at this time when the recipient of funding will be selected.

Going forward, Green said she wants to focus on being transparent with the community, and is open to public feedback.

“We hope that people will be supportive of the projects and priorities that we put out there. We’ll try to be as transparent as possible as we make our way through the application process, and we will have opportunity for people to give feedback,” said Green.

“We really want community feedback and especially from the businesses and people who are within the area that would receive the funding, because that’s really important that they understand what we’re doing and that everyone feels like they had a way to give us some input,” she added.
Norwich Airport Shortlisted For $790,000 In Federal Infrastructure Deal

Published: August 3rd, 2021
By: Shawn Magrath

The Lt. Warren E. Eaton Airport in Norwich is slated to receive federal dollars if a $1 trillion infrastructure deal passes Congress. (File Photo)

NORWICH - The Lt. Warren Eaton Airport in Norwich is in line for $790,000 if Congress passes the $1 trillion infrastructure deal set for a vote this week.

Senator Chuck Schumer announced Friday that a number of airports across the state are slated for additional funding, including the one in Norwich, as well as nearby Sidney, Binghamton and Hamilton.

The bill earmarks $25 billion for airports nationally; more than $937 million for New York State alone.

“We don’t have many details yet about how we need to spend that,” said Chenango County Planning Director Shane Butler. “Until we know the details of how it works, it’s hard to say how it would be used.”

Butler said the best option, if allowed under federal funding terms, is to dump any influx of cash into the airport trust fund which keeps the Norwich airport operational. The place has survived on a trust fund since the county purchased it in 1986. Administrators budgeted to break even in 2021 with anticipated revenues of $161,000 garnered from land leases, fuel sales, hangar rentals, and other fees.
Chenango Allots $980,000 For Local Transit

Published: August 16th, 2021
By: Shawn Magrath

NORWICH - Chenango County is moving ahead with the purchase of seven new buses to outfit the fleet of First Transit in Norwich.

A resolution passed by the Chenango County Board of Supervisors authorizes the purchase by using a combination of federal, state and local dollars to foot the $980,000 price tag.
Commerce Chenango announces 'Hotel Norwich' initiative in Chenango County, NY

Audrey Robinson Special to the Mid-York Weekly USA TODAY NETWORK
Published 10:13 a.m. ET Jun. 28, 2021

Commerce Chenango President and CEO Kerri Green made a major announcement on behalf of the Development Chenango Corporation (DCC) Thursday, June 17 at the gala "A Celebration of Commerce Chenango" in Norwich.

She said that with a major investment from the Development Chenango Corporation, an agreement has been signed for the purchase of the former SUNY Morrisville building that sits on 14-16 South Broad St. for the purpose of implementation and development of a hotel.

The DCC feels strongly that this project is a much-needed asset and that a hotel will benefit all, and help to grow, spark and develop additional economic development projects in Chenango County. From employers, to residents, event organizers, countless businesses and our tourism program, this is a much-needed resource for the attraction of complementary businesses, and our business community.

“From my very first month on the job, nearly two years ago, the critical need for a hotel was expressed to me by our businesses, community members, and those who work in the tourism and event industry,” Green said. “I am so pleased that the DCC board understood how this major investment would affect our downtown, and the ripple effect this anchor project will have on all of Chenango County."
She thanked Chenango County Board of Supervisors Chairman George Senecki; Norwich Mayor Shawn Sastri; City of Norwich representatives Bob Jeffrey, Matt Caldwell, Robert Jeffrey Jr and Pat McNeil; and the Parker-Walsh Team of Keller Williams for their support and assistance with this project.

"It’s an exciting time here in Chenango County,” Green said.

She added that this project will not be possible without additional investment and support from the businesses and foundations in Chenango County. With DCC’s initial investment the hope is others will follow our lead and contribute toward the overall cost of developing this hotel.

A capital campaign is to be announced soon and this will be an opportunity for local foundations and businesses to show their support for the project. The funds raised through campaign efforts will be for improvements to the space and make it more attractive to a potential developer.

DCC is not-for-profit and operates as the economic development arm of Chenango County.

Organized in 1959, Commerce Chenango is a not-for-profit, community based organization. Visit their new website at commercechenango.com for more information on future programming and services.

The site for the future “Hotel Norwich” will allow for a 45-unit boutique hotel in downtown Norwich with a large meeting space, and restaurant. Currently, Chenango County has very few hotels and no major hotel that can accommodate the need of the tourism industry, businesses and travelers.

Operating under the umbrella of Commerce Chenango, the Development Chenango Corporation focuses on the retention and creation of jobs in the county through business growth by providing start-up assistance, business planning and technical assistance, access to low-interest financing, and assistance navigating government programs and funding resources.
Norwich: Northeast Classic Car Museum

Located in a small city in rural Chenango County, this is truly one of the finest classic car museums east of the Mississippi. When you walk into the first showroom and the lights come on, the sight will absolutely dazzle your eyes. Cars spanning more than a century await your review, and all in bright colors such as cherry red, sunny yellow, lime green, vivid blues and of course jet black. Lots of jet black cars here, mainly from the pre-1940s. My favorite are the post World War II models, with their space age design, jabbing fins and chrome everywhere. Who remembers DeSotos? Studebakers? And so many others. Five big rooms holding nearly 200 vintage and classic cars and 20 motorcycles). Figure on spending a full day here. A real Upstate treasure. Located at 24 Rexford Street, Norwich, NY 13815
NORWICH - The 174th annual Chenango County Fair kicks-off today, bringing one of the county’s most enduring summertime traditions back to the fairgrounds in Norwich.

For nearly two centuries, the Chenango County Fair has been a showcase of the area’s agricultural roots and an attraction for the young and young at heart. The core of the event aligns with the New York State Association of Agricultural Fairs. Its mission: to foster horticulture and domestic arts, and educate on Chenango’s leading industry of agriculture.

Whether it’s the educational exhibits, family friendliness, or the glowing games, rides and food of the midway, the Chenango County fair attracts nearly 40,000 visitors each year, making it the largest annual county attraction – a feat that takes a whole lot of planning and prepping, said Ag Society President Mary Weidman. And with big events on the docket again this year – and folks itching to enjoy summer again – organizers say they’re hoping for another terrific turnout.
Artists’ exhibit at Norwich Arts Center through August

‘Lake Morning’ took first place at NAC, by Timothy Egan. (Photo submitted)
The last days of August are the last days the work of local artists will hang at Norwich Arts Center at the annual members exhibit, Artistic Wanderings.

Works include oil, watercolor, and acrylic paintings, clay sculptures, copper etchings, fabric, and a variety of mixed media and montages of found objects.

Sixty entries by 36 artists were judged by Jason Fong, Director of Exhibits at South County Art Association. Fong awarded the First Prize to Timothy Egan, of Waterford, for “Lake Morning.” Melody Knight Leary, of Norwich, won second prize for “Finding the Way.”

Several other awards were given for other works.

In a statement about the exhibit, Fong said, “I was struck by the diversity of styles subjects and media presented: painting, printmaking, drawing, sculpture, ceramics, fiber, landscapes, figurative, nature, abstract, subdued, elegant, rambunctious, wild.”

Among the artists from the Norwich area are Samson Tonton, Lisa Shasha, Gabe Lipman, Susan Masse, Kyle Gordon, Sandra Jeknavorian, Carol Dunn and Brian DeVantier.

Other artists came from as far away as New Hampshire, Rhode Island and New York.

The entire collection can be seen at norwicharts.org, but the true beauty comes out when seen directly in the gallery.

The NAC galleries at 60 Broadway are open Thursday to Saturday, noon to 4 p.m. Entrance is free. Most works are available for sale. September’s exhibit will feature the work of Rita Dawley and Blaney Harris.