



2021 DRI Application

BASIC INFORMATION

Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) Region: Long Island

Municipality Name: Town of Huntington

Downtown Name: Huntington Station

County Name: Suffolk

Applicant Contact(s) Name and Title: Leah M. Jefferson, Director, Community Development Agency

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VISION FOR DOWNTOWN

DRI funding will be a catalyst that enables Huntington Station to re-energize its urban core and attract new opportunities as a vibrant, diverse, and walkable community. The vision is to continue the transformation of this compact, transit-oriented, and historic downtown to secure its future as a local and regional destination.

Building off of comprehensive community outreach and Town-based revitalization efforts in recent years, the larger Huntington Station Hamlet Center has already made significant strides, as demonstrated by planned and newly-constructed mixed-use and fully-residential projects just north of the Huntington Long Island Railroad (LIRR) Station, which include surrounding pedestrian-friendly improvements. With DRI funding, the target area south of the LIRR is perfectly poised to benefit from increased investment that will continue the revitalization of Huntington Station.

There is great potential to redevelop existing vacant and blighted properties, some of which have resulted due to the negative impacts of COVID-19. Many opportunities await to create new public gathering spaces, and increase pedestrian connectivity along New York Avenue south of the LIRR to further encourage the walkable lifestyle and sense of community. The Town and its partners envision new attractive mixed-use buildings, a centralized park and public plaza, colorful pedestrian-friendly cross walks, the elimination of above-ground utility lines, bike safety improvements, new trees planted throughout the area, integrated informational and safety kiosks, and facade improvements to existing buildings, all which will attract people to the downtown. The creation of aesthetically pleasing parklets throughout the area would create opportunities for people to gather with their neighbors and enjoy the many benefits of green space. Additionally, public art projects, such as murals created by local



artists, would celebrate the rich and diverse history of Huntington Station and help create a 'sense of place'.

With a zoning code in place that already allows mixed-use development and requires an affordable housing component, DRI funding would encourage Huntington Station to continue investment in the area and foster development to both increase the commercial tax base and bring much needed housing to the downtown.

Recent development created through the aforementioned zoning has brought in over 90 new rentals, and with that, new residents who are seeking a downtown that is amenable to living in a community that provides retail, food, entertainment and leisure activities within walking distance. In the aftermath of the global coronavirus pandemic, many workers who once traveled into the city daily are now telecommuting, and working in a new environment either at home, or in a workspace created within walking distance or even in the same building as their domicile. This new approach to the daily work routine has amplified the need for amenities for those who have made Huntington Station their home due to the proximity to the LIRR, yet now find themselves spending more time in the community. While pop-up convenience food markets and workspaces have been created to accommodate them, the need exists for more permanent amenities that can meet the demands of these new residents, and continue to not only attract but keep them in the community.

JUSTIFICATION

The emergence of Huntington Station as a successful downtown began 150 years ago and can be attributed in part to the expansion of the LIRR, which established a depot in 1867 on the site of the present station. The railroad attracted commerce and people to the hamlet, where three hotels, a bank, post office, racetrack, and two to three-story buildings on both sides of New York Avenue were built to cater to both the needs of travelers and the eastern migrating population. These buildings provided space for offices, apartments, convenience retail and service establishments. Goods and services offered included coal, lumber and feed merchants, a bicycle shop, barbershop, shoe repair store, meat and poultry purveyors, a drug store, general store, bakery, grocery store, an auto repair garage, and a clothing store. Huntington Station was an important commercial center of western Suffolk County.

Sadly, by the 1960's, under urban renewal, the 86 businesses surrounding the railroad station that comprised the economic center and vital core of Huntington Station had been demolished. The promised "urban renewal" did not occur. Instead, it altogether eliminated the economic, social and cultural center of Huntington Station; creating blight, a lack of a downtown, and the overall devastation of a cultural epicenter. The recent coronavirus pandemic has also had a disparate impact on Huntington

Station, relative to other areas on Long Island. Many residents found themselves unemployed, facing food insecurity and many were unsure as to whether they would be able to afford to remain in their homes.

The Town of Huntington has enacted policies, adopted plans, invested in infrastructure, and partnered with public and private entities to overcome over the decades of disinvestment and blight. Much of the beauty of the remaining original buildings along New York Avenue still remains, and restoration to their old glory can be achieved through a facade redesign program. The existence of brownfield sites in Huntington Station led to the 2016 formal designation as a New York State Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) to address contaminated sites and work with the public towards cleanup and redevelopment. In 2018, a census tract located within the DRI area was designated an Opportunity Zone by the federal government. The area was the recipient of two grants through New York State Restore totaling almost \$2.7 million toward the development of new housing in the area. This influx of new residents has created a dire need for revitalization and investment in the area to bring economic development to the community. With the pending East Side Access that will bring rail commuters directly to Grand Central Station, the DRI area will be a robust haven for both long term residents and those looking to plant roots in a vibrant, thriving community.

Since the area is designated as C-6 and C-6 Overlay zoning, which permits mixed-use, there are ample opportunities for businesses to relocate to the area, and for individuals and families to live in the neighborhood where they would support local businesses. Additionally, the Town's affordable housing code would provide new dwellings for those wishing to reside in the community that may not be able to otherwise afford to do so, further creating a diverse and equitable downtown. The award of New York State's DRI grant, coupled with investments by both the Town and Suffolk County would position Huntington Station on a fast track to becoming a true gem of Long Island by enhancing downtown appearances and opportunities, increasing walkability, creating parks, and allowing for new mixed-use development that has been lacking for far too long.

DOWNTOWN IDENTIFICATION

1. Boundaries of the Proposed DRI Area

The target area focuses on the walkable downtown Huntington Station neighborhood immediately surrounding the LIRR Station and continuing south along the New York Avenue corridor (see Figure 1 below). This well-defined area encompasses an area of 50.3 acres and is centrally located within the 3,305.7-acre Huntington Station 2020 Census Designated Place (CDP). The center is the intersection of Pulaski Road and New York Avenue, approximately one-quarter of a mile south of the train station, and



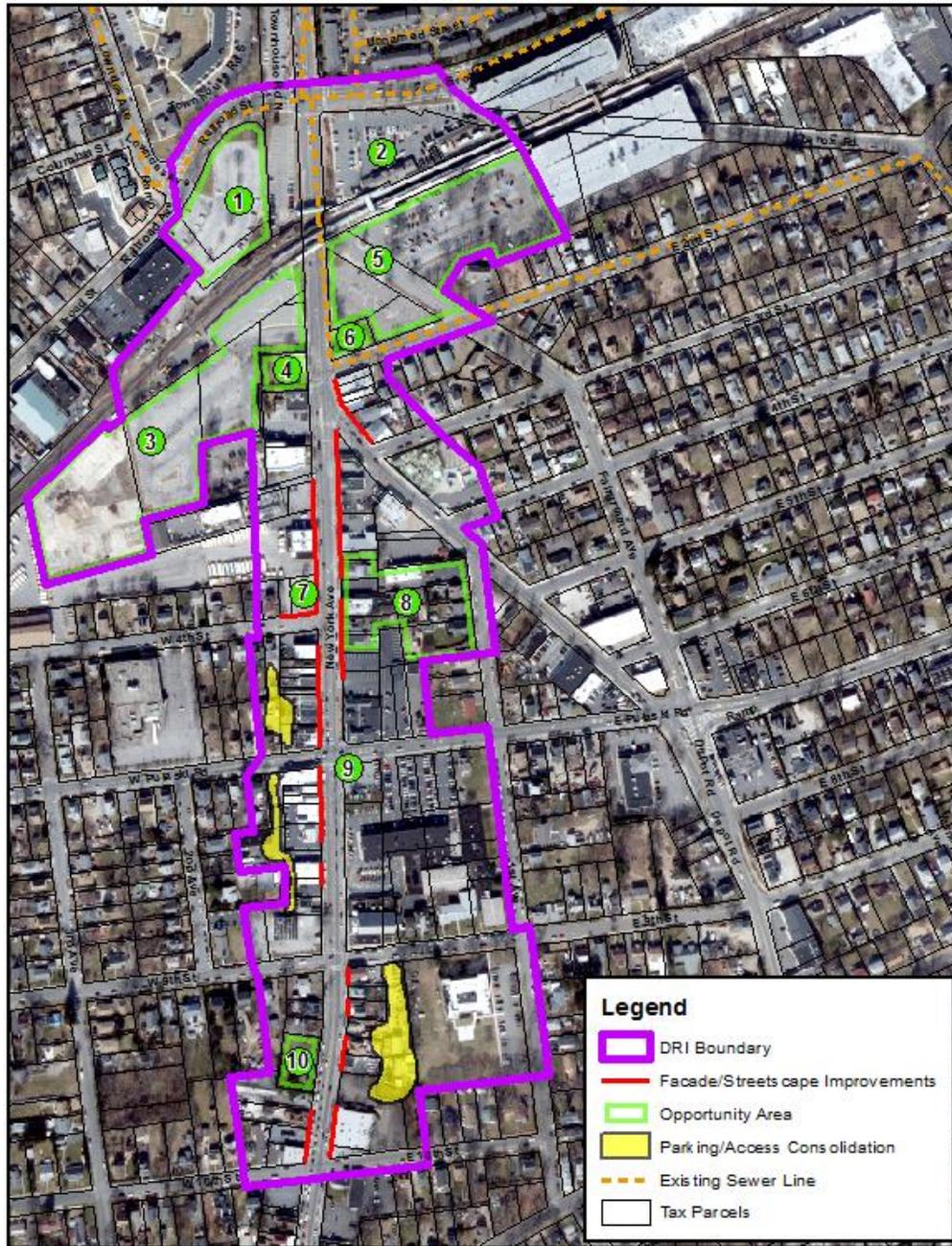
ends at the intersection of 10th Street. This area is ripe for commercial revitalization that will ultimately serve as a major commercial and social attraction to the community. Infill housing, significant mixed-use development, as well as aesthetic, pedestrian, and safety improvements will be the focus in this target area to create a walkable, attractive downtown area with a true sense of place.

The DRI boundary map (Figure 1) and DRI Assets and Opportunities map (Figure 2) follow:

Figure 1 - Overall DRI Area Map:



Figure 2 - DRI Assets and Opportunities map (numbered points referenced throughout narrative):



2. Past Investment, Future Investment Potential

Over the past several years, Huntington Station projects have received approximately \$23 million in public investment from both Town funds (approximately \$15 million) and various grants received from all levels of government, including Restore NY grants from Empire State Development and Suffolk County Downtown Revitalization Grants. These funds have been used in both planning efforts and direct actions such as land purchases to accomplish revitalization goals. The recent and future actions to make improvements throughout Huntington Station include the following:

Public Agency Support

- Town of Huntington Economic Development Corporation (EDC) – The EDC provides professional and technical support, grant writing and advisory services for the Town of Huntington from its high-level professionals on the Board of Directors. The Board was instrumental in securing funding for the Gateway Development project, and worked with developers to make the new mixed-use building at Northridge a reality.
- New York State Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) – The Town received a \$340,000 grant for planning and community outreach concerning brownfield sites in the area as part of the application process for the BOA program. A portion of Huntington Station around the LIRR station was formally recognized as a BOA by the NYS Department of State in August 2016.
- Long Island Regional Economic Development Council (LIREDC) – Investments made by the Council to date include two (2) Restore NY grants; \$1.56 million for the Columbia Terrace Affordable Housing Condominiums for veterans and \$1.17 million for the Gateway Development.

Public / Private Partnerships

- Huntington Station Business Improvement District – In 2003, the Town of Huntington facilitated the formation of a Huntington Station Business Improvement District (BID), which generates approximately \$100,000 annually from property tax collection for improvements and promotion of the downtown business district. The Director of the CDA serves as liaison to the BID and provides assistance with BID projects. Each year the BID dedicates its resources to enhance the downtown area, through seasonal decorations, planters in the summer, and most recently, upgrading the security camera system.
- Huntington Opportunity Resource Center (HORC) – The Huntington Opportunity Resource Center operates from a mixed-use building located one block south of the LIRR on a property acquired by the Town. Currently owned and run by the Huntington Community Development

Agency (CDA), the Center assists local residents with employment searches, job training, small business counseling, and connects local residents with benefits and services provided through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Suffolk County. The building also houses a large community room that is available to the public to host educational forums, community conversations, and job fairs. Also at this location are two apartments above the Center, which have consistently provided affordable housing to families.

Completed Public Projects

- Columbia Terrace - The project entailed the acquisition and merger of several parcels, some of which contained buildings in disrepair, and the realignment of the intersection of Railroad Street and Lowndes Avenue to improve traffic and pedestrian safety. The Town of Huntington and the Huntington Community Development Agency combined their efforts, with the help of state and county grants, to develop a 14-unit affordable housing condominium project for military veterans on the reconfigured land.



Columbia Terrace Veterans Housing

- Gateway Plaza – The Town acquisition of surplus land from the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT), created from a road realignment fifty years ago at the intersection of New York Avenue and Olive Street, was used to convert a barely used parking area into a small pedestrian plaza with landscaping, limestone seating, new sidewalks, parallel parking spaces, public art, as well as a new bus shelter and bike share station.

- Gateway Park / Community Gardens – The Town acquisition of several vacant lots along New York Avenue north of the LIRR and east of Lowndes Avenue was used to create a community garden where local residents can learn gardening skills and grow vegetables and flowers.
- South Hamlet Center Sewer Study – The Huntington Sewer District (HSD) covers the northern portion of the Huntington Station Hamlet Center north of the LIRR tracks. This system uses gravity lines to carry sewage to the north, where it is treated and released into Huntington Harbor and the Long Island Sound. On the south side of the tracks most of the properties are smaller than the 20,000 sq. ft. required by the Suffolk County Department of Health Services to use septic systems, and sanitary constraints have been a significant obstacle to development and redevelopment. In 2018 the Town of Huntington and the Suffolk County Department of Public Works hired the professional engineering firm of D&B Engineers and Architects to study the possibility of connecting the portion of the hamlet center south of the railroad tracks to public sewers. This was done with \$1.25 million in funds allocated by Suffolk County. The Final Feasibility Report determined that the most appropriate solution was to connect to the County’s Southwest Sewer District #3 using an out-of-district contract connection line serving the Walt Whitman Mall. This would require the expansion of several different pump stations and sewer lines, which would also increase capacity for the Melville Employment Center, and would cost \$56.85 million.
- Huntington Train Station (Figure 2; Site 2) – Landscaping and sidewalk improvements were made around the train station to improve its appearance. A volunteer beautification committee meets on an ongoing basis to conduct regular maintenance.
- New York Avenue Streetscape Improvements - In limited areas largely north of the LIRR, old concrete sidewalks were replaced with red brick pavers, and decorative sidewalk lamps were added to improve the appearance and safety of the pedestrian environment. This project also added sidewalk ramps at various intersections with detectable warning surfaces for handicapped accessibility and safety, as well as crosswalks and pedestrian crossing signals.

Completed Private Projects

- United Veterans Beacon House – A vacant parcel just to the east of the DRI target area on Depot Road that had been taken by Suffolk County for failure to pay property taxes was acquired by United Veterans Beacon House, a charitable organization. In early 2018 they completed the construction of a building that now houses four (4) veterans.
- Gateway Development – This mixed-use project combines 66 new luxury studio and one-bedroom apartments with over 30,000 square feet of retail space on a former brownfield site. The Town, in collaboration with the Economic Development Corporation and a private developer, was able to secure funding from NYS Economic Development Council to clean up the property, demolish the abandoned buildings and create much desired housing and commercial

space. Completed in 2021, this welcome addition has enhanced the area and brought new residents to the downtown.



Gateway Mixed-Use Development at 1000 New York Avenue

- Northridge Development – This mixed-use development contains 14 rental apartments with retail space below and on-site parking in the rear of the building. It was completed in 2018.

Active/Planned Public Projects

- South Hamlet Center Sewer Implementation – After reviewing the Final Feasibility Report for the construction of public sewers in the DRI area, Suffolk County allocated an additional \$1.75 million to complete a construction design for the proposed sewer work. The Town is awaiting receipt of this study. In the meantime, the Town has submitted multiple funding requests for the construction of the sewers. An application of \$54.2 million was submitted to New York State for funding under the Clean Water Infrastructure Act. The Town has submitted a \$48 million request to Senator Schumer for consideration in the upcoming federal infrastructure bill. An application was also submitted to Suffolk County for \$12 million in funding. The Town has \$22 million in funding available through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to allocate to this sewer project. In addition, developer Renaissance Downtowns is expected to contribute infrastructure funds to help connect its planned projects to the sewer system.
- Huntington Sewer District - Sewer planning is not limited to areas south of the LIRR. The Town has submitted a request for \$3 million under the State’s Clean Water Infrastructure Act to make upgrades to its sewage treatment plant. The proposal involves upgrades to the plant’s Sequencing Batch Reactor and related sewer treatment pumps. This would result in a reduction of nitrogen levels in plant effluent, which in turn would allow for increased flow capacity that could benefit the Huntington Station neighborhood near the train station. The South Hamlet Center sewer project may also allow some out-of-district contract connections

south of the LIRR tracks to be diverted to the Southwest Sewer District, freeing up additional capacity at the Huntington plant.

- LIRR East Side Access – The LIRR East Side Access project is anticipated to greatly benefit Huntington Station as its train station is currently the end of electrification on the Port Jefferson LIRR branch, thus making it a high-volume transfer point. Just as it had done 150 years ago, the Huntington LIRR Station will once again become a catalyst for economic growth and improvements in and around the catchment area.
- Federal Opportunity Zone - In 2018, the United States Census tract that contains a portion of the catchment area along New York Avenue was included in the Federal Opportunity Zones program. This program offered through the Tax Cuts and Job Acts of 2017, encourages private investment in low-income urban and rural communities. It is the expectation of the Town and members of the community that these tax benefits will attract private investment into Huntington Station and help leverage additional funding that will contribute to the economic revitalization.

Active/Planned Private Projects

- Northridge Square - The developer of the Northridge project just north of the target area has a second proposal now under construction for a new mixed-use building with retail space on the first floor and 16 apartments with on-site parking just south of the Northridge project. It also includes the renovation and restoration of an historic apartment building containing nine units on the adjacent property, which has been completed.
- 1090 NY Ave/The Landmark - Another project by the same developer as Northridge, this development to convert an existing historic structure to a 9-unit fully-residential building and construct a new 16-unit mixed-use structure on the same site, is currently under review.
- Huntington Station Hotel (Figure 2; Site 1) - There is strong community support for a hotel in the downtown as virtually no hotel options currently exist in the area. Concept plans for a 140-room boutique hotel on the southwest corner of New York Avenue and Railroad Street have been developed and the Town is in the process of finalizing a transfer of ownership on a portion of this land from the State to the Town so that the project can move forward. The Town already owns a majority of this land, which is used for surface commuter parking, and would receive replacement parking spaces in a planned parking garage.

In sum, the Town of Huntington, together with its residents, intergovernmental partners, the development community, and other stakeholders including civic, business, cultural, not-for-profit and faith-based organizations, has a unique opportunity to align and leverage the cumulative impact of past and future investments. These valuable collaborations will catalyze private investment south of

the train station on both private properties and public property. While the majority of improvements to date have been north of the LIRR, property owners have been working to extend Huntington Station's revitalization to the south, and bring with it the infrastructure and synergistic energies needed to realize the highest and best uses of the land to lift up the entire area.

3. Recent or Impending Job Growth

Development on the north side of the LIRR has already resulted in over 200 new employment opportunities that have attracted more commuters, residents and visitors to the area with a variety of new housing, goods & services, transit options and public space. DRI investment will serve to enhance a walkable, vibrant downtown lifestyle that is in high demand across Long Island. The DRI plans will serve as a catalyst for current and new proposals to further improve and revitalize Huntington Station. Zoning in and around the DRI area is largely C-6 and C-6 Overlay District, which is favorable for mixed-use development and sets up the target area for immediate revitalization without the need for additional policy or code changes. The Town of Huntington and Renaissance Downtowns have entered into a Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) that provides opportunities for construction jobs, contracting opportunities and permanent positions in retail and hospitality to local residents.

Recent job growth at the Northridge development included approximately 22 full time construction jobs, 13 indirect full-time jobs, and 14 induced full-time jobs. The Northridge development long term job growth projects \$2 million annually back into the community by 2022, with approximately 20 full time permanent jobs. The Gateway Plaza development generated approximately 52 full time construction jobs, 28 indirect full-time jobs and 32 induced full-time jobs. Its long-term job growth projects \$6.5 million annually back into the community by 2022, with 43 full time permanent jobs producing \$1.3 million in income. These two developments alone have created 80 new units within walking distance of the LIRR, just north of the DRI area. With the added Northridge Square and The Landmark projects well underway which will provide an additional 41 units (including six (6) affordable units), there will be a market-driven need for more restaurants, grocery shops and convenience retail within the downtown. New businesses including GEI Consultants and Mercato Deli have already opened in the completed 1st floor commercial spaces. Other new, largely minority-owned businesses in the DRI area have opened, such as El Sueno, a highly-regarded Mexican restaurant developed on an underutilized site along New York Avenue. To further meet demand, "The Big H" shopping center, located just north of the DRI area, is being redeveloped to bring an additional 11,500 square feet of retail space to the area, including a much-needed grocery store now under construction. A new Northwell Health medical facility is also proposed just south of the DRI area along New York Avenue.

Unemployment among the residents of Huntington Station has dropped over the past few years due to increased opportunities locally, as well as access to career opportunities in Manhattan via mass transit. While COVID-19 has set back these gains temporarily, we are already seeing signs of recovery in late 2021. In the Federal Opportunity Zone in particular, we have seen a net gain of jobs. Obtaining DRI funding would help continue the reversal in job loss due to COVID-19. Prior to the pandemic, according

to the US Census Bureau, while the population modestly increased between 2013-2016, both the percentage of families living below the poverty level and the unemployment rate have steadily decreased.* If this positive trend continues post-pandemic, Huntington Station will be in prime position to become the cultural and economic hub it was envisioned to be, and as development continues with the anticipated mixed-use projects and infrastructure improvements, further job growth and opportunities within the target area will be sustainable in the long term.

*https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_16_5YR_S2301&prodType=table

4. Quality of Life

Over the past decade, the Town, County, State and private investors have spent over \$23 million on Huntington Station's infrastructure to attract private investment, beautify and make the area pedestrian friendly. Examples surrounding the LIRR include streetscaping, brick sidewalks, new curbing and pedestrian medians, decorative streetlights, murals, a pedestrian plaza with a public art installation, a community garden, and a new county-sponsored bike share station. Huntington Station has numerous amenities as a walkable transit hub with an influx of new housing, and offers a prime opportunity to advance DRI goals.

One of the most attractive attributes of Huntington Station is its cultural diversity, with numerous ethnic restaurants, specialty retail, and cultural institutions all within close proximity to the LIRR. While the community may be known for its significant Hispanic/Latin population, a wide variety of minority-owned dining and retail establishments thrive within and bordering the downtown area, including Middle Eastern, Asian, Haitian, Pakistani, and others. Several medical and dental facilities lie within and just outside the target area, which provide immediate access to healthcare. Additionally, Huntington Hospital, the highest ranked community hospital in New York State, is less than two (2) miles away. A plethora of beauty parlors, barbershops, clothing stores and other personal service shops cater to the local community and showcase the vibrant small business community.

This area is also home to several religious and social institutions that serve as cornerstones of the community, providing their members with food, counseling, youth activities and other support services. The Family Service League recently relocated from Manor Field to the Huntington Opportunity Resource Center, located within the DRI area. This agency has been providing vital services to the community for several years, including but not limited to counseling, job placement programs, shelter, food and other valuable resources.

Huntington Station families with children enjoy the amenities of nearby Manor Park just east of the LIRR, which include tennis, basketball and handball courts, a synthetic turf field, softball fields, and a playground. The Town recently received funding from New York State in the amount of \$189,000 to

construct a spray park and upgrade the turf field. The Huntington Public Library's Station Branch has also recently expanded in its current location to better provide services and programs to the community.

Besides having the Huntington LIRR Station in its core, the Town of Huntington is the only municipality in Suffolk County that operates and maintains a public bus transportation system for the benefit of its residents. Huntington Area Rapid Transit (HART) operates both regularly-scheduled fixed route buses for the general public as well as paratransit for persons with disabilities and non-driving seniors.

Finally, compared to much of Long Island, a wide variety of housing options exists in the area, especially in mixed-use buildings. Over 120 new apartments have recently been constructed or are under review just north of the LIRR, including several inclusive units at the Gateway Development for people with developmental disabilities. In addition to providing a much-needed resource, these projects have raised the bar for architectural design in Huntington Station.

5. Supportive Local Policies

The Town of Huntington has established planning policies friendly to Huntington Station with the creation of the C-6 Huntington Station Business Overlay District, an offshoot of the prior C-6 General Business zoning that narrowed the potential land uses to promote more appropriate development around the train station. The new zoning district prohibited some of the auto-dependent uses that appealed more to commuters than local residents. This was followed by the Town's Horizons 2020 Comprehensive Plan, which gave formal recognition to the concept of hamlet centers in the Town. The Huntington Station Hamlet Center was mapped around the LIRR station and specific policy recommendations were made for the neighborhood. Horizons 2020 acknowledged that some "destinations such as schools and parks are not always well connected by sidewalks to surrounding neighborhoods" and makes recommendations for improving pedestrian and bicycle mobility. Transit-oriented and Huntington Station revitalization projects are highly encouraged. The Plan encourages a mix of national, regional, and local tenants as well as cultural and entertainment uses, specialty shopping, artists' lofts, other live-work spaces, and mixed-use buildings that act as anchors in downtown hamlet centers, especially older hamlets such as Huntington Station.

The Town created the Huntington Station Business Improvement District (BID), a special taxing entity that pools funds from business owners to make neighborhood improvements and hold community events that promote local businesses. The Town has three representatives on the BID Board. The makeup of the Board ensures communication between the Town, commercial property owners, tenants, and local residents. Community organization and input has also been increased by the

creation of the Source the Station website (<https://sourcethestation.com/>). This website allows local residents the opportunity to show their support for various land uses and planning ideas in the downtown. Interested residents continue to meet on a regular basis to discuss progress and new ideas for Huntington Station improvement.

In 2012, Huntington adopted the Climate Smart Communities Pledge as part of its commitment to reduce greenhouse gases and make positive environmental choices. Support for green energy has been written into several sections of Town Code. The Town's green planning was set forth in 2015 with the adoption of a Climate Action Plan. In 2017 the Huntington Town Board approved a measure to require that twenty (20) percent of apartments constructed in mixed-use buildings be affordable. This was the first-time affordable requirements were brought to commercial downtowns.

The Community Development Agency (CDA) oversees the Town's affordable housing program through a lottery process. It has been able to assist many residents in achieving the dream of homeownership. The CDA also enables existing low-income homeowners to renovate or repair their homes through the Residential Repair Program, which is funded through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

6. Public Support

The Town has engaged the community using a variety of outreach methods such as crowdsourcing to build consensus for the many ideas and concepts that are presented in this application. Since 2013, residents and business owners have participated in numerous in-person meetings with Town and elected officials, collaborated on ideas, and expressed their vision using a dedicated website and social media outlets. The Town of Huntington EDC and LDC act as high-level stakeholders and have also been an integral part of development projects within the catchment area. Members of the Huntington Station Business Improvement District (BID) have a direct vested interest in seeing the community where they earn their livelihood flourish, and have long envisioned the revitalization of the downtown. Huntington Station is also fortunate to possess an active community of clergy leaders that interact with the Town as well as with not-for-profit leadership. Over the years, these stakeholders have successfully lobbied the Town for zoning changes, variances, approvals and many other actions that have been beneficial to the downtown. Their work assures socially, environmentally and economically responsible redevelopment ideas in the downtown.



Community Meetings in Huntington Station

7. Transformative Opportunities and Readiness

To build upon the intrinsic strengths and recent economic investments in Huntington Station, the Town has identified several opportunity areas where the proposed DRI strategies would be implemented. The following projects have been carefully identified for the target area as having both strong public support and a catalytic potential to bring transformative change to the downtown. Significant progress will be achieved on many of these proposals within two (2) years through a cooperative effort involving the Town, 2021 DRI Community, local residents, developers, property owners and the existing small business base. The numbered sites referenced below correspond to the points displayed in Figure 2 (DRI Assets and Opportunities Map).

Infrastructure Improvement – Sewer Line Extension

The Town has identified several key sites that would allow for transformative mixed-use projects within walking distance of the LIRR. DRI funds combined with private investment would help these key sites connect to the existing sewer line via a minor expansion of the Huntington Sewer District line south of the LIRR tracks. The total cost of this extension is estimated at approximately \$1.7 million. DRI funding would be utilized to facilitate the proposed sewer extension that would benefit the following properties:

- 1328 New York Avenue Mixed-Use Development (Site 8)

A proposal to redevelop a 1.56-acre site made up of eight (8) parcels located near the intersection of New York Avenue and Depot Road have been submitted by a developer for two (2) mixed-use buildings with over 20,000 square feet of retail and 64 apartments, including an affordable component and on-site parking.



Rendering of 1328 New York Avenue

- Municipal Properties (Sites 3 & 5)

There are nine (9) municipally-owned properties, predominantly utilized for municipal surface parking, directly south of the LIRR totaling approximately 10.25 acres in size. These sites provide an outstanding opportunity for transformative transit-oriented mixed-use projects involving the Town and a private developer. Access to sewers would result in the same type of redevelopment that has occurred north of the LIRR.

- Mixed-Use Development Sites (Sites 4 & 6)

The minor extension of the sewer line south of the LIRR will also promote redevelopment of additional underutilized or blighted sites such as the vacant building next to the 7-11 and aging multi-family housing located on either side of New York Avenue just south of the LIRR. These mixed-use developments would transform the area and prompt further investment.



Aging Multi-family Housing



Vacant Building next to 7-11 & Municipal Parking Lot

Relocation of Utility Lines

Burying and/or relocating utilities and overhead wires along the New York Avenue corridor using DRI funds as leverage is an important aesthetic improvement that would spur redevelopment and benefit businesses in the downtown. It would also address issues relating to disaster resiliency due to the increase in frequency of climate change events. The sidewalks along this portion of New York Avenue are narrow because of past road widenings and buildings built at the front property lines. The utility poles block the sidewalk and the wires are only a few feet from the upper floors of the buildings. The view out of many second-floor windows is blocked by thick, obsolete copper phone wires. If burial of the wires is problematic or not cost-effective, other options to consider would be feeding buildings from the poles and wires on the connecting side streets, or by installing new poles at the rear of commercial properties.

Broadband Internet Expansion

High-speed internet access is a genuine utility, vital for economic development, education, and connection in the digital age, which has been made especially clear after the past 18 months of the global pandemic. Broadband expansion is a crucial component to maintaining Huntington Station's competitiveness in attracting new businesses and providing a level playing field to an underserved area with a lower percentage of internet-connected homes. The Town would work with local service providers using DRI funding to provide access.

Huntington Station Park and Public Plaza (Site 10)

One key element of a successful downtown is a centralized park or public gathering space to foster community and attract its best asset: people. The Town has identified an available parcel at 1535 New York Avenue to acquire utilizing the Town's open space acquisition program (EOSPA). The 15,000 square foot property, a five-minute walk from the LIRR, is sufficient in size to provide for light recreation, open space, a stage for performance events, a farmer's market, and other community activities. The DRI grant would be used to fund the necessary improvements in order for the public space to serve as a social and cultural "village square" of Huntington Station. The Huntington Station park would complement the area and support local businesses during daytime hours by offering a location for customers to eat, relax, and engage with fellow residents.



1535 New York Avenue Future Park

Business Façade Designs and Improvements (See Figure 2; Designated areas in red)

In an effort to help our small businesses (re)invest in their commercial space in the DRI area, the Town will establish a Huntington Station Small Business Façade Improvement Program in cooperation with the Huntington Economic Development Corporation (EDC) and the Huntington Station BID. The Town Board has adopted building design standards specifically for Huntington Station prepared by the Town Planning Department based on building scale, historic compatibility, architectural composition, and quality materials. The design guidelines will be applied to applicants seeking assistance for projects to revitalize façades in the DRI area. DRI funds will be utilized to provide grants and establish a revolving loan fund to underwrite project costs for small businesses or property owners in the opportunity areas identified on the DRI map. Grant funding received from ESD in 2018 for feasibility studies and development plans will also be used, and the Town will be applying for additional funding to be applied to both areas through ESD and the New York Main Street Program.



1351-1359 New York Avenue Façade



1540 New York Avenue Façade

Streetscape Improvements and Pocket Parks (Site 9)

A field review of the Huntington Station Commercial District has revealed a number of opportunities along New York Avenue to locate small public green spaces and improve upon the existing streetscape that would both promote community pride and foster social interaction. A variety of amenities, including but not limited to garden areas, benches, art work, sidewalk improvements, LED lighting and street trees would significantly improve the visual aesthetics of Huntington Station. The Town would partner with the Huntington Station Business Improvement District to earmark grant funds for the needed public improvements. Specifically, a focus on establishing a public fund to sponsor art projects could greatly benefit the aesthetic and visual appeal along the main commercial corridors in the target area.

Informational Kiosks

The Town of Huntington is in the process of developing options for technology-based wayfinding and security kiosks to improve quality of life throughout the Huntington Station Business District. Modeled after the signage found in downtowns all across New York State as well as “blue-light” security programs on college campuses nationwide, this is an ongoing effort with Huntington Station business consortiums and local community groups to spur business development and highlight all of Huntington Station’s assets.

These kiosks would serve as an economical and efficient way to serve the community in providing both services and information, such as directions to available public parking areas and local businesses. The Town has deployed Q-Alert, a web-based complaint management system in order to execute immediate action and track the status of each case filed in the system. Kiosk platforms and signage are well-suited to support this function as well as provide instructions on accessing Town services.

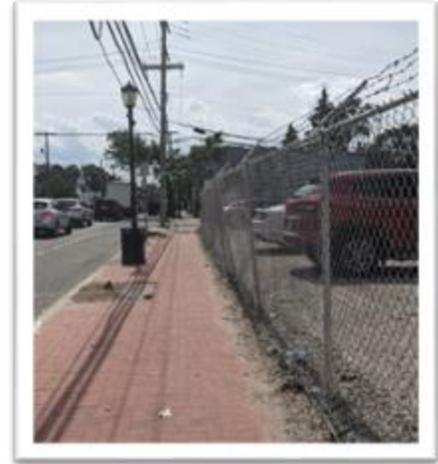
Off-street Municipal/Private Parking Improvements (Site 7 and Figure 2 areas in yellow)

Earlier this year, the Town purchased a lot from Suffolk County on the southeast corner of New York Avenue and Pulaski for the purpose of increasing available parking in the area. The Town has identified several additional parking lots along New York Avenue where appropriate signage, lighting and physical improvements would complement existing businesses along New York Avenue and attract new business in vacant or underutilized sites. There are also opportunities to work with existing underutilized private parking lots in disrepair, with chain link or barbed wire fencing that does not allow for public access. DRI funds would help seed funding for decorative street walls with integrated planters and lighting to stitch together the adjacent building walls. Shared parking agreements identified on the DRI map would be structured for properties, such as the back areas of parcels on the

westerly side of New York Avenue between Pulaski Road and 9th Street, to allow for public access in exchange for municipal support that would fund improvements necessary to enhance this area.



Town-owned Parking Lot at Pulaski/New York Avenue



Existing Parking Lot at 1359 New York Avenue

Transportation Infrastructure and Complete Streets

A county-wide bike share program has recently come to Huntington and includes a bike share station just north of the LIRR, with potential expansion over the course of the upcoming year. Currently, circulation through the New York Avenue corridor south of the LIRR could be improved for pedestrians and bicycle mobility. A variety of actions are needed to encourage walkability and increase the safety and attractiveness of the downtown. Using the New York Complete Streets Act as guidance, the Town will utilize funding from the DRI grant to analyze signalization issues in cooperation with the New York State Department of Transportation. In addition, the Town will develop plans to improve pedestrian crossings with brightly colored crosswalks and audible street signals, establish clear signage and wayfinding in the downtown, identify locations for bicycle lanes and racks, and improve and upgrade public parking along with ADA accessibility.

Electric vehicle (EV) charging stations have also been placed in numerous locations throughout the Town, including Town Hall, and public EV stations would be a welcome addition to the LIRR parking lot, to be utilized by commuters and local residents.

The complete streets plan recommendations ultimately will result in infrastructure costs related to signage, pavement markings, equipment installations or other capital projects. It is the intention to utilize the DRI grant to fund a share of the planned improvements in conjunction with other interested parties.

8. Administrative Capacity

The administrative and professional capacity to manage this initiative internally is extensive and includes officials in the Town Supervisor's Office, Town Council members, the Town of Huntington Community Development Agency, Department of Planning & Environment, Town Attorney's Office, Department of Engineering, the Town of Huntington Economic Development Corporation, and the Huntington Station BID, all of whom have been working collaboratively to administer and manage the ongoing redevelopment effort as defined in the Development Strategy adopted by the Town Board. The initiative will be overseen by Leah M. Jefferson, Director of the Town of Huntington Community Development Agency and Executive Director of the Economic Development Corporation, and Anthony Aloisio, Director of Planning and Environment. The management team will include David Genaway, Deputy Director of Planning and Environment & GIS Manager; Craig Turner, Principal Planner; and Sasha Abraham, Senior Planner; along with staff from the Department of Planning and Environment. Further, the goals and policies put forth in this application have consistently had full support by the community as well as bipartisan support from the Town Board. The skills and knowledge brought by these individuals will be instrumental to realizing the further redevelopment of Huntington Station.

9. Other

The Town of Huntington is well prepared to continue the revitalization of Huntington Station. Huntington Station has a rich history as a vibrant, successful downtown and has made great strides towards returning to its former glory as an economic engine and heart of the community since the days of urban renewal. DRI assistance, coupled with the coming LIRR investments, ongoing and planned commercial and residential development, would serve as a catalyst to bring back Huntington Station as a prosperous, walkable, inviting community that would serve as a model Long Island downtown.

10. \$20 Million Request

The Town would like to be considered for the opportunity to be awarded an additional \$10 million. A larger award amount would allow for an even more significant impact on the revitalization of Huntington Station, in terms of expanding the mixed-use projects described in Section 7 to cover additional sites along New York Avenue south of the LIRR that are currently underutilized, allowing for greater sewer expansion and additional connections, and extending the relocation of utility lines further south down New York Avenue.

SUBMISSION

Long Island: LIREDC@esd.ny.gov



STEVE STERN
Assemblyman 10th District
Suffolk County

THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

COMMITTEES
Aging
Banks
Economic Development, Job Creation,
Commerce and Industry
Energy
Insurance
Veterans' Affairs

September 14, 2021

Mr. Kevin Law and Mr. Stuart Rabinowitz
Regional Co-Chairs
Long Island Regional Economic Development Council
150 Motor Parkway, Suite 311
Hauppauge, NY 11788

Dear Co-Chairs Law and Rabinowitz:

As the State Assemblyman representing the 10th Assembly District, I am writing to urge the Long Island Regional Economic Development Council (LIREDC) to act favorably on the application submitted by the Town of Huntington for a \$10 million grant through the New York State Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI).

The DRI program provides critical funding to help communities on the cusp of economic revitalization enter into sustained prosperity. The funding literally transforms communities into vibrant neighborhoods that are ripe for redevelopment, business, job creation and housing diversity. Simply put, the DRI is an important tool for municipalities seeking to revitalize their downtowns.

To that end, the Town of Huntington recently submitted an application to the LIREDC to be considered for Round Five of the DRI program. The application in question pertains to the Downtown Huntington Station area. As the State Assemblyman representing the hamlet of Huntington Station, I can say with certitude that a \$10 million DRI grant would be a game-changer on every level for this community.

The Huntington Station application meets all of the DRI criteria and contains all of the key ingredients needed for successful downtown revitalization including: a clear vision for the downtown; goals and strategies to accomplish this vision; and, a detailed plan to implement the transformative projects that have been identified. The vision and projects detailed in the application have all had the strong and unwavering support of the local community for many years. These projects include:

- the development of a public plaza
- improvements to business facades and building designs
- streetscape improvements
- the creation of new pocket parks
- an integrated security program for local businesses
- an off-street municipal parking plan
- plans to improve pedestrian crossings and encourage walkability

These projects are vital to enhancing our quality of life, local economy and precious environment in Huntington Station. I proudly support the Town of Huntington's ongoing revitalization efforts and strongly urge the LIREDC to approve and support this important initiative.

As always, if you have any questions, or if I can be of assistance to you in any way, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steve Stern". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Steve" and last name "Stern" clearly distinguishable.

Steve Stern

SS/jl

cc: Ms. Cara Longworth, Regional Director, LIREDC

SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATURE
COUNTY OF SUFFOLK

WILLIAM R. SPENCER
LEGISLATOR 18TH DISTRICT

MEMBER
Economic Development, Planning & Housing
Government Operations Personnel, Information Technology & Diversity
Education & Labor



224 WALL STREET, SUITE 303
HUNTINGTON, N.Y. 11743

PHONE: (631) 854-4500

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EMAIL: william.spencer@suffolkcountyny.gov

September 15, 2021

Dear Chairmen Kevin Law and Stu Rabinowitz,

I am writing in support of the Huntington Community Development Agency's application for the Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) Region Downtown Revitalization Initiative. Huntington Station is on its way to returning to the thriving, richly diverse and walkable downtown it once was. This grant will boost the current efforts that are underway to revitalize the community and help reverse decades of disinvestment and blight.

In recent years, Huntington Station has received much needed attention from a network of stakeholders including- community organizations, the Town of Huntington, Suffolk County, New York State and private developers. These relationships have produced an array of improvements benefitting Huntington Station including land use plans, investment in infrastructure, public outreach groups that have coalesced strong public support for future development and the construction of mixed-use buildings that incorporate smart growth principles. In addition, as a County Legislator, I was able to secure funding to conduct a feasibility report for sewer infrastructure for the Huntington Station Hub area to help improve the economic, housing opportunities and the environment. With the feasibility study now complete, I followed up with securing additional funds for the planning and design for the expansion of the sewers for the area.

With significant momentum already in place, this funding would undoubtedly fast track Huntington Station's revitalization efforts. The strategies laid out in the application such as development of colorful pedestrian-friendly cross walks, bike safety improvements, street trees, sidewalks, creation of "parklets," and public art would celebrate the rich and diverse history and will have a transformative impact to Huntington Station.

It is my hope that you will see the wonderful value in this project. This focused effort will go a long way in overcoming the substantial challenges and offer Huntington Station the opportunity to live up to its maximum economic potential. Thank you for your attention and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "William R. Spencer".

William R. Spencer, M.D.
Suffolk County Legislator
18th Legislative District

Town of Huntington Economic Development Corporation

100 MAIN STREET • ROOM 309 • HUNTINGTON • NEW YORK • 11743-6978

JIM KADEN, CHAIRPERSON
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LEAH M. JEFFERSON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
TEL: (631) 351-2881
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Co-Chairmen Kevin Law and Stuart Rabinowitz
Long Island Regional Economic Development Council
150 Motor Parkway
Hauppauge, New York 11788

Dear Chairman Law and Chairman Rabinowitz:

I am writing this letter on behalf of the Huntington Town Economic Development Corporation (EDC) in support of the Town's application for funding under the Round 5 New York State Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI).

The EDC has been a vital part of the ongoing efforts to revitalize Huntington Station since its inception in 2003, particularly through the development of the Huntington Station Economic Development Initiative in 2004. This initiative outlined the vision of the Town to restore the luster to a once vibrant downtown community that had been stripped away under the promise of Urban Renewal. During the past eighteen years, the EDC has been able to secure funding on behalf of the Town, assisted in the procurement of land for development, and provided professional support each step of the way.

While much has been accomplished, there is still a tremendous amount of work to be done to obtain the goal of achieving the vision. \$10 million would go a long way in assisting the Town in reaching that goal, and re-establishing Huntington Station as a vibrant, walkable community that celebrates its rich history and culture. The recent COVID-19 pandemic hit Huntington Station extremely hard, with the hamlet seeing some of the highest number of both cases and deaths in Suffolk County. Too many residents were left unemployed, and facing food insecurity and unable to pay their rent or mortgage. The investment in new businesses and housing would create a resurgence in the economy that the area so desperately needs and deserves.

It is the sincere hope of the Huntington EDC that you will see the value of the application and consider it worthy of the \$10 million award. The investment would be invaluable to continue the efforts to revitalize a jewel on Long Island.

Sincerely,

Jim Kaden
Chairman



September 15, 2021

Chairman Kevin Law and
Chairman Stuart Rabinowitz
New York State Economic Development Council
Long Island Region
150 Motor Parkway
Hauppauge, New York 11788

Dear Chairman Law and Chairman Rabinowitz,

I am writing in support of the Town of Huntington's application for funding under the New York State Downtown Revitalization Initiative: Round 5.

It is my understanding that this project is seeking the maximum award of \$10,000,000 to support the area of downtown Huntington Station. In 1965, Huntington Station went through urban renewal and the community has since felt a great level of disinvestment. Throughout the years, the Town of Huntington has undertaken several efforts in order to revitalize the hamlet, including 2 housing developments - Highview and Whitman Village -, creating a community garden and a public plaza, as well as brick sidewalks and other improvements.

In addition, for more than 9 years, Renaissance Downtowns (RD), as the designated Master Developer of Huntington Station, and the Town of Huntington have been working together under a public-private partnership towards revitalizing this hamlet.

Renaissance has invested more than \$4 million in its efforts thus far and has garnered more than \$30 million of private investment funds for the revitalization of Huntington Station through co-planning efforts with the Town and the community. As part of concept plans developed for the sewerred areas of Huntington Station, with the community, the Town and RD, 5 immediate opportunity development projects were envisioned: (1) Northridge: a \$5 million mixed-use building with approximately 5500 square feet (SF) of commercial and 16 one bedroom apartments that was completed in May 2018; (2) Gateway: a \$22 million mixed-use building with approximately 13,500 SF of commercial and 66 apartments completed Spring 2021; (3) a 140 key hotel and office space with up to 100,000SF adjacent to it; and (4) a 49 unit artist loft building.



Renaissance Downtowns at Huntington Station LLC

While we have been able to achieve great momentum and success in the sewered areas, we know the limits posed by a lack of infrastructure funding. The DRI grant would provide much needed resources to be able to continue necessary planning and implementation of revitalization efforts, and to help property and small business owners and community members thrive. The funds would also help Huntington Station become a more economically and environmentally resilient community, as we have seen in the last two years with historical natural events, this is also extremely important for the future of the community and the region.

Huntington Station is on the way to becoming the vibrant, walkable community it once was. Ten million dollars would go a long way to make this a continued reality, and spur additional growth beyond the catchment area. I strongly encourage you to support this grant applications.

Very Truly Yours,

Ryan Porter
Partner, Renaissance Downtowns