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# Village of Massena

DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE GRANT APPLICATION

# 2021

*#AlwaysInSeason*

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**BASIC INFORMATION**

- REDC Region: North Country
- Municipality Name: Village of Massena
- Downtown Name: Downtown Massena - Moving Massena Forward: Proud Past, Promising Future
- County Name: St. Lawrence County
- Applicant Contact(s) Name and Title: Mayor – Timothy Ahlfeld, Deputy Mayor – Matt LeBire
- Applicant Contact(s) Email Address and Secondary Email Address: [mayor@village.massena.ny.us](mailto:mayor@village.massena.ny.us) and [mattlebire@gmail.com](mailto:mattlebire@gmail.com)

**VISION FOR DOWNTOWN**

*Provide a brief statement of the municipality's vision for downtown revitalization.*

## ***Moving Massena Forward: Proud Past, Promising Future***

A rich heritage nestled amongst one of the most scenic settings in New York State, the Village of Massena is transforming into a greener, more vibrant, and more connected community. The goal is to revitalize Massena's downtown making it more walkable, utilized, and functional.

Serving the community's housing, wellness, and recreational needs while improving the economy and sustainability for the entire Massena community, continued investment in Massena's downtown will boost economic growth, inspire entrepreneurial opportunities, and enhance placemaking. As a central hub to smaller surrounding communities, Massena's growth has the potential to ripple through and enhance neighboring areas to strengthen the region as it recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic and well into the future. Enhancing downtown to serve as a true community center will support health and sustainability for both the Village and region.

## **JUSTIFICATION**

*Provide an overview of the downtown area nominated for the DRI program, highlighting the area's defining characteristics and the reasons for its selection. Explain why the downtown is ready for Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) investment, and how that investment would serve as a catalyst to bring about revitalization.*

### **Overview**

The Village of Massena seeks funding through the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) to build upon its momentum in rediscovering and revitalizing its historic, intimate, and picturesque downtown. DRI support will fast-track the Village's vision and fluid revitalization, leading to definitive measures of economic sustainability and improved quality of life.

### ***Defining Characteristics***

- Massena's downtown core is well defined by its natural geographical boundaries, architecture, and zoning codes. Capitalizing on underdeveloped and its riverfront properties will enhance the downtown significantly. Improvement of the appearance of downtown's buildings, sidewalks, signage, streets, and green space will amplify the Village's #ExploreMassena branding strategy.
- A strong sense of commitment to grow the downtown from business and property owners is evidenced by the amount of completed and ongoing private investment and revitalization initiatives.
- The Village of Massena has a successful track record in obtaining and administering publicly funded grant projects. Previous projects in the downtown include the installation of electric car charging stations, urban forestry initiatives, housing rehabilitation projects, high speed internet installation, and development of an updated Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan. The projects in the downtown area are highly visible and have served as catalysts for further private investments. The Village has the administrative capacity to manage the DRI.
- Continued community engagement during the development of this application. Over the past several years, the DRI Planning Committee and in conjunction with other groups such as the Waterfront Advisory Committee, Moving Massena Forward Community Coalition, and other community stakeholders have provided and solicited public opinion and input for this application and the Village's downtown revitalization strategy. Pooling of data as well as providing opportunities for ongoing input (in person, virtually, and in socially distanced community forums) serve as ongoing efforts to reflect the community's needs and opinions. Creative new sampling ideas include utilizing educational and healthcare access points to reach a more varied age and socioeconomic capture of public opinion for development guidance.

### ***Projects***

The Village has created three major themes to guide its revitalization principles and deploy its vision: Waterfront Development and Community Wellness, an Arts and Culture Corridor, and Workforce and Business Development. Potential projects include:

- Restoration of the Massena Theater – centrally located and already partially renovated, this space is ready to embark on the next phase of restoration. Once completed, the theater will serve as a social and cultural anchor in the heart of the Village
- Development of an Outdoor Event Center and Recreation Place – a four season social epicenter that will include the cultivation of healthy food options and improve access to fresh food options by housing farmers’ markets. The project will also create entry-level and professional job opportunities by adopting a “food as medicine” initiative.
- Waterfront Developments – Grasse River Commons and Downtown Riverwalk. The developments will renew the Grasse River waterfront and its dilapidated properties for recreation, housing, dining, and entertainment purposes providing job opportunities with varied skill levels and salaries. The Riverwalk will provide a scenic pathway from the Veteran’s Memorial Park along the Grasse River to the Parker Avenue Bridge. The project will provide new access to the Grasse River waterfront in downtown Massena and encourage investment, greatly adding to the area’s economic viability.
- Renovation of the former JJ Newberry Building – the historic facility will be transformed and spark a renewal of rundown vacant traditional multi-story mixed-use row buildings. Creation of mixed income housing on upper levels and commercial and retail initiatives on lower levels will directly improve the local property tax base and create additional employment opportunities.
- Downtown Enhancements – improve the walkability of downtown Massena creating a safer and more inviting environment for visitors, patrons, and businesses.
- Recapitalize the Core of the Community Fund – the Community Oriented Revival Effort will help additional local businesses by providing grants for façade renovations, green energy improvements, and renewable energy sourcing. The initiative will improve historic buildings and provide enhanced handicapped accessibility.
- Digital Community Connection – the project will provide a public WiFi network in the downtown through a series of informational kiosks. The project will also increase the number of electric vehicle charging stations for a more connected and greener downtown.

The themes that the host of projects follow not only reflect the values of the Massena community but also serve to fortify downtown infrastructure in a way that is constructive to the socioeconomic livelihood of all Massena residents.

### ***Overcoming Challenges***

Historically, the Village has carried the heavy burden of the general deindustrialization felt across New York State in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Born of hydroelectric power and industrial operations such as Alcoa (the oldest operational smelter in the world), Massena has defining characteristics and a storied past. As a three-river community, the Village’s waterfront resources are ample, featuring the Grasse River Blueway, St. Lawrence River, and the Raquette River Blueway Corridor. Despite the benefits afforded by plentiful riparian resources, the waterfront has been historically underutilized, and the community has long struggled with contamination as a result of its industrial and manufacturing base. No stranger to the ever-changing economic landscape, Massena has grappled with maintaining a robust commercial portfolio. Complicating revitalization, the Village of Massena has endured definitive impoverishment and has contended with blight, eroding employment opportunities, outmigration, and the reality of maintaining a Village where there is a poverty rate of 19.6% (2019 American Community Survey 5-year

estimates) and over 60% of students in the Massena Central School District receive free or reduced lunches.

This past does not define Massena but instead serves to shape it for a brighter future. Today, Massena is moving forward, and both residents and tourists are rediscovering its downtown. In a community of distinct neighborhoods created during the construction of the St. Lawrence Seaway, Massena's downtown core has always been more than a group of stores or places to do business. Downtown is the central gathering place to connect with neighbors, commune with friends, and to get together for important community events - from a Memorial Day salute at Veterans Park on Andrews Street, to the arrival of Santa Claus from a Massena Fire Department ladder truck, to the steps of the Massena Town Hall (and former opera house). So many locals and ex-patriots of Massena still recall the community's downtown corridor with almost wistful affection. The public Facebook group, "Memories of Massena" has no less than 6,465 members – more than half of the current population of the Village of Massena. In those posts, people still talk about meeting points and life in a community whose heartbeat can be felt downtown.

### Why Massena?

On March 21, 2019, New York State and Federal leaders stood on the production floor of Alcoa, Massena Operations and marveled at the legacy of the longest-running aluminum manufacturing plant in the Western Hemisphere. For nearly 120 years, the labors of Massena's manufacturing workers had fueled the aviation industry, spurred manufacturing across the globe and had even helped put a man on the moon; the aluminum that built Apollo 11 had been forged right at this plant. One of Massena's best assets is its workforce. In 2015, through bi-partisan efforts of Federal, State, and regional leaders, Massena's major industry was given a lifeline, just recently extended another seven years. Perhaps more infinitely, the series of events also sparked an unprecedented self-examination and strategic planning effort that continues to this day as part of this application. The process has taken the community on a journey of rediscovery.

This DRI proposal represents justification in the faith that New York State has consistently shown in Massena. It outlines a strategic plan for building the best future for all of our residents, especially those we hope to attract or bring back home to downtown, a future that merges the best of what we were with new realities and promise.

Our application is founded on the following assessments:

#### ***Manufacturing will continue to support Massena's economy***

While it will continue to hold a pivotal place in Massena's economy, manufacturing will probably never attain the prominence it once had in the region. Despite the well documented losses in aluminum and car manufacturing, Massena's Industrial Park is at or near capacity, with about a dozen firms each employing anywhere from two to thirty-five jobs. Light manufacturing is now boosting the occupancy rate of the local mall and Alcoa and Arconic are hosting several firms in a developing business park. There is commercial interest in properties owned by the Town of Massena and at the former General Motors location, now owned by the RACER (Revitalizing Auto Communities Environmental Response)

Trust – which could result in significant future employment. Access to NYPA and public power from the municipal Massena Electric Department hold the promise of even more manufacturing activity. Still, Massena believes its future lies in workforce development, professional development, and entrepreneurship development and this DRI application focuses on building capacity in those areas.

***Tourism plays a lead role in Massena's future***

During the 1800s, Massena grew in prominence as a health retreat as people flocked to the area to enjoy the medicinal benefits of bathing in the Sulphur mineral springs found along the Raquette River. Known to the Native Americans as Kanaswastakeras, meaning "the place where the mud smells bad," the Iroquois had been visiting the springs and using the waters for their "curative" powers for generations before settlers from New England and Europe came to this area. The Native Americans described the springs as a place where many moose, deer and their sick brothers would come to drink the healing waters. The Sulphur springs provided a booming economy for Massena, which at one time boasted some 60 hotels, before fires devastated the structures and the interest in the Sulphur springs faded.

Today, Massena officials are once again turning to its three rivers and the promise of tourism to jumpstart its community. The natural elements of Massena combined with events like the FLW Costa Fishing Tournament and destinations such as the Seaway and the Nicandri Nature Center currently make Massena a strong tourist destination. This DRI application includes several projects that capitalize on our river assets and to connect downtown to memorable experiences that attract tourists and residents alike.

***Our future will depend in part on our ability to recruit and retain young professionals***

While virtually everyone would benefit from the proposals submitted as part of this DRI application, the Planning Team has focused its efforts on building a community for the future and we believe that the future of this community depends on our ability to make Massena an attractive, compelling place for young people hoping to start a family.

The future holds the promise of increased employment opportunities for people living in Massena, we are developing our community as the place for young families to live in the region, regardless of where they may work. Massena is uniquely well positioned to provide affordable, quality of life amenities that would be attractive to young families.

Massena has the most to offer young people ready to settle down, including affordable residential properties that Massena officials have actively marketed and supported through first time home buyers' programs and others. Massena also boasts a robust recreation and parks program and is home to several family-oriented organizations. Further, our exceptional school system, the largest in St. Lawrence County, has the capacity and experience to help all children succeed.

As demonstrated in this application, the past 5 years have seen unprecedented levels of public and private investment and renewed community interest. The Village is taking calculated measures to ensure economic progress no longer comes at the expense of its vast natural resources and future

generations. Redevelopment projects such as facade improvements, historical restorations, incorporation of green energy and infrastructure principles, and a reconnection to the waterfront are taking shape downtown.

The progress has brought much-needed renewal and set a spotlight on advancing downtown Massena's revitalization. The community is engaged and mobilized. Massena is ready to capitalize on its current momentum to write the next transformative chapter of its story. In partnership with the Downtown Revitalization Initiative, Massena will truly be able to embrace a proud past and a promising future.

### ***Signs of progressive change in a small community***

The number of women owned businesses is on the rise and Massena is a great reflection of this. In the downtown area, there are at least 26 woman-owned businesses. This information demonstrates the remarkable impact women entrepreneurs have on the economy, creating jobs and stimulating revenue but also impacting our community at large. We are proud of the progress and want to continue the momentum. DRI designation, planning, and funding, will positively impact new female entrepreneurs and support existing woman-owned businesses.

### **Capture of Woman-Owned Businesses in the DRI area:**

BRKK Tees	67 Main Street
Studio 162	47 Main Street
Rosario's	42 Main Street
Simplicity	48 Main Street
Rest above The Nest	51 Main Street
The Shop Around the Corner	32 Andrews Street
Mystic Rays Tanning Salon	18 Andrews Street
A and J Embroidery	10 Main Street
A Million Monarchs	2 Main Street
Via Main	132 Main Street
The Massena Yoga Studio	69 Main Street
Hayden Fit	54 East Orvis Street
The Fly Factory	54 East Orvis Street
Pets First Choice	6 Parker Ave
Delmar Sportsmen's Tavern	20 Andrew Street
House of Groom	33 Center Street
B Hair Studio	25 Center Street
SC Salon	92 Main Street
Toddler Town	120 Main Street
Peets Jewelers	10 Phillips Street
Eyland's Restaurant	10 West Orvis Street
Violi's Pilates	52 Main Street
Carriage House Bridal	8 Main Street
Black Hearts Bay Tattoo	73 Main Street
St. Hilaire Insurance Services	154 Main Street
Trego Realty	154 Main Street
J&C Towers	38 E. Orvis Street

## **DOWNTOWN IDENTIFICATION**

1. *Boundaries of the proposed DRI area. Detail the boundaries of the targeted downtown area or neighborhood, keeping in mind that there is no minimum or maximum size, but that the area should be concentrated and well-defined. Neighborhoods beyond traditional central business districts are eligible if they can meet other criteria making them ripe for investment. Include a map that clearly delineates the area to be included in the downtown revitalization area.*

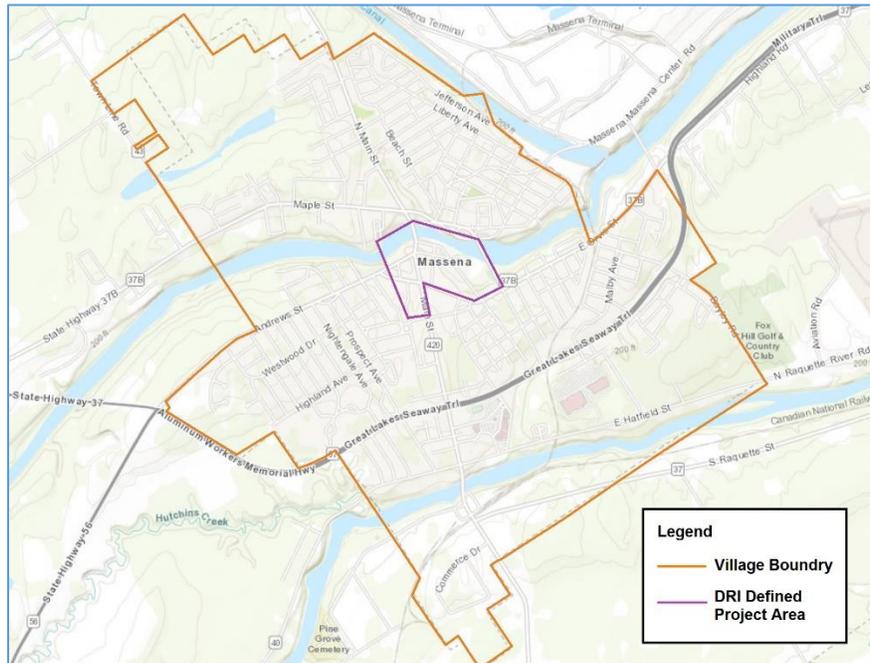
Situated along the Canadian border of St. Lawrence County in Northern New York, the Village of Massena (population of 10,200 according to the U.S. Census Bureau) marks a strategic location along the Saint Lawrence Seaway, 90 miles south of the Port of Montreal. Further south on this route, 34 miles away, lays the Port of Ogdensburg. With two shipping locks and an industrial park, Massena plays a crucial role in this leg of the distribution chain to the Great Lakes and Western States.

The identified DRI boundaries represent natural edges to downtown's core, from the first intact historic structure to the Grasse River Bridge and flowing onto side streets in a reflection of Massena's historic commercial district. Recently rehabilitated, the boundaries include Parker Avenue Bridge which serves as a downtown gateway and is representative of an investment of over \$14M in Massena's infrastructure. The boundaries were selected so that Village leadership could achieve new projects which promote walkability and riparian access, such as the proposed Downtown Riverwalk.

Specifically, the boundaries comprise Andrews Street west to Church Street, Church Street south to W. Orvis Street, W. Orvis Street west to Church Street, E. Orvis Street east to Parker Ave., Glenn Street south to E. Orvis Street, Phillips Street east to Water Street, Main Street north to Maple Street, Water Street northwest to Main Street, Center Street east to Parker Ave. Bridge, and Maple Street east to Center Street. The selected DRI target area encompasses 137 total acres and a collection of commercial and residential buildings. The downtown neighborhood is well defined by:

- **Geography.** The natural boundary is formed by the Grasse River on the North side. Historically the community evolved here as the waterway served as a local industrial center. The Village has made waterfront development and community wellness a guiding theme in its downtown revitalization efforts through the integration afforded by these community assets. Running through the core of the community, the DRI boundaries encompass a large span of the Grasse River and include its approaches and crossings.
- **Green spaces.** Rich in urban green space, the proposed DRI area benefits from the inclusion of the beloved Veterans Memorial Park and Gazebo on the banks of the Grasse River as well as the Village's much anticipated riverfront development of Wavy Waters Park on Water Street.
- **The presence of traditional building types.** The DRI area is differentiated in the Village for its multi-story mixed use row buildings that are a traditional scenscape in downtowns and main streets. The Village and Town Hall and Theater feature the use of stone and brick that creates a strong presence and cultivates an appreciation for the community's rich history.
- **Compact development type.** The defined downtown is an approximate 15-minute walk from one end to the other at its widest point. A pedestrian walking at a comfortable pace from the center of the Village could reach any destination within the defined downtown in fewer than 10 minutes.

- Modern zoning and parcel boundaries.** Within this area are several anchor institutions that include multi-family residential developments, major employers, professional services, and cultural and recreational destinations. The presence of developable properties creates the potential for increased economic activity.



Additional maps delineating the DRI boundaries can be found in Attachment A of this application, as well as a map of the proposed DRI projects.

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

Downtown Massena is transforming by leveraging several opportunities for public and private investment - selecting, saving, and supporting renovation efforts at several key properties and sites. In the past few years, 22 businesses have either opened, expanded, or relocated to the downtown. In accordance with the Massena Downtown Coalition's (MDC) Downtown Strategic Plan, the Village has worked systematically to invigorate development and expand improvements throughout its downtown all while retaining its historical character.

Massena's identity is being built around its most transformative investment areas – Main Street and Water Street. Potential to build upon recent investments continues with an intriguing array of developable properties within the downtown, including properties that can be utilized for varying levels

of housing affordability and mixed-use developments. Two good examples of projects currently underway/funded that align with DRI principles and that could be replicated at other downtown properties are the former Slavin's building and the Grist Mill – both of which will feature prime residential space as well as anchor commercial space. Another great example of a project currently underway that aligns with the DRI principles is the Downtown Theater. With \$300,000 being used to complete Phase I (Asbestos Abatement & HVAC) of its restoration, the Theater is primed to become a truly transformative project for the downtown core.

### ***Future Investment***

The Village has proposed an array of future investment opportunities in the downtown in this application. The list is comprised of 12 potential projects representing over \$21 million in project costs. Massena will continue to make strategic and incremental advances but has potential for significant gains with the award of the \$10 million DRI grant.

Past investments have been facilitated and encouraged through several programs, including a Massena Complete Streets policy, the 2012 NYS Main Street Program, a Town of Massena grant for local businesses which began in 2014, and the Core of the Community initiated in 2017. More recent public investments have included RestoreNY awards for the Mercantile (former Slavin's building) and the Grist Mill, a microenterprise grant program, Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan grant, and NYSDEC for the installation of electric car charging stations. These initiatives focused on local waterfront revitalization planning and implementation as well as the creation of a greener community through the enhancement of park space and recreation. Assisting the start-up of entrepreneurs, small businesses, and helping with renovations – these efforts have helped Massena take shape and reflect current progress.

Since 2015, projects in downtown Massena have earned grant awards totaling nearly \$5 million. In addition, other public and private investments in the downtown area have totaled approximately \$20 million in the past ten years.

## **New, Ongoing, and Recently Completed Projects**

### **The Mercantile**

This public/private partnership is a perfect example of the progress being made with Massena's downtown revitalization efforts. Having sat vacant and dilapidated for years, this 12,000 sq. ft. building underwent over \$1 million in renovations utilizing more than \$400,000 in private investment as well as funding from a Restore NY grant. This facility is now a vibrant and attractive a multi-use structure. The upper level of The Mercantile contains three apartments, each with a bird's eye view of the Grasse River and downtown Massena. The main level houses a physical therapy office, which occupies 825 square feet of the available 3,900 square feet of space. The rest of the 3,075 square feet on the main level will be available for retail or office space in the future. The lower level is being leased by the New York Power Authority to accommodate Project Management and other staff for several ongoing NYPA initiatives, including the Smart Path and Northern New York Priority Transmission Project.

### **Grist Mill Renovation and Conversion**

Another example of public/private partnerships further advancing Massena's downtown revitalization efforts, this 11,365 sq. ft historic building, is in the process of being renovated. Combining over \$400,000 in private investment with a \$986,000 Restore NY grant, this project is renewing and repurposing a structure that had previously sat vacant for decades. Plans for the facility include a shared commercial kitchen, which will host three well known eateries that were once the cornerstone of Massena's restaurant community. The building will also include two river view apartments. This mixed-use redesign of the Grist Mill building aligns perfectly with Massena's vision for downtown revitalization.

### **Massena Theater Restoration**

The Massena Arts and Theater Association, a 501c(3) non-profit organization, is in the process of restoring the Massena Schine Theater in downtown Massena. Until its permanent shut-down in 1995, the theater played a pivotal role in drawing people to the downtown area. Once fully restored and reopened, the theater will serve as a multipurpose arts and entertainment hub. From screening movies, concerts, speakers, to one act plays and comedians, the theater will serve as a draw to hundreds of people making the downtown core even more vibrant than it is today. Phase I of the theater restoration, which included asbestos abatement and other critical structure related work was recently completed. More than \$300,000 in funding from a NYS Main Street Grant and from the Massena Business Development Corporation was used in part to complete Phase I. Fundraising efforts by the Association are ongoing to assist with the planned Phase II of the restoration.

### **Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan**

The Village of Massena Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan (LWRP) is a critical component of the Village's revitalization efforts. Once completed, the plan will develop waterfront recreation, flood resiliency, and ecologically beneficial project recommendations that are attuned to the needs of current and future Village residents. The Village retained Barton & Loguidice, DPC as its planning consultant to assist and guide the planning process. The intent of this project is to provide a strategic plan for enhancements to the Village's riverfronts for improved visual and recreational access, downtown and neighborhood revitalization, and unique and appropriate new development. The Plan will focus on four key opportunity areas including:

- Enhancing physical and visual public waterfront access opportunities
- Revitalizing commercial and mixed-use areas
- Protecting community character
- Improving the ability of the community to take advantage of scenic resource-related tourism.

The Village is currently building on these themes to prioritize community development projects. The projects will establish a complete strategic plan for accessibility enhancements to the Grasse Riverfront, downtown and neighborhood revitalization, and unique and appropriate new development. Upon finalization of the plan, the Village will be eligible for funding from NYSDOS to implement recommended actions from the plan.

**Celine G. Philibert Cultural Centre and Museum Expansion**

A public/private partnership, the Celine G. Philibert Cultural Centre and Museum is in the process of completing a \$250,000 addition to the facility. The expansion is funded by the combination of a \$150,000 grant facilitated by Sen. Joseph Griffo in 2018 and approximately \$103,000 in Town and Museum funds. The addition will help expand the community's access to cultural and historical exhibitions and relics. The Centre and Museum serve as an integral element to the Village's Arts and Culture corridor. The expanded facility combined with a restored Massena Theater and other proposed projects such as the Water Street Park recreation and event space will make downtown Massena a true Arts and Culture destination.

**Parker Avenue Bridge and Turnabout**

The Parker Avenue Bridge serves as a gateway to downtown and spans the Grasse River. In partnership with the New York State Department of Transportation, replacement of the deteriorating bridge was just recently completed. As part of the project, several improvements were made to the connecting roadways and sidewalks and 70% of the area's water mains were replaced. The thoughtful design incorporated a downtown-friendly roundabout, slowing vehicle speeds in this pedestrian-friendly corridor. Advancing goals of the village's waterfront development and community wellness focus, the project added attractive landscaping and vegetation, enticing visitors and residents to spend quality time in the Grasse River and downtown area. The total investment of these betterment projects is approximately \$14 million.

**Downtown Massena Sustainability Efforts**

The Village, in conjunction with the Massena Electric Department, was previously awarded a grant in the amount of \$11,748.86 for the installation of an electric car charger downtown. The project was implemented to promote and support clean vehicle use while accommodating the Village's many cross-border visitors and seasonal tourists. Efforts and planning are ongoing for the installation of additional charging stations in the Village and Town. The Village is also currently working with the Massena Electric Department (MED) on an upcoming street pole and lighting upgrade. MED will be facilitating the project in which the streetlights and poles in the downtown core will be replaced. The Village of Massena was consulted with on the selection of the new pole design and as such they will be in line with the Village's future streetscape plans and goals. The new lights will be LED further increasing the sustainability efforts of the Village and community.

**Shared Service Facility**

The Village of Massena recently completed construction on a new and relocated salt storage facility. The construction was funded in part by a \$225,000 Water Quality Improvement Project (WQIP) grant which was awarded in 2017. This project allowed the site of the prior storage property, which is near the industrial park, to be repurposed to a job-creating commercial prospect while also inducing environmental protections and benefits. The newly constructed storage facility also has a dedicated section for the Massena Central School District, which has allowed it to obtain significant savings in purchasing salt supplies as they are now better equipped to purchase in bulk.

**Citizens Advocates Clinic**

Centrally located in the downtown core, Citizens Advocates provides access to vital, safety-net care and a comprehensive range of Behavioral Health Services. The organization recently remodeled the facility located at 16 Phillips Street, investing over \$500,000. The newly renovated facility is open throughout the week and brings numerous individuals to the downtown core, opening up even more opportunities for neighboring downtown businesses to expand their customer base.

**WellNow Urgent Care**

Originally founded as Five Star Urgent Care, WellNow Urgent Care has 85+ locations throughout New York, Ohio, Illinois, and Michigan. In 2021, the company announced plans to build and operate a brand-new facility in Massena. The clinic will provide walk-in service for a wide range of non-life-threatening injuries and illnesses, such as sprains, burns, lacerations, colds, and allergies. It will also provide on-site X-rays, lab testing, and physicals. Site preparations for the new clinic have already started and documentation submitted to the Village Building and Code Office indicate that at least \$980,000 will be invested in the creation of the new facility. The new clinic will not only create new, professional jobs but will also increase the number of individuals coming to the catchment area.

**Hayden Fit**

Located at 54 East Orvis Street, within the proposed DRI project area, Hayden Fit is a fitness club that offers multiple classes for all ability levels. Opened in 2020, this business offers personal training, CrossFit, cardio and weights, spin class, functional fitness boot camp, and other fitness related services. The business promotes themselves as having a motivating a positive atmosphere. The range of services and hours offered helps bring a steady stream of residents to the downtown core in both the morning and evening hours, further strengthening the economic and business advantages of the area.

**Northern Credit Union**

Currently located at 256 East Orvis Street, Northern Credit Union is in the process of planning and constructing a new location, 88 Parker Avenue within the Village. The initial plans indicate a two-phase approach. Phase one will be the development of a new Northern Credit Union Drive Thru. Phase two involves the potential construction of a new 2,100 square foot full customer relationship center. The total estimated project cost listed on the initial plans is \$2 million. The maintenance and expansion of financial service business locations within the downtown core and catchment area is critical to the continued economic success of downtown Massena and the Village as a whole. This upcoming project is just another example of the continued faith and trust businesses have in the future of Massena.

**Main Street Business Relocations & Expansions**

Recently, a number of businesses located on Main Street in the downtown Massena core have relocated to new, larger locations that are still within the proposed downtown project area boundaries:

- **Simplicity Boutique:** Clothing, home décor, and giftware retailer. Relocated to a completely renovated location at 48 Main Street in downtown Massena.

- Joseph's Jewelry & Gifts: Retailer of jewelry, gift items, and specialty foods. Relocated to 27 West Orvis Street in downtown Massena, a much larger building.
- Massena Yoga Studio: Offering a variety of yoga classes to accommodate the needs of their students, from beginners to experienced yogis. In 2020, the Massena Yoga Studio purchased 69 Main Street in Massena. The renewal of the rundown vacant traditional downtown multi-story mixed-use row building was a goal of the investment. The apartments upstairs have been completely renovated. The apartments will be used as short-term rentals (The Alley Cat's Flats) to support the cost of the building as a whole and make yoga available to all. It has been a goal of this business to create a sustainable business model while providing movement and mindfulness to the community at a reasonable cost or on a donation basis. The owner has installed new electrical, plumbing, windows, replacement of some doors, sheetrock, flooring, fixtures, kitchens, bathrooms, and a COVID compliant air filtration system. Over \$175,000 in private investment has leveraged a \$25,000 microenterprise grant to purchase a hot yoga tower, mirrors, yoga wall equipment, yoga chairs, and other miscellaneous equipment. The next phase will include façade and outdoor lighting upgrades and the addition of a healthy café style eatery – The Kitchen Apothecary – which could benefit from DRI investment.

### **BRKK Tees & Embroidery**

Newly opened in 2021, BRKK Tees is a family-owned business located in downtown Massena. The company offers commercial embroidery, direct to garment, sublimation, and screen printing. In addition to apparel, they make epoxy resin mugs, sublimation mugs, handmade earrings and more. BRKK Tees & Embroidery serves the entire North Country and strives to provide high quality, small quantity t-shirts and hoodies and other custom products such as mugs and water bottles. A great addition to the wide range of existing businesses in the downtown core.

### **Internet Network Upgrades**

Slic Network Solutions completed an expansion and upgrade to their network that resulted in more than 200 businesses in Massena having access to 1 gigabyte-per-second internet access. The service uses a pure fiber optic, which allows more users to go online at the same time without slowing down the connection. The expansion was paid for in part using grant funds through the Northern Border Regional Commission. Slic, the Village, and other partners such as Massena Electric Department, Massena Memorial Hospital, and the Town of Massena shared in the total project cost as well.

## ***Assets and Attractions***

The Greater Massena community enjoys a multitude of well-established assets and attractions that serve as a formidable and healthy foundation that enables Massena to capitalize on prior private and public investment and catalyze future investments within the neighborhood and surrounding areas. These assets and attractions are defining features of Massena's culture, history, community, and continuing potential.

### Fishing: Professional, Intermediate, & Amateur

Massena continues to grow and capitalize on its unparalleled fishing resources and opportunities for anglers, sponsors, and fans. In 2021 Massena hosted multiple major, professional fishing tournaments including the Toyota Series Northern Division and the 2021 Tackle Warehouse Pro Circuit. These tournaments along with others such as the General Tire Bass Pro Stage Five will have brought approximately 1,000 different anglers to the Massena area, in addition to the hundreds of fans and spectators. To capitalize on the ever-increasing number of fishing related events and visitors in Massena, and to connect them more directly to the immediate area and economy, Massena launched a campaign known as 'A Season of Excitement'. This campaign involved the organization and promotion of multiple events and promotions. From large scale events such as the 'Party at the Beach' fireworks and concert event, to smaller business specific promotions, Massena was able to make the most of the increased tourism and activity created by these events.



### Massena Intake Park

In association with the New York Power Authority, \$3 million in improvements at the Massena Intake Park were recently completed. The Massena Intake Park has long been a popular tourist destination for boaters because of its location on the St. Lawrence River, its proximity to the Canadian border, and because of it being the site of several national fishing tournaments. The improvements made include an expansion of existing boat launches from four to eight, a new dock, and room for seasonal boat parking, as well as the addition of two new, spacious picnic pavilions with restrooms, parking, and handicap accessibility features.



**St. Lawrence Seaway & Dwight D. Eisenhower Visitors Center**

Welcoming tens of thousands of visitors each year, the Dwight D. Eisenhower Visitors Center has served as a major tourist attraction for North Country residents and tourists visiting the region since 1961. In Late 2019, it was announced that a new visitors center at the U.S. Eisenhower Lock in Massena will be constructed thanks to \$6 million in approved funding for the Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation. With the new center, the Seaway will continue to welcome the tens of thousands of people from around the world who come to watch ships transit the lock each year, and it will serve as a cornerstone for tourism in the greater Massena area.

**Robert Moses State Park/Barnhart**

Robert Moses State Park - Thousand Islands is a 2,322-acre state park located on Barnhart Island in the Saint Lawrence River and the adjacent mainland in the Town of Massena in St. Lawrence County, New York. The park is a spacious home to a large variety of flora and fauna and offers a multitude of recreational opportunities, including wooded campsites and cabins, a marina and boat launch, and some of the best fishing in the Northeast. Considered a flagship facility, this park offers a multitude of recreational opportunities, camping, a marina and boat launch, some of the best fishing in the Northeast, picnic areas, a swimming beach, and tennis courts. The park's nature, hiking and cross-country skiing trails wind through fields, forests, and wetlands with overlooks showcasing spectacular views. In winter, the park also welcomes snowmobilers.

**The Eugene L. Nicandri Nature Center**

This \$12 million, 9,500 sf facility is a state-of-the-art nature center that opened in May 2017. The Nature Center contains indoor and outdoor facilities for use by school groups, families, campers, and others in all seasons of the year. All events and activities are free of charge. Widespread appeal and ability to attract visitors is anticipated. The Center consistently hosts tens of thousands of visitors each year.

**NYPA - The Frank S. McCullough, Jr. Hawkins Point Visitors Center and Boat Launch**

The Frank S. McCullough, Jr. Hawkins Point Visitors Center and Boat Launch at the St. Lawrence-FDR Project offers panoramic views of the Power Project and interactive exhibits that let visitors experience and understand hydropower and electricity. The Center nests on an island in the St. Lawrence River. Visitors will learn about the series of dams, walls, and canals that let the enormous river provide power to both Canada and New York. The Center's local events include pajama parties, a wildlife festival, free movie showings, ice cream socials, and more. The Center enjoys 28,000 visitors annually.

**Outdoor Opportunities for All-Season Tourism**

Massena boasts amazing outdoor opportunities for all-season tourism. The three rivers combined with the other natural resources in Massena and its surrounding areas provide for year-round recreational

opportunities; whether it is boating, hiking, snowshoeing, or other outdoor activities, there are always recreational prospects that attract people to the area.

### **Camping**

Whether opting for an RV, cabin, or tent, Massena and the surrounding area offer some of the best camping opportunities. In addition to the Robert Moses State Park on Barnhart Island, there are numerous other camping areas in the immediate and nearby communities that bring a plethora of visitors into Massena. Local businesses benefit from providing respite, dining experiences, or by selling campers critical supplies, groceries, and sundries. With naturally enjoyable summer weather, many downstate residents and Canadian visitors frequent these northern portions of New York State to escape the hustle and bustle of the city and other populated metropolitan areas. Current and proposed biking and walking trails will only further connect many of the camping areas to the downtown core of Massena.

### **Winter Recreation**

Outdoor recreation and tourism are not only for the summer; in Massena it is a year-round opportunity. Snowshoeing and cross-country skiing are popular winter activities in the winter months, especially with sites such as the Nicandri Nature Center offering free rentals and groomed trails. Ice fishing enthusiasts also take advantage of our long ice fishing season and the plentiful number of sites available. Those pursuits along with robust snowmobile opportunities and other fun winter activities make Massena and the surrounding area a prime location for winter enthusiasts.

### **Recreation Commission – Massena Arena**

Hosts a variety of sports and other events, including:

- Hockey, Lacrosse, Skating, Tennis, Basketball, Softball, and more
- Rod & Gun Club Sportsman Expo
- Youth Soccer Program
- Shriners Circus
- Model Rail Show
- Frog Jumping Competition, Nerf Wars, and other kid friendly activities
- Massena High School Graduation
- 3 Outdoor Skating Rinks
- Beach and Summer Recreation Program

### **Massena Rod and Gun Club**

Nearly 400 active-duty and retired officers from five law enforcement agencies use the facilities here for their required training and certification while another 700 people from all walks of life are recreational club members. Situated 3 miles west of downtown on the Grasse River, the Rod and Gun Club features a variety of outdoor practice stations like a trap, skeet and pistol range, and indoor and outdoor archery ranges. Plus, the river is just steps away for those who enjoy bass and muskie fishing, canoeing, kayaking and tubing.

**The 56 Drive-In Theater**

Massena is the proud home to one of approximately 330 remaining drive-in theaters still in operation in the United States. The 56 Drive-In, established in 1955 just 2 miles from downtown, continues to draw families and movie-goers of all ages. Families still enjoy the nostalgic experience of watching a double feature in the great outdoors while eating food from the snack bar.

**The River Course**

One of the most scenic courses in the North Country, the St. Lawrence River provides the spectacular backdrop for much of the 18-hole, 71-par golf course situated about 3 miles north of the Village. It features a full-service restaurant that caters to golfers and the public alike, and reservations are accepted for large-scale events like wedding receptions and corporate meetings. Boaters are also welcome to park at the dock and come ashore to enjoy the clubhouse amenities.

**Antiques, Collectibles and Treasures Network**

Five local businesses have built Massena's reputation as the go-to center for those shoppers seeking truly unique and rare items, whether new or gently used. Massena Marketplace and Fabulous Finds, situated across from each other on South Main Street, are the first retail businesses to welcome visitors entering the Village on Route 420. The North Country Showcase is nestled in the Harte Haven Shopping Center, the Shop Around the Corner is anchored on Andrews Street downtown, and shoppers can visit Journeyman Antiques and Gifts on Route 37 on the west side of town. The network of related businesses in the Village and outside draw like-minded shoppers to all corners of the community.

**Timequest Miniature Golf and Petting Zoo**

Two 18-hole mini-golf courses can be found about 2 miles south of downtown. When they're done golfing, visitors can enjoy feeding the many goats, ducks, and chickens that also make themselves at home on the property.

**Akwesasne Mohawk Casino Resort**

Located just 11 miles from Massena, the casino features 1,600 slot and video-gaming machines, 30 gaming tables, restaurants, and a day spa for guests to enjoy. The casino complex also features an events center, hotel and RV park, and a gift shop packed with products made by Native American artisans. The Casino draws thousands of individuals from all over into the great Massena region and DRI catchment area.

**Police Activities League (PAL) of Massena & Horizons**

Both organizations provide a variety of kid-centric activities that challenge and stimulate young minds and bodies. Specifically, Massena PAL (formerly known as the Boys & Girls Club) provides after school programming for students in grades 2 - 12 to ensure that our community's young people, who are most in need of our help, have greater access to quality programs and services that help them succeed academically, live healthy lifestyles, and become leaders. The Horizons Clubhouse is another after school program that promotes healthy life choices. The program is for students ages 12-17 who are at risk of addiction or facing addiction. It provides essential supports and positive activities that help students to overcome these obstacles to their success.

### Branding Initiative, Website and Smartphone App

The Village and Town of Massena combined efforts to launch a branding initiative and marketing campaign. Working with H3 Designs, a Massena based creative design company, a group of local officials and business and community representatives created a cohesive brand image and strategy to assist with attracting and retaining residents, bolstering business, and boosting tourism. With that brand strategy in mind, a new Explore Massena website ([www.exploremassena.com](http://www.exploremassena.com)), social media presence, and smartphone app was created. These easy to use, resident and tourist friendly tools are vibrantly designed and market the Massena area as a tourism destination. These tools have been used extensively with the promotion of various events such as the 'Season of Excitement' series as well as a variety of area attractions and businesses.



### Community Potential

Large-scale, transformative projects that would be assisted by a successful DRI application will be supported by a number of smaller-scale, existing attractions in the greater Massena community with the potential to draw not only out-of-the-area visitors but transplanted young professionals who might be unaware of all downtown has to offer. In fact, Massena regularly welcomes a diverse international cross-section of patrons that can easily be expanded upon through strategic future investments.

#### Neighboring Communities:

Neighboring communities who frequent downtown Massena and are regular patrons of its businesses are:

- St. Regis Mohawk Reservation (Akwesasne) – population 3,288
- Canadian communities including Cornwall, ON – population 46,876
- Louisville, NY – population 3,145

- Brasher, NY – population 1,140
- Norfolk, NY – population 4,668

**Surrounding Student Base:**

Not counting faculty and support staff and looking only at enrollment statistics at each of the four colleges within a 30-minute drive of Massena, there is potential to reach a combined 7,900 students in Potsdam from Clarkson University and SUNY Potsdam and another 5,700 students in Canton who attend SUNY Canton and St. Lawrence University.

Capitalizing on students' genuine interest in new experiences and lending the ability to engender a true sense of community by welcoming and encouraging investment in downtown - through shopping, attending events or perhaps renting an apartment or purchasing a home – students can create a sense of belonging and ownership in a vibrant community where opportunities abound.

**Tri-Chamber Agreement**

In 2018, the Massena Chamber of Commerce entered into a tri-chamber agreement with Cornwall and Akwesasne to promote economic development efforts in the area and strengthen the communal network. This agreement demonstrates the region's broad desire to see Massena succeed with its revitalization efforts.

**Long-term viability from Major Employers**

Massena's major employers offer reliability and economic stimulus to local business activities, services, and attractions. These include:

- Massena Memorial Hospital – 373 employees
- Alcoa – 450 employees
- Massena Central School District – 433 employees
- Arconic – 160 employees
- St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation – 130 employees
- New York Power Authority – 245 employees
- Massena Electric Department – 20 employees
- Liberty Utilities – 56 employees
- Industrial Park tenants\*:
  - Curran Renewable Energy/Seaway Timber - 95
  - NRC (Op-Tech) - 50
  - Fockler - 10
  - NY Power Tools - 2
  - Marimac – 1
  - Am Tech Yarns, Inc – 18

\*A combined total of 176 employees

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

Massena's business and employment environment has historically endured setbacks; however today, Massena is not only showing progress but is also poised for long-term future developments. Several features make Massena an ideal business climate, including its strategic geographic location on the U.S./Canadian border, access to vast natural resources including 3 rivers, low-cost hydroelectric power, close proximity to best-in-class educational facilities, central position to many major cities in both the U.S. and Canada, and a high-speed telecommunications network.

A special report on the North Country's economy in 2018 via State Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli, noted a continuing problem with high unemployment, child poverty, and housing vacancy rates. However, despite these longstanding issues, there are several indications that the economies of Massena and St. Lawrence County are improving. St. Lawrence County's unemployment rate has leveled off at 6.1% despite the pandemic. For the first time in recent memory, St. Lawrence County did not rank among those counties with the highest unemployment rate in the state. As another indicator that better days are ahead, St. Lawrence County was removed from the State Comptroller's list of fiscally stressed municipalities. Massena has also seen the job market increase by 0.5% over the last year.

Demonstrating the improved statistics above, Massena continues to make progress upon the developments which will lead towards the attraction of professionals, support redevelopment, and make long-term growth sustainable. As more and more private funding sources are leveraged with public investment dollars to improve the community, Massena is seeing unprecedented momentum and revitalization interest. Recently opened, underway, and upcoming businesses within and near the DRI focus area are detailed in the following table.

Recent Projects Impacting Job Growth	Address	Status
On the Rocks Restaurant (New Business)	20 Water Street	Planning Stage
Joseph's Jewelry and Gifts (Relocation & Expansion)	27 W Orvis Street	Completed
GoCo Micro-brewery & Restaurant	38 Water Street	In Process
Fahrenheit Club (New Business)	4 Main Street	Completed
B Hair Studio (Relocation & Expansion)	Center Street	Completed
Funky Feet (New Business)	East Orvis Street	Completed
Hayden Fit (New Business)	East Orvis Street	Completed
Massena Yoga Studio (Relocation & Expansion)	Main Street	In Process
Simplicity (Relocation & Expansion)	Main Street	Completed
BRKK Tees & Embroidery (New Business)	Main Street	Completed

A Million Monarchs	Main Street	Completed
Virtual Precision (New Business)	Main Street	Completed
SC Salon (New Business)	Main Street	Completed
St Hilaires Financial Services (Expansion)	Main Street	Completed
Trego Reality (New Business)	Main Street	Completed
Old Tyme Tattoos (Relocation)	Main Street	Completed
Celine G. Philibert Museum & Cultural Center (Expansion)	Main Street	In Process
Violi Pilates (Relocation/Expansion)	Main Street	Completed
NYPA Downtown Offices (Relocation)	Mercantile Building	Completed
Matthew S Hayes Physical Therapy PLLC (New Business)	Mercantile Building	Completed
Citizen's Advocates (New Business)	Phillips Street	Completed
Eylands (Relocation)	W Orvis St	Completed
Premo's Pizza and Subs (New Business)	2184 NY-420	Completed
Coin Operated Laundry	425 S. Main Street	Planning Stage
WellNow Urgent Care (New Construction)	Harte Haven	In Process
KFC Kentucky Fried Chicken (New Construction)	Main Street	Completed
Dunkin Donuts (Remodel)	Main Street	In Process
Hardy's Bakery & Café (Relocation & Expansion)	North Main	Completed
Seaway Crafts (New Business)	North Main Strret	Completed
Pets First Choice	Parker Ave	Completed
Northern Credit Union (New Construction)	Parker/Rt 37	In Process
Impact Fitness Gym (New Business)	St Lawrence Centre Plaza	In Process
Walmart (Remodel)	Stephenville Road	Completed
Confluent Energy (40 Acre Greenhouse Project)		Planning Stage

In addition to the multitude of recent projects, there is continued positive growth demonstrated at Massena's major employers.

- **Massena Memorial Hospital's** employment has held steady with 373 full time equivalents and 19 additional employees in new Outreach Clinics. Total payroll has followed suit, increasing 5.22% from \$25.6M to \$27M from 2017 to 2018. The hospital continues to add experts to its staff and expand services to amplify the quality of care in the community. In 2018, the hospital recruited five new physicians to provide primary and specialty care services to include a Cardiologist, Nephrologist/Hypertension Specialist, and three Hospitalists. The Outreach primary care and specialty services supported by these additional physicians grew by 13,178 units from 2017 to 2018. Based on an analysis performed by the Hospital Association of New York, these figures have resulted in an increase in the hospital's total economic impact - a staggering \$85M in 2018 (up from \$78M in 2017).
- **Massena Central School District (MCS)** carries sustainable economic impact. The district, though the largest in the region, has a small town feel and is the heartbeat of the community. It covers over 200 square miles in St. Lawrence County as well as the Akwesasne Mohawk Territory to the east. MCS educates 2,600 students Pre-K thru 12 and employs 433 people in various capacities. The district's budget of \$54M provides strong support for education programs and sustainable employment. A recent report from the NYS Association of School Business Officials (ASBO), indicated the district had an even wider economic impact, stating "The district's purchase of goods and services as well as employee personal spending is responsible for about 190 additional spillover jobs in the North Country region." The school district is responsible for a total of about 590 jobs. These jobs generate \$31.4M in income. \$20.9M is directly connected to Massena employees. Another \$10.5M is generated by spillover spending that generate additional jobs. This income generates an estimated \$1.4M in state income tax in total and \$0.9M in sales tax." The school also offers a culturally diverse atmosphere, unparalleled by many surrounding districts, with over 10% of students of Mohawk descent.
- **SeaComm Credit Union** is headquartered in Massena, NY. The organization's expansion into Clinton County, NY early in 2017 and now into Vermont has afforded SeaComm the opportunity to diversify its market mix, further enabling the Credit Union to withstand certain economic anomalies which have or could be market specific. SeaComm's growth trajectory in the building of new retail branches also affords Massena with additional jobs at the operations center in the areas of risk, information systems, finance, lending operations, and compliance. SeaComm continues to add 6-10 employees per year in order to meet growth targets which will add to its current staff of 90 employees in Massena. This will continue as the credit union operations become more complex, specifically based upon the number of locations and asset size. Today, SeaComm represents \$558M in assets with more than 47,000 members and, based upon internal financial forecasts, will be nearing the \$1 billion mark once its new Vermont markets mature. SeaComm is a financially sound entity offering long-term economic benefits to

Massena, with more than 15% in capital and a rating of A by the independent rating agency Weiss.

- **Alcoa and Arconic** - In March 2019, a new seven-year deal between New York State and Alcoa was reached to preserve hundreds of jobs at its Massena facility. The agreement will maintain 450 jobs and ensures the continued operation of Alcoa's Massena Smelting Plant through 2026. The deal also builds upon a 2018 agreement with Arconic that secured 145 additional jobs at the same site in Massena. Arconic, a derivative entity of Alcoa, is showing promising growth. Arconic's largest and fastest-growing market is aerospace, an industry in which it has had a major presence since the Wright Brothers' first flight. Because of an expanding global middle class and increasing air travel, according to Arconic officials, worldwide demand for aircraft has led to the largest order book in aviation history, with a nine-year production order book for both commercial aircraft and aero engines. Earlier, in December 2018, it was announced that Arconic would maintain its workforce through 2028, ensuring a commitment of roughly 600 jobs total between the two companies. Most recently, in September 2021, as a result of the increasing price of aluminum, Alcoa announced the hiring of 15 more hourly employees and plans to add even more employees that are hourly and on salary.
- **RACER Trust and the Former General Motors Property** – In June 2021, it was announced that the RACER Trust (Revitalizing Auto Communities Environmental Response) has reached an agreement to sell the former General Motors property in Massena. While details remain confidential, the reuse project will create significant new jobs and other benefits for the community, including a substantial increase in the tax base. General Motors operated in Massena from 1959 to 2009. The company announced plans in 2007 to close its Massena Powertrain plant, which has since been torn down. Since the plant's closure in 2009, RACER Trust assumed ownership of the property through a 2011 bankruptcy settlement and began a cleanup and remediation under the oversight of the federal Environmental Protection Agency. The 217-acre site is border by the St. Lawrence River to the north, the St. Regis Mohawk Nation to the east, the Raquette River to the south, and property owned by Alcoa and CSX to the west. The site has long represented a major opportunity for economic development in Massena and under the recently announced agreement, new investment and job creation opportunities will be created.

Much anticipated future growth in Massena is based on the amplification of outdoor recreational opportunities and tourism – including sportsmen's and outdoorsmen tourism. As is evident throughout this application, when speaking of recent growth or potential projects, the Village's ability to highlight its outdoor and recreational assets is paramount to the community's long-term economic sustainability. Increased participation in fishing, boating, and kayaking are readily evident.

The fishing opportunities that exist around the three rivers that flow through Massena are unlike any other found in North America and are accessible year-round. This extraordinary fishing potential represents a means to bring anglers and their families from all over the region and can serve as the

catalyst for future economic expansion. In order to facilitate this effort, Massena has embarked on a multi-faceted movement which includes representation at Northeastern sports shows, connecting with regional tournament directors to make Massena the center of a national bass experience, television and radio presence in both programs and advertisements, and the creation of a national fishing school. At the center of all of this is a partnership with the New York Power Authority to include an ambitious rebuilding of the Massena Intake into a multi-faceted and ultra-modern tournament and event destination center. This project is crucial to the success of Massena's fishing tourism promotion.

The expansion of the Massena Intake is also a key component in the recreational plan for Massena. The project plans call for additional parking, boat launches, and gazebos to provide gathering areas and play spaces for adults and children alike. This project plays a pivotal role in garnering additional interest for future tournaments. The Town Board has worked in cooperation with the New York Power Authority to create a world-class launch site, and the potential for future tournaments is greatly enhanced with the eventual completion of this project. This project and complementary outdoor recreation projects may hold much weight in amplifying area job growth. Outdoor attractions will also continue to support economic sustainability and growth of Massena's downtown, its businesses, and services.

In Late 2019, it was announced that a new visitors center at the U.S. Eisenhower Lock in Massena will be constructed thanks to \$6 million in approved funding for the Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation. With the new center, the Seaway will continue to welcome the tens of thousands of people from around the world who come to watch ships transit the lock each year, and it will serve as an anchor for tourism in the area garnering millions of dollars in business revenue and creating economic development opportunities.

The seaway continues to makeup the lifeblood of the North Country Region. The St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation reported that tonnage on the waterway during the 2020 navigation season totaled 37.76 million metric tons. Much of the credit for the tonnage can be given to healthy movements of grain, the best on record since the turn of the century. Marketing efforts under the "Highway H2O" initiative served as a catalyst to spur increased movements of a broad range of cargoes including grain, road salt, stone, cement, gypsum and refined fuels.

### ***Attractiveness of physical environment***

Massena is a three-river community situated on the majestic St. Lawrence River. We are nestled perfectly between the Adirondacks and the 1000 Islands and on the doorstep to Canada. We have four major attractions continually bringing visitors to our nearby downtown: Robert-Moses Power Dam, Eisenhower Lock, The Eugene Nicandri Nature Center in the Robert-Moses State Park, and we are neighbors to the culturally rich Akwesasne territory and the Casino. As an ideal place to start a business, we have affordable and reliable municipal power and 1 gigabit high-speed internet access. Massena was formed from a rich heritage and history. The Village was first settled circa 1803. Part of its early growth was based on neighboring medicinal springs. Then, throughout the mid-20th century, Massena experienced enormous growth due to the construction of the Franklin D. Roosevelt power project and the Eisenhower locks which helped connect the Atlantic Ocean to the Great Lakes via the St.

Lawrence River. Within the last century, Massena established itself as the manufacturing center of St. Lawrence County with the presence of the Aluminum Company Of America (Alcoa) plant, Reynolds Metals plant (now Alcoa) and a General Motors Powertrain plant (dismantled in 2011).

Downtown Massena benefits from its strategic location. In less than 2 hours, one can be enjoying the European flair of Montreal, Quebec, or see the changing of the guard at Parliament and the gorgeous Tulip Festival in the beautiful Canadian capital city of Ottawa. Looking to the south, there is the majestic vista of the nearby Adirondack Mountains that invite fabulous, world class skiing in the winter and a marvelous system of hiking trails to enjoy all year. Oftentimes tourists move up the St. Lawrence Seaway on their way to scenic Lake Placid and beyond. In less than a day's drive, one will find 45% of the U.S. population and 70% of the Canadian population – from New York City to Toronto; Buffalo to Boston. Within a 750-mile radius, there is 37% of America's manufacturing plants and 75% of Canada's; 35% of the U.S. industrial payroll and 83% of Canada's; 29% of America's retail sales and 69% of Canada's.

An intimate, historical, and architecturally rich setting, downtown Massena is ripe for reinvestment and exhibits broad physical appeal. The broader downtown service corridor stretches generally from the southern banks of the Raquette River to the northern banks of the Grasse River. Route 420 is Main Street for this entire length. The historic downtown core begins south of the intersection of Main Street and Orvis, extending to the Grasse River Bridge, where the broader downtown service corridor continues across the river, generally converting to a residential neighborhood at Maple Street. This Main to Maple route is the most traversed for individuals who live in the near-downtown neighborhood and work at Alcoa or travel to the Massena Memorial Hospital.

The historic downtown core is at the heart of Massena's Village. From just south of Orvis Street along Main, heading north and then onto Andrews Street to the west; continuing on Main to the Grasse River Bridge and then east onto Water Street; lie the most densely intact, historically significant buildings of Massena's downtown. This core has long been the nucleus of commerce and civic pride, containing several early 20th Century commercial-style buildings - owner-occupied by small service, retail, and restaurant businesses as well as the Town & Village Hall and Massena's beloved bicentennial clock tower.

The downtown core is demonstrative of an ideal historically intact, contiguous, and dense district. There are a number of developable properties including such buildings as the coveted Massena (Schine) Theater and other lesser-known properties such as the rounded-front brick structure at 9 West Orvis Street. The plethora of architecturally significant buildings with a view are prevalent here and lend well to mixed-use development prospects. There is a notable public parking capacity, as well as a significant quantity of through-traffic to Massena's major regional employers, including the Massena Memorial Hospital, Alcoa, Massena School District, Arconic, St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation, and NYPA. Overall, the region offers a wide diversity of communities, lifestyles, recreational pursuits, and outstanding educational opportunities at all levels, including four public and private universities nearby. With annual payroll in Massena well over \$150M, residents enjoy a high quality of life enhanced by reasonable property values, a low crime rate, and extremely low-cost, reliable power from its municipal electric company.

A survey of downtown Massena’s attractiveness and appeal would not be complete without a look at its vast natural resources. The downtown area is situated upon and encompasses a beautiful stretch of the Grasse River. An ongoing project to update the Village’s Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan has helped to bring the riverfront into focus, restore its health, and capitalize upon its ability to evoke economic impact. The downtown is further straddled by three parks: Veterans Memorial Park, Danforth Street Park, and the upcoming Water Street Park. The presence of these public parks exemplifies the Village’s commitment to ensuring the community has ample access to open, green space and plenty of recreational opportunities. With DRI investment, the Village will further the community connection to these resources and integrate a greater scope of walkable, bike-able, and event-friendly spaces within the downtown footprint. Further leveraging these assets, the Village of Massena (its downtown included) benefits from an enthusiastic group of naturalists, gardeners, and arborists as well as its Massena Electric Department who continue efforts to maintain and expand the community’s urban forest. Massena Electric first received “Tree Line USA” status in 2005. “Tree Line USA” is designated annually by The National Arbor Day Foundation in cooperation with the National Association of State Foresters and recognizes public and private utilities across the nation that demonstrate practices that protect and enhance America’s urban forests. Additionally, the Village enjoys Tree City USA status.

The community’s commitment to keeping downtown green purposefully adds to downtown attractiveness, physical appeal, and its ability to invite private investment. In short, downtown Massena exudes the aesthetic appeal characteristic of many downtown revitalizations across the country.

- 4. Quality of Life and supportive local policies. Articulate the policies in place that increase the livability and quality of life of the downtown. Examples include the use of local land banks, modern zoning codes, comprehensive plans, complete streets plan, transit-oriented development, non-discrimination laws, age-friendly policies, and a downtown management structure. If policies that support livability and quality of life in downtown are not currently in place, describe near-term efforts by the municipality to create and implement such policies.*

The Village of Massena recognizes the critical importance of quality of life and livability to downtown revitalization efforts. The Village and community have been proactive in implementing a variety of policies and initiatives designed to improve the quality of life for residents and visitors alike. It is the forward-looking concept of continuous improvement that has motivated the Village to pursue new or redesigned programs to elevate day-to-day life in the community. The following are some of the more notable and relevant policies and initiatives:

#### **Massena Downtown Coalition Revitalization Strategic Plan**

Developed by a coalition that included business and property owners, Village and Town board members, and other key stakeholders, the plan serves as a guiding document and resource for continued and future development in the downtown core. With the goal of ‘propelling a vibrant, walkable, beautiful downtown’ the Massena Downtown Coalition included in the plan recommendations and proposals relating to design standards, zoning and codes, and a variety of other areas important to the continued success and development of downtown Massena.

**Downtown Overlay District (Adopted August 2018)**

The Village of Massena believes that the integrity of site and architectural design features within its downtown core area is a critical part of the lifeblood to long-term community and economic development. As such, the Village defined and adopted into their local code a set of site and architectural design standards intended to:

1. Enhance the aesthetics of the downtown core area of the Village;
2. Guide the design of future development and improvements to existing structures within the downtown core; and
3. Improve the public realm to create a positive pedestrian experience, enhance the area's image, and generate long-term economic growth.

**Complete Streets Policy (Adopted February 2017)**

Developed with training and assistance from The National Complete Streets Coalition and the New York State Department of Transportation, the Village of Massena adopted a Complete Streets policy. The policy is intended to help ensure roadway and sidewalks are planned and designed to consider the safe, convenient access and mobility of users of all ages and abilities. The policy not only assists in economic development by ensuring access to all people, but it also aids in the overall quality of life by giving individuals the ability achieve the health benefits associated with increased mobility.

**485-A Tax Abatement (Adopted July 2016)**

To spur redevelopment and help influence what occurs downtown, the Massena Village Board of Trustees adopted a tax abatement ordinance in order to offer a financial incentive to property owners. The tax abatement incentive is available to property owners who invest at least \$10,000 to convert their properties into buildings with a mixed use, such as businesses on the lower level and residential units on the upper levels. Since its adoption, multiple property owners have invested in their buildings thus making downtown Massena even more attractive and vibrant.

**Blighted Properties Policy (Adopted May 2015)**

The Massena Village Board, with the intention of protecting the public health, safety, and welfare, adopted a policy to authorize the establishment of procedures to identify, abate, and eliminate the presence of blight upon properties throughout the Village. The policy clearly defines blight and outlines the process for which the designation is assigned and the various options for restoration and remedy. Since its adoption, the code has proven to be a valuable tool in the effort to prevent and remedy blighted properties.

**Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan (LWRP)**

Under the leadership of the Village Administration, a group of community members, business owners, and local officials has been formed to continue developing and moving forward with our local waterfront redevelopment. Running right through the downtown core, the rivers continue to be a key focus for downtown revitalization efforts. The Village of Massena LWRP is a critical component of the Village's revitalization efforts. Once completed, the plan will develop waterfront recreation, flood

resiliency, and ecologically beneficial project recommendations that are attuned to the needs of current and future Village residents. The Village retained Barton & Loguidice, DPC as its planning consultant to assist and guide the planning process to provide a strategic plan for enhancements to the Village's riverfronts for improved visual and recreational access, downtown and neighborhood revitalization, and unique and appropriate new development. Upon finalization of the plan, the Village will be eligible for funding from NYSDOS to implement recommended actions from the plan.

### **Sustainability Initiatives**

The community of Massena understands and appreciates the importance of environmental sustainability. This is fully demonstrated by a variety of activities and initiatives. Massena Electric is currently implementing a project to upgrade light poles and replace fixtures with LED bulbs. Our Joint Recreation Commission has undergone renovations that will increase its energy efficiency. With a grant from NYPA, the Massena Central School District has undertaken a \$600,000 project to replace less energy efficient fixtures with LED lighting in each of the three elementary schools and all outside lighting on its campuses. Massena is also home to groups such as the Gardening Club who help maintain our parks as well as green space areas in the downtown core. Community Garden and GardenShare initiatives have also formed in recent years.

### **Housing & Community Redevelopment**

The Village has contracted with DANC (Development Authority of the North Country – whose mission is to develop and manage infrastructure at the 10th Mountain Division at Fort Drum and to serve common interests in Jefferson, Lewis and St. Lawrence Counties) to administer a local housing program. The Village recently administered two federal housing grants. The Village of Massena received and administered a \$400,000 Community Development Block Grant through the NYS Office of Community Renewal. Funding was provided to assist 12 income-eligible families purchase a single-family home in the Village. The Village also administered a \$400,000 AHC (NYS Affordable Housing Corporation) grant for the rehabilitation of 10-12 income-eligible owner-occupied homes in a specific target area (Census Tract 4901).

### **Massena Joint Recreation Commission**

The Village and Town of Massena jointly fund a recreation commission for maintenance of our multiple parks and recreation activities. These parks are integral to downtown recreation and provide space for community celebration, sporting activities, and personal reflection. Notably, free events continue to gain momentum at the parks and enhance quality of life such as weekly yoga classes. With a new park to be built on Water Street and a proposed Downtown Riverwalk, the recreation commission will continue to play a key role in both the quality of life for our community and the continued development of the downtown core.

### **Moving Massena Forward Community Coalition**

The Moving Massena Forward Coalition was created in 2014. The coalition's mission is "To develop initial strategies for community development that will promote progressive, innovative, and diverse

business growth, expansion and retention aligning with healthy and prosperous living.” The group is a key driving force in visioning and redevelopment efforts, including in the downtown core area.



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

*“... ripe for revitalization and have the potential to become a magnet for redevelopment, business, job creation, greater economic and housing diversity, and opportunity.”*

The Village of Massena has a fantastic head start and has been preparing for this opportunity since 2007. Long before the creation of the DRI, the community of Massena has taken on the task of reinventing a former big factory town like only a blue-collar community can do – by planning, by rolling up our sleeves, and continuing to work hard to find opportunities to rebound.

Located on the St. Lawrence River in the northernmost part of the state, Massena used to be home to Reynolds, GM and a much larger Alcoa operation. But in 2007, the aluminum operations downsized, GM closed its powertrain plant, and more than 1000 jobs were lost.

There were a lot of folks who were early enough in their careers to accept job transfers, others accepted the buyout. Many of those manufacturing workers left, but many of them stayed – or, better yet, have moved back.

After all, this is home. And there’s no place like it.

Since the first DRI round was announced in 2016, stakeholders representing economic development, local government, utilities, business developers, and dozens of citizen volunteers have continued to advance projects that will reinvent and revitalize our downtown core by focusing on the power of place.

- We have conducted several rounds of surveys to gauge what residents want most to see downtown – what they shop for elsewhere, what they would enjoy, spend their time and money on. That survey remains active and open to accept rolling feedback from the community.
- We have held citizen and business community roundtables to share concerns and talk about solutions, with focus groups representing downtown businesses and stakeholders, young entrepreneurs, public agencies and service providers, the general public, and high school students.
- Given the challenges of public meetings during the pandemic, we have leveraged digital platforms to gather insights and share status updates.
- We have received letters of support and – more importantly – lined our Chamber’s walls with hundreds of pictures colored by Massena’s kids on why they love this community.
- We’ve even been featured on TV - In June of 2021, an episode of the HGTV show "My Lottery Dream Home" aired that focused on a Connecticut couple's search for the perfect house. After winning the lottery in their home state of Connecticut, they reached out to the television show for help locating the perfect house away from the hustle and bustle of their current city life that would be quieter for their family. Their search brought them to Massena. In their own words, the couple described Massena as, *"Very charming community and people and everybody seems to be so nice. It's very family oriented."* The show reflected a larger trend in Massena, which has seen a dramatic spike in demand - and prices - for family dwellings over the past 12 months as people shed urban life in favor of the small, welcoming home they find in Massena.

During the pandemic, rather than rallies, we have had great success in connecting through Facebook groups dedicated to Moving Massena Forward, Memories of Massena, and Class Reunion Groups to share what they love most, what they miss, and what we should aim for in the future. Among comments received in the past 48 hours:

*V. Davis: My favorite thing about Massena is you can go almost anywhere and know someone! Love the St. Lawrence River, the views of the sunrise and sunsets and I love that this is home!*

*D. Furnace: I really like the location. We are a small town with a lot of stuff only hours away. We have the rivers for water sports and entertainment. We are within 2 hours of world class skiing and other mountain activities. When you want large city activities, Montreal, Ottawa and even Syracuse are just a short drive away.*

*B. Good: Great memories made at Alcoa Field, Warriors Football, softball leagues, summer rec. Who doesn't remember the snake parades?!?*

*L. Sardegna: Fredericks Roller rink downtown. What a great memory. It was a marking place for every youth that came into this town, by those who were brought up here, lived here and left here. Frederick's was the place where we flocked to in the 80's and 90's through our younger*

*days. Many have lived here, been brought up here, and learned here over the years. For many, this is our hometown. Always will be.*

*B. Martin: The seaway. Ships transiting from lakes to ocean...right here! We're far from the ocean, yet have a continuous parade of Lakers and ocean vessels! It's truly amazing!!!*

*The water and sunsets are so beautiful! So many locals and visitors pause to appreciate the setting (and rising) of the sun. It never gets old...*

*C. Ellis: Firemen's Field Days were always a lot of fun – bringing families together downtown. Those kinds of activities would be awesome to have again. Our small town is a great place to call home. It just needs a little more love.*

*C. Martin: My favorite thing about Massena are the three Rivers. Massena hasn't yet begun to fully take advantage of this amazing natural resource that is so, so powerful in attracting new people and business to Massena...*

*R. Rothwell: ... it doesn't matter that you weren't born in Massena, it matters that Massena is important to you. When you move here, you became a part of the Fabric of Massena. We're so glad you chose us. It is a Very Special Place!*

*J. Sunday: If more people lived downtown, more businesses would open there to cater to them. Buildings with apartments above and retail space below. Would love to see a good clothing store for men open right where Stan's (Men's Shop) used to be.*

*L. Harmon: It's never too late. [A local businessman] remodeled the old Slavins building when everyone said it was a total loss. The Mercantile has really beautiful apartments on the upper floor with balconies overlooking the river, offices and retail/service space on the street level and lower floors. It took a lot to make it possible, but it is a great example that it is possible.*

*C. Sharlow: I would love to purchase the former Massena School of Business and turn it into a coffee house / bookstore / gallery where local artisans could display their works.*

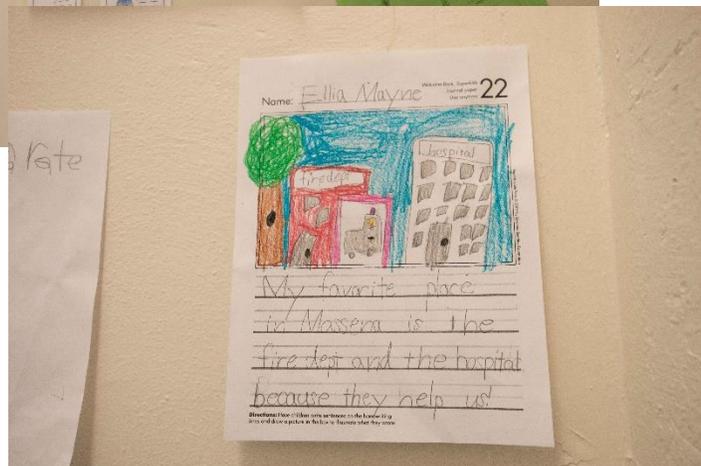
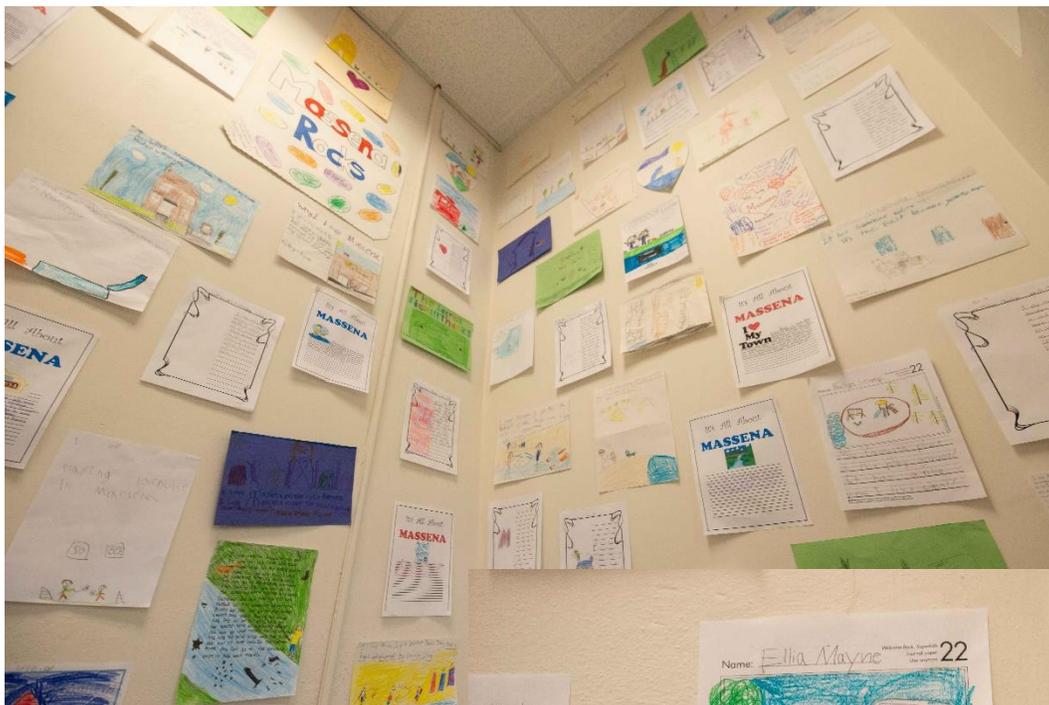
*L. Todd: We live in paradise for sure. Not many people can boast about living on the edge of the USA with Canada just a stone's throw away.*

*S Mills, visiting Massena as part of a fishing tournament: We don't ever get to fish anywhere like this where you get to see 20 feet down. I like it here. A lot.*

*J. Hardy: There are a lot of hardworking, amazing people – a lot of them women – who are making things happen and bring great businesses to Massena. As a business owner, I'm proud of all that I've achieved, grateful for the tremendous support I've had along the way, and happy to lift others up who want to join me in serving this great community.*

Included in the development of this DRI submission, the Village of Massena has:

- Solicited potential projects – large and small
- With business and public feedback, developed downtown design guidelines
- Held public rallies (pre-COVID) in support of the Village’s DRI application. The rally, aside from bringing together 300+ residents, drew significant area news coverage and public awareness – not only of Massena’s plans, but in calling attention to all the progress that has been made. Further public engagement was tied in via a community survey and letters from over 300 of the area’s youth. In addition, high school art students created renderings of their visions for downtown buildings. These creative displays were placed in windows to demonstrate potential of these historic spaces.

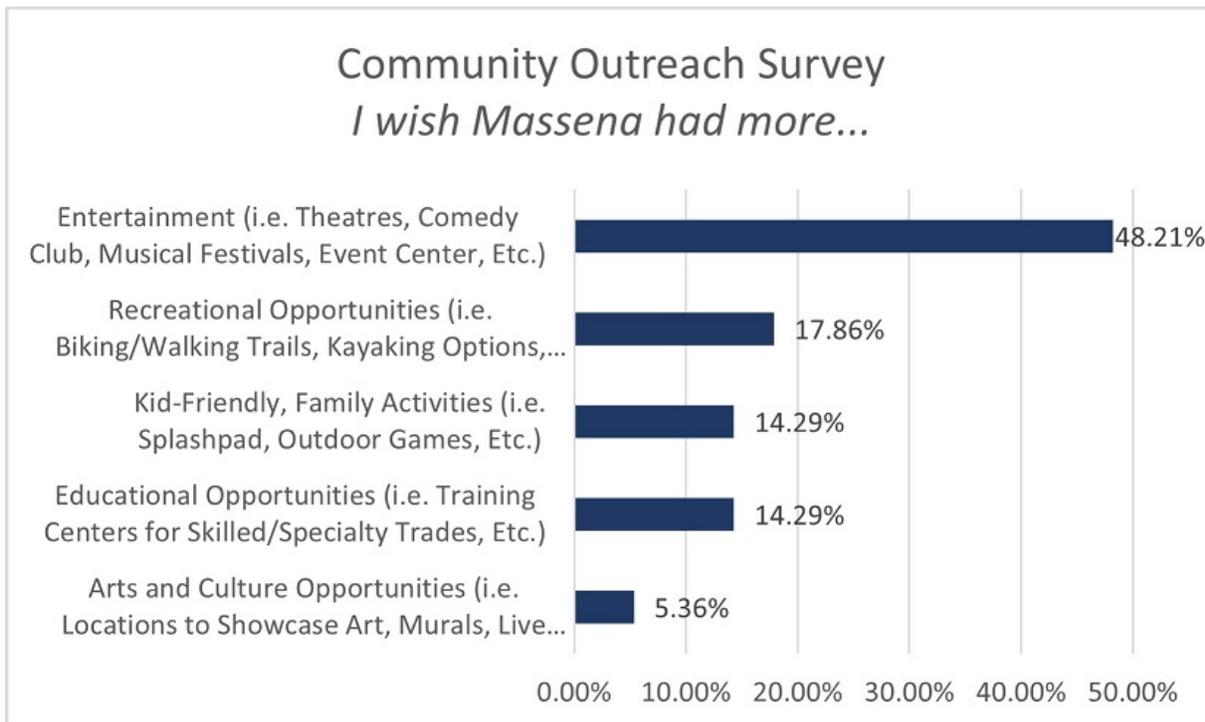
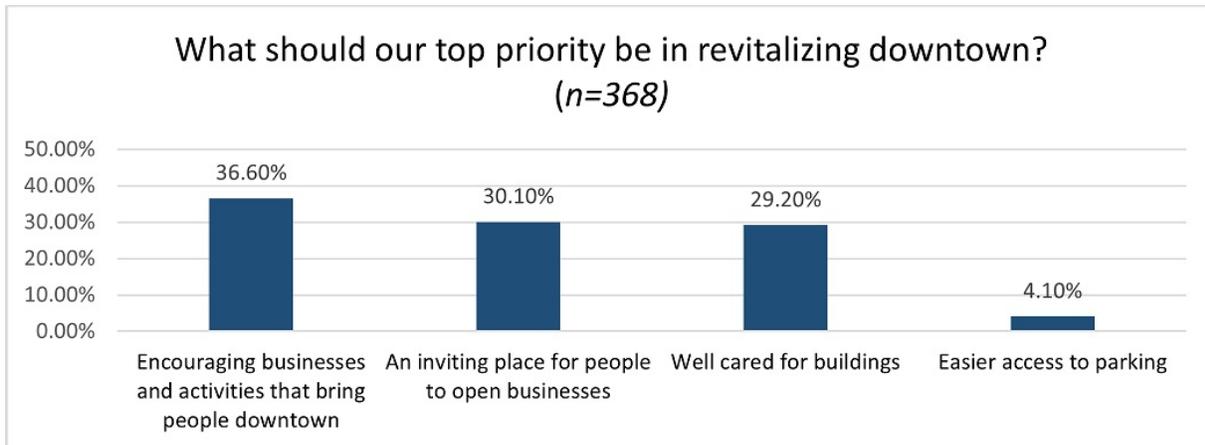


- Teachers at the Massena Central School District, Trinity Catholic School and the Police Activities League of Massena have worked with our community’s youth to share what they love and what they’d like as part of our efforts. Their enthusiasm serves as a refreshing reminder of why community efforts such as the revitalization are so very important.

The following is a partial list of DRI Application Planning Committee members:

- Tim Ahlfeld, Mayor
- Matt LeBire, Deputy Mayor
- Monique Chatland, Village Administrator
- Jim Murphy, Community Developer
- Vance Fleury, Private Developer
- Jason Hoxie, Developer/Entrepreneur
- Tricia Wilson, Economic Developer
- Jason Hendricks, Chamber Board President
- Nate LaShomb, Downtown Business Owner
- Allison Smith, Medical Professional/Downtown Business Owner
- Christina Wilson, Educator
- Bill Fiacco, Developer/Downtown Business Owner
- Marina LaBaff, Downtown Business Owner
- Mike McCabe, Recreation Director
- Amanda Taraska, Educator

## Ongoing Community Engagement and Participation – Survey Data



6. *Transformative opportunities. Describe opportunities to build on the strengths described above by providing a list of transformative projects that could be ready for implementation with an infusion of DRI funds within the first one to two years (depending on the scope and complexity of the project). Identify potential development opportunities, such as municipally owned property that may be appropriate for redevelopment. Projects may be public or private, and could address economic development, transportation, housing, and community development needs. It should be recognized that if a DRI award is made to the downtown, the projects identified here, along with any others that may arise during the DRI planning process, will ultimately be vetted by the Local Planning Committee and the State to determine which projects receive DRI grants.*

The various projects, plans, and proposals outlined in this DRI application are the culmination of years of planning efforts and the product more than 50 active participants over the past five years - guided by a team of dozens of local leaders, citizens, and stakeholders. This blueprint for future development was carefully crafted in dozens of committee meetings and honed by a series of focus groups, stakeholder interviews, and public events.

Village leadership and committee members have envisioned downtown Massena's transformational projects following three main themes: Waterfront Development and Community Wellness, Arts and Culture Corridor, and Workforce & Business Development. Each theme can effectively transform downtown Massena – physically, culturally, and economically. Each category features an anchor project:

- Arts and Culture Corridor – Massena Theater Restoration
- Waterfront Development and Community Wellness – Grasse River Commons
- Workforce & Business Development – JJ Newberry Building

## Arts & Culture Corridor

PROJECT #	PROJECT TITLE	TOTAL AMOUNT	DRI AMOUNT
A-1	Massena Theater Restoration	\$ 1,900,000	\$ 1,000,000

**Project Name:** Massena Theater Restoration

**Owners:** Massena Arts and Theater Association

**Location:** 63, 65, &67 Main Street, Massena, NY 13662

**Est. Construction Jobs:** 15-20

**Est. New FTE Jobs:** 8

**Project Readiness:** Shovel Ready

**Total Budget:** \$1,900,000

**Project Summary:** The Massena Theater, formerly known as the Schine Theater, is the very embodiment of downtown revitalization and is a key project in establishing a cultural anchor in the heart of the Village of Massena. The Theater is centrally located on Main Street and is flanked by other buildings that have recently been renovated or are in the process of being renovated. Once operational, the Theater will be a cultural and entertainment destination for visitors and residents alike, driving support for local businesses such as hotels, restaurants, and cafés - and leading to more area developments and revitalization.

This project will improve the physical infrastructure of the community by renovating and making functional once again a historically significant building in the heart of Massena's downtown corridor. This building is vacant and unusable in its current condition. Once renovated, the Theater will provide a source of year-round employment for an estimated eight (8) full time equivalents, meeting the Opportunity Agenda goals of establishing job training programs, internships and apprenticeships that result in career building experiences through anticipated collaboration with local colleges; supporting micro-business/self-employment opportunities; boosting the sustainability of long-term learning, employment and investment in distressed communities; and redeveloping blighted areas.

As a key structure in the downtown core, revitalization funding for the Theater's restoration into a fully functioning building is vitally important to downtown Massena's identity. It also serves as the first major revitalization project for a cultural venue. This new cultural amenity, anchored on Main Street, will join the Celine G. Philibert Cultural Center and Museum recently located three doors down, which houses the Town of Massena Museum and the Massena Public Library on Glenn Street at the rear of the building.

The renovated structure will not only be reopened as a movie theater but also as a venue for small theatrical productions, concerts, musical ensembles, lectures, film festivals, art shows as well as other cultural events.

### Preliminary Phase

- June 2015: Building Acquisition - Completed
- June 2016: Renovation Estimates – Completed
- June 2016 – Ongoing: Preliminary Site Work to mitigate damage and stabilize structure (roof repairs, floor stabilization, exterior masonry fixes, new front and perimeter doors, and refurbishing of original marquee)

- July 2017: Grant Submission to the NYMS program
- Ongoing: Community Fundraising Efforts

Phase 1 Renovations

- December 2017: Successful Grant Award Notification from NYMS
- Multi-phase testing for asbestos, lead, and air quality.
- March 2018: Advertised and mailed RFP's to secure architectural services.
- 2019: Renovations Begin (Phase 1)  
Stabilize structure; install electrical, plumbing, lighting, and HVAC system; install new doors; install ADA-compliant bathrooms; marquee restoration and installation; renovate lobby/concession
- October 2019: Renovations Completed (Phase 1)

Phase 2 Renovations:

- January 2022: Renovations Begin (Phase 2)  
New studding, sheetrock, paint; digital projection and sound system; replace screen; install new flooring; seat restoration; office; facade improvements
- October 2022: Renovations Completed (Phase 2)

Budget:

- Phase 1: \$500,000 for Building Renovations. This includes asbestos removal, demolition, gas service, plumbing and electrical work. At the completion of Phase 1, the Theater will be an operational arts venue, ready to host events and schedule programs. Although the renovation will be nowhere near complete the space will be available for community and arts programming.
- Phase 2: \$1,400,000 New studding, sheetrock, paint; digital projection and sound system; replace screen; install new flooring; seat restoration; office; facade improvements.
- \$20,000 for Soft Costs. NYMS funds will be used to cover the cost of grant administration by the BDC for a Greater Massena, which is serving as the Local Program Administrator for the grant.

Phase 2 of the renovation project (at an estimated cost of \$1,400,000), will focus on interior upgrades that will recreate the original décor and provide expanded offerings to the community at the theater. This phase includes interior upgrades to doors, walls, and flooring; a Dolby sound system, digital projection, screen, and stage curtain; restoration and installation of the original theater seating; ticketing, concessions and restroom renovations.

**DRI Funding Request: \$1,000,000**

PROJECT #	PROJECT TITLE	TOTAL AMOUNT	DRI AMOUNT
A-2	Outdoor Event Center and Recreation Place at Water Street Park	\$1,750,000	\$1,500,000

**Project Name:** Outdoor Event Center and Recreation Place at Water Street Park

**Owners:** Municipal

**Location:** Downtown Core

**Est. Construction Jobs:** TBD

**Est. New FTE Jobs:** TBD

**Project Readiness:** Planning

**Total Budget:** \$1,750,000

**Project Summary:** This project expands the sense of community connection and engagement with its keystone project, the development of a four-season, downtown “gathering space” to serve as a destination for community concerts, events and other public gatherings. The need for an outdoor gathering space has only been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic so the community can continue social and recreational activities while following health protocols.

The proposal calls for the development of an outdoor event center and recreation space that would create an important destination for both residents and tourists that would include:

- An open-air event center for regular music events
- Plenty of green space, park benches, flowers
- Small retail/concession spaces for food and other vendors (including bikes and boats)
- A four-season enclosed farmers’ market
- Kid-friendly attractions including a splashpad
- Child/Adult player Chess Game, Graffiti cube, outdoor movies
- Informational kiosks

In the winter, the event center area will be transformed into a “Rockefeller Center” style outdoor skating rink, complete with lights, music, and a place to rent skates, warm up, or have a cup of hot cocoa.

The “gathering space” concept would also include wide, well-marked corridors to Main Street merchants and new developments underway or proposed along Water Street, as well as proposed Grasse River access improvements. It is central to the development of an arts and culture corridor, highlighted in this DRI application, that includes the nearby Massena Theater, the Celine G. Philibert Memorial Cultural Centre and Museum, the Massena Public Library, and others.

Utilizing the principles for creating great community spaces by the Project for Public Spaces, as well as Complete Streets data about downtowns, Massena intends to create a space downtown that connects our river assets and bike trails, and which develops more effective relationships between the surrounding retail and activities going on in public spaces. The goal is to create a place that has both a

strong sense of community and a comfortable image, as well as a setting and activities and uses that collectively add up to something more than the sum of its often-simple parts.

**DRI Funding Request: \$1,500,000**



PROJECT #	PROJECT TITLE	TOTAL AMOUNT	DRI AMOUNT
A-3	Downtown Enhancements	\$2,750,000	\$2,250,000

**Project Name:** Downtown Enhancements

**Owners:** Municipal

**Location:** Throughout Downtown

**Est. Construction Jobs:** TBD

**Est. New FTE Jobs:** TBD

**Project Readiness:** In Process

**Total Budget:** \$2,500,000

**Project Summary:** The Village envisions DRI investment aiding the community's integration of complete streets elements and principles – greatly improving downtown's walkability, accessibility, and diversity of use. The Village will design the streetscape to enhance the pedestrian experience with sidewalks, crosswalks, lighting, public art and plantings, along with other improvements in the public rights-of-way.

The proposed project would include the removal of approximately 102,000 sq. of concrete and heaving brick-paver sidewalks within the downtown core and replacement with 6" concrete sidewalks. The anticipated cost of this phase of the downtown enhancements is approximately \$1.8 million.

Massena Electric Department, a municipally owned utility company, is in the process of removing the outdated light fixtures with more modern poles and LED lighting throughout the downtown core improving pedestrian experience and safety. The cost of these upgrades and investment in the community are expected to exceed \$250,000 for materials alone, not including the in-kind services in the form of labor.

Additionally, the Village recognizes that alleyways are crucial pedestrian connections in the downtown. They link parking and retail, and downtown employees to their workplaces, as well as make the community more walkable. The Village is committed to developing and maintaining the alleyways it owns and partnering with private property owners to make improvements and maintain connections in their alleys. The goals include addressing safety concerns, lighting, and signage providing walkable connections from the ample municipal parking located in the downtown. The Village will also encourage use of the alleyways as a canvas for local artists to showcase their work in the form of murals.

***New/Improved Side Walks***

Main Street (from Maple to Bridge)

Andrews Street (West Orvis to Main)

West Orvis (Andrews to Main)

Orvis Street (Main to Water)

Water Street (Main to East Orvis)

***New/Improved Parking Lots***

Municipal Lot Off Andrews Street (South)

Municipal Lot off Andrews Street (North)

***Other Elements for Downtown Appeal***

Benches, newly designed crosswalks, energy-efficient updated lighting added within the downtown core and parks, wayfinding signage, historic markers, planters, and green infrastructure features.

**DRI Funding Request: \$2,250,000**



## Waterfront Development and Community Wellness

PROJECT #	PROJECT TITLE	TOTAL AMOUNT	DRI AMOUNT
B-1	Grasse River Commons	\$ 4,100,000	\$ 2,050,000

**Project Name:** Grasse River Commons

**Owners:** GoCo Ventures

**Location:** 68-70 Water Street

**Est. Construction Jobs:** 12

**Est. New FTE Jobs:** TBD

**Project Readiness:** Planning

**Total Budget:** \$4,100,000

**Project Summary:** In its heyday, the Lumber Yard had the Grasse River running underneath its buildings, providing waterpower to run its mills. Unfortunately, as abandoned buildings on the property decayed, the lumber yard has not been a source of pride for Massena and has left significant blighted property along the waterfront. GoCo proposes to repurpose the approximately 2-acre site into a dynamic, waterfront-oriented mixed-use location with new residential, retail, and small-scale restaurant space where community, culture, and commerce converge. This opportunity allows for plenty of green space, while also encouraging local/regional artists to participate in an ever-changing aesthetic environment.

After removing the blighted and abandoned buildings and cleaning up the site, the proposal includes 8 to 10 new apartments with colorful row house construction, along the waterfront. Expectations are for various commercial spaces with possibilities to include small artisan shops such as bakery, coffee roaster, creperie, startup small restaurants, and small office space as well as possibilities of small-scale production spaces for local craftsman or shopkeepers such as bikes shop, pottery, ornamental iron work, crafts, fishing supplies etc., leveraging local skills in a fun, entrepreneurial environment. Outdoor communal spaces would include open air seating, areas for entertainment and games, providing for a walkable pedestrian-friendly setting.

Leveraging the ongoing LWRP in place in the Village, a sidewalk along the property's shoreline would be included. This would be part of the broader Riverwalk project being proposed, connecting the Water Street Riverfront district with the new Water Street Park and downtown. This project, in conjunction with the almost completed GristMill Brewery and the proposed Creamery will create a unique and vibrant 5 acre contiguous site, completing a remarkable transformation of blighted riverfront properties into a distinctive sense of place to be enjoyed by the entire region.

DRI Funding Request: \$ 2,050,000



PROJECT #	PROJECT TITLE	TOTAL AMOUNT	DRI AMOUNT
B-2	Downtown Riverwalk	\$ 1,630,592	\$ 1,354,432

**Project Name:** Downtown Massena Riverwalk

**Owners:** Municipal

**Location:** Veterans Memorial Park to North Main Street

**Est. Construction Jobs:** TBD

**Est. New FTE Jobs:** TBD

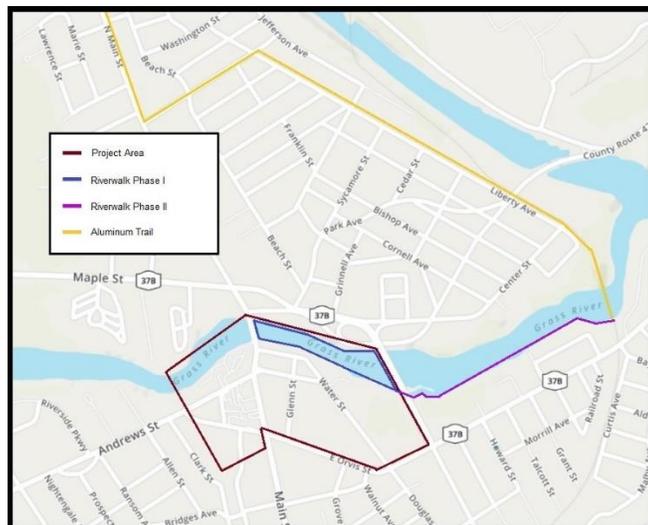
**Project Readiness:** Planning

**Total Budget:** \$1,630,592

**Project Summary:** This proposal will create a scenic river walk from Massena’s historic downtown connecting with the Aluminum Trail. The Riverwalk would bookend with Main Street in downtown, heading along the Grasse River to the recently re-constructed Parker Avenue Bridge. After crossing the Grasse River via the bridge, individuals will be able to follow along the north side of the River to return to the downtown area. Phase II and III of the project will connect the new Riverwalk to the existing Aluminum Trail and other areas such as the Massena Intake and its nearby St. Lawrence River Trails. The Riverwalk will serve as yet another attraction to bring even more residents and visitors to the downtown core area of Massena. It will also facilitate easy access to current and future businesses and attractions along the route. Potential bike, kayak, and fishing equipment rental business opportunities are also targeted for the Riverwalk.

- Phase I: Downtown Riverwalk – At just over 1.5 miles long, Phase I of the Riverwalk will create a ‘loop’ running along the south side of the Grasse River from Main Street to the recently reconstructed Parker Avenue Bridge, crossing over to and continuing along the north side of the Grasse River.
- Phase II: The second phase of the Riverwalk would create an extension of the walkway to the pedestrian footbridge, connecting the Riverwalk to the Aluminum Trail.
- Phase III: The third and final phase of the project would create a new connection between the Aluminum Trail and North Main Street to the Massena Intake and Route 131 and the related trails that run along the St. Lawrence River.

**DRI Funding Request:** \$1,354,432



PROJECT #	PROJECT TITLE	TOTAL AMOUNT	DRI AMOUNT
B-3	Hayden Fit	\$400,000	\$ 160,000

**Project Name:** Hayden Fit

**Owners:** Jennifer Hayden (Woman-Owned Business)

**Location:** 54 E. Orvis Street

**Est. Construction Jobs:** TBD

**Est. New FTE Jobs:** 10 to 15

**Project Readiness:** Shovel-Ready

**Total Budget:** \$400,000

**Project Summary:** Hayden Fit is a fitness facility currently offering an array of programs for any level of physical ability. The facility was opened in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic by Jennifer Hayden in August 2020, and despite all the guidelines associated with the pandemic, she was able to adapt and begin a very successful business venture that continues to this day. Hayden Fit is owner-operated; however, various sub-contractors utilize the facility to provide additional programming. Currently, there are 10 instructors and 2 clerical staff, offering an array of programming such as CrossFit, personal training, nutrition counseling, spin classes, Evolution Fitness Bootcamp, cardio kickboxing, pole fitness, aerial hoop fitness classes and many more. There are more than 200 adults that participate in fitness activities weekly, as well as more than 60 youth participating in the youth programming weekly. Hayden Fit is currently the only fitness facility located in the Town and Village of Massena.

The facility is 17,000 sq. ft., however, for various reasons, such as lack of heat, lack of flooring and a leaking roof, they are only able to utilize 6,500 sq. ft. The building needs various upgrades in order to continue to remain successful, as well as to offer additional programming. Ms. Hayden hopes to be able to expand her current operations by providing additional space(s) to allow for more classes and programming. She plans to add additional space for others to be able to rent for use for additional classes, such as karate, yoga, pilates, Zumba and so on.

Currently there is only one, small heating source for the entire building, that is only able to heat 800-1,000 sq. feet at most. The proposed funding would be used to add an energy efficient heating source such as a gas furnace and simultaneously install central air while ensuring the central HVAC system filtration meets the highest rated filtration compatible with the currently installed filter rack and air handling systems, as was recommended during the COVID-19 pandemic for fitness facilities. In order to accommodate for the above-mentioned installation, various electrical upgrades would be required. During this stage of renovations, all new energy efficient lighting would be installed throughout the building, replacing the outdated and minimal lighting at the facility currently.

The façade of the building is along one of the most traversed streets in the Village and would be completely updated and would include the installation of new and additional doors and windows. The replacement of the doors and windows would also allow for a more efficient flow for client foot traffic and separate entrance/exit doors, as recommended during the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, the funding would allow for the 50-year-old roof to be replaced, as it is leaking in various locations throughout the building, causing damage to the walls and specialty flooring. It would not be possible to expand their space into the building further without the roof replacement.

**DRI Funding Request:** \$160,000



## Workforce & Business Development

PROJECT #	PROJECT TITLE	TOTAL AMOUNT	DRI AMOUNT
C-1	JJ Newberry Building	\$ 2,950,000	\$ 1,475,000

**Project Name:** 28 & 30 Main Street (JJ Newberry Building)

**Owners:** GoCo Ventures (acquisition complete June 2021)

**Location:** 28 & 30 Main Street

**Est. Construction Jobs:** 10

**Est. New FTE Jobs:** TBD

**Project Readiness:** Shovel Ready (Environmental testing, as built drawings, architectural and GC reviews, asbestos abatement quotes, and preliminary architectural drawings all complete)

**Total Budget:** \$2,950,000

**Project Summary:** At the center of downtown Massena, stands a prominent, historic building first constructed as “The Central Building” in 1916. As the village grew, the building expanded with it, and in 1941 opened as the new and “modern” JJ Newberry’s Building. The building stands 2 floors above ground and one floor below, providing 33,700 square feet of space. Unfortunately, this largest building in downtown Massena remains totally vacant, and in great need of repair.

GoCo Ventures is proposing a full modernization of the property. The immediate work will include removing the asbestos, replacing the leaking roof while adding a rooftop deck, and replacing the existing decaying 1970 façade with a new façade reminiscent of Massena’s better days. Following the initial work, the main floor will include an interior “walking main street” to connect the Main Street access of the building directly with the back parking lot, and provide access to shops, restaurants, and/or office space. The building design allows flexible space utilization on the first floor, with space available from 1,000 sq ft to 13,000 sq ft. Six public access doors to Main and Andrew Streets will also enable flexible use of the space. New infrastructure including HVAC, electrical, and plumbing is included. The newly refurbished municipal parking lot is also readily accessible. Already, early inquiries for the space have included a distillery, coffee roasting shop with retail space, a pottery shop, and a clothing/outdoor store, creating the opportunity for incubating new businesses, generating new jobs, and creating a reinvigorated sense of pride and community in town.

The top floor rehabilitation will include up to 7 apartments of differing types (in a 7,776 sq ft top floor space) each with a view of downtown and different levels of affordability. There will also be a roof top deck (at floor level with the top floor apartments) allowing up to up 5,300 sq feet of outdoor space, one floor above main street. This rooftop deck can be separated into space for the residents to enjoy, and still leave ample space for a first-floor tenant to use the space for outdoor dining and the like to support their business. Access includes two staircases as well as a proposed elevator. The basement floor, once used as

retail space for Newberry's, can be combined with first floor spaces creating multilevel experiences, or stand-alone office/server/call center space.

The building and its new infrastructure, will include state of the art materials and technologies, allowing for ultimate energy efficiencies. The top 7,776 sq ft of the roof will include solar panels, and EV charging stations could be incorporated on the site parking lot.

**DRI Funding Request: \$1,475,000**



PROJECT #	PROJECT TITLE	TOTAL AMOUNT	DRI AMOUNT
C-2	Round Brick Building	\$1,300,000	\$650,000

**Project Name:** Round Brick Building - West Orvis Street Building

**Developer:** Ricky Hamelin

**Location:** 9 West Orvis Street

**Est. Construction Jobs:** 6

**Est. New FTE Jobs:** 4

**Project Readiness:** Planning

**Total Budget:** \$1,300,000

**Project Summary:** 9 West Orvis represents a proposed renovation of a historically interesting, yet rundown building which has been vacant for several years. The developer would like to tear down the former Village Pub building at the same address and replace it with a parking lot for the adjacent historically relevant building. The rounded-front brick building will be completely renovated and modernized on the inside while taking steps to preserve the historic look of the outside. The development would result in an architecturally significant multi-use building with three 1,000-sf apartments on the upper floor and retail or office space on the ground floor. There is currently a local restaurant that would be interested in moving to this location.

**DRI Funding Request:** \$650,000



PROJECT #	PROJECT TITLE	TOTAL AMOUNT	DRI AMOUNT
C-3	The St. Lawrence Inn	\$2,500,000	\$1,000,000

**Project Name:** The St. Lawrence Inn

**Owners:** St. Lawrence Hotel Corp.

**Location:** 10 West Orvis St.

**Est. Construction Jobs:** TBD

**Est. New FTE Jobs:** TBD

**Project Readiness:** Planning

**Total Budget:** \$2,500,000

**Project Summary:** Since the Quality Inn opened in 1961, it has been a major cornerstone of downtown, and is in need of updating. The existing hotel will be reimagined into a true multi-use facility that is energy efficient and financially sustainable well into the future – The St. Lawrence Inn. The first floor will be renovated into retail space with direct street entrances from East Orvis Street. Approximately 45 of the existing 120 hotel rooms will be transformed into upper mid-scale 2 and 3 bedroom apartments. DRI funding would assist with energy efficiency improvements and include a new roof, windows, and central boiler system. Complete renovation of the interior and exterior of the building would include new energy efficient electrical and plumbing as well as new flooring, furniture, and fixtures in all the rooms.

**DRI Request:** \$1,000,000



PROJECT #	PROJECT TITLE	TOTAL AMOUNT	DRI AMOUNT
C-4	CORE of the Community	\$600,000	\$ 600,000

**Project Name:** Core of the Community

**Owners:** Municipal

**Location:** N/A

**Est. Construction Jobs:** N/A

**Est. New FTE Jobs:** N/A

**Project Readiness:** Planning

**Total Budget:** \$600,000

**Project Summary:** The Village seeks to recapitalize and build upon its successful Core of the Community program which was introduced in 2017. A great opportunity for business owners to receive help in renovating their buildings, the program assists with rehabilitation projects including interior or exterior improvements, creating second-floor residential space, and signage. As a source of rent subsidy assistance, this program attracts new business downtown and is critical to ensuring new storefronts have tenants. With DRI investment, the Village will seek to recapitalize this fund and continue to use it as a business and economic development tool within the prime downtown catchment area.

**DRI Funding Request:** \$600,000

PROJECT #	PROJECT TITLE	TOTAL AMOUNT	DRI AMOUNT
C-5	The Creamery – Value Added Dairy	\$1,090,000	\$545,000

**Project Name:** The Creamery – Value Added Dairy

**Owners:** GoCo Ventures

**Location:** 37 Water Street

**Est. Construction Jobs:** 6

**Est. New FTE Jobs:** 7

**Project Readiness:** Shovel Ready (property and 5 adjacent parcels acquired, building cleared, first round of architectural drawings completed)

**Total Budget:** \$ 1,090,000

**Project Summary:** In conjunction with recent efforts of residential and commercial revitalization on Water Street, this project will renovate a 5,100 square foot abandoned building in downtown Massena to implement light manufacturing and regionally distribute value-added dairy products, including ice cream, yogurt, and cheeses. The project also includes adding a second floor to the existing building allowing for three moderate income apartments, adding to the vibrancy and walkability of downtown. The project will play an important role in alleviating village blight, while supporting tourism by attracting new visitors to the area with a small factory-direct storefront and viewing windows to the manufacturing process. Through added aesthetics and foot traffic, the project also leverages and helps to ensure the success of existing projects currently underway on Water Street - including the Mercantile Building, The GristMill, and the Water Street Park, adding to a renewed sense of place.

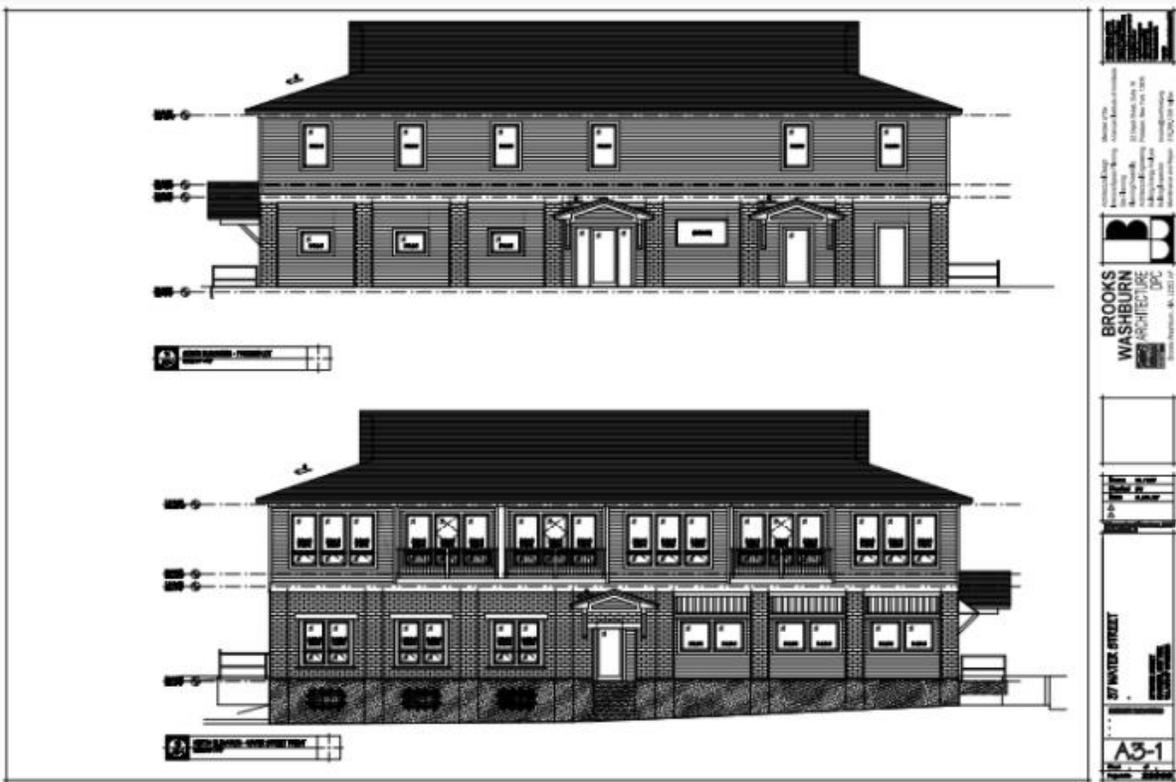
GoCo acquired the building in September 2019; and, over the last 2 years, has also acquired 5 adjacent parcels to the 37 Water Street building – allowing for ample parking, excellent truck access, and plentiful green space for customers and visitors to enjoy. The building's location, directly across the street from the GristMill and a block away from the recently renovated Mercantile Building, along with the added parcels creates the opportunity for placemaking synergies, generating the excitement and vibrancy of a village undergoing a resurgence.

Significant architectural work and GC surveys have been completed. The project would be expected to final bid to GC's immediately after having funding sources in place and is shovel ready.

The project will include:

- Complete renovation of building's existing exterior, including repointing & repainting brick, new energy efficient windows and doors, new siding in those areas without brick, and new awnings and door porticos.
  - Build out for the first floor to include a small (~1,000 sq ft) factory-direct sales/tourist space, manufacturing space with raised ceilings and truck access, freezer/storage and staging areas as well as office space to run the dairy business.
  - New HVAC, electric and plumbing, with solar panels on the roof
- \*An added second floor, with a similar floor plate of 5,100 sq ft to include three 2 – bedroom, 2 bath apartments with outdoor terraces overlooking Water Street and the Grasse River.
- Resized parking areas, landscaping, green space development.

DRI Funding Request: \$545,000



PROJECT #	PROJECT TITLE	TOTAL AMOUNT	DRI AMOUNT
C-6	Digital Downtown: Wi-Fi Zone Creation & Information Centers	\$215,000	\$190,000

**Project Name:** Digital Downtown WiFi Zone & Information Centers

**Owners:** Municipal

**Location:** Downtown Core (Main St, Andrews St, Water St., Glenn/Phillips St.)

**Est. Construction Jobs:** TBD

**Est. New FTE Jobs:** N/A

**Project Readiness:** Planning

**Total Budget:** \$215,000

**Project Summary:** This project will utilize the installation and aggregation of multiple Wi-Fi hotspots along Main Street, Andrews Street, Glenn Street and Water Street to create a 'Wi-Fi zone' in the core of downtown Massena. The zone will use a "wireless mesh" system meaning that as you walk through the zone, your smart phone or computer will pick up the signal from whatever hardware you are closest to without disconnecting from the one you are leaving behind and asking you to reconnect to a new area. The system will also be designed to allow for future expansion to additional areas within the proposed downtown project area boundaries.

Dedicated and reliable Wi-Fi hotspots will make downtown Massena even more attractive to professionals, entrepreneurs, creatives, and many others. The Wi-Fi zone will also make downtown Massena more attractive to tourists as they are often more incentivized to travel to a location if they can use the internet for free. Providing a free downtown Wi-Fi zone would be advantageous both for these tourists, who would enjoy internet connection without roaming charges, and for the local economy, which would largely benefit from increased levels of activity in the downtown core.

In conjunction with the development and implementation of the downtown Wi-Fi zone, this project will also provide for the purchase and installation of four digital kiosk information centers throughout downtown, providing residents and tourists a quick and easy way to get hyperlocal information about downtown as well as the greater Massena area. The interactive, touchscreen digital kiosks will play a key role in 'wayfinding' efforts planned for the downtown project area. The Kiosks will be designed in the same style and spirit as the 'Explore Massena' app and website in that they will assist individuals in identifying businesses, services, and events that they may want to discover or experience in Massena. The cross-promotion of businesses and attractions in and out of the downtown area will further strengthen the relationship between the downtown core and the greater catchment area.

**DRI Funding Request:** \$190,000



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

#### Capacity to Lead and Implement

Under the leadership of the Village Administration, Massena's engaged citizenry have completely reconsidered their approach to economic and community development, providing Massena with the capacity necessary to carry out its future development priorities and to assist in the implementation of the DRI grant. Both the Town and Village made the commitment to hire a full-time, experienced economic/community developer in 2019. In the past, the Massena Business Development Corporation (BDC), which represents the interests of both the Town and Village, had only employed a part-time employee whose job was primarily to recruit industrial clients to the Massena Industrial Park, managed by the BDC.

The new BDC executive director has been working with the Town and Village to develop several initiatives designed to ensure that Massena is ready and open for business, including:

- BDC entrepreneur training programs
- The creation of the CORE Business Alliance, Downtown merchants' association
- Creation of a Doing Business in Massena Guide
- Creation of an ongoing inventory of available property
- The development of co-working space and a professional incubator
- The development of "access to capital" programs

Through a catalytic number of public investments, many which utilized State and Federal grants, Village leadership have demonstrated their adeptness to grant administration and implementation. Their experience and years of success present the Village as an ideal candidate for DRI investment. The DRI investment will be administered and overseen by the Mayor and executed with broad public support and committee-member engagement.

#### Staff and Structure

The Village Board of Trustees, the legislative body of the Village of Massena, consists of a Mayor and four Trustees who are elected at-large. They are elected to 4-year terms with elections staggered every 2 years. As the governing body, the Mayor and Board of Trustees set laws and policies for the Village, appoint certain officials, administer Village finances, oversee Village services, and handle legal matters.

The Village of Massena is led by a very dedicated, committed and purpose-driven Mayor; Mayor Timothy Ahlfeld as well as Village Trustees, while being supported by Village Administrator, Monique N. Chatland. Current Trustees include Matthew J. LeBire, who also serves as Deputy Mayor and Trustees Greg Paquin, Christine M. Winston, and Francis J. Carvel.

Mayor Ahlfeld, a lifelong resident of Massena, retired as an Outage Coordinator/Operations Supervisor from the New York State Power Authority in 2018 after a successful thirty plus year career. He has always remained actively involved in the Massena community, having previously served as a Village Trustee for eight years and has remained active and engaged with the Village. He also served as a member of the

Massena Central School District Board of Education for sixteen years, having been elected by his peers to the position of Vice President.

The Mayor ensures that Village policies are carried out by the various Village Departments. The Village delivers plenty of services as provided by the following departments: Police Department, Fire Department, Department of Public Works, Water and Wastewater, Code Enforcement, Housing, and Recreation. The Village's water and sewer utilities serve over 5,000 properties, while the Street Department maintains over 40 miles of roads. The Village also uses numerous volunteer boards to assist with Village operations. The commitment and dedication of these Boards provides a professional approach in a multitude of areas relating to local concerns and initiatives. The Boards include Massena Planning Commission; Massena Zoning Board of Appeals; Business Development Corporation for a Greater Massena; Massena Recreation Commission; Massena Housing Authority; and the Board of Ethics.

#### Public Engagement

As an additional level of support and capacity, the Village of Massena benefits from a widely engaged and active group of citizens that would enthusiastically create a Local Planning Committee (LPC) for the development of a DRI Strategic Investment Plan. The Local Planning Committee will benefit from a broad range of local professionals, business owners, and public stakeholders who are dedicated to the revitalization vision and a long-term, sustainable, viable, and bright future for Massena. It is likely some of the same citizens on the committees for forming this application will be involved with the LPC – ensuring cohesion and accord in directing the downtown revitalization and vision.

#### Shared Services and Collaboration

In further consideration to the Village's administrative capacity, is the fact that it coexists harmoniously with the surrounding Town of Massena and benefits from a variety of shared services agreements and departments, such as the Joint Recreation Commission, Building/Code Enforcement Office, Tax Assessor/Assessment Office, Business Development Corporation for a Greater Massena and Water and Sewer Billing Department (Town of Massena water and sewer districts). The Village also has various other shared services agreements with other entities such as housing the Massena Central Schools Transportation & Fueling Facility at the Department of Public Works, processing and collecting water bills for the Town of Norfolk water districts, as well as various agreements with St. Lawrence County and surrounding municipalities. It is without a doubt that DRI investment in downtown Massena will be maximized because of the local government landscape presented in Greater Massena.

Overall, the Village has a long history of success in properly and adequately administering and implementing grant projects. In fact, the Village has successfully administered over \$10 million in grants since 2010. The administration exudes competence and ability, as well as sufficient capacity, to successfully meet the goals of this esteemed program and ensure project completeness in accordance with all program guidelines.

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

Massena has strong competition for DRI funding in the North Country Region. The engaged citizenry, however, continue to actively pursue and engage in the efforts of the Village to secure DRI designation and have not lost excitement or persistence through the four application rounds.

The application committee believes it is pertinent to consider the level of adversity the Village of Massena has worked to overcome. As a highly distressed community, with a deep level of environmental challenges, and infamously marked deindustrialization – the Village has risen from hardships, invested, reinvented, and demonstrated not just one or two, but many improvement projects towards revitalization. Despite the odds, the Village and its leadership have gone above and beyond what many thought possible. Walking through downtown Massena today, the momentum of its revitalization efforts is visible, and the excitement is palpable. For a community whose challenges are widely known, this is remarkable. Massena has truly exhibited its ability to persevere and thrive, as well as its readiness and administrative capacity for leveraging Downtown Revitalization Initiative investment.

Massena's proposal for Downtown Revitalization Initiative funding enjoys support from the following entities whose letters can be found in Attachment C of this application:

Senator Joseph A. Griffo  
Assemblyman Mark C. Walczyk  
St. Lawrence County Legislator (District 14) Nicole Terminelli  
St. Lawrence County Legislator (District 13) Tony Arquiatt  
St. Lawrence County Industrial Development Agency  
Liberty Utilities Corporation  
St. Lawrence Health – Massena Hospital  
Town of Massena  
Business Development Corporation for a Greater Massena  
Town of Louisville  
Massena Central School District  
Massena Drug Free Community Coalition  
Police Activities League of Massena  
IBEW Local 2032  
Massena Housing Authority  
Shelyn Peets – Downtown Proprietor of Simplicity Clothing  
Quality Inn of Massena  
H3 Designs  
Massena Savings & Loan  
Village of Massena – Mayor Tim Ahlfeld  
Massena Police Department  
Massena Joint Recreation Commission

Village of Massena Code Enforcement Office  
Timothy and Ruth Cameron  
Anthony Curley  
Chelcie Lomasney  
Ashley Johnson

