



Downtown Revitalization Initiative

Western New York Downtown Revitalization Initiative and Smart Growth Community Fund

APPLICATION

Applications for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative will be received by the Regional Councils. Applicant responses for each section should be as complete and succinct as possible. Applications should be submitted as Word documents and must be received by WNY Regional Council (WNY REDC) by 4:00 PM on June 1, 2018 at the email address provided at the end of this application. Application guidance is provided in the *Downtown Revitalization Initiative Guidebook* found on the WNY REDC website at www.regionalcouncils.ny.gov/western-new-york

BASIC INFORMATION

Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) Region: Western New York

Municipality Name: City of Lockport

Downtown Name: Downtown Lockport

County Name: Niagara

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

The City of Lockport envisions a growing, inviting, and vibrant downtown district that is filled to capacity, serves as the heart of the Eastern Niagara County community, acts as a point of pride for residents, and attracts visitors of all ages. This progressive downtown, built around the Erie Canal, will offer residential and commercial opportunities including dining, shopping, art, entertainment, parks, and events in a friendly and welcoming environment. The integrity and character of our unique canal community will be a showcase for the region, with revitalized buildings, attractive storefronts, and residential options – providing a walkable, livable, and sustainable community.

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.

Downtown Lockport is a vibrant community rich with economic development assets that anchors the eastern end of Niagara County. Several recent economic development successes and ongoing impactful projects have built positive momentum in the City of Lockport and has Downtown Lockport trending in the right direction and on the cusp of a true transformation. In addition to the completion of recent projects the City of Lockport has been refining the vision for downtown by undertaking a variety of planning initiatives and market studies. This due

diligence has helped identify and develop impactful projects capitalizing on existing assets consistent with the community vision. The result is a cohesive and comprehensive Downtown Revitalization Initiative that can unlock downtown's full potential.

Downtown Lockport was originally formed in the early 1800s as a direct result of the construction of the Erie Canal and the series of adjacent locks built connecting the waterway, so that boats could navigate up and down the Niagara Escarpment. This engineering marvel, now known as the Flight of Five, created hydropower opportunities that fueled a surge in industry immediately adjacent to the locks and the canal.

Almost 100 years after the opening of the Erie Canal, another industrial giant, Harrison Radiator, would begin operating in Downtown Lockport. Even while industry throughout the Rust Belt began to decline in the mid-1900s, Harrison Radiator employed thousands of employees in Lockport's downtown well into the 1980s before building a new facility in the City's west end and slowly beginning to reduce employees.

For the next two decades, unable to accept that times were changing, Downtown Lockport declined. In 1998, however, the City of Lockport developed a comprehensive plan that outlined a new direction and renewed vision for the future of Lockport. The 480,000-square foot Harrison facility, a blighted reminder of industry that abandoned the City, was now seen as a tremendous asset to capitalize on. The Flight of Five Locks, which Lockport was built around but had fallen into disrepair since more modern locks constructed in 1918 rendered them useless, were recognized as an Erie Canal heritage attraction that could drive tourism in Lockport. Long abandoned or under-utilized properties were seen as the future of development, and public and private investment were imagined to breathe new life into these historic buildings.

Presently, the old Harrison Radiator plant, now called Harrison Place, is home to more than 50 businesses and approximately 250 employees. The Flight of Five has had two of its five locks fully restored, was named a "regional priority project" by the Western New York Regional Economic Development Council and has been awarded a \$1.3 million grant through Empire State Development and a \$200,000 National Maritime Heritage grant through the National Park Service for the next phase of restoration. The restoration project has become a tourist attraction in and of itself, and teams of volunteers now perform demonstrations of how the locks were operated in the 1800s for visitors and Erie Canal enthusiasts throughout the canal navigation season. In 2017, a new replica Canal Boat, the Erie Traveler, has only added to the excitement. Just in the last few weeks, the renovation of the Locks District Museum was completed to include new, state-of-the-art exhibits. To complement the established tourism season in Lockport, Cornerstone CFCU Arena, a modern and energy efficient ice skating facility, was built in 2014 to continue to drive people to Downtown Lockport, and over the past two full seasons, has hosted tournaments drawing teams from across the globe.

The implementation of these projects has made Downtown Lockport ripe for development and has driven private developer interest in downtown properties. In 2015, Iskalo Development purchased two under-performing properties – the Historic Post Office and 57 Canal Street – and has since made significant investments into each building. 57 Canal Street was once the largest example of blight on the Richmond Avenue block, now known as Canal Street, which was vacant and had serious environmental concerns in the 1990's. Compare that to today – 57 Canal now anchors a bustling epicenter of downtown: the site of the Lockport Community Farmer's Market, Locktoberfest, a summer Chalk Festival, and many other community events in Lockport. Each building on Canal Street is now privately-owned, with Steamworks Coffee Roasters (and café) on one end, and the hugely successful Lake Effect Ice Cream on the other.

The success of these projects, along with new investments, is crucial for the Lockport community because there are certainly areas that need improving. During the 1960's and 70's, Lockport, like many other communities, took advantage of the Federal Urban Renewal Program, which in turn dramatically affected the City's central business district. As Urban Renewal moved in, the program took on the task of acquiring, demolishing, and redeveloping portions of its downtown. The City of Lockport's central business district is typical of an Urban Renewal city that

is trying to combat and reverse the effects of disinvestment in the downtown corridor, and one that is trying to survive significant loss of industry and manufacturing, and thusly, jobs and population.

The neighborhoods closest to Downtown Lockport were hit the hardest when industry left. The City's poverty rate has risen to almost 20% and the poverty rate immediately surrounding downtown is 35%. In 2015, the City of Lockport received a \$50,000 grant through the Office of Community Renewal to undertake a Community Needs Assessment, which was completed in 2016, to determine how to best connect unemployed and underemployed individuals to the new opportunities being created in Downtown Lockport. The resulting "South Street Neighborhood Needs Assessment and Action Plan," identified 28 recommendations organized into seven categories - Organizational Structure, Neighborhood Improvement and Redevelopment, Code Enforcement, Transportation Infrastructure, Green Space and Recreation, Workforce Development and Education, and Neighborhood Pride and Heritage - which once implemented, would leverage successes in Downtown Lockport to economically empower a residential resurgence in this neighborhood.

The City of Lockport, and its development agency, the Greater Lockport Development Corporation (GLDC), strongly believes that meaningful investment into downtown properties, and creating opportunities for new, mixed-use development is the key to reversing these trends. Sound economic development practices in Downtown Lockport have already made significant positive changes. Lockport has positioned itself, and made the strategic investments necessary, for immediate planning and implementation of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative. Downtown Lockport has an inventory of vacant or underutilized properties that offers opportunities for mixed-uses that would vastly improve and sustain the downtown with the help of significant investment. Lockport is a perfect candidate to demonstrate how public investment can leverage private investment and transform a city's downtown. Lockport has the tools for effective economic development, the need for improvement, the ability to administer major initiatives, and the pieces in place to ensure the benefit is felt by the entire community. The Downtown Revitalization Initiative would fast-track results with significant impact on Downtown Lockport and beyond.

DOWNTOWN IDENTIFICATION

This section should be filled out with reference to the list of desired attributes for participation in the DRI as set forth in the *Downtown Revitalization Initiative Guidebook*.

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

Downtown Lockport is easily identifiable as a traditional downtown or central business district in Western New York. The boundary of downtown begins just west of South Transit Road at State Road and moves north before going west on West Genesee, north on Hawley, east on Park, north on North Transit, east on Ontario, north on Lock Street to the Falls Road Branch Line. The boundary then crosses the Erie Canal to Market Street, moves east along Union, south on Washburn, west on South Street, north on Pine Street, and west on Walnut back to South Transit. Parcels on either side of the boundary are considered to be Downtown Lockport.

A map of Downtown Lockport has been submitted separately, and other visuals are included in the attached Downtown Lockport Revitalization Initiative that identify key properties within downtown and downtown's proximity to employment centers and surrounding communities.

2) Description of catchment area. Outline why the proposed DRI area, or its catchment area, is of a size sufficient to support a vibrant, year-round downtown, with consideration of whether there is a sizeable existing or increasing population within easy reach for whom this would be the primary downtown destination.

At about 15 city blocks, the downtown is a compact central business district, but large enough that it includes a number of economic and community development assets that are sufficient to support a vibrant downtown year-round. These assets include: the Erie Canal Locks, Cornerstone CFCU Arena, a winery on the Niagara Wine Trail, Harrison Place, The Historic Palace Theatre, and an inventory of underutilized or vacant mixed-use properties with great potential.

While the City of Lockport's population has been shrinking, the Town of Lockport, which surrounds the City, has doubled its population since 1970. Other surrounding communities that would also consider Downtown Lockport their downtown, like Pendleton, Cambria, and Newfane, have all grown over the last 30 years, but lack many of the amenities that a larger downtown provides. In addition, Downtown Lockport has an increased daytime population, as it is an employment center, and is currently home to approximately 315 businesses, and 1,360 employees. As the seat of Niagara County, Downtown Lockport plays host to a number of municipal agencies and nonprofit organizations that employ many. Harrison Place, located right in Downtown Lockport, is now home to about 250 employees. Other nearby and highly accessible employment centers like the Transit corridor and the Lockport IDA Park are also growing, and Downtown Lockport would be the primary downtown for these employees as they decide where to eat, drink, shop, and live.

As trends change, individuals, especially young adults, are choosing to move to walkable downtowns rather than suburbs. Lockport is already on a path to become that downtown for eastern Niagara County. A successful DRI program, however, would accelerate that trend immensely by, among other things, improving walkability, filling the gap in housing opportunities in Downtown Lockport by utilizing the inventory of vacant or under-performing mixed-use properties to create apartment units for varying income levels, and capitalizing on the existing amenities within the confines of the downtown.

3) Past Investment, future investment potential. Describe how this DRI area will be able to capitalize on prior private and public investment, or catalyze future investments in the neighborhood and its surrounding areas.

Downtown Lockport is positioned to build upon recent successful economic and community development projects and initiatives by leveraging existing local and regional assets, realizing the potential of underutilized mixed-use properties, meeting the need for market-rate housing, and enhancing the historic resources along, and contributing to, the Erie Canal. All of which will incentivize additional public and private investment and ensure the benefit of these new initiatives extend to nearby neighborhoods. This will be accomplished by capitalizing on past and current planning activities and through close coordination with stakeholders at the local, regional, and state levels.

Lockport is unique in that, for a relatively small community, the economic development assets it contains in its downtown rival much larger municipalities. The Western New York Regional Economic Development Council is intimately familiar with four of them - Lockport's Palace Theatre, Harrison Place, the historic Flight of Five Erie Canal locks, and Cornerstone CFCU Arena - as all were named "regional priority projects." There are, however, others with the potential to impact downtown significantly as well.

A consistent vision for economic and community development has been formed around capitalizing on existing and under-performing assets in Downtown Lockport. This vision was initiated in the 1998 Comprehensive Plan, tweaked and improved in the 2005 Downtown Plan, and updated again in the 2010 Local Waterfront Redevelopment Plan. Most recently, this vision has been enhanced through the process of designating Downtown Lockport as a Brownfield Opportunity Area in 2015. The Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor Commission recently recognized these sound methods of economic development when they awarded Downtown Lockport the 2015 Erie Canalway Heritage Award of Excellence.

Downtown Lockport has a number of vacant or underutilized mixed-use properties that represent impactful development opportunities. Many of these properties are iconic, character buildings that could be utilized for a blend of affordable, market-rate, and luxury housing, which downtown is greatly lacking. These buildings include the F&M Building, the Bewley Building, the Historic Post Office, the soon-to-be-vacant YMCA facility, and Building 3 of Harrison Place, among others.

In addition to having the stock of existing developable mixed-use properties, there is a demonstrated demand for market-rate housing in Downtown Lockport. In 2015, the Greater Lockport Development Corporation, the City of Lockport's economic development agency, commissioned GAR Associates to perform a market analysis on the feasibility of market-rate apartments in downtown Lockport. The findings of this report identify a conservative demand for 154 new market-rate apartments in Downtown Lockport. In fact, the first key recommendation from the report is to, "work with the existing physical inventory including vacant and underutilized buildings to create market-rate housing."

This region has seen first-hand how the creation of downtown living units can transform a city, and Downtown Lockport is the type of vibrant, walkable environment people are choosing to live in. With less than 10 market-rate apartments currently located in downtown, a demonstrated demand for additional apartment units, and an inventory of underutilized, iconic buildings that are primed for successful mixed-use redevelopment, Lockport is poised to capitalize on all of these factors and transform its downtown.

Lockport has demonstrated in recent years that it can deliver significant economic development initiatives that positively impact the community. Between Lockport's Community Development Department, the Greater Lockport Development Corporation, the Lockport Locks Heritage District Corporation, and Lockport Main Street, the City of Lockport has the ability to effectively administer any economic development initiative. Built around a consistent vision, direction, and demonstrated organizational capacity, the City of Lockport can capitalize on previous investments the WNY REDC has made in Lockport, as well as other public investments such as capital improvements at Harrison Place and through programmatic funding like Microenterprise programs, to leverage future investments through the Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

As stated previously, the City of Lockport recently completed a Community Needs Assessment titled the "South Street Neighborhood Initiative" funded by a \$50,000 grant through the NYS Office of Community Renewal. South Street's proximity to downtown affords opportunity through the DRI to directly benefit a neighborhood that needs it.

Past Investments

Canal Street and the Locks District

The City of Lockport has taken proactive and aggressive steps to redefine the original heart of downtown; Canal Street and the Locks District. The effort began with the remediation of the Richmond Avenue block directly above the locks. The City took title to the entire contaminated and blighted block and, through a Master Lease arrangement with the GLDC, cleaned it up environmentally and aesthetically, creating Canal Street. The Canal Street block now features the Erie Canal Discovery Center, and three historic buildings that were saved and renovated for commercial use; all of which are now privately owned. Additionally, Canal Street was closed to vehicles and enhanced with green space and a gazebo, in order to form a true gathering place that is now home to events like the Lockport Community Farmer's Market and Locktoberfest. This community events venue was further enhanced and defined through a placemaking project, whereby the City secured \$360,000 in funding from the Niagara River Greenway Commission and the Dormitory Authority of the State of New York to construct the Locks District Gateway Exhibit, a pair of interpretive structures.

The City/GLDC efforts further leveraged private investments by the Flight of Five Winery, who redeveloped an 1864 building sitting above the Locks, and Lockport Cave and Underground Boat Ride, who built a new sales, ticketing, and souvenir facility, along with the investments in the Canal Street structures from Iskalo Development, Lake Effect Ice Cream, and Steamworks Coffee.

The Canal Street investment made sense due to its proximity to the Lockport locks, however the locks and the adjacent spaces provided opportunity as well. The Flight of Five is the marquee tourism economic development project in the City of Lockport. In 2014, Phase I of the project was completed through a \$3 million grant through the Department of Transportation that was freed up by then House Representative Kathy Hochul. In 2014, the project was deemed a "regional priority project" and in 2015, was awarded \$1.3 million to begin Phase II of the project. Last year, the Lockport Locks Heritage District Corporation (LHDC - a local non-profit organization dedicated to revitalizing the Locks District) was awarded a \$133,000 grant from the Niagara River Greenway Commission to implement the first phase of "The Lock Tender Tribute," a replica bronze statuary of the original 19th century lock tenders that labored to bring boats through the original locks. This monument is the main interpretive element that will complement the Flight of Five. Similarly, the LHDC secured \$160,000 in grant funding between the New York State Council on the Arts and the NYS Canal Corporation to renovate and modernize an existing and underperforming Erie Canal Museum, located at the base of the locks. The newly named "Locks District Museum" renovation was completed over the last month.

Once completed, the Flight of Five, and its interpretive elements, is expected to draw 230,000 visitors annually. These projects add legitimate new attractions to Western New York and will bring more people to the region and keep visitors here longer. The now-vibrant Canal Street Block creates a positive and impressive experience for those visitors and the community alike.

Cornerstone CFCU Arena is a state-of-the-art ice skating facility that has already had a noticeable impact on Downtown Lockport. Completed in 2014, the arena draws more than 150,000 people each year. The project was named a "regional priority project" for the potential impact these new visitors can have on the Lockport community and beyond.

Cornerstone CFCU Arena regularly hosts teams that compete with teams from around the region and the country and has already hosted multiple international tournaments. Thus far, the \$15 million facility has received rave reviews from players and fans alike. Destination Niagara USA has booked tournaments at Cornerstone and local businesses, especially restaurants, bars, and hotels, are benefiting from these events.

The arena was designed with an eye toward great ice and accessibility. As a result, Cornerstone CFCU Arena has become both a draw for Championship caliber figure skating and the home ice for the Sled Hockey Foundation. Additionally, the Arena continues to grow its programming, recently becoming the first New York State facility to offer the chance to ride Ice Bumper Cars, and events, such as hosting Lockport's New Year's Eve Ball Drop.

The vision of a year-round community gathering place in the heart of downtown has become a reality.

Harrison Place is now home to over 50 businesses and approximately 250 employees on the campus. The property is owned by the Greater Lockport Development Corporation, which has already committed funding to future projects at the site. Trek, Inc. located in Harrison Place in 2013 during a \$4 million renovation project that built out 48,000 square feet of space. In 2015, Trek expanded through the \$1 million build out of 16,000 additional square feet within Harrison Place. In total, the GLDC has been the developer and project manager for the renovation of 64,000 square feet that now houses the Trek's corporate headquarters in a once blighted and completely vacant structure in Downtown Lockport.

None of this would have ever been possible without the guidance of Tom Mancuso, of Mancuso Management, who manages the GLDC-owned facility. While Trek is by far the largest employer on the campus, many of the smaller businesses at Harrison Place have also been success stories. As a WNY Innovation Hot Spot, Harrison Place continues to be an asset for entrepreneurs, and thus for Downtown Lockport, as new businesses and jobs start and are created here. In addition to the 64,000 square feet occupied by Trek, the GLDC, in partnership with Mancuso Management, has built out a total of over 100,000 square feet on the campus and counting.

Building 3 at Harrison Place is one of the most captivating properties in Downtown Lockport. At 140,000 square feet, the property offers opportunities for upper floor residential space, and a myriad of other uses throughout. In 2016, recognizing this potential, Empire State Development awarded the campus a \$300,000 grant for further build out at Harrison Place, including improvements to Building 3.

The Historic Palace Theatre, built in 1925, sits in the middle of a corridor created by Harrison Place, the Historic Post Office, YMCA Building, and Cornerstone CFCU Arena. For many downtown neighborhoods in Western New York, their local community theatre is the only economic driver. In Lockport, it is just one of many quality economic development assets that can be improved upon and capitalized upon to enhance not just downtown, but the entire community. The Historic Palace Theatre seats 1,100 people and hosts musicals, plays, concerts, and movies. It is also the site of community events including graduations, weddings, debates, and stand-up comedy. With the help of a recent \$423,000 Market NY grant award, a \$500,000 challenge grant through the Grigg Lewis Foundation, and a capital campaign of already over \$300,00, the Palace is implementing a \$2.1 million renovation over the next two years. The renovation involves installation of new rigging, allowing the Palace to host a wider variety of performances, restoration of the historic plaster and brick features, and reconstruction of the lobby and concession area that will improve the patron experience and help increase Palace revenues.

Opportunities for Future Investment

Improve Walkability/Access to Erie Canal

Despite being rated as one of the most walkable communities in Western New York, there is ample room to improve accessibility not just around Downtown Lockport, but also from the nearby residential neighborhoods into downtown. Similarly, the Erie Canalway Trail bisects Downtown Lockport, but there are limited access points to allow residents onto the trail and for travelers to access and patronize downtown businesses.

Lockport Harbor and Marine Center

A large vacant parcel located just west of Lockport's locks was identified several years ago as the potential site for boater supportive services and infrastructure. No such boating amenities are located west of the locks in the City of Lockport, with Widewaters Marina located outside of downtown on the east end of the city. This Harbor and Marine Center will establish a destination within Downtown Lockport in close proximity to local businesses and allow Lockport to better capitalize on its waterfront for economic development.

Spalding Mill Building and Historic Mill Race

The Spalding Mill Building and Mill Race were central pieces to the City of Lockport's development and industrial heritage. Combined the two directed water to generate electricity used to power a large portion of the industrial uses in 19th century Lockport. A not-for-profit group, Historic Lockport Mill Race, Inc. has entered into a lease arrangement with the City to help redevelop the Spalding Mill and surrounding area in order to create a rooftop gathering spot with some of the best views available along the canal system, active recreation opportunities, interpretive elements including signage and statuary, and new trails to connect into the existing system along the canal.

Harrison Place

Over the last semester, the GLDC has been working with the University of Buffalo School of Architecture and Planning to create a new vision for the campus, with a particular focus on a visionary redevelopment of Building 3 and on turning Harrison Place from a physical barrier between downtown and the South Street neighborhood into a network of physical and program-based connections.

Tuscarora Club

The Tuscarora Club is owned by the Greater Lockport Development Corporation and is the prime location for a mixed-use property in Downtown Lockport. The Tuscarora Club is one of Lockport's most valued vacant properties with potential. The GLDC conducted a feasibility study to estimate the cost of renovation and has committed funds to a rehabilitation project at the "T Club." While the City of Lockport was awarded a \$500,000 Restore NY grant and a \$250,000 EPA grant for asbestos remediation, additional funding is needed to complete the \$1.7 million project.

Historic Post Office and YMCA Building

The Historic Post Office was on the market for over a year before it was purchased by Iskalo Development. The City of Lockport is pleased that it is in the hands of a capable and established developer who has already made significant improvements to the property, however, the second and third floors remain vacant. The property is directly between two economic development anchors: The Palace and Cornerstone CFCU Arena. Similarly, the YMCA, which will be vacant later this year but is under contract with Iskalo Development, is a difficult property to redevelop but has potential due to its size and prime location.

The F&M Building was the original Farmers and Manufacturers Bank before it later became Lockport Savings Bank, First Niagara Bank, and was eventually absorbed by KeyBank. Now completely vacant, the architecturally significant structure is an iconic building that shapes Downtown Lockport's skyline and offers some of the greatest potential impact on the community if renovated and revitalized properly.

The F&M Building has tremendous views of Downtown Lockport, the Erie Canal, and even Toronto on clear days. The property is in the heart of Downtown Lockport, Harrison Place is in walking distance, as is the bus stop for the NFTA and Rural Niagara Transportation. The highest and best use for the F&M Building is mixed-use with residential on the upper floors.

The Bewley Building is another underutilized property in Downtown Lockport with the potential for mixed-uses. The first floor is primarily retail space, with office uses on the second and third floors. The fourth floor is largely vacant and the fifth floor is entirely vacant. These floors offer stunning Erie Canal views and would be an excellent fit for residential units in the City's downtown.

Photos and additional information about these properties can be found in the attached Downtown Lockport Revitalization Initiative. Also, more detailed information is included in response to Question 8 of this document.

4) 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.

Recent job growth within Downtown Lockport and at nearby employment centers is attracting young professionals to work in this area of the region. These individuals working in and around Downtown Lockport represent a demographic available to capitalize on to support existing businesses and attract new businesses within the central business district and a market to support a sustainable, vibrant downtown.

Harrison Place, once derelict and vacant after Harrison Radiator left the property for new construction projects in the 1980s, is now home to over 50 businesses that employ a total of approximately 250 individuals. Over 100 of these are employed by Trek, Inc., which chose to locate at Harrison Place, in part because of Downtown Lockport's proximity to the University at Buffalo's North Campus, in 2013 and has continued to expand each year. Since 2015, a microenterprise program through the Office of Community Renewal has supported 22 new startups or expanding small businesses, most of which are located right in downtown, which has led to the creation of more than 50 jobs. The diversity of these businesses, which ranges from a comic book store and bubble tea cafe to a machine job shop, creates a vibrant downtown attractive to individuals searching for a place to live, and also offers a variety of jobs with varying levels of qualifications that are available for people to pursue. The GLDC is currently administering another microenterprise program that is sure to continue to attract more businesses.

Recent economic development projects, like the restoration of the Flight of Five, the presence of Cornerstone CFCU Arena, and the soon to be improved Palace Theatre, are creating more to do for residents and driving thousands to Downtown Lockport that were not coming here even just three years ago. This additional foot traffic is not only supporting the existing businesses here, but also creating a demand for more, and different, new businesses. As Downtown Lockport continues to capitalize on the successes of those projects, more businesses will start up or expand to answer the new demand and jobs will be created offering new opportunities and adding to the vibrancy of downtown.

Both the Transit corridor and the Lockport IDA Park, two of the largest employment centers in Niagara County, along with Eastern Niagara Hospital and recent developments like the New York Beer Project brewery, are in very close proximity to downtown - all of which are accessible via public transportation. Additionally, while the trend toward the industrial sector is gradually declining nationally, manufacturing is still a leading industry in Niagara County. Heavy industry continues to benefit from low-cost hydroelectric power made available by the Niagara Power Project. This low-cost power has also made the transition from heavy industry to other sectors possible, thanks to several county government and New York Power Authority-backed initiatives, including low-cost hydropower grants provided through the County's Center for Economic Development. This has been no truer than in Lockport, with the addition of a 190,000 square foot Yahoo! data center that opened in 2010 in the Town of Lockport's Industrial Park which created 125 high-tech white-collar jobs, and would later expand creating 100 more jobs in the process. The job opportunities at each of these employment centers makes Downtown Lockport a natural candidate for young adults and others who are hired to fill the positions created and are determining what their options are regarding where to live.

The Lockport Tourism Focus Area Brownfield Opportunity Area nomination report states that five industry clusters were identified on which to target business recruitment efforts: advanced manufacturing, professional services/entrepreneurial networked professionals, healthcare, urban agriculture/agribusiness, and tourism. The report states these clusters were identified based upon synergies between target industry sectors and several indicator criterion, such as: location quotients; local presence; growth trends; and export industries.

Maps identifying employment centers in and in close proximity to Downtown Lockport are included in the attached Downtown Lockport Revitalization Initiative.

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

Downtown Lockport has all the tools necessary to be an attractive and livable community for diverse populations of all ages and socioeconomic standing. It does, however, need support to enhance these tools to accelerate Downtown Lockport's development to reach its full potential.

Downtown Lockport prides itself as being both walkable and bikeable. Complete streets that have sidewalks, on street parking, car lanes, medians along Main Street and East Avenue (the main thoroughfare), and crosswalk infrastructure makes it safe for pedestrians and bicyclists alike to travel through the city. Despite a solid foundation of walkability, there are a lot of opportunities to further improve upon Lockport's walkability and accessibility by better pulling the neighborhoods into downtown by enhancing corridors from residential neighborhoods into the heart of downtown. This is especially worthwhile as the Erie Canalway Trail runs directly through Downtown Lockport, creating a "green ribbon" of park space along the canal and connecting downtown to other local and regional amenities like Upson Park and Widewaters Marina in the City of Lockport, but also the Lockport Nature Trail in the Town of Lockport and a network of bike and pedestrian pathways in the Town of Pendleton. Just this past April, a section of the Erie Canalway Trail was opened between the City of Lockport, Pendleton, and Amherst. The next phase of that project will connect the trail entirely between the Tonawandas and Lockport, connecting Downtown Lockport with regional attractions like Canalside in Buffalo, Niawanda Park in the City of Tonawanda, and Gateway Harbor in North Tonawanda.

One major component to the development of Downtown Lockport, and a tremendous asset to the community, is the inventory of vacant or underutilized mixed-use properties that could have a great contribution to the future of Lockport if their full potential is reached. These are beautiful, historic, architecturally significant properties, located in a walkable community with lots of amenities, that young professionals are searching for when selecting where to live. As previously mentioned, the Greater Lockport Development Corporation conducted an apartment feasibility study that determined there is a significant demand for apartment units in the downtown. We have the demand, we have the stock, we just need to help spur the investment necessary to create new units so they are available for individuals searching for a place to live to locate to.

The current number of market-rate apartments in Downtown Lockport is in the single digits. Urban Park Towers, located at 77 Main Street in the City's downtown, is a 150-unit low-income housing property. With underachieving and vacant mixed-use properties that make intriguing prospects for residential units, and a demonstrated demand for new units in place, Downtown Lockport is in a position to greatly enhance the vibrancy of the community by bringing new apartments online that are geared towards those searching for market-rate, affordable, and even luxury residential units.

Another aspect that makes Downtown Lockport attractive is the commercial and retail businesses located here. People working or living in downtown can walk to an ice cream shop, a theater, a winery, a comic book store, several restaurants and bars, a grocery store, an ice skating arena, two major regional tourist attractions, a public library, banks, churches, and professional services of a wide variety. Canal Street, formerly known as Richmond Avenue, has become an events center for the community. A "place-making" project called the Locks District Gateway Exhibit was recently constructed on Canal Street that greatly contributes to the sense of place in Downtown Lockport along the Erie Canal. During the summer there is a farmer's market located on Canal Street

that offers the SNAP program, making affordable, healthy food easily accessible to the community in addition to Niagara Produce, the local downtown grocery store. The Lockport Community Garden is a free garden grown and maintained by the community in an effort to provide fresh produce to all in the surrounding communities who need/want it. The amenities not available in downtown, such as big box stores and chain restaurants, are accessible via public transportation along Transit Road that has a stop directly in the center of Downtown Lockport.

Downtown Lockport is also in close proximity to five city parks, offering plenty of green space for residents to enjoy. The City Youth and Recreation Department offers free quality programming, and with the addition of the Community Pool, Lockport has a lot to offer city youth during the warmer months. Public art projects and community events are regular occurrences in Downtown Lockport, with an annual Chalk Festival and “Locktoberfest” celebration. Lockport Main Street also oversaw an “Art in the Windows” public art program last year that was very well received.

Other amenities necessary for a livable and vibrant community are also located in or near Downtown Lockport. Eastern Niagara Hospital, located in the City of Lockport just a few minutes outside of the downtown area on East Avenue and accessible via public transportation, announced a partnership with Kaleida Health in 2016 that will strengthen the health care facilities for those in Lockport. Cultural and entertainment fixtures, like the Historic Palace Theatre, the Kenan Art Center, the Erie Canal Discovery Center Museum, and even Cornerstone CFCU Arena, offer residents and visitors a lot to take in and explore.

6) Quality of Life 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 achieving this goal are not currently in place, describe the ability of the municipality to create and implement such policies.

In the last five years the City of Lockport has benefited from professional planning firms facilitating community input through the Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan and, more recently, the Brownfields Opportunity Area Planning process and South Street Initiative Community Needs Assessment. In 2014 and 2015, as part of the BOA, Bergmann Associates and Camoin Associates began the process of translating the public vision into policy recommendations designed to leverage quality, sustainable development. Specifically, the BOA included recommendations to enhance “place-making” such as the implementation of form-based zoning code and a complete streets policy approach, which was adopted in April 2017. Additionally, the BOA identified Lockport as a community that would benefit from the creation of a land bank as the City has many strategically located opportunities for land assembly and targeted redevelopment. In 2017, the City of Lockport partnered with Niagara and Orleans Counties as well as the cities of Niagara Falls and North Tonawanda to establish a regional land bank, the Niagara Orleans Regional Land Improvement Corporation.

Earlier this year, the City of Lockport became a member of Energize NY, giving property owners in Lockport the ability to access PACE financing, which can finance 100% of capital expenditures that result in significant reduction in energy inefficiencies. This was the fourth completed High Impact Action the City completed to become a designated Clean Energy Community through the New York State Energy Research Development Authority. The City continues to pursue progressive policies that improve the environment, save energy costs, and create jobs.

In 2013, Lockport Main Street contracted with the Genesee/Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council and completed “Community Specific Design Guidelines” for the downtown Lockport district. These design guidelines provide a

roadmap to renovating Lockport's building inventory appropriately, and provide understanding and interpretation of basic preservation principles, and advisory site and landscape design elements for the downtown district.

The timing could not be better for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative as Lockport has the leadership, strong desire, and organizational infrastructure to implement creative, forward-thinking policies in accordance with the BOA recommendations and community planning process. City leadership instituted a program in 2014 to actively seek out residents with professional design and planning experience to serve on City Boards including, but not limited to: the Planning Board and the Zoning Board of Appeals. The City would be an eager partner that recognizes the benefits of both the funding and the technical and professional support available through the Downtown Revitalization Initiative in order to flush out recommended policies to ensure quality, sustainable development throughout the City, and especially in the downtown core.

Currently, Downtown Lockport is located in a number of districts that offer incentives for private sector development. These districts include; the Lockport Tourism Focus Area BOA, which gives developers an added tax credit when developing brownfields; the Niagara County IDA Opportunity Zone, which offers an aggressive five year 100% tax abatement on improvements of properties within the district and notably can be used on mixed-use properties; Niagara County Census Tract 237, which is a distressed area and eligible for IDA incentives for retail use, and also has access to federal New Market Tax Credits. While Downtown Lockport is not a designated historic district, there are a number of historic properties that would be eligible for Historic Tax Credits.

7) 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. Describe the commitment among local leaders and stakeholders to preparing and implementing a strategic investment plan. Identify an initial local lead for the program that will work with outside experts to convene a DRI Local Planning Committee to oversee the plan.

The Lockport community has been actively engaged in shaping the future of Downtown Lockport and the establishment and selection of the projects identified in this application through various community and stakeholder events, public hearings, group discussions, related to multiple planning documents, such as the BOA Nomination Report and the South Street Initiative Community Needs Assessment. Additionally, over the last two years, the Lockport community has participated in and hosted One Region Forward events and Jane's Walks. Just last month, Lockport Main Street hosted a Downtown Lockport Jane's Walk, a day full of workshops, a neighborhood stroll, and community feedback, named for planning advocate, Jane Jacobs. Interested community members learned about walkability, traffic calming, the importance of mixed-use development, and design guidelines before taking to the streets of Downtown Lockport and applying what they learned to rate areas of downtown that were desirable and what locations needed improvement. The projects in this application, especially related to streetscape improvements and walkability, are consistent with the feedback received during the Jane's Walk.

In addition to the public participation and input that has shaped this application, several local leaders, stakeholders, and property owners have submitted letters of support or commitment letters. Letters of support have been submitted by:

- ☐ Joel Maerten, Supervisor, Town of Pendleton
- ☐ Mark Crocker, Supervisor, Town of Lockport
- ☐ Wm. Keith McNall, Chairman of the Niagara County Legislature

- ☐ Anthony J. Nemi, Niagara County Legislator representing downtown Lockport
- ☐ John Percy, President & CEO of the Niagara Tourism & Convention Corporation
- ☐ Michael Casale, Deputy Commissioner, Niagara County Department of Economic Development
- ☐ David Wohleben, City of Lockport, Common Council President
- ☐ Chris Smith, Executive Director, Grigg Lewis Foundation

Commitment letters, which are included in their respective project's section of the attached document, have been submitted by:

- ☐ Paul Iskalo, Iskalo Development
- ☐ Brian Stratton, Canal Corporation
- ☐ David Bewley, Bewley Building
- ☐ Brian Smith, Greater Lockport Development Corporation

While the support for this submission requesting Downtown Lockport to be nominated for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative includes elected officials and community development agencies who generally express their support for their municipality's efforts such as this, the most telling and compelling support comes from elected officials of other municipalities, Mark Crocker, Town of Lockport Supervisor, and Joel Maerten, Town of Pendleton Supervisor, demonstrating the regional impact this initiative will have on their respective communities, and eastern Niagara County as a whole. In addition, Iskalo Development, whose private investment in Downtown Lockport over the last two years has been highlighted throughout this application as an indicator that Lockport is at a tipping point, has submitted a commitment letter stating they will further invest should Lockport be chosen for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

Other important demonstrated support comes from the Niagara County Legislature, recognizing the impact these projects will have on Niagara County, and demonstrating their willingness to be an active partner in DRI endeavors. John Percy, President & CEO of Destination Niagara USA, who emphasizes the impact Lockport's tourism initiatives will have on the region. Niagara County Department of Economic Development Deputy Commissioner Michael Casale expresses that agency's support by their willingness to assist the City of Lockport in marketing downtown properties to potential developers, and offering incentive programs to encourage projects within Lockport. Lockport Common Council President David Wohleben articulates the Council's willingness and excitement to learn about and adopt progressive development policies. Grigg Lewis Foundation Executive Director Chris Smith stated their hope to partner with the City of Lockport and the State to implement a successful, transformational program for the community. The NYS Canal Corporation has also submitted a letter of support for our nomination as they recognize the City of Lockport's strategic location within the region along the Erie Canal and how canal-themed projects, like the Lockport Harbor and Marine Center, contribute to economic development in Downtown Lockport.

The City of Lockport is committed to putting together and implementing a strategic investment plan. In addition to this commitment, the City of Lockport also has the organizational infrastructure in economic and community development to implement the plan from start to finish. The local lead for this program will be the City of Lockport's Director of Planning and Development, Brian Smith. Mr. Smith is also the President and CEO of the Greater Lockport Development Corporation, the City of Lockport's economic development agency, which will be responsible for the implementation of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

The GLDC is led by President/CEO Brian Smith, assisted by Vice-President Heather Peck, and also utilizes the consulting services of H. Sicherman & Company, located within Downtown Lockport and owned by Harry Sicherman, a well-respected economic and community development consulting firm that helps implement

economic development programs throughout New York State. The GLDC has, even in just the last three years, overseen projects and programs ranging in scope and purpose that demonstrate the organization's ability and experience necessary to implement the Downtown Revitalization Initiative. The most recent of these projects and programs include; a microenterprise grant program for small businesses looking to expand or startup in Downtown Lockport, two New York Main Street grant programs for facade improvements and the creation of market rate residential units in downtown Lockport, a \$4 million project in 2013 that rehabilitated 48,000 square feet at a previously vacant building at Harrison Place to bring Trek, Inc., to Downtown Lockport, bringing with them over 100 jobs, and a \$1 million expansion project for Trek in 2016 that built out an additional 16,000 square feet that created another 20 jobs. The GLDC is capable and comfortable administering and implementing a wide range of projects.

In addition, the GLDC is involved with all of the major economic development projects that have taken place in Lockport - mainly the construction of Cornerstone CFCU Arena, development of Harrison Place, and the restoration of the Flight of Five. The GLDC has representatives on the board for the arena, including two members that were on the arena's construction committee. The restoration of the Flight of Five is largely overseen by the Lockport Locks Heritage District Corporation, which is a subsidiary of the GLDC. Lockport has delivered on major economic development initiatives when given the opportunity to access funding. The WNY REDC can feel confident in the GLDC's, and Lockport's, demonstrated track record and ability to deliver an effective and impactful Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

8) Project List to Demonstrate Readiness: Describe opportunities to build on the strengths described above by providing a list of transformative projects that will 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) and which may leverage DRI funding with private investment or other funds. Such projects could address economic development, transportation, housing, and community development needs. While such projects should have demonstrated public support, it is recognized that projects will ultimately be vetted by the Local Planning Committee and the State. Explain how most projects proposed for DRI funding demonstrate their readiness for implementation.

The City of Lockport has taken a comprehensive approach to the Downtown Revitalization Initiative by developing a diverse mix of projects in the following categories:

1) Investment in public and municipal spaces to promote walkability and place-making, improve physical connectivity for a variety of transportation modes, improve community aesthetics, and create new gathering places

Representative Projects

§ Streetscape improvements

§ Trail Development

§ Harbor Marine Center

§ Historic Lockport Mill Race

2) Investment in significant publicly controlled properties

Representative Projects

§ Harrison Place

§ Tuscarora Club

3) Support for private investment consistent with the City's vision

Representative Projects

§ Historic Post Office/YMCA

§ F&M Building

§ Bewley Building

In addition to creating a holistic approach to development, the mix of projects in the Lockport DRI ensures that the City and Greater Lockport Development Corporation can be proactive participants with direct control of a number of the projects and maintain the ability to leverage projects with the most impactful private investment. The result is an initiative that maximizes both **project readiness** and **community benefit**.

1. Improving Walkability, Connectivity and Access

\$2.7 million will be used to revamp streetscapes, improve crosswalks, better connect nearby residential neighborhoods to downtown, and create new trails connecting downtown to the Erie Canalway Trail.

Summary

While Downtown Lockport is already quite walkable, the City of Lockport has identified a number of projects to complete to improve walkability in and around downtown, especially as it relates to better connecting nearby residential neighborhoods to downtown. Through the DRI, key projects from this list will be completed.

West Main Street, Main Street, and East Avenue, which make up the main drag of Downtown Lockport, have many of the key elements that lead to highly-walkable communities. Minor improvements to this area, including narrowing pedestrian crossing areas and adding bike lanes or “sharrows” will make Lockport even more walkable and accessible.

More significant improvements will be made to connect the neighborhoods to downtown. One key corridor to connect into Downtown Lockport from the north is Lock Street and Pine Street, including the Pine Street Bridge. Through the DRI, the City of Lockport will complete two master plan projects identified in Lockport's BOA nomination report that will address this corridor – the Lock Street Closure and Pine Street Bridge Streetscaping projects. Improvements to Washburn Street, also identified in the BOA nomination report, will better connect the neighborhoods to the south of downtown.

Several other important streetscaping projects, including along Chestnut Street and Frontier Place, will also be implemented in order to better define streets, aesthetically improve downtown, improve the safety and perceived safety of pedestrians, and create more appealing opportunities for infill development along those streets.

Two new pedestrian/bicycle trails will be established that connect downtown and residents to the Erie Canal, including a short network of trails near the Spalding Mill Building and a trail that will connect Washburn Street to Lowertown, crossing the City-owned former Dussault Foundry site, and traversing down the Niagara Escarpment to the Erie Canal.

2. Harbor and Marine Center

\$2.25 million will be used to complete the first phase of the Lockport Harbor and Marine Center on a Canal Corporation-owned property along the Erie Canal in Downtown Lockport.

Summary

With the ongoing restoration of the Flight of Five and the recent renovation of the Locks District Museum, the Erie Canal has figured prominently in the resurgence of Downtown Lockport. However, the lack of accommodations for transient boaters within the downtown area has limited the ability of boaters on the Canal to access downtown attractions and businesses.

In 2011, the City of Lockport retained Moffat & Nichol to prepare a Lockport Harbor and Marine Center Feasibility Study, which identified potential sites in close proximity to downtown for docks and other amenities to serve transient boaters and analyzed input from the public, stakeholders and public agencies to develop recommended designs and cost structure. Based on the results of the Feasibility Study, the City proposes to construct a Harbor and Marine Center on a 3.79 acre parcel located on the north side of the canal between the Stevens Street Bridge and the Genesee Street Bridge which is owned by the New York State Canal Corporation and which is referred to as the “Upper Terminal Site,” as it was historically used by the Canal Corporation for loading and unloading bulk materials and staging of work barges. The proposed improvements would include approximately 750 linear feet of floating docks sufficient for approximately 18 vessels; a boater services building which would house restrooms, showers, laundry facilities and vending machines; an outdoor gathering area (a covered porch or a pavilion); lighting and security measures; and electric power, potable water, pump-out stations, and communications infrastructure (internet, telephone, TV) to service boaters. Additional improvements, such as fueling stations, could be added based on demand. The Canal Corporation is supportive of the proposal, as demonstrated in the attached letter of support.

The Upper Terminal Site is located in close proximity to the Erie Canalway Trail, affording boaters access to Downtown Lockport and creating additional opportunities for hiking and biking along the trail. Downtown Lockport has experienced an increase in the number of bicyclists utilizing the trail and the City is in the process of adding bike racks along the Canal to encourage bikers to patronize local businesses. The Harbor and Marine Center would create an additional access point for travelers wishing to experience the Erie Canalway Trail and downtown attractions.

3. Spalding Mill Building and Historic Mill Race

\$350,000 will be used to implement key projects identified through a strategic plan developed by Historic Mill Race, Inc. to repurpose Spalding Mill and the historic Mill Race to increase accessibility to the Erie Canal and

properly interpret Lockport’s technological history through a network of trails, wayfinding and signage, the construction of a rooftop pavilion, and façade improvements.

Summary

The Historic Lockport Mill Race, Inc. (HLMR) is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to preserve and promote the impact of Lockport's unique positioning along the Erie Canal and highlight the innovation and technology that came from Lockport's ability to harness the continuous flow of water over the escarpment. HLMR is overseeing the rehabilitation and repurpose of the Spalding Mill Building, and the development of other projects in the Mill Race Study Area in order to reinvigorate the surrounding area, as well as communicate the role that the Spalding Mill Building, mill race, water power and fire suppression had in the development of industry along the Enlarged Erie Canal, as well as their contribution to the history of the City of Lockport and State of New York.

Through a strategic plan developed on behalf of HLMR by Environmental Design & Research, Landscape Architecture, Engineering & Environmental Service, D.P.C. (EDR), projects were identified to be undertaken within the former Lyman Spalding Mill Building/former Lockport Gas & Electric Building at 55 Main Street in Lockport, New York, and surrounding area. Key projects identified in the strategic plan that can be completed in the next 1-2 years include the creation of a rooftop pavilion/event space on the roof of Spalding Mill, the creation of a Mill Race Trail network that will better connect Downtown Lockport to the Erie Canal, façade improvements to the mid-1800s Spalding Mill Building, and the installation of interpretative signage to properly tell Lockport’s innovation and technology story.

The City of Lockport owns Spalding Mill and the adjacent properties required to implement these projects and is committed to assisting HLMR in realizing their vision for the historic Mill Race and Spalding Mill.

4. Harrison Place

\$1.5 million will make critical, strategic investments into Building 3 and improve walkability and accessibility to, around, and through the campus.

Summary:

Once a vacant and blighted eyesore, Harrison Place has since become a thriving business incubator. Over the last several months, the Greater Lockport Development Corporation has been working with the State University of New York at Buffalo (UB) School of Architecture and Planning to reimagine the future of Harrison Place. Funds through the DRI will be used to implement some of the major recommendations from the UB studio, which include improving accessibility/walkability through and around the Harrison Place campus, utilization of the roof of the facility for solar power as well as public space, and aesthetic improvements such as landscaping, façade improvement, and window replacement.

Improving access through and around Harrison Place was identified as a necessary improvement by both the UB studio as well as the South Street Community Needs Assessment completed in 2016. The large campus acts as a physical barrier between the neighborhood and Downtown Lockport. In addition, Harrison Place is a destination in its own right, and improvements will make it easier for people to walk and bike to the campus.

In 2016, the WNY REDC named Harrison a “regional priority project” and awarded the Greater Lockport Development Corporation a \$300,000 grant through the CFA process. Since then, approximately 30,000 square feet of new space has been made available, all of which has been rented out or is committed to be rented out once work is completed.

Building 3, perhaps the property with the greatest untapped potential in Downtown Lockport, has received an uptick in developer interest for a mixed-use adaptive reuse project over the last two years. An initial investment into the 140,000 square foot property is necessary to prepare Building 3 for full-scale redevelopment and make the property more attractive to developers. This initial investment will level the floor, repair a portion of the roof, replace windows, establish retail space on the first floor, including space for the winter indoor market, and make necessary HVAC upgrades. The indoor market addresses the need to provide more access to fresh, local food year-round in the community, and it will offer the public an opportunity to experience the unique atrium space in a way that has never been available.

5. T Club

\$500,000 will be used to further renovate the Tuscarora Club into a mixed-use property.

Summary

The former Tuscarora Club is a stately manor built in the mid-1800's by a respected Lockport physician. It was a single-family home until 1911, when it was purchased by the Lockport Wheelmen Club, a prominent bicycle organization in need of a larger clubhouse, which would later become the Tuscarora Club. The Tuscarora Club of Lockport continued to be an esteemed business and social club for many years, and is a key building in Lockport's downtown corridor. The club had become a Lockport, NY landmark and played host to some of the most prestigious social functions in the city. In February 2007, the members of the Tuscarora Club were forced to close their doors after 96 years. Later that year, private owners re-opened it as a restaurant, banquet and catering facility on the first floor, but never pursued additional development on the upper floors, which were necessary to make the property viable. The Greater Lockport Development Corporation acquired the property in 2014.

The GLDC, recognizing the building's historic value, and potential for development, hired Smart Design Architecture to evaluate existing conditions and conduct a cost assessment on the implementation of the GLDC's long-term vision for this property which includes the creation of a mixed-use facility, re-establishing the dining and events venue on the first floor and addressing the City's lack of market-rate housing with the creation of apartments on the second and third floors of the property.

Based on a pro forma completed with the support of H. Sicherman and Co., even with the grant funds that have already been secured for the Tuscarora Club, an additional \$500,000 is required to make the over \$1.7 million renovation project feasible. With \$500,000 in DRI funding, the GLDC, or another developer, will be in a position to move the project forward with reasonable debt service (1.21) on a conventional mortgage, while still seeing an acceptable, albeit modest, cash on cash return for the approximately \$130,000 in anticipated equity commitment. Without the additional funding, there would be a negative cash return for any private developer even with debt financing.

6. Historic Post Office and YMCA

\$1.92 million will be used for the redevelopment of the Historic Post Office and the former YMCA Building, two neighboring properties in the heart of Downtown Lockport with the potential for mixed-use development and a combined total renovation cost of \$7.54 million.

Summary

The building at 1 East Avenue was originally constructed as the City of Lockport's main US Post Office. Designed by James Knox Taylor, Supervising Architect of the Treasury Department, and completed in 1904, the Lockport Post Office building is an outstanding example of early 20th century public architecture in New York State. The three-story (plus finished lower level), red brick and terra cotta building combines Beaux Arts massing with sculptural detail inspired by classical and Renaissance design. No expense was spared on building materials in an era before austerity budgeting and standardized design were adopted by the US Treasury for public buildings after 1915. In 1932, a 3,800 square foot one-story addition was constructed on the north side (i.e. rear) of the building near the brick loading dock.

Of special interest in the "Historic Post Office" is the second-floor federal courtroom, which retains its original architectural detail, furnishings, and light fixtures. Postal facilities of this era were often combined with federal courts. The courtroom on the second floor of 1 East Avenue was utilized until the 1930's, after which it was closed.

Post office activities in the building ceased in March 1991, at which time the building was put up for sale. It was purchased in 1992 by Lockport couple Michael and Patricia George, who spent the next five years refurbishing it for lease to commercial tenants. Following the death of Michael George, the building was sold in 2006 to former Lockport native, Steven Talarico. An affiliate of Iskalo Development Corp. purchased the building in 2015.

At the time of the acquisition by Iskalo, the building was largely vacant but for a handful of tenants on the first floor. The lower and upper floors had been unoccupied for many years, were unmaintained and not tenantable. The building exterior, while still beautiful, also had not been maintained and was suffering from benign neglect.

Iskalo's first course of business was to stabilize the building's exterior and reconstruct one of the sandstone entry stairways. The company has continued to lease the first floor while it planned a more comprehensive renovation of the building's interior in an effort to return the entire building back to productive use. Key repositioning strategies for the building include (a) installation of a fire suppression system, kitchen infrastructure and restrooms to adapt the 1932 addition to the building for restaurant use given the building's ideal downtown location which is also proximate to the Palace Theater and Cornerstone CFCU Arena; (b) installation of an elevator and additional stairwell to provide handicap accessibility to the upper and lower floors, and (c) complete refurbishment of the lower and upper floors for use as office suites. Iskalo has not proceeded with this restoration and repositioning plan because the additional investment required is prohibitive without subsidy.

Iskalo has invested \$500,000 in the property thus far and estimates that an additional investment of \$2.54 million is required to complete the renovation and repositioning of the property for a total investment of \$3.04 million. Under current local market conditions, post- renovation, full-occupancy of the building would yield a projected annual NOI of approximately \$160,000. This NOI would yield a valuation of approximately \$2.12 million against the \$3.04 million estimated project cost, resulting in a financing gap/subsidy requirement in the range of \$920,000

in order for the project to be feasible.

The building at 19 East Avenue in the City of Lockport has been occupied by the YMCA since 1926. It consists of four levels and contains approximately 33,360 square feet of space. The YMCA will relocate to a newly constructed building in the fall of this year, vacating the 19 East Avenue building after 92 years. An affiliate of Iskalo Development is under contract to acquire the 19 East Avenue building. Iskalo owns the historic Post Office building next door at 1 East Avenue.

The 4-story section of the building fronting East Avenue possesses a stately façade that complements the 1 East Avenue building and lends itself to conversion to apartments. The rear section of the building houses the indoor swimming pool and gymnasium making its conversion to productive use difficult (the pool and gymnasium cannot continue to be used due to a non- compete provision in the sale contract). Though the building has been reasonably well maintained, it suffers from obsolescence and will likely require some asbestos and possibly lead paint abatement prior to renovation.

The redevelopment plan envisioned by Iskalo involves a comprehensive renovation and conversion of the front section of the building into 21 apartments and demolition of the rear section of the building to be replaced with parking for residents of the building as well as to several spaces for the adjacent 1 East Avenue building (29 spaces overall). In order to derive an appropriate number of apartments, a floor will be inserted in the current racket ball court that occupies two- stories in the center of the front section of the building. Three apartments will be provided on the ground floor of the building, facing East Avenue. The rear of the ground floor, which has minimal opportunity for windows, will be improved with mechanical space and storage units for residents of the building.

Studies commissioned by the City of Lockport indicate that there is some unmet demand for market rate apartments in downtown. To date, few such projects have been developed. With the potential to provide 21 apartments, the adaptive re-use of the 19 East Avenue building could meet a good portion of the measured demand. The estimated cost to complete the project is \$4.5 million. However, the projected income from project only supports a value of \$3.5 million (assuming a PILOT from the Niagara County IDA). Therefore, a financing gap of \$1 million exists that a DRI award could fill thereby allowing the project to proceed.

7. The F&M Building

\$1.5 million will be used to purchase and provide partial funding for the redevelopment of the F&M Building and an adjacent property - \$600,000 for acquisition and \$900,000 for 20% of the expected rehabilitation cost.

Summary

There is no building in Downtown Lockport more iconic than the F&M Building, and through this round of the DRI, the City of Lockport, in partnership with the Greater Lockport Development Corporation, will bring it back to life. Since the last DRI application, the current owners have taken steps demonstrating they are prepared to sell. The property is currently listed on the market and a commercial broker has been selected to represent the building. The owner has also been cooperating with the Greater Lockport Development Corporation in a joint

effort to establish a fair market value for the property and an appraisal has been completed valuing the combined value of the properties at \$600,000.

If Lockport is selected as the DRI community and the total amount requested for this project is awarded, the Greater Lockport Development Corporation is fully committed to undertaking this project (a commitment letter is including in the PDF version of this application). The GLDC has a demonstrated track record of developing difficult properties in partnership with the State, and the F&M Building is the next logical property to complete together.

The City is also committed to completing the proposed streetscape improvements to Frontier Place, a City-owned right-of-way adjacent to the F&M Building, which will establish approximately 30 public on-street parking spaces that will support future development at the F&M Building.

8. Bewley Building

\$1.2 million will be used to support the \$6.1 million redevelopment of the Bewley Building, another property with the potential for upper-floor market-rate apartments.

Summary

The Bewley Building is another iconic property with the potential to help address the need for market-rate housing in Downtown Lockport. Similar to the above-mentioned properties, the costs associated with the build out of apartments are too much to justify taking on an extensive mixed-use redevelopment of the building. With support through the DRI, however, this gap will be closed so that the redevelopment of the Bewley Building can take place. The Bewley Building was built on the foundation of the 1880's Hodge Opera House. The opera house was a grand building, a center of culture and commerce in the City of Lockport in the late 19th century, until its demise early in the 20th century. A fire destroyed the original Hodge Opera House on January 5, 1881. Owner John Hodge immediately began the erection of the second opera house, which was opened in 1882. The rebuilt opera house hosted a memorial service for President William McKinley, who was assassinated in Buffalo in 1901. It continued to run entertainment until 1914 when the theater was ripped out. The whole building was then used for offices until a second fire broke out in 1928. In 1929, building on the foundation of the Hodge Opera House, the Bewley Building came to life in downtown Lockport. The present rear and west walls were added onto the pre-existing foundation with yellow brick. The building, when viewed from the rear or from the Erie Canal, shows the original stonewalls and chimney of the Hodge Opera House. The current building consists of 200 individual offices on floors two through five with ten retail stores on the first level.

Economic conditions have hit the Bewley Building hard in recent years, and this downtown anchor has now fallen below 70% occupancy for the first time in its history. The property owners now recognize the need for reuse in order to remain viable. The vacant fifth floor of the Bewley Building offers one of the most breath-taking views of downtown and its layout make it easily adaptable for the creation of residential units that would be at the intersection of Market and Main Streets in the heart of the downtown.

9) Administrative Capacity. Describe the extent of the existing local administrative capacity to manage this initiative, including potential oversight of concurrent contracts once projects are selected for award.

The City of Lockport's economic development agency, the Greater Lockport Development Corporation (GLDC), will be responsible for the implementation of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative. The GLDC serves as the clearinghouse for all planning and development initiatives in Lockport.

The GLDC is a local development corporation whose Board members include the Mayor and Common Council President, along with eleven business and community leaders who live and work in the City of Lockport.

In the last ten years, the GLDC has taken proactive steps to bring signature developments to Lockport and to help projects overcome negative market forces to reach completion. The GLDC takes a holistic approach to community and economic development and has grown its organizational structure and capacity to fill any identified gaps. As a result, the GLDC and its subsidiaries (described below) are ideally situated to deliver maximum impact through the Downtown Revitalization Initiative and to act as an ongoing caretaker for Downtown Lockport.

GLDC Organizational Structure

Locks Heritage District Corporation

The Locks Heritage District Corporation (LHDC) is a 501(c)3 formed by the GLDC in 2014 to protect the integrity of the “Locks District,” while marketing the district’s businesses and attractions. The LHDC is working with the New York State Canal Corporation to oversee the reconstruction of the Flight of Five Locks and is responsible for the ongoing operations and maintenance of the restored locks. Recently, the LHDC partnered with the Buffalo Maritime Center to build the Erie Traveler, a replica 1800’s Durham boat, which is used for seasonal demonstrations of the manual lock systems. The LHDC has undertaken other interpretative activities in and around the locks, such as developing the Locks District Gateway Exhibit signage constructed last summer, and the newly upgraded Locks District Museum.

The LHDC fosters strong relationships with the NYS Canal Corporation and State Historic Preservation Office through marketing, branding, and land use partnerships essential within the Locks District. In 2015 and 2016, the LHDC supported the State’s \$6 million effort to “close the gap” project that constructed a new portion of the Erie Canalway Trail between the Amherst Museum and the Erie Canal towpath at the Locks. The LHDC is currently working with the Canal Corporation on the planning of the proposed Lockport Harbor & Marine Center, and the Lock Tender Tribute.

210 Walnut Street, LLC

210 Walnut Street, LLC is a for-profit subsidiary of the GLDC that was created in 2008 to manage and operate Harrison Place. 210 Walnut contracts with Mancuso Management, who handles day-to-day operations and maintenance as well as much of the leasing.

Lockport Main Street

In partnership with the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the National Main Street Program, and the Western Erie Canal Alliance, Lockport Main Street (LMS) was formed in 2008 to support downtown businesses. LMS provides supportive services including marketing, grant-writing, and event development and implementation. Notably, LMS created the Lockport Community Farmer’s Market, an outdoor market on Canal Street in the Locks District. The market runs on Saturdays from June through October. In 2017, LMS began a monthly indoor winter market at Harrison Place that was quite successful and will expand in 2018.

LMS has also been the driving force behind the development of Locktoberfest, which began in 2014 as a partnership with the NYS Canal Corporation and NYS Agriculture & Markets to celebrate the Erie Canal and harvest season in New York State. Last year, the organization also successfully implemented a new public art project showcasing local art in downtown storefronts, called “Art in the Windows.”

Lockport Beautiful

Lockport Beautiful was formed in 2014 to undertake beautification projects throughout the City, with a particular focus on the downtown. The group is comprised of volunteers that partner with community organizations ranging from Lockport Rotary to Lockport In Bloom and the City’s Tree Commission. As the downtown begins to bring in more visitors through the growing attractions and year-round offerings, beautification efforts are receiving more attention in the community and Lockport Beautiful’s role continues to grow.

Staffing

The GLDC is staffed by President/CEO Brian Smith and Vice President Heather Peck, who was hired in June 2016 as a direct result of the organization's ongoing and increasing economic and community development activity. The additional staff support grows the GLDC's capacity to implement new programming such as the Downtown Revitalization Initiative. Lockport Main Street features a full-time Program Manager, Jessica Dittly, as well as an assistant director, Colton Balcerzak, and benefits from interns funded by the Grigg Lewis Foundation and a group of dozens of volunteers.

GLDC as Clearinghouse for Visioning and Planning

When the GLDC realized Lockport needed a pro-active push beyond typical development corporation activities, it broadened its mission to add community and economic development visioning and planning to ongoing implementation activities.

The GLDC spearheaded the Brownfield Opportunity Area Program administered by the NYS Department of State. Through community forums, surveys, and stakeholder meetings, the BOA flushed out a positive vision for Lockport that fully embraced downtown development.

From that point on, the GLDC has focused on implementing that vision while refining the plan as trends change and new development occurs. Additionally, the GLDC has brought in experts to determine the market demand for, and feasibility of, projects and initiatives identified as needs. Between 2014 and 2015, the GLDC commissioned a Market-Rate Housing Study and a Hospitality Study to gauge demand, highlight community resources, and to serve as tools for investors, developers, and operators.

Now that there is development momentum, the GLDC is looking to ensure that it benefits current residents, especially those underserved. To that end, the GLDC administered a grant through the NYS Office of Community Renewal to develop an action plan to improve the quality of life of residents of the neighborhood immediately south of the downtown – the poorest neighborhood in the City. The resulting "South Street Neighborhood Needs Assessment and Action Plan" aims to improve the neighborhood connectivity to downtown in terms of physical connections and connections to opportunity.

GLDC as Developer

The GLDC has shown a willingness to take an aggressive and proactive role in community and economic development, including serving as a property developer. Historically, the GLDC has developed property when:

- 1) Property is in a strategic downtown location,
- 2) The market does not support private sector investment,
- 3) Property condition has a negative influence on surrounding area leading to the potential for disinvestment.

When those conditions exist, the GLDC intervenes and implements customized and strategic development solutions, as referenced in the examples below. The GLDC has the experience, successful track record, and capacity to take a proactive role in property development to support the Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

Canal Street

The Richmond Avenue Block was a derelict, contaminated block located immediately above the locks in downtown. The GLDC obtained the properties, commissioned a redevelopment plan, remediated the property, demolished the unsafe structures, and saved every building that could be saved. The GLDC brought the three signature buildings to "vanilla box" interiors, constructed a pedestrian street and event venue, installed period lighting, and created a pocket park featuring a gazebo with electric and water service.

The GLDC held onto the properties until they found the right user for the community vision and approved redevelopment plan, ultimately selling one building to Lake Effect Ice Cream for their signature scoop shop, and one to a local business owner for upper floor residential and the build out of retail space, now Steamworks Coffee, on the first floor. The GLDC built out the upper floors of the largest of the buildings, 57 Canal, into office space leased to Trek, Inc. for their technology center housing all research & development, and design engineering. As progress was made on this block, and throughout downtown, the property began to gain developer interest and it was sold to Iskalo Development in 2015. The property is now 100% occupied.

Harrison Place

When Delphi and General Motors vacated 480,000 square feet of space in the City's downtown, it was the GLDC that took the necessary steps of creating a for-profit subsidiary to rename, rebrand, and invest in Harrison Place. Knowing how massive the undertaking was, the GLDC/210 Walnut Street, LLC contracted with the Mancuso Business Development Group to manage and operate Harrison Place through a management agreement. Through steady and responsible investments into the property, Harrison Place became an active center of flex space for small businesses.

These development efforts ultimately positioned Harrison Place as an attractive location for Trek, Inc. to move their manufacturing and corporate operations. Initially a \$4 million project in 2013, 210 Walnut rehabilitated 48,000 square feet of vacant space in Harrison Place to accommodate 100 company employees. The resulting operational efficiencies, along with company growth, lead to a \$1 million expansion project that built out an additional 16,000 square feet and created another 20 jobs. Further progress at Harrison Place was named a "regional priority project" by the WNY REDC in 2016 and was awarded a \$300,000 grant, which has been used to build out new space for startups and entrepreneurs.

Throughout the Harrison Place development process, 210 Walnut and the Mancuso Group have ensured that the signature building on the Harrison campus, Building 3, remains available for higher quality mixed-use. The strategic decision had been made to sign short-term leases in the space and not make leasehold improvements that could limit future development plans or limit Mancuso's ability to relocate a tenant within the campus as needed.

Tuscarora Club

When this iconic building went into foreclosure, the GLDC purchased it. The former Tuscarora Club lends itself beautifully to boutique lodging or market rate residential development. To date, the GLDC has commissioned an architectural and engineering analysis to determine the physical investment needed to effectively market the property to a private sector partner who shares one of those visions for the building. A \$500,000 grant award through Restore NY, \$250,000 grant through the EPA, along with a \$100,000 match from the GLDC has begun to address some of the cosmetic, environmental, and structural issues of the building. Significant progress has been made on this building, including the complete replacement of the roof.

Other GLDC Projects and Programming

The GLDC has overseen other projects and programs ranging in scope and purpose that demonstrate the organization's ability and experience necessary to implement the Downtown Revitalization Initiative. The most recent programs include: a microenterprise grant program providing financial and technical assistance to small businesses looking to expand or startup in Downtown Lockport, and two New York Main Street grant programs for facade improvements and the creation of market rate residential units in Downtown Lockport.

In addition, the GLDC committed to provide organizational support to the Lockport Ice Arena & Spots Center, Inc when the project began to take hold in 2013. GLDC personnel chaired the organization's fundraising and

construction committees and now chair the marketing and operations committees. The GLDC has similarly supported the Palace’s expansion project.

Lockport has delivered on major economic development initiatives when given the opportunity to access funding. The Western New York Regional Economic Development Council can feel confident in the GLDC and Lockport’s capacity and demonstrated track record and that Lockport will deliver an effective and impactful Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

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

In summary, the City of Lockport is ripe for development and a DRI award would launch Downtown Lockport forward. Regional Priority Projects like Cornerstone CFCU Arena, the Flight of Five, Harrison Place, and the Palace Theatre, have set the table for retail, residential, commercial, industrial, and infill development throughout downtown. Downtown Lockport’s foundation of walkability can be built upon to enhance the community through improved access and connectivity that will only add to momentum from recently implemented projects.

The projects in this application are ready to go, with the City of Lockport or the Greater Lockport Development Corporation owning or operating several of the projects, and commitment letters from Paul Iskalo, David Bewley, and Brian Stratton of the Canal Corporation regarding projects located at their properties. There is no shortage of projects in Downtown Lockport. These projects total over \$10 million, and many of these, like Improving Walkability, the Lockport Harbor and Marine Center, and Harrison Place, could be expanded upon with additional funding. No matter what projects are preferred and selected by the eventual DRI planning committee, Downtown Lockport provides an abundance of quality, transformational projects.

Finally, the City of Lockport has the organizational capacity and the track record that demonstrates the ability to implement a successful Downtown Revitalization Initiative. Downtown Lockport is the right community at the right time to be Western New York’s next Downtown Revitalization Initiative representative.

Please see the attached PDF version of this application, which includes maps, letters of support, commitment letters, images, and other relevant attachments.

*Don’t forget to attach a map that clearly delineates the proposed DRI Area. (See item 1.)

EMAIL SUBMISSION ADDRESS

Please submit your application as a Word Document to the Regional Council for your region.

Western New York NYS-WNY-REDC@esd.ny.gov