

**CITY OF NEWBURGH**  
DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE

APPLICATION FOR THE  
REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL  
MID-HUDSON DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE

# CITY OF NEWBURGH

## APPLICATION FOR THE MID-HUDSON DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE

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### BASIC INFORMATION

REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL (REDC) REGION: Mid-Hudson

MUNICIPALITY NAME: City of Newburgh

DOWNTOWN NAME: Downtown Newburgh

COUNTY: Orange County

DOWNTOWN DESCRIPTION:

*PROVIDE AN OVERVIEW OF THE DOWNTOWN AND SUMMARIZE THE RATIONALE BEHIND NOMINATING THIS DOWNTOWN FOR A DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE (DRI) AWARD*

Downtown Newburgh, the center of civic, artistic, cultural, and institutional life in Newburgh, is poised to take advantage of recent public and private investment to become a day and evening, year-round destination for the region that will showcase its unparalleled historic and environmental beauty; increase the tax base and promote development without displacement.

Much of Newburgh's historic downtown was removed during Urban Renewal in the 1970s, and these, still mostly undeveloped lands, just to the east of Colden Street and the Downtown, are the target of comprehensive planning for redevelopment in 2016 and early 2017. A comprehensive initiative in Downtown Newburgh would further position these redevelopment parcels, finally re-connecting the Downtown to the vibrant waterfront, and putting the heart back in the City.

Recently, Downtown Newburgh has seen a large expansion in new businesses and the unprecedented redevelopment of historic properties in and adjacent to the Downtown. Several large scale private developments are in the planning or permitting phases, and will add significant numbers of new housing units to the Downtown at a variety of income levels, along with a much needed supermarket. Newburgh's Land Bank has also commenced work on approximately forty Downtown buildings. And three institutions, the Boys and Girls Club, Safe Harbors of the Hudson, and SUNY Orange, are rehabilitating anchor buildings into significant cultural and educational amenities to enhance the full time, year-round offerings available to residents and visitors. A comprehensive plan, and money for implementation, would ensure that each of these committed dollars for Downtown Newburgh would have the transformational effect for all of Newburgh's residents, current or future.

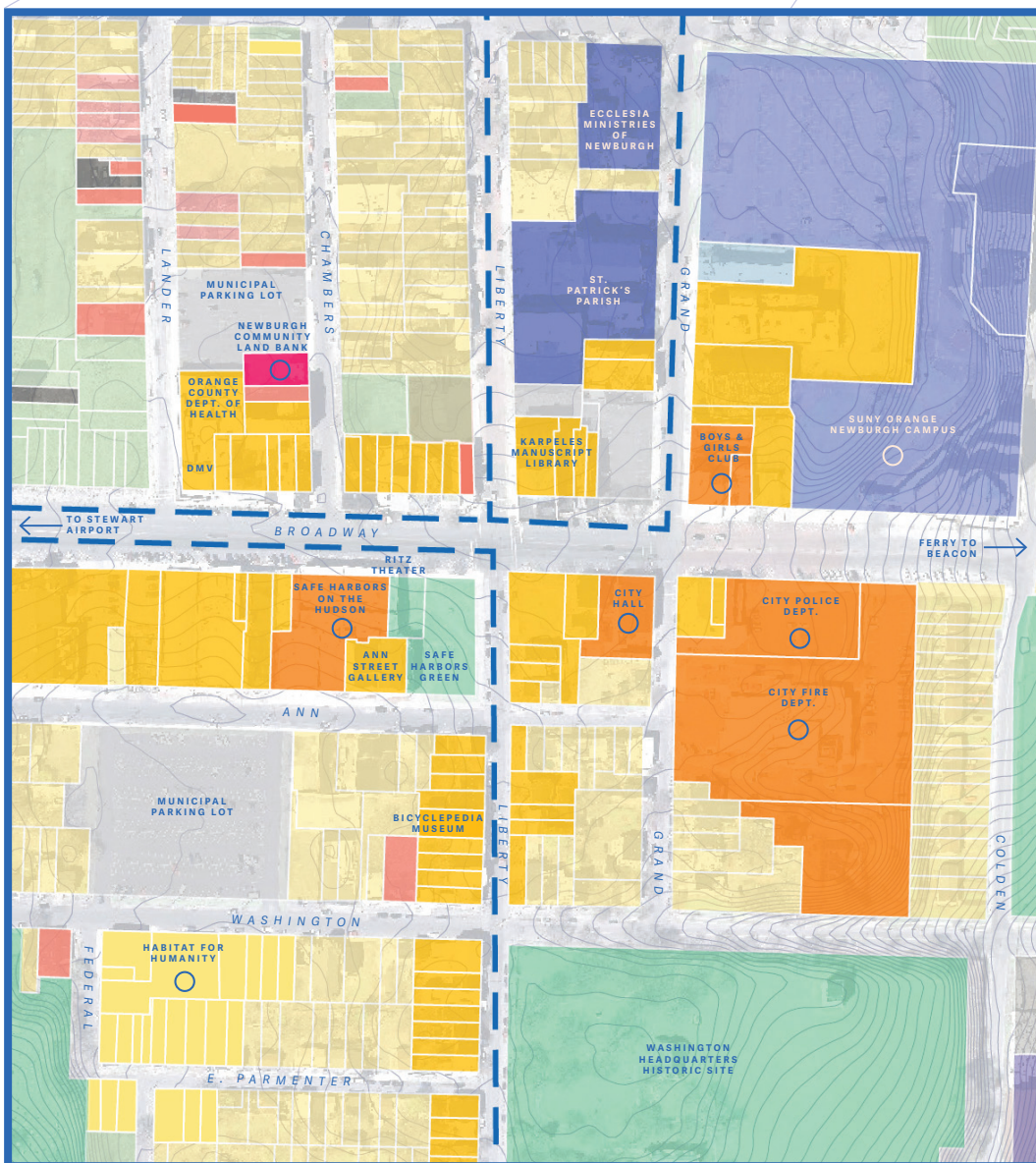
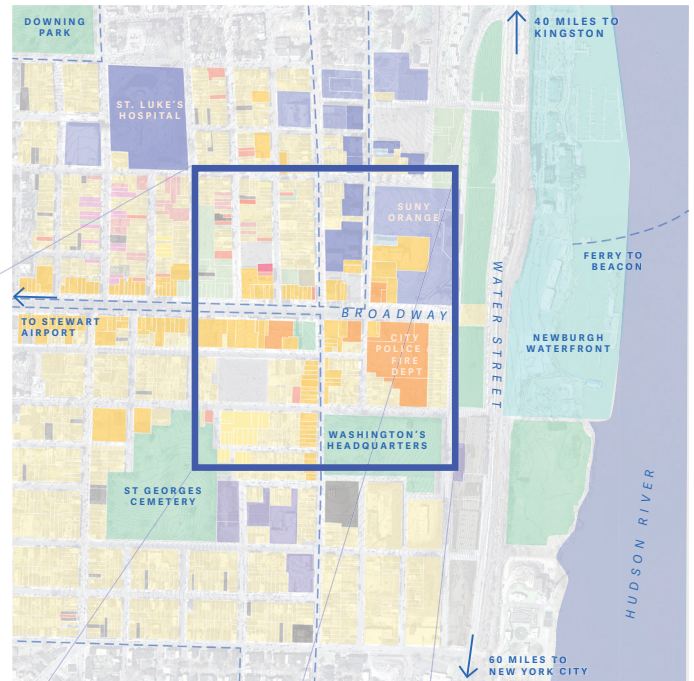


DOWNTOWN IDENTIFICATION

1 BOUNDARIES OF THE DOWNTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD

DETAIL THE BOUNDARIES OF THE TARGETED NEIGHBORHOOD, KEEPING IN MIND THAT THERE IS NO MINIMUM OR MAXIMUM SIZE, BUT THAT THE NEIGHBORHOOD SHOULD BE COMPACT AND WELL-DEFINED. CORE NEIGHBORHOODS BEYOND A TRADITIONAL DOWNTOWN OR CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT ARE ELIGIBLE, IF THEY CAN MEET OTHER CRITERIA MAKING THEM RIPE FOR INVESTMENT.

Downtown Newburgh is the area that stretches along Broadway and Liberty Street, from Colden Street on the east, First Street on the North, Johnston Street, on the west, and East Parmenter Street on the South.



KEY	
GREEN SPACE	[Green Box]
RIVERFRONT	[Light Blue Box]
PARKING/ROADS	[Grey Box]
COTTAGE INDUSTRY	[Purple Box]
MIXED USE NEIGHBORHOODS	[Yellow Box]
HABITAT FOR HUMANITY	[Light Yellow Box]
BROADWAY & LIBERTY STREET CORRIDORS	[Orange Box]
KEY CIVIC & COMMUNITY RESOURCES	[Dark Orange Box]
LAND BANK PROPERTIES	[Red Box]
NEWBURGH COMMUNITY LAND BANK	[Dark Red Box]
KEY INSTITUTIONS HOSPITALS & COLLEGES	[Blue Box]
RELIGIOUS SPACES	[Dark Blue Box]
ABANDONED PROPERTIES	[Black Box]
VACANT LOTS	[Light Green Box]
CITY OWNED LOTS	[Brown Box]
PROPOSED AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT	[Pink Box]
RUPCO SCATTERED SITE DEVELOPMENT	[Light Orange Box]
TRANSIT ROUTES	[Dashed Line]
DOWNTOWN PROJECT AREA BOUNDARY	[Thick Blue Line]



## DOWNTOWN IDENTIFICATION

## 2 SIZE

*OUTLINE WHY THE DOWNTOWN, 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.*

THE FOLLOWING ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS ARE USED THROUGHOUT THE APPLICATION:

CDBG: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANTS  
 THE CITY: THE CITY OF NEWBURGH  
 NCLB: NEWBURGH COMMUNITY LAND BANK  
 SAFE HARBORS: SAFE HARBORS OF THE HUDSON

Newburgh is the only central urban downtown in the surrounding area, with 100,000 residents in the City and towns of Cornwall, New Windsor, and Newburgh. It is also the densest city in Orange County, which has 372,813 residents. Although the Downtown itself, Census Tracts 4 and 5.01, has a population of 7,681 as of 2014, the catchment area supports vibrant year round performing and visual arts programs, restaurant districts, universities, a hospital, small shops, and festivals. The City is the administrative and cultural hub of the region, and a consolidated regional school district serves most of these residents. National demographic changes have made downtowns, including Newburgh's Downtown, places that people want to be in and be part of. Ongoing, year round events such as Newburgh Last Saturday draw hundreds of people adding to the cultural vibrancy of the City and supporting local businesses.



The Downtown is uphill from the riverfront, a lively three season destination, and location of year-round commuter ferry service to the Metro-North Railroad. The City is proximate to two interstate highways and is the terminus of a scenic byway out of New York City, making it one of the most accessible cities in the Hudson Valley.

As with most cities in New York State, the City of Newburgh's population declined over the last 50 years, but Downtown has seen an increase in investment and population in the last 5 years, and the City had slight population growth between 2010 and 2014. The Downtown census tracts have historically suffered from high levels of residential vacancy, however, in recent years, this has presented opportunity for redevelopment. East of Liberty Street, historic homes have been purchased and restored as single family properties while to the west there is new commercial and greater variety of housing options from multi-unit affordable rentals to owner-occupant row house restoration. As the population growth leads to increased sales and rehabilitation of the housing stock and commercial properties, the Downtown only becomes more poised to capitalize the recent investments and increase growth.

Sales of properties tracked through MLS have increased City-wide from 170 in 2012, to 250 in 2015. Arms-length residential sales, as tracked by the City assessor, have increased from 68 in 2012 to 169 in 2015, suggesting that arms-length residential sales in Newburgh represent the majority of this increase in sales. This has been bolstered by targeted home-ownership programs to bring new families to the downtown, including Habitat for Humanity's East Parmenter Street Development, one block south of Broadway, and the Newburgh Community Land Bank's target area, bordering Broadway to the north.

This increase in residents downtown is supporting an addition of new restaurants, businesses, and shops in the downtown. The three blocks of Liberty Street, between Broadway and East Parmenter Street are now at 96% storefront occupancy, with businesses, such as restaurants, which support residents and tourists alike; and businesses, such as a pilates studio, which cater to the rapidly expanding downtown resident base.

## DOWNTOWN IDENTIFICATION

## 3 PAST INVESTMENTS &amp; FUTURE INVESTMENT POTENTIAL

*DESCRIBE HOW THIS DOWNTOWN WILL BE ABLE TO CAPITALIZE ON PRIOR, AND CATALYZE FUTURE, PRIVATE AND PUBLIC INVESTMENT IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD AND ITS SURROUNDING AREAS.*

The targeted downtown neighborhood is at the epicenter of a strategic and intentional cluster strategy for downtown revitalization. To date, this focused approach has garnered much support including: Newburgh's designation as a Community, Opportunity & Reinvestment (CORE) community; a \$4.4 million investment from the Office of the Attorney General in support of the Newburgh Community Land Bank in addition to multiple Consolidated Funding Application awards; a \$250,000 investment from Central Hudson Gas & Electric for main street revitalization; and an expected investment of \$16 million from Homes and Community Renewal and state and federal historic tax credits for the historic rehabilitation of 13 buildings and 47 units of affordable, workforce housing.

With a \$2 million grant from a local, private foundation, and \$663,000 in planned New Market Tax Credits, the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Newburgh is purchasing and renovating a long underutilized 21,000sq.ft. multi-story building, at the center of the targeted area to establish the Center for Arts & Education. This facility will house an early childhood education center for 100 children in grades K-2 and the Newburgh Performing Arts Academy, the Boys & Girls Club of Newburgh's arts program serving over 800 youth and adults each week. As a complement, SUNY Orange is building on its \$20 million downtown campus with the development of the Masonic Temple to create a Performance and Fine Arts Education center to foster entrepreneurship and the development of social and cultural capital.

To support all of these initiatives, the City has spent \$300,000 in CDBG funding on facade improvements along the targeted downtown corridor. A private developer is also working to create 90 units of market rate housing with an adjacent supermarket, at an estimated development cost of \$26 million.



Safe Harbors of the Hudson, a \$21 million Low Income Housing Tax Credit project, has invested an additional \$1.6 million in the development of two commercial spaces, a half acre park space and a performing art space which will support the SUNY Performance and Fine Arts Education center and the Boys and Girls Club's Performing Arts Academy. Habitat for Humanity has developed over 70 dwellings for homeownership and live/work housing.

Businesses have expended millions of additional dollars to locate in the Downtown. Hundreds of thousands of square feet dedicated to fine arts, design and industrial craft businesses can be found in the Downtown area as well as restaurants and retail shops to provide needed amenities.

Prior and future investment in the targeted neighborhood, coupled with a re-zoning and land use plan that orients development toward the reintegration of downtown, affords Newburgh the unique opportunity to create the conditions necessary for a downtown district that is a social, cultural and economic driver in the community.

## DOWNTOWN IDENTIFICATION

## 4 JOB GROWTH

*DESCRIBE HOW RECENT OR IMPENDING JOB GROWTH WITHIN, OR IN CLOSE PROXIMITY TO, THE DOWNTOWN WILL ATTRACT PROFESSIONALS TO AN ACTIVE LIFE IN THE DOWNTOWN, SUPPORT REDEVELOPMENT, AND MAKE GROWTH SUSTAINABLE IN THE LONG-TERM.*



While Newburgh prides itself on its connectivity, especially to New York City, 82% of Newburgh residents work in Orange County. The average commute time is 24 minutes, suggesting that most choose to stay local to work. Investment in Newburgh's downtown increases job growth, continuing to create a vibrant downtown corridor and bikeable/walkable neighborhoods.

The development of the Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, and Accommodations sector has added 614 jobs to the City of Newburgh since 2010, for a total of 1,502 jobs, making it the third largest employment industry, after Educational, Health, and Service; and Retail. The Arts industry cluster is critical for promoting cultural development and for redeveloping buildings to house industries and crafts. For example, Atlas Industries, a high-end, NY based furniture company, invested several million dollars in the rehabilitation of a building for its production, and also created additional studios and manufacturing spaces, gallery and performance space, and has short-term plans to open cafe and retail space. With over 30 businesses run out of their building, they are incubating small businesses and have created a cultural hub that encourages more businesses and new residents.

Adjacent to Atlas, Thornwillow Press, a high-end stationary and book bindery, has expanded its portfolio and physical footprint to include the Thornwillow Institute, a not-for profit developing properties to serve as spaces for artists in residence; and Thornwillow Village, which will be a multi-use arts incubator, arts venue, and public market facility. This expansion creates jobs and vibrancy, and redevelops an entire block that suffers from long-term disinvestment, vacancy, and crime.

SUNY Orange, in collaboration with local business partners and community groups is working to significantly expand programs designed to create a highly skilled and flexible local workforce. Areas of concentration are healthcare, digital media, manufacturing, historical preservation and restoration, floriculture, and fine and performing arts.

St. Luke's Hospital has recently become part of the Montefiore Health System and is working with NYS to decrease in-patient volume and emergency visits through Population Health initiatives. These changes to the health sector, bring a new focus on cutting-edge preventative and community based health programs, that includes greatly increasing jobs in the community, in a variety of health sectors.

River of Opportunities advertises Newburgh and Newburgh spaces to targeted sectors, in order to connect spaces for rent and sale with relocating manufacturers to create jobs. The program also promotes City, State, and regional economic incentives via a well designed website and marketing campaign.

Start Up Newburgh (SUN) is a Mt. St. Mary College/ iCANny co-venture that manages Newburgh's START-UP NY endeavor. In addition to working with SUNY applicants interested taking advantage of NYS tax incentives and making Newburgh their home, SUN seeks to converge academic, entrepreneurial and community leaders with local business to enhance Newburgh's economy. SUN has worked with scores of SUNY applicants and has successfully brought 3 to Newburgh in the last year.

## DOWNTOWN IDENTIFICATION

### 5 ATTRACTIVENESS OF THE DOWNTOWN

*IDENTIFY THE PROPERTIES OR CHARACTERISTICS THE DOWNTOWN POSSESSES THAT CONTRIBUTE OR COULD CONTRIBUTE, IF ENHANCED, TO THE ATTRACTIVENESS AND LIVABILITY OF THE DOWNTOWN. CONSIDER, FOR EXAMPLE, THE PRESENCE OF DEVELOPABLE MIXED-USE SPACES, HOUSING AT DIFFERENT LEVELS OF AFFORDABILITY AND TYPE, HEALTHY AND AFFORDABLE FOOD MARKETS, WALKABILITY AND BIKEABILITY, AND PUBLIC PARKS AND GATHERING SPACES.*

Coupled with breathtaking Hudson River vistas, Newburgh's Downtown is part of the East End Historic District which features unique historic and architecturally significant housing stock and commercial buildings, civic and institutional anchors all within a dense, walkable urban fabric. The City has made extraordinary strides to improve the "curb appeal" of Downtown by focusing on projects that leverage public and private funds to rehabilitate facades and improve the streetscape.

Besides the projects discussed in the Investment section, the Downtown is teeming with other activity. Safe Harbors is developing its half acre public square, park, and outdoor performance space which will act as the central square for Downtown on one corner of Broadway and Liberty. Concurrently, the NCLB is rehabilitating the historic mixed-use building on the opposite corner. These projects have spurred private investment and confidence, so that the long-vacant third corner was sold in April to a local developer for a new construction mixed-use redevelopment project.

The NCLB has also redeveloped its headquarters and stabilized the adjacent mixed-use building on Chambers Street. The local architecture firm that undertook the work eventually moved its office to the first floor space, relocating in the Downtown. The \$300,000 in CDBG funding invested to make facade improvements along Broadway and Liberty Street, has led to unprecedented 96% occupancy for Liberty Street, of shops, restaurants, offices, and the redevelopment of a former Labor Temple into a Bicycle Museum by the Motorcycle Museum. Nascent business development continues to spur new investment by long-term City business owners and those new to the area.



Greater HV Family Health Center (now Cornerstone) operates a Dental Clinic on Broadway, and a variety of social services, including the Department of Motor Vehicles, are also located within the Downtown area, making Downtown convenient for diverse residents.

Improvements to the public realm and streetscape are also ongoing. The City studied Complete Streets in this corridor, including the addition of parklets in front of existing restaurants, medians, bump outs, and other traffic calming devices, standards for street furniture, and street trees, all which allow and promote a vibrant main street. A contractor will begin implementation of phase-1 of this plan in June. Updated sidewalk standards have been completed, incorporating Complete Streets/ Green Infrastructure best practices within the historic streetscape, and re-construction along Liberty Street will begin in fall 2016.

Washington's Headquarters State Historic Site is undertaking a \$1.6 million restoration of its monument and observation area, which will greatly increase tourism at the southern end of the Downtown. The Newburgh waterfront, which is 2-3 blocks east of the Downtown is also benefiting from substantial public and private investment and improvements, including new restaurants, new parks, new public dock facilities, streetscape improvements, and expansion of the waterfront promenade.

## DOWNTOWN IDENTIFICATION

## 6 POLICIES TO ENHANCE QUALITY OF LIFE

*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, COMPLETE STREETS PLANS, OR TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT. IF POLICIES ACHIEVING THIS GOAL ARE NOT CURRENTLY IN PLACE, DESCRIBE THE ABILITY OF THE MUNICIPALITY TO CREATE AND IMPLEMENT SUCH POLICIES.*

In 2010 the Land Use Law Center at Pace Law School was commissioned to study opportunities to remediate distressed properties and, in the process, set the stage for the future revitalization in the City. The plan led directly to the creation of the Newburgh Community Land Bank; a comprehensive city-wide zoning update; planning for the implementation of complete streets; the creation of the Downing Park Greenway to link green spaces and parks; and a city-wide emphasis on promoting development and redevelopment of distressed properties.

The Newburgh Community Land Bank stimulates local planning, economic development and neighborhood revitalization by acquiring, managing and disposing of vacant, abandoned and underutilized properties in a responsible manner. It has raised over \$4.5 million to stabilize vacant properties to prepare them for redevelopment. The City and NCLB also collaborated to develop Downing Park Urban Farm, a center for urban agricultural education and job-training. To further support redevelopment, the City has hired a full time Economic Development specialist who manages the disposition of City-owned vacant property, and sells an average of 12 properties per month to qualified purchasers.

The City adopted a comprehensive zoning update in 2015. Downtown Newburgh is now in Form Based districts that match the existing urban fabric and promote mixed use infill and redevelopment through streamlined permitting, reducing the need for approvals and variances, and promoting transit oriented development with reduced parking requirements. By respecting the as-built environment, the zoning promotes livability and increases the diversity of people and businesses in the downtown.

A Complete Streets policy plan will increase the vitality and usability of City streets, especially Broadway. In the short term, the City is implementing a plan to transform Broadway between Chambers and Grand Streets with a demonstration model of complete streets, using paint and temporary measures to introduce traffic calming, more prominent crosswalks including mid-block crossings, a redesigned bus-shelter, and street furniture throughout. The City updated its sidewalks standards in 2016 to include bump-outs and stormwater retention areas and is currently drafting a bid to reconstruct sidewalks, for a portion of the downtown. The City has bolstered its promotion of sidewalk cafe permits and is drafting a policy and standards for in-street parklets.



In 2015 the City began an initiative to rebrand its park system as the Downing Park Greenway in order to promote environmental sustainability and healthy living, by adding more comprehensive signage, including maps that show linkages between existing Parks and trailways. The project also links regional trails, such as the Hudson River Greenway and the Trail of Two Cities to Beacon.

The City is focused on the issue of distressed properties and a city-wide emphasis on promoting development and redevelopment of distressed properties, of enforcing existing code violations, and of investigating and fixing unsafe structure, has become a model for the State, with weekly public working meetings to ensure that each property in the City is contributing to the improvement of quality of life.



## DOWNTOWN IDENTIFICATION

## 7 LOCAL SUPPORT

SET FORTH THE LOCAL AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT THAT EXISTS FOR THE REVITALIZATION OF THIS DOWNTOWN AND THE COMMITMENT AMONG LOCAL LEADERS AND STAKEHOLDERS TO BUILDING AND IMPLEMENTING A STRATEGIC INVESTMENT PLAN. IDENTIFY AN INITIAL LOCAL LEAD FOR THE PROGRAM THAT WILL WORK WITH OUTSIDE EXPERTS TO CONVENE A LOCAL DRI PLANNING COMMITTEE TO OVERSEE THE PLAN.

The Land Use Law Center at Pace Law School has offered to serve as the initial local lead to coordinate outside experts and a local DRI planning committee to oversee the plan. Community Preservation Corporation has agreed to be our fiscal sponsor. In recent several years, stakeholders in Newburgh have made enormous strides in breaking down silos and creating partnerships that result in tangible downtown improvement. Key entities in the downtown target area that have supported, and committed time, energy and resources toward meaningful change include:

- CITY OF NEWBURGH
- BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB OF GREATER NEWBURGH
- SUNY ORANGE
- NEWBURGH COMMUNITY LAND BANK
- SAFE HARBORS OF THE HUDSON
- MOUNT SAINT MARY COLLEGE
- ST LUKE'S CORNWALL HOSPITAL
- HABITAT FOR HUMANITY OF GREATER NEWBURGH
- ATLAS INDUSTRIES
- LIBERTY STREET PARTNERS
- THORNWILLOW
- MILL STREET PARTNERS
- CITY OF NEWBURGH AND ORANGE COUNTY INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES
- ORANGE COUNTY PARTNERSHIP
- PATTERN FOR PROGRESS



Several groups named above already participate in the “Distressed Property Task Force” which gathers quarterly to coordinate initiatives surrounding vacant and abandoned property. Public meetings are also held to inform and engage residents in the ongoing, iterative process of Downtown improvement. In addition, many groups, like the City of Newburgh, Newburgh Community Land Bank and Safe Harbors of the Hudson have collaborated on the implementation of plans, such as the Central Hudson Main Street Grant program which is reimagining the intersection at Liberty Street and Broadway with improved building facades, public green space and improved street crossings and navigation. Finally, the coordinated efforts between Newburgh Community Land Bank, Habitat for Humanity of Greater Newburgh, RUPCO, Safe Harbors and other private individuals and entities are resulting in the rehabilitation and re-occupancy of vacant buildings in the immediate downtown. The DRI is an opportunity to build upon initial successes and new collaborative efforts, leverage dollars, and fully transform Newburgh’s historic downtown.

## DOWNTOWN IDENTIFICATION

## 8 OTHER

PROVIDE ANY OTHER INFORMATION THAT INFORMED THE NOMINATION OF THIS DOWNTOWN FOR A DRI AWARD.



Newburgh has seen unprecedented public and private development and investment in the last five years, and has over \$30 million in the development pipeline for its Downtown. The City, through its focus on Downtown, will capitalize on this investment to become the regional urban center of history, culture, and the arts. Downtown Newburgh is both a place to call home and a day and evening, year-round destination. Buttressing this transformation will simultaneously increase the tax base, promote development without displacement, and highlight the unparalleled historic and environmental beauty of Newburgh. And the City is well on its way. Its strategic location attracts business development especially the industrial craft and small scale manufacturing base. The Downtown's diversity of storefront and spaces for business attracts retail and restaurant of various scales that support the existing residents, new resident, and tourists alike. Liberty Street has a 96% storefront occupancy rate for the first time in recent memory, and institutions are making their stake along Broadway, creating civic, educational, and entertainment places that attract people back downtown again.

More than ever, Newburgh is working together to accomplish this vision and plan with public, private and institutional actors all integral to fulfilling the vision. In the short term, several projects are a priority. Notably, the reinvention of the historic Ritz Theater as a contemporary, flexible performing arts space that will complement the Boys and Girls Club facility to be constructed at Broadway and Grand Street and will be further enhanced by the SUNY Orange transformation of the Masonic Lodge, just two blocks north, for its own preservation program. Each of these undertakings will provide educational, job training, and community based programs. All of this is within an area that the City has invested in facades, streetscape, and complete street improvements which make the streets and public realm safe and enjoyable for all users. Recent City policy changes, particularly zoning, along with these large institutional projects, all support one another and help form the cohesive strategy for downtown development. A comprehensive plan which ties together the public, institutional, and private capital, and provides money for implementation, would ensure that currently committed dollars for Downtown Newburgh would have a transformational impact for all of Newburgh's residents, making a dynamic, year-round, urban center.