



Downtown Revitalization Initiative

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 the appropriate Regional Council 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 DRI website at www.ny.gov/dri.

BASIC INFORMATION

Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) Region: Long Island

Municipality Name: Town of Smithtown

Downtown Name: Kings Park

County Name: Suffolk

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

The community's vision for downtown Kings Park is to leverage its many assets – including a centrally located LIRR rail station, excellent connectivity to area job centers, existing downtown infrastructure, strong economy, and proximity to some of Long Island's most pristine parklands and greenbelt trails – to transform the downtown area into a more vibrant, welcoming and walkable neighborhood that will attract transit oriented and mixed use development, spur economic growth, and meet regional housing demand.

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 Kings Park is a .09 square mile central business district in the north western corner of the Town of Smithtown. The entire downtown is within less than a half-mile radius of the LIRR Kings Park station, which is on the Port Jefferson Line and provides service to job centers such as Stony Brook University (21 minutes away) and points west to Manhattan (1 hour 7 minutes to Penn Station). Recently completed community visioning and planning studies are supportive of Transit Oriented Development (TOD) in the downtown. Once planned sewerage is complete, there is strong potential for mixed use development, including infill development on underutilized parcels, as well as associated improvements to enhance walkability within the downtown and to promote connectivity with nearby parks, greenbelt trails and other community assets.

Anticipated growth in residential density (up to 379,000 SF) and retail space (up to 70% over the existing 215,000 SF) will create a more vibrant, economically sustainable downtown neighborhood and will address regional demand for jobs, recreation opportunities and housing at various price points.

Recently completed community visioning studies will drive selection of DRI projects that are needed to advance downtown revitalization. Proposed capital and planning projects are as follows:

- Parking study and parking management plan
- Zoning amendments
- Development of a downtown plan
- State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR), as needed to support zoning amendments and associated actions
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Access Improvements
- Pedestrian Infrastructure Enhancements
- Wastewater collection system installation and treatment plant upgrades
- Downtown public and recreational space
- Façade improvement initiatives

The Town of Smithtown, civic groups and other community stakeholders will participate in DRI implementation.

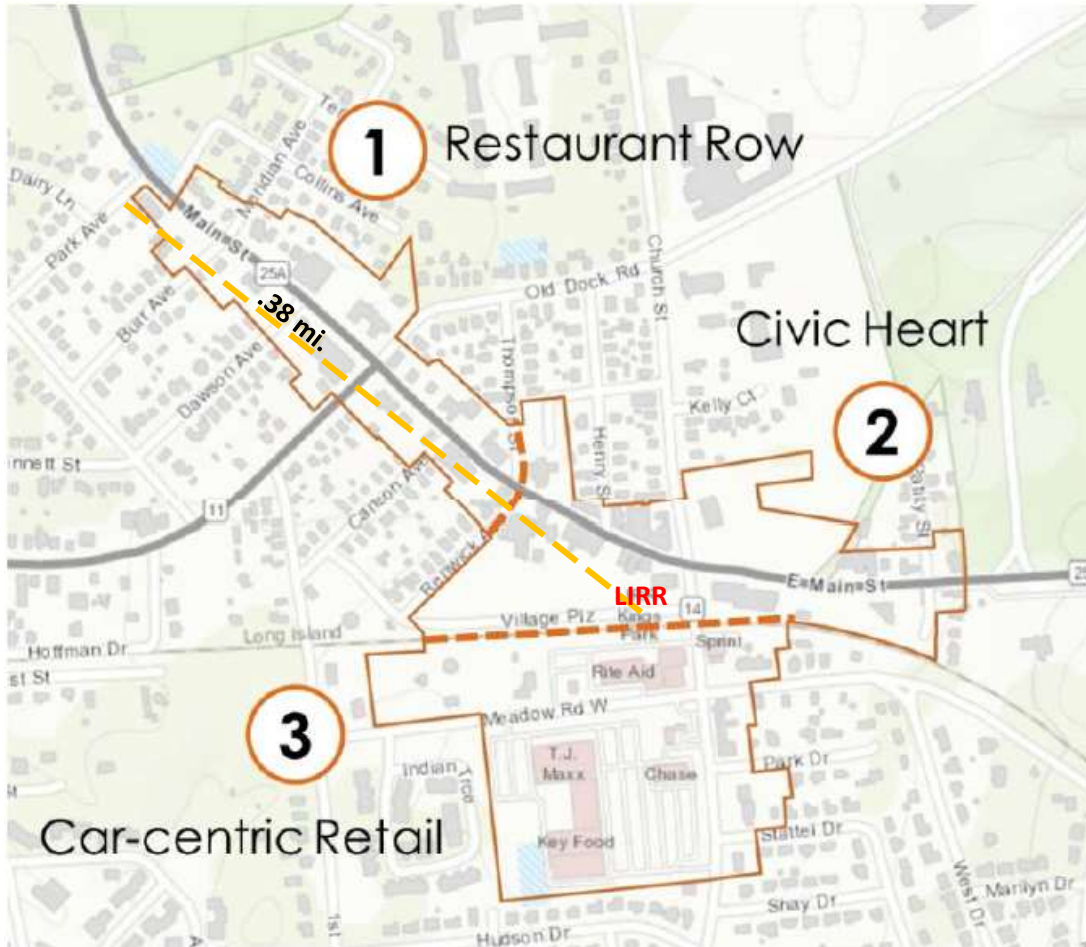
DOWNTOWN IDENTIFICATION

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.

Kings Park is a hamlet in the north western corner of the Town of Smithtown. The boundary of downtown Kings Park is contiguous with proposed boundary for comprehensive sewerage for the Kings Park central business district (CBD). The land area is approximately .09 square miles and includes the length of Main Street between Park Avenue and Patiky Street, the Long Island Rail Road station, and the commercial area south of the station encompassing Tanzi Plaza, Kings Park Plaza, and the handful of commercial establishments located on the eastern side of Indian Head Road. The downtown is accessible by rail, bus, and arterial roadways including Main Street (NY 25A), Sunken Meadow Parkway, and Indian Head Road.

Kings Park Downtown Boundary



- 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.

The entire downtown is within less than a half-mile radius of the LIRR Kings Park station, which is on the Port Jefferson Line and provides service to job centers such as Stony Brook University (21 minutes away), the Route 110 corridor (17 minutes away) and points west to Manhattan (1 hour 7 minutes to Penn Station).

Recently completed community visioning and planning studies are supportive of Transit Oriented Development (TOD) in the downtown. Once planned sewerage is complete, there is strong potential for mixed use development, including infill development on underutilized parcels, as well as associated improvements to enhance walkability within the downtown and to promote connectivity with nearby parks, greenbelt trails and other community assets.

The *Kings Park Downtown Market Analysis and Action Plan* (January 2018) defines the downtown's catchment area in terms of two Trade Areas: the Primary Trade Area is within a 1.5 mile radius, or 5 minute drive, and Secondary Trade Area within a 3 mile radius, or 10 minute drive. Together, the trade areas encompass a population of over 52,000, with population densities exceeding 2,000 people per square mile. In addition, planned north-south transit improvements along the Sagtikos/Sunken Meadow Parkway envisioned in Suffolk County's Connect Long Island initiative could make downtown Kings Park an even more broadly appealing destination as both a gateway to Suffolk County's north shore recreation opportunities, and as a point of improved mobility to jobs and destinations throughout Suffolk County.

- 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.

Because most properties in the downtown currently rely on cesspools and septic tanks, Suffolk County Health Department regulations for wastewater collection and disposal make it impossible for most small properties to accommodate adequate onsite disposal systems for additional development such as second or third floors, or expansion of restaurants. In order to address this limitation, and clear away barriers to development and revitalization, New York State has pledged \$20,000,000 to Suffolk County toward upgrades at the Kings Park Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) and installation of a sewage collection system to convey wastewater to the STP.

Other investments encompass the following studies and reports: *Draft Town of Smithtown Comprehensive Plan Update* (February 2015), prepared by the Town Planning Department; *Revitalizing Downtown Kings Park Action Plan* (October 2016) prepared by Vision Long Island with funding support from the Kings Park Chamber of Commerce and Kings Park Civic Association; *Kings Park & Smithtown: Downtown Opportunity Analysis* (March 2017) completed by the Regional Plan Association with support from the Town of Smithtown Planning Department and funded by the Suffolk County Industrial Development Agency; *Kings Park Retail Market Assessment and Action Plan* (January 2018), completed by Larisa Ortiz Associates with funding support from the Town of Smithtown; and sewer studies funded by Suffolk County Department of Public Works, including the *Sewering Feasibility Study* (2009) by Cameron Engineering & Associates and *Engineering Design Report for the Kings Park Business District* (2010). This planning, visioning and engineering work supports the revitalization scenario and demonstrates that downtown Kings Park is well positioned as an emerging market for new mixed-use development.

- 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.

The 2009 *Sewering Feasibility Study* estimated that an additional 379,000 square feet of residential density could be created based on the added capacity from new sewers and without changing existing zoning. This could create up to 379 additional residential units (assuming 1,000 SF/unit). The January 2018 *Kings Park Downtown Market Analysis and Action Plan*, which assessed retail leakage, demographic and related factors, determined that this projected residential growth would create more captive demand for downtown businesses. Using current figures for spending per household in the Primary Trade Area, the Market Analysis

estimated that the new residential development would add spending potential of almost \$20M to the downtown and would provide even more supportable square footage of new retail. It is estimated that the existing 215,000 SF of retail space in the downtown could increase by up to 70% under this development scenario.

This growth potential and proximity to LIRR and regional roadways are factors that will support vibrancy in the downtown. Further, planned connectivity under Suffolk County's Connect Long Island bus rapid transit initiative would make Kings Park an even more strategic place for businesses and workers.

- 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 Kings Park has a rich history as a center of civic, economic, and cultural activity. Despite the development of shopping centers and malls that have redirected most shoppers away from downtown, this district has survived and continued to adapt with the support of the community and the assets that distinguish it, including the LIRR station, regional arterials that provide service to regional job centers, a concentration of shops and restaurants, and high quality public open space and natural features. Kings Park offers immediate access to some of Long Island's most unique trails, parks, beaches and other waterfront landscapes. These characteristics are prized by the region's diverse population and promote community livability.

To encourage the improvement of the business and pedestrian environment for downtown Kings Park the Town of Smithtown will encourage mixed-use development that offers a variety of housing options, and will utilize regulatory tools to promote walkability, establish design guidelines, and create standards for the public realm, such as signage, architecture, landscaping, and environmental resources.

- 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 2016, the Kings Park Chamber of Commerce and Kings Park Civic Association engaged Vision Long Island to facilitate community discussions and draft a conceptual plan that would reflect residents' vision for the Kings Park downtown. The resulting *Action Plan* presented results of a visual preference survey (for sidewalks, streets and crossings, community spaces, parking, commercial storefronts, housing, and architecture); presented analyses and recommendations for land use and zoning, sewerage, commercial space, residential space, public and recreational space, mobility and parking, character and aesthetics; and

proposed a series of short, mid- and long-term implementation projects across these domains. This plan memorialized community consensus and provided a framework for subsequent planning efforts. Overall, it reinforced the notion that downtowns are healthier, more vibrant places when more people live in transit-oriented residential and mixed-use infill development.

Quality of life and community benefit policies will be further developed when the Town addresses recommended planning actions contained in the *Opportunity Analysis* study, including a parking study and parking management plan; zoning amendments for development of a form-based code; and development of a detailed downtown plan and associated State Environmental Quality Review, if one is necessary.

The Town and civic groups will explore the feasibility of establishing a special services district, merchants association or other organizational body that can help ensure physical conditions of Kings Park are maintained, address retail vacancies, and otherwise work on behalf of the downtown.

- 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.

Suffolk County supports Kings Park downtown revitalization plans, as evidenced by its investment in planning studies and sewer infrastructure upgrades. The Kings Park Civic Association and Kings Park Chamber of Commerce continue to be effective advocates for the downtown by sponsoring visioning meetings, engaging the community in progress updates, and continually working to implement recommendations contained in the planning studies that have been completed so far.

The DRI local lead will be Town Supervisor Edward Wehrheim.

- 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 following Capital and planning projects are recommended by the 2017 *Action Plan* and 2018 *Opportunity Analysis* and reflect the community's vision for the downtown. Due to the broad consensus around the need for these projects, they are ready for implementation over the coming 1-2 years.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS:

- 1. Bicycle and Pedestrian Access Improvements:** Projects to address connectivity within the downtown and with the area's parklands, recreational trails and waterfront areas. Improvements will include the existing Kings Park Hike and Bike Trail which provides access to Nissequogue River State Park and to the greater Long Island Greenbelt Trail.
- 2. Pedestrian Infrastructure Enhancements:** Pedestrian improvement projects will focus on improving crossing conditions on Main Street and linking the downtown to the south side of the LIRR tracks. Sidewalks should be widened whenever possible, curb cuts removed wherever possible, pedestrian signage added, crosswalks should be widened and made more identifiable when possible, and curb extensions at the intersection of Indian Head Road/Church Street and Main Street should be considered to reduce crossing distances. Specifically, the northeast and southeast corners should be extended to reduce the turning radius for automobiles turning north onto Church Street from westbound on Main Street, and vehicles turning east onto Main Street from northbound on Indian Head Road. The smaller turning radius reduces the speed at which a motorist can navigate the turn. Pedestrians will also have a shorter crossing distance from these corners. Traffic calming solutions which help improve the pedestrian environment and make Main Street more accessible and efficient for all users should be pursued.

Potential opportunities to connect to the Long Island Greenbelt Trail from downtown Kings Park and Smithtown



Source: Regional Plan Association



Source: Revitalizing Downtown Kings Park, VLI

The Vision Long Island *Action Plan* also recommends exploring the possibility of further changes beyond bulb-outs at this intersection, including shifting southbound lanes slightly to accommodate some on-street parking on the west side of Church Street, and the addition of a pedestrian island at the southeast corner, creating a protected right-turn lane while shortening the distance across both Main Street and Indian Head Road. The *Action Plan* also identifies the intersection of Main St and Pulaski Road as another place where bulb outs would be immediately useful, and also indicate that adding them at the intersections of Main Street and smaller streets could enhance intersections by adding sidewalk space at the corners. It further recommends that new sidewalks should be considered from the commercial district to the High School in order to increase safety and bring customers to downtown.

- 3. Wastewater:** Sewage treatment infrastructure is required to encourage mixed-use development and growth in the downtown. Planning and implementation activities will be leveraged with a combination of Town, County, state and other resources as available.

4. **Downtown public and recreational space:** explore public space options for parcels at the entrance to Kings Park Boulevard (requires input from NYS); on Town property at the south side of East Main Street; and for the Town-owned space at Veterans Plaza and the adjoining property.
5. **Façade improvements:** Establish a partnership with storefront owners to provide design and implementation support for façade improvements and rehabilitations.

PLANNING PROJECTS:

1. Parking Study and Parking Management Plan: A parking study will account for available parking at multiple times and over an established district-wide area, or within a given distance from specific strategic development sites in downtown Kings Park. The goal of the study will be a complete understanding of how the parking is being used at peak and off-peak times, where there is availability and where there is not, and how to better manage the current parking spaces and lots. From this study, a parking management plan can be completed which creates a parking district, where parking flexibility strategies can be enacted.

2. Zoning Amendments: The Town will consider specific zoning amendments such as development of a Form-Based Code. The creation of a form-based code involves active public participation for which a consultant may be needed to facilitate.

3. Develop a Downtown Plan: Using the recommendations contained in the 2017 *Opportunity Analysis* report, previous studies and the Market Analysis, the Town will establish a downtown plan. Integral to the formation of this plan is extensive public outreach which includes charrettes, walking tours, and other methods (surveys, forums, and social media) to collect public input.

4. State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR): As part of New York State’s Environmental Conversation Law under the State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR), “most projects or activities proposed by a state agency or unit of local government, and all discretionary approvals (permits) from a NYS agency or unit of local government, require an environmental impact assessment.” The Town of Smithtown will follow the steps of the SEQR process and determine the type of action, determine if the proposed action has significance or non-significance, and determine if an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is necessary. If necessary, the Town will consider creating a Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS). A GEIS is prepared when a proposed action could have wide-ranging effects in a defined area.

- 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 Town of Smithtown has sufficient internal capacity to manage this initiative. A Grants Committee accountable to the Office of the Supervisor provides a central coordination mechanism for proposal development, implementation, financial reporting and compliance activities. The Town has experienced professional staff in the Procurement office, Comptroller office, Town Attorney, and within its Engineering, Planning, Traffic Safety, Highway and other divisions who are capable of administering contracts once

projects are selected for award. Partnerships with civic organizations will facilitate community engagement in revitalization projects.

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

As part of Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone’s Connect Long Island initiative, the Kings Park LIRR station has been proposed as one endpoint of a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) corridor. This BRT corridor is proposed to run from the Babylon LIRR station to the Kings Park LIRR station largely utilizing the Sagtikos/Sunken Meadow Parkway. The development of this BRT corridor is dependent upon numerous factors, including the widening of the parkway, and the proposed development of Heartland Town Square (site of Pilgrim Psychiatric Center in Brentwood). However, as it comes to fruition, it will make Kings Park a more desirable destination for all segments of the diverse Long Island community to live, work and play.

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

EMAIL SUBMISSION ADDRESSES

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

Capital Region	NYS-CapitalDist@esd.ny.gov
Central New York	NYS-CentralNY@esd.ny.gov
Finger Lakes	NYS-FingerLakes@esd.ny.gov
Long Island	LIREDC@esd.ny.gov
Mid-Hudson	NYS-MidHudson@esd.ny.gov
Mohawk Valley	NYS-MohawkVal@esd.ny.gov
New York City	NYC-DRI@esd.ny.gov
North Country	NYS-NorthCountry@esd.ny.gov
Southern Tier	NYS-SouthernTier@esd.ny.gov
Western New York	NYS-WNY-REDC@esd.ny.gov