



# 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](http://www.regionalcouncils.ny.gov/western-new-york)

#### BASIC INFORMATION

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

Municipality Name: Amherst

Downtown Name: Eggertsville and the Niagara Falls Boulevard Corridor

County Name: Erie

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

In 2001, a wide array of stakeholders created the Eggertsville Community Action Plan, a strategy for the northwest corner of the Town of Amherst, abutting the City of Buffalo and Town of Tonawanda. To this day, it remains largely unimplemented. Since that time, neighboring communities, including North Buffalo and the University of Buffalo Campus, have seen significant reinvestment and growth; meanwhile Eggertsville, specifically the areas which abut Niagara Falls Boulevard, have sustained a number of economic downturns that have plagued first-ring suburbs across the country. Yet, the neighborhood remains a vibrant, diverse community, that with the right investment, can provide a full live-work-play atmosphere.

#### 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.

Eggertsville is Amherst's urban, historic community, abutting the city and a block away from the University of Buffalo's South Campus, the Eggertsville community - particularly the corridor along Niagara Falls Boulevard - takes on many of the characteristics of both its urban and suburban neighbors. As evidenced by home values, however, Eggertsville has seen neither the prosperity of the rest of Amherst, nor the resurgence taking place in nearby North Buffalo, where reinvestment has suddenly made homes high-value and high-demand. The

corridor, outlined on the attached map, which includes a large, big-box retail district at its north end, has been beset by the typical problems that first-ring suburbs are encountering.

The Eggertsville community is located in the southwest corner of the Town of Amherst, adjacent to the City of Buffalo and Town of Tonawanda. This community is a very special place within the Town of Amherst. It has a unique character and density found locally in only a few older suburban communities. Eggertsville is one of the oldest areas of the Town of Amherst due to its proximity to the historic regional center - the City of Buffalo. Earlier in the century, the outward growth of traditional urban neighborhoods, which for the Town of Amherst began in Eggertsville, established a development pattern and character that is today being emulated in new communities across the country. Eggertsville's special attributes have created a community fabric worth preserving and enhancing.

The area, like many other first-ring suburbs, is facing recent problems, including aging infrastructure and housing stock, deterioration of older neighborhood and regional shopping centers, poor property maintenance, and overall loss of private sector reinvestment. For example, Harley Davidson recently decided to leave the neighborhood, and several small retail businesses on Bailey Avenue and Eggert Road have been sitting vacant for five years or longer. To address the aging housing stock, Amherst Community Development has buoyed the neighborhood with approximately \$4 million in Community Development Block Grant funding for homeowner repair and investment over the last decade. Homeowners in this area are primarily low and moderate income (70%), and rarely have the means to address a major household repair. Code violations on property maintenance are heavily concentrated in Eggertsville and have been exacerbated by increases in single-family conversions to student housing by absentee landlords. In the last three years, according to our Town Assessor's office, this neighborhood has seen a 19% increase of non-owner occupied properties. Thirty-five percent of Amherst's zombie homes are in the Eggertsville neighborhood.

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## **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.

The DRI target area of Eggertsville, a sliver of the Town of Amherst at its southwest corner abutting the City of Buffalo and Town of Tonawanda, is three square miles bounded by Niagara Falls Boulevard to the west and Getzville Road and the I-290 to the east. On the south side, the area is bounded by the Buffalo city line at Kenmore Avenue, continuing along Main Street, and on the north by Maple Road. The corridor is a gateway to both the City of Buffalo and the Town of Amherst, and lies strategically between the University of Buffalo's North and South campuses. The area is a mix of residential and commercial,

creating a true live-work-play environment. The corridor is a key component of the popular proposal to extend the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority's (NFTA) Metro Rail beyond its City of Buffalo limits and into the Town of Amherst.

The residential population of this area, as defined by the American Community Survey data, is 14,972. The area is home to several affordable housing properties, with the median monthly rent being \$672. The average structure was built in 1955. The area is home to 738 businesses and 10,778 employees. One-half of these businesses are retail based, and another 30% are in the service industry. (THREE MAPS ATTACHED)

- 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 the far north end of the Eggertsville corridor is the Boulevard Mall, which continues, like other 'B' malls across the country, to lose tenants. The writing is on the wall that the Boulevard Mall will not be a traditional mall, and could possibly be something quite different. The consensus is that the mall property will, in the near future, become a mixed-use, walkable community, perhaps served by light rail connecting to the NFTA's Metro System. Indeed, there are a host of visions for the property that have been put forth; but without question, the Boulevard Mall site, for its prominence and potential, is the most interesting and significant redevelopment opportunity in the entire region.

The immediate catchment area already includes a variety of amenities to support this vision and investment. There's ample work-force housing, transit connections, grocery stores, office and medical providers, in addition to salons, restaurants, and top-ranking public and private schools. In fact, 50% of the jobs in the area are retail based now and housing is primarily valued within a range that minimum wage dual income earners can afford home ownership. In-fill with higher end residential development will complement the neighborhood housing options currently available. Moving forward, Amherst will seek businesses and services that are currently missing from the neighborhood and necessary to support a true live-work-play community, such as day care centers, hardware stores or tool libraries, community center, makerspace, greenspace and water features, bike paths and complete streets. These amenities can be accomplished with community benefit agreements with developers.

Regionally, the Boulevard Mall originally drew shoppers and workers from across northern Erie County and southern Niagara County. With potential NFTA Metro Rail expansion and this redevelopment, the future regional catchment area could increase even further to include Southern Erie County and Downtown Buffalo. Design amenities added into redevelopment, like a dynamic park with green-infrastructure water features, outdoor events space and entertainment center, or boutique hotel and conference center could expand the catchment even further to include all of Upstate New York and Southern Ontario.

Currently, the three square mile downtown area hosts four NFTA bus routes: 5, 34, 35 ,39, and is proximate to bus line 8, the Main Street bus, and the existing light rail stop at University of Buffalo's South Campus. Traffic counts at Niagara Falls Boulevard and Sheridan drive are the highest in the area at 35,000 cars a day.

The Eggertsville corridor is the direct beneficiary of that promise, as the gateway between the highly visible and in-demand property and the City of Buffalo. Transforming that corridor from its history of big-box retail (and the empty buildings stand as testament to that history) to a vibrant, user-friendly environment will yield an enhanced live-work-play environment, increased property values and economic growth.

Situated a mile from University of Buffalo's North campus and quarter mile from the South campus, the Eggertsville downtown area is a prime location for growth as UB continues its own rise. This investment's impact will reach well beyond the Eggertsville and Niagara Falls Boulevard neighborhood.

**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.

While the Boulevard Mall reuse project is the prize, there is a great deal of work that needs to be done to prepare for, or is complementary to, its success throughout the Eggertsville corridor. Indeed, some private sector reinvestment is already underway, starting with ongoing work taking place at Northtown Plaza. The introduction of Whole Foods in 2017 jumpstarted a revitalization of a plaza that had previously lost its big-box anchors. The Northtown Plaza project is now in Phase II – a \$75-million-dollar investment to create a new retail center on the remainder of the property, surrounding the Whole Foods anchor. There is a possibility of a third phase at this site that would add housing for a true, mixed-use lifestyle center. In order to incentivize more investments such as this one, the Town has identified an array of Town projects to support further redevelopment in the area including:

(1) "Amherst Gateway Project" – The corner of Niagara Falls Boulevard and Kenmore Avenue at the northwest corner of both the Eggertsville corridor and the Town of Amherst has been an eyesore for twenty years. The Town of Amherst is in the midst of acquiring the property through eminent domain, and is working with the Amherst IDA's Amherst Development Corporation to secure a developer to create an Amherst/City of Buffalo gateway, incorporating greenspace and bus shelters to support transit-oriented development in the corridor. (PLEASE SEE ATTACHED PLAN LABELED "GATEWAY").

(2) Infrastructure – Necessary sewer and drainage projects have been proposed for the Eggertsville neighborhoods south of the Boulevard Mall area. These improvements are not only necessary for the current environment to relieve the residential neighborhood of frequent systematic flooding during heavy rain and spring thaw, but are essential to the redevelopment of Northtown Plaza and the Boulevard Mall.

(3) Niagara Falls Boulevard Streetscape and Land Use – The Amherst Town Board on May 16, 2018 put into motion plans to enhance the safety and redevelopment of the streetscape of Niagara Falls Boulevard by unanimously approving a project charter. According to the resolution, the project will involve all possible levels of representation from both Amherst and the Town of Tonawanda, including NYS officials, council members, chambers of commerce, industrial development agencies and police departments. Some of the increased safety measures for Niagara Falls Boulevard could include better sight lines for motorists and lowering the speed limit on some portions of the road. The planning project is scheduled to begin in July 2018, with a tentative completion in July 2019. In the second half of this year, stakeholder meetings will be conducted, and an event to discuss new urbanism aspects for Niagara Falls Boulevard is planned for October. (PLEASE SEE ATTACHED RESOLUTION)

(4) Senior Affordable Housing Complex – A stone’s throw from the mall site, Belmont Housing Resources for WNY is planning a 3-story, 40-unit senior/disabled housing complex for a cluster of properties at the corner of Alberta Drive and Amsterdam Avenue. The \$13.5 Million project redevelops the site of a former fire station and three currently vacant and underutilized properties. Belmont’s project is the perfect catalyst for the area to ramp up density and transition to taller buildings leading into the mall property. It’s a welcome project in a neighborhood that has limited senior housing options despite the walkable amenities. To further support the project, the Town of Amherst is injecting \$200,000 of HOME Investment Partnership funding.

(5) The Town of Amherst Department of Community Development has invested approximately \$4 Million in Community Development Block Grant funds in the Eggertsville neighborhood in the last decade to support safe and healthy housing. Community Development’s continued focus for the neighborhood is to expand reinvestment beyond housing stock to small commercial spaces through a facade improvement program, as well as generate affordable housing in-fill development on vacant lots via partnerships with the Land Bank and non-profit development community.

(6) Amherst Development Corporation - The Amherst Industrial Development Agency’s (AIDA) Development Corporation has been a passive entity for the past several decades. The Town and the AIDA are currently working together to revive the ADC and use it to redevelop blighted and vacant commercial properties in the Town of Amherst, beginning in the Eggertsville neighborhood. The Amherst Gateway project, referenced above, is the first of several opportunities to bring reinvestment to commercial properties in Eggertsville.

(7) Opportunity Zone - The Boulevard Mall lies within the newly created Federal Opportunity Zone. At the Town’s request, Governor Cuomo designated census tract 92, which includes the Boulevard Mall and part of Eggertsville, as an Opportunity Zone. By definition, an Opportunity Zone allows money to be sheltered from capital gains tax in an Opportunity Fund, and must be spent in the next decade. This Opportunity Zone is a transformational tool in the corridor’s revitalization.

**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.

Envisioned for the entire neighborhood and highlighted by the vision for the Boulevard Mall site is a work-live-play community, with easy access and a small parcel design, creating an environment where small businesses can thrive. Amherst has about 125,000 residents, but boasts a daytime population of nearly 200,000, making the Town a regional center of employment. Many of those jobs are centered in the Eggertsville corridor between UB’s two campuses. According to American Community Survey data, within the three square mile downtown area, there are 10,778 people coming to work there daily. Half of these individuals have jobs that are retail based. It is imperative that we bring targeted investment to this neighborhood in order to compete for retailers and retain these jobs.

Additionally, the 2016 Economic Study conducted by the Town of Amherst, called for the redevelopment of sites, such as the Boulevard Mall, to meet the demand for new, modern office space in a mixed-use, walkable environment. According to the study, “the Town of Amherst is forecasted to add between 9,000 and 16,500 jobs between 2015 and 2040. Most job growth will be concentrated in businesses that will

need retail and office space, with little new demand for industrial spaces in most of the Town. In order to meet this job growth, the Town will need to increase its supply of commercial space by 4.1 to 5.9 million SF. Most of this development is expected to be achieved by redeveloping existing commercial sites.”

- 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.

The wider Eggertsville neighborhood is the most diverse neighborhood in Amherst in terms of race, age, incomes, and cultural background. There are university students who rent homes, first generation immigrants, young families in starter homes, retirees and empty nesters, and single mothers who are head of household. It's a wonderful neighborhood for people and families as a stepping stone to reach the middle class, with affordable worker housing, great schools, a community center with afterschool programming, and strong transit connections to the regional job market. Racially, the neighborhood is made up of 94 % Caucasians, 4.5% African Americans, 1.7% Asians, and 2% identify as Hispanic. Belmont's planned 40-unit affordable housing project will also add opportunities for disabled adults to have more housing options in the neighborhood as well.

Yet to truly create a dynamic interactive community, Amherst will need to create spaces and features of the larger redevelopment that provide opportunities for a variety of people to engage with each other, either through public plazas, parks space, a water feature, bike trails or planned events. Amherst already intends to build off the services and amenities that exist in the neighborhood presently via design and use requirements in a revised zoning code and through other tools, such as Master Planning or Planned Unit Development Overlays, or even Community Benefit Agreements. These tools can be implemented to achieve the necessary public plazas or greenspace, man-made water features, green stormwater infrastructure, bikeway connections, outdoor events space, and other improvements outside of the public right-of-way improvements the Town will complete.

For the streetscape construction supported with this grant application, the Town will incorporate sidewalks, trees and plantings, complementary lighting, pedestrian bump-out cross walks and on-street bike lanes.

- 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.

The Town of Amherst Department of Community Development works closely with the Buffalo Erie Niagara Land Improvement Corporation (BENLIC), the region's local land bank, to address distressed properties. Amherst Development Corporation, the Amherst Industrial Development Agency's (AIDA) Development Corporation has been a passive entity for the past several decades. The Town and the AIDA are currently working together to revive the ADC and use it to redevelop blighted and vacant commercial properties in

the Town of Amherst, beginning in the Eggertsville neighborhood. The Amherst Gateway project, referenced above, is the first of several opportunities to bring reinvestment to commercial properties in Eggertsville.

Over the last two years, the Town of Amherst has been actively working with the public on a re-visioning and planning process for key commercial clusters and corridors in the Town. This work includes the primary streets serving the Eggertsville neighborhood: Niagara Falls Boulevard, Sheridan Drive, Maple Road, Bailey Avenue, Kenmore Avenue, and Eggert Road. The long-term intent is to rewrite the zoning code to provide Form-based codes that better activate the public realm and complement the neighborhoods these areas serve.

The Town has also decided to begin a new comprehensive planning process that generate neighborhood based plans. The current Bicentennial Comprehensive Plan is 20 years old. The process was started by holding new neighborhood forums in April and May this year. The neighborhood forums allowed us to engage on a neighborhood level with residents to hear more localized concerns and desires.

Working to densify the corridor will provide an even greater diversity of housing options, including options for senior who want to age-in-place in their neighborhoods.

The Town is actively working with the NY State Department of Transportation and Erie County to create collaborative complete-street policies and tree planting initiatives to further the beautification of this area. The Town Planning Director is currently on the NFTA's Transit Oriented Development Committee, studying the possibility of encouraging density surrounding future light rail stations, including the one at the Boulevard Mall (PLEASE SEE ATTACHED TOD STUDY FOLDER)

By recreating the street grid, we will enable accessibility across all modes, and encourage a more forward-thinking brand of redevelopment, better aligned with what the market is demanding. While big box retail is failing due to many factors, it is a forever changing and evolving preference of the consumer that demands a better, more vibrant shopping experience. Smaller parcels, more accessible, and creating a more personalized experience, are the communities of the future, and the key to redevelopment in the Eggertsville corridor.

- 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.

Over the last two years, the Town of Amherst has been actively working with the public on a re-visioning and planning process for key commercial clusters and corridors in Town. This work includes the primary streets serving the Eggertsville neighborhood: Niagara Falls Boulevard, Sheridan Drive, Maple Road, Bailey Avenue, Kenmore Avenue, and Eggert Road. The long-term intent is to rewrite the zoning code to provide Form-based codes that better activate the public realm and complement the neighborhoods these areas serve. As part of this process, the Town has reached out to the public via a working committee, direct community forums, neighborhood meetings, school-based ice cream socials, farmers markets, written surveys, and Town Board and Planning Board meetings. Throughout the process, we've had developers at

the same table as neighborhood organization leaders and met with Youth Engaged in Service (YES) teens to seniors.

Now, in 2018 under the new leadership of Supervisor Brian J. Kulpa, the DRI project lead, the Town has also decided to begin a new comprehensive planning process that generate neighborhood based plans. The current Bicentennial Comprehensive Plan is 20 years old. We started this process by holding new neighborhood forums in April and May this year. The neighborhood forums allowed us to engage on a neighborhood level with residents to hear more localized concerns and desires.

Throughout all this outreach, a consistent theme has emerged as evidenced again in the latest public sentiment from the Eggertsville neighborhood meeting held this April. Residents want Amherst to redevelop its existing commercial areas, especially those that are languishing, rather than building or expanding new commercial developments elsewhere in town. Eggertsville residents told us repeatedly to “rebuild the Boulevard Mall” or “put new development at the Boulevard Mall”, in addition to addressing pedestrian safety on Niagara Falls Boulevard. Most Eggertsville residents are concerned that the Boulevard Mall will turn into a Seneca Mall situation and sit idle for decades, draining property values and fostering blight.

To inform the drafting of Form-Based Codes, Town planning staff also ran a visual preference survey to gauge public opinion of different building styles at various densities, scales and feel (i.e. suburban, urban, mixed-use, single-use, deep setback, shallow setback, flat roof, sloped roof, parking front, parking rear, etc.). Eggertsville residents overwhelmingly chose higher density (3-4 stories) mix-used buildings that are built-up right against the sidewalk as “appropriate” for the redevelopment of primary streets in their neighborhood. This outcome tells town planners that we’re on the right track for draft zoning revisions for the mall area and the primary streets of Eggertsville.

Previous planning work and engagement from the last 20 years also include:

- Eggertsville Action Plan: This plan was developed in 2001, and identified nodes of investment and public improvements that should be undertaken in the Eggertsville Neighborhood. The Town has now decided it is long past due to implement those plans; many of which are streetscapes, traffic calming measures, and other beautification measures.
- The Amherst Bicentennial Comprehensive Plan: This plan was adopted by the Town Board on January 2, 2007 and amended on September 8, 2015. The Plan is intended to guide future growth and redevelopment in the Town.

Letters of support for the project have also been received by the Town from the Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council, the Amherst Industrial Development Agency, and the Amherst Chamber of Commerce, and several other elected officials in Western New York and throughout New York State. (PLEASE SEE THE ATTACHED DOCUMENT TITLED “LETTERS OF SUPPORT.”)

- 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.

In preparation for the reuse and revitalization of the Boulevard Mall property, DRI funds will be used to create a new street grid stretching from Northtown Plaza, through the BJ's Plaza and the Boulevard Mall. This will create better access by all modes through what is currently a barrier between Alberta drive and Niagara Falls Boulevard. The proposed set-up will enable walkability and, in concert with the NFTA's proposal to bring light rail the property, connected to the University of Buffalo and on to downtown Buffalo, add vibrancy, residency and business opportunity to what is currently an underutilized resource. In conjunction with the wide array of projects described above, the new street grid will serve as the necessary foundation for future development. Creating a street grid through these dying big-box grayfields will also allow the introduction of utilities, green infrastructure, and street trees.

The Town of Amherst's sanitary sewer system has two main interceptors, the West Side Interceptor, which has a south to north alignment and the Peanut Line Interceptor, which has an east to west alignment. The West Side Interceptor's sewer shed contains the more mature areas of the town (Snyder and Eggertsville) as well as the Village of Williamsville; the Peanut Line Interceptor's sewer shed contains the newer areas of the town. As such, the wet weather flow rates (inflow and infiltration) are significant in the West Side Interceptor, so significant as to cause capacity issues and sanitary sewer overflows in two locations in Eggertsville and Snyder. As currently operating, the West Side Interceptor is a constraint which limits future development in its service areas of the Town and Village. To remedy this situation, the Town of Amherst Engineering Department has conceived a plan for construction of a West Side Interceptor Wet Weather Relief Pump Station, which will pump wet weather flows from the West Side Interceptor to the Peanut Line Interceptor, and has the capacity to accept the additional flows.

After project implementation, the wet weather relief pump station will provide the following benefits:

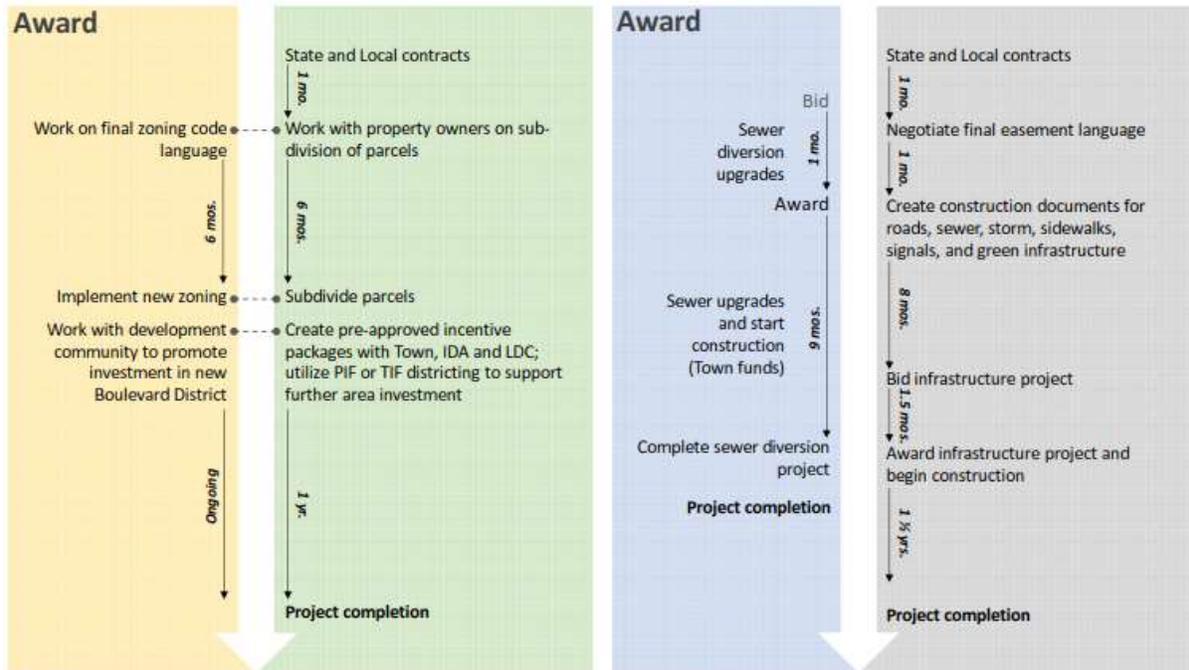
- a. Shift wet weather sanitary sewer flows from West Side Interceptor to Peanut Line Interceptor, allowing for redevelopment projects and increased sewer demand in Eggertsville, Snyder and west side areas.
- b. This project working in parallel with revised wet weather treatment scheme at the treatment plant will allow for active management of sanitary sewer system which will reduce surcharges in system.
- c. May also reduce and/or eliminate 2 remaining SSOs.

In the May 2018 publication of Shopping Center Business, the article "Retail Evolution," details that reinvention and flexibility is key to successful retail centers. Smaller parcels and walkable streets encourage that flexibility. The article goes on to highlight examples of such reinvestments, including one from an area comparable to Metro Buffalo and Amherst which is Rochester Hills, Michigan. A re-development of a site as large as the Boulevard Mall and surrounding parcels, over 80 acres, is a great opportunity for such creativity and flexibility, but it will need to be subdivided into smaller parcels to create such vibrancy.

A little more than nine months after defaulting on a \$92 million loan, the note for the Boulevard Mall was purchased by LNR Partners, based out of Miami. LNR Partners is the same firm which purchased the debt on the One Seneca Tower in Downtown Buffalo. They are not developers, though they are currently keeping the Mall stable and operating until a viable buyer presents themselves.

(PROJECT BUDGET ATTACHED)

Projected Project Readiness Timeline:



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 team will consist of the Amherst Town Supervisor, the Planning Director, the Highway Superintendent, the Town Engineer, the Executive Director of the Amherst Industrial Development Agency, and other relevant Town staff. The Executive bios are below:

**Brian J. Kulpa, Amherst Town Supervisor**

Brian Kulpa was elected as Supervisor of the Town of Amherst in November 2017, taking office at the beginning of this year. Prior to this role, Brian served as the Mayor of the Village of Williamsville, NY. He was elected Mayor in 2011 after four years serving as a Village Trustee. He was re-elected in 2015. During his time at the Village, Kulpa led American Public Works Association and American Planning Association award winning projects. During his tenure at the Village of Williamsville, the Village was the recipient of over \$11 million dollars in state and federal grants to invest in community planning and infrastructure on Picture Main Street, South Long Street, and Spring Street. He is an architect and urban planner with the firm Clark Patterson Lee design firm in Buffalo and is a graduate of the University at Buffalo with Bachelors and Master’s degrees in both Architecture and Urban and Regional Planning. With Clark Patterson Lee, Brian led American Public Works Association and American Planning Association in the City of Tonawanda, the Town of Tonawanda, and West Seneca. Brian has served as the President of the Association of Erie County Governments, and is currently a Board Member of the Erie County IDA.

**Daniel C. Howard, Director of Planning**

Daniel C. Howard, AICP, has been employed with the Town of Amherst Planning Department since 1984 and currently serves as Planning Director. He directs and supervises a staff of 11, including planners and a design professional who provides community planning, landscape design, and community development services. Mr. Howard has extensive planning experience, successfully managing comprehensive planning projects, zoning code development, public engagement processes, and transportation planning. He also serves as adjunct faculty in the Department of Geography and Planning at Buffalo State College. Mr. Howard earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Urban and Regional Planning and a Master of Arts degree in Geography with a specialization in Urban and Regional Planning. He also holds a Doctor of Philosophy in Geography from the State University of New York at Buffalo. Mr. Howard is a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) and the American Planning Association. In addition to his planning experience, Mr. Howard holds the rank of Lieutenant Colonel in the United States Army Reserve and presently serves as Plans and Operations Officer for the Army Reserve Medical Command.

#### **Patrick Lucey, Highway Superintendent**

Patrick Lucey started his employment with the Town of Amherst in 1975 at the Amherst Highway Department, where he was elevated to a Motor Equipment Operator. In 1986, Mr. Lucey left the Amherst Highway Department as he was appointed to the Amherst Police Department. During his career as a police officer Mr. Lucey attended numerous training courses, which included Accident Investigation Courses, and in 2004 he was certified as an Accident Reconstructionist. In 2008, Mr. Lucey was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant where he directly supervised police officers under his command, trained police officers and directly supervised Public Safety Dispatchers and Town of Amherst crossing guards. Mr. Lucey has a B.A. degree from the University of Buffalo in Legal Studies. He was also certified as a Police Instructor from Erie County CPS academy. In 2015, Mr. Lucey retired from the Amherst Police Department after he was elected to the position of Superintendent of Highways for the Town of Amherst On January 1, 2016, Mr. Lucey became the Superintendent of Highways, a position he currently holds today.

#### **Jeffery S. Burroughs, P.E., Town Engineer**

Jeffrey S. Burroughs has been practicing municipal engineering since his graduation with a Bachelor's of Science in Civil Engineering from the State University of New York at Buffalo in 1993. In 1994, Mr. Burroughs joined the Town of Amherst Engineering Department as a junior engineer where he focused on infrastructure project design and construction. In 1996, Mr. Burroughs transitioned into management in the Engineering Department overseeing the Environmental Control Division at the Town's Water Pollution Control Facility and in May 2000, Mr. Burroughs earned an MBA from the State University of New York at Buffalo. In 2001, Mr. Burroughs became a NYS licensed professional engineer and in 2006 Mr. Burroughs was promoted to Town Engineer. In February 2008, Mr. Burroughs left the Town of Amherst to work as a senior project manager for URS, a national architecture and engineering services consulting firm. In his private consulting work, Mr. Burroughs worked for various public and private local clients including the Town of Amherst, Erie County, the City of Buffalo, the Niagara Falls Bridge Commission and Chautauqua County. In 2016, Mr. Burroughs was brought back to the Town of Amherst as the Town Engineer. Mr. Burroughs' experience is in infrastructure and wastewater treatment plant design.

#### **David S. Mingoia, Executive Director/CEO, Amherst Industrial Development Agency**

David is the Executive Director/CEO/CFO for the Amherst Industrial Development Agency (AIDA) and Amherst Development Corporation (ADC) since December 2016. Previously he served as the Deputy Director since 2005. Before joining the AIDA, David was the Director of Business Development for Empire State Development (ESD), managing staff working with companies on retention/attraction activities covering five counties in Western New York. During his over 20 years of working in economic development

in Western New York, David has overseen and actively worked on nearly \$1 billion in private investment leading to over 10,000 direct jobs. Work activities throughout his career are varied, ranging from working on Buffalo Waterfront projects to helping secure the GEICO investment in Amherst to fostering redevelopment activities in older commercial districts. David holds a Master's Degree in Urban and Regional Planning specializing in Economic Development from the State University New York at Buffalo. Currently, he is serving on the Board of Directors for the Upstate Chapter of the National Association of Industrial and Office Properties, Amherst Chamber of Commerce and Invest Buffalo Niagara.

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

Please see the following information, attached:

- Link to video
- Project budget labeled Engineering Estimates
- Boundary maps
- Before and After renderings
- Rendering of the Amherst Gateway Project
- Resolution for Niagara Falls Boulevard Town Planning Project
- Resolution to apply for the DRI
- Letters of Support
- Supporting Draft NFTA TOD Study

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

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## 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](mailto:NYS-WNY-REDC@esd.ny.gov)

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