



Capitalize. Catalyze. Realize.

Advancing the community's vision for a vital, vibrant downtown Canandaigua.

Downtown Revitalization Initiative Proposal
May 31, 2019

Application Information

In accordance with guidance provided by Empire State Development, the following basic application information is offered.

District Information

Region: Finger Lakes
Municipality: City of Canandaigua
Downtown Name: Historic Downtown Canandaigua
County: Ontario



United for Success



Contact Information

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VISION FOR DOWNTOWN

The vision for Historic Downtown Canandaigua is “Downtown Canandaigua is a cultural, economic, and social center to the region; a vital urban core—thriving and vibrant, amidst a backdrop of unmatched natural beauty.”

More information on what guided us to these principles can be found on **Page 4**.

JUSTIFICATION

Downtown Canandaigua is well-positioned for DRI investment, with a strong set of core assets, unique redevelopment opportunities, and real challenges to be tackled with a combination of public and private capital investment.

More information on what makes Canandaigua best suited for this investment can be found on **Page 5**.

DOWNTOWN IDENTIFICATION

- 1) Boundaries of the proposed DRI area.** The proposed DRI Investment Area consists of over 70 acres of compact, walkable urban assets. More information on how we arrived at the proposed district can be found on **Page 7**, and the boundaries and other attributes of the zone are found in **Attachment A**.
- 2) Past investment, future investment potential.** Over \$100 million in new development has either been constructed in the last several years, or is currently in design or development review. More information on this incredible investment can be found on **Page 8**.
- 3) Recent or impending job growth.** Over 600 new jobs have been created in the last several years, with more on tap to develop. More information on job growth and how it impacts our development strategy can be found on **Page 11**.
- 4) Attractiveness of physical environment.** Canandaigua has carefully cultivated a range of attributes that enhance livability for a diverse set of residents, investors, visitors, and other stakeholders. More information on steps we’ve taken to enhance our physical environment can be found on **Page 12**.

- 5) **Quality of Life policies.** City leadership has taken an intentional path toward developing a community with an unmatched quality of life. More information on our policies, practices, and other efforts can be found on **Page 15**.
- 6) **Public support.** The City has engaged in a robust stakeholder engagement effort to provide for the opportunity for our local stakeholders to shape the elements of this proposal. More information on our public engagement efforts can be found on **Page 16**.
- 7) **Transformative opportunities.** A strong combination of public infrastructure enhancements, non-profit capacity building projects, and private sector development opportunities are all primed and ready for near-term implementation with DRI support. More information on these projects can be found on **Page 20**.
- 8) **Administrative Capacity.** The City and our economic development partners have a strong record of performance for managing grant-funded programs and projects, and delivering them on-time and on-budget. The DRI management framework and other administrative information can be found on **Page 25**.
- 9) **Other.** The City's comprehensive plan, economic development strategy, and DRI project proposals align well with the FLREDC's FLX FORWARD plan. More information on strategic alignment and the value of the associated impact can be found on **Page 26**.

A Unified Vision

Every great journey starts with a plan—a roadmap toward that point on the horizon that we all recognize as our ideal objective. Why do we cherish this place so much, and why have we elected to stake our future on its success?

The Canandaigua community has labored over these questions and arrived at some very laudable answers. These exercises have culminated in an aspirational, yet attainable vision for downtown’s future:

“Downtown Canandaigua is a cultural, economic, and social center to the region; a vital urban core—thriving and vibrant, amidst a backdrop of unmatched natural beauty.”



These words were not pieced together haphazardly, but carefully drawn from local strategic planning efforts, our effective Finger Lakes Forward strategy, and from the minds and hearts of our own stakeholders. They reflect our view of a successful downtown district, existing on the horizon, but for our collective effort.

“...a cultural, economic, and social center to the region...”

These words are drawn directly from the City’s comprehensive plan. The plan’s development has been citizen-led, with a core group of dedicated stakeholders from a diverse set of backgrounds. The plan’s vision and elements are not just being coordinated by our residents, but by our neighbors in the Town of Canandaigua, so as to reflect a broader regional strategy.

“...a vital urban core...”

At a recent meeting of the Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development Council, key leaders identified the Downtown Revitalization Initiative as an opportunity to create a network of “vital urban centers” throughout New York State. Cities, villages, and other urban areas are service centers to a broader region, and the Governor’s vision for networking these centers means a far more impactful return for state and local investment. The City of Canandaigua stands ready to serve as a part of this critical network.

“...thriving and vibrant...unmatched natural beauty...”

As we set out to craft this application, City leadership sought the advice and counsel of a broad range of residents and other stakeholders via a robust public engagement process. Stakeholders were asked why they’ve chosen to live, work, and invest in Canandaigua, and what they see in the City’s future that is keeping them here. Repetitive themes of a thriving urban center and a vibrant downtown scene were most often paired with fond attribution to our core economic asset—Canandaigua Lake.

We used the vision statement in many different ways throughout the development of this application. We leveraged its core principles as a filter for what recommendations made the most sense and as inspiration to drive creativity. Most importantly, it was used as a guidepost—that point on the horizon that we’re all working toward.

Join us as we advance toward this invaluable objective.

Justification for DRI Investment

Economic development investment is most productively placed in initiatives that are well-planned, and in communities with the leadership and management capacity to leverage government investment with robust private sector capital. The City of Canandaigua and our historic downtown are in just such a position. Our economic development strategies are rooted in sound planning efforts, and are geared to align with regional initiatives to intensify the economic impact of local and state investment.



Downtown Canandaigua is well-positioned to generate significant economic activity through the Downtown Revitalization Initiative. We have established a framework that will capitalize on our core strengths, catalyze our existing assets to serve as a multiplier for DRI investment, and as a result, realize our unified vision—a thriving, vibrant, vital urban center contributing toward the region’s economic power.

Our initial DRI strategy, to be refined through the Strategic Investment Planning process, recognizes the following attributes, and builds upon them to create opportunities to shape downtown as a regional economic engine.

Core Strengths on Which to Build



The Downtown Revitalization Initiative has not been built for communities starting from scratch on the economic development front. Communities must be ready to launch both strategy and execution in short order. The City of Canandaigua is poised to capitalize on our core strengths to advance initiative elements.

- Sound Base of Community-Driven Planning Initiatives: The Downtown Revitalization element of the City’s comprehensive plan was updated in 2019, with unanimous endorsement of the citizen-based committee.
- Traditional Urban Architectural Assets and Infrastructure: The City has worked tirelessly through policy and action to maintain a strong set of historic architectural assets, and has maintained the original urban form on which the central business district was built.
- Unified Vision: As described above, the community has come together to develop a vision statement that is reflective of both our local economic development approach, and which integrates well with the Finger Lakes region’s economic development strategy.

Real Challenges Which Remain Unaddressed

The central tenet of economic development investment is that the market is challenged by conditions which will persist without external intervention. Some markets, or segments of markets need a “jump start” to accelerate private investment or enhance local conditions. The City of Canandaigua has experienced many economic successes, but remains challenged by issues that plague many local governments nationwide.



These include.

- Concentrated Poverty: As the County seat for Ontario County, and an urban service district, the City of Canandaigua is charged with the care of a larger segment of the region’s impoverished than many of our neighbors. This challenges our ability to create safe, affordable housing opportunities, and to commit to a broader service delivery portfolio.
- Expanding Urban Blight: While a strong collection of historic architectural assets is a blessing, it also presents significant challenges. Adaptive re-use and revitalization of historic structures requires a unique development skill set, and often more resources than can be justified with return on investment. Add environmental challenges of brownfields and perceived environmental issues to the complex nature of historic preservation and you have a recipe for stagnation.
- Local Government Resource Constraints: Like nearly every city across the nation, we are experiencing more service demands than we can satisfy within existing revenue streams. Each year, we are challenged to do more with less. In many cases, we forsake economic development investment for basic infrastructure needs, putting advancement of our vision squarely out of reach.

Actionable Opportunities on the Cusp of Execution

The City’s strongest economic development asset lies in its opportunity to engage and act on sound economic strategy. Downtown Revitalization Initiative projects will see immediate action and very near-term results. These opportunities lie in:

- Committed Local Investors: Investors that sense local and state commitment to Canandaigua projects have voiced their readiness to share in the needed investment. The City has millions of dollars in potential investment in initial development discussion or review.
- Shovel-Ready Opportunities: Transformative projects have been identified, and every opportunity will commence within months of DRI commitment.

Canandaigua stands ready to capitalize on the investment of confidence and resources by New York State.

Investment District Boundaries

Downtown Canandaigua is a compact, walkable district located in the heart of the Finger Lakes Region. The district is based strongly in the statutorily defined Canandaigua Business Improvement District, which has been slightly enhanced to address several anchor properties, ripe for investment.

The district is anchored to the north by the Greater Canandaigua Family YMCA, a federally-recognized 1911-built former U.S. Post Office building. The post office and historic Ontario County courthouse square to the east serve as a strong architectural frame to the north end of the proposed investment district.

The northwest portion of the district includes a key neighborhood commercial opportunity, with an operating grocery store and small department store, serving residents in the neighborhoods to the west of downtown, and representing the commercial transition between western neighborhoods and the central business district.

On the western edge, Business Improvement District official boundaries were slightly modified to capture a commercial property and adjacent vacant lot, which as outlined in the ensuing section, represents an opportunity for the development of a community garden—a source of fresh fruits and vegetables to the surrounding neighborhoods.

The remainder of the proposed investment area has left the statutory boundaries of the Business Improvement District largely intact. Following Main Street, the district continues south from the YMCA and Courthouse properties to the southern boundary at Foster Street. The western border is comprised of Bemis Street roughly extended north and south, while Pleasant Street, Lafayette Avenue, and Beeman Alley form the eastern boundary. The district can easily be walked from its north to south boundaries in under ten minutes.

The bulk of the proposed investment area is recognized for its historic character and architectural assets through designations on the State and National Registers of Historic Places, and has been named as a federal Opportunity Zone, with associated benefits for investment. This portion of Main Street is also part of Historic Route 20, which is the longest road in the United States; spanning from Fenway Park to Newport, Oregon.

The basis for selection of district boundaries was a series of sound planning exercises, including the engagement of local residents, business owners, and other key stakeholders. The City facilitated a series of public engagements, at which residents were encouraged to take maps on which to draw suggested boundaries for DRI investment. Over 90% of participants submitting responses to this exercise suggested either the Business Improvement District itself, or a minor modification thereto as the area ripe for investment.

These findings align well with the vision for downtown revitalization, as outlined in the City's Comprehensive Plan, which focuses downtown investment recommendations on the area generally comprised by the Business Improvement District. This recommendation was unanimously reinforced in 2019 by the City's Comprehensive Plan Update effort.

A map of the proposed district, which encompasses 71.5 acres, is included as Attachment A at the close of the application.

Capitalizing on Recent Investment

In recent years, the City of Canandaigua has experienced tremendous public and private investments in areas surrounding downtown. Our lakefront resort district and other areas leading into the downtown core continue to see dramatic transformation. However, the unique challenges associated with redeveloping an urban core require a focused approach, and the planning and implementation resources only a program like the Downtown Revitalization Initiative can provide.



The City intends to leverage DRI funding, as well as recent comprehensive planning and public engagement efforts, to capitalize on the momentum experienced outside of our urban core, and drive investment into the downtown district. We have worked with our residents and key stakeholders to establish a clear vision and set of policies and strategies to transition development successes in the outer ring into downtown Canandaigua.

Significant Recent Investment

As is the case in many lakefront communities, real estate near Canandaigua Lake has been the ripest for redevelopment. Even so, development activity didn't come easy. The City worked with our non-profit and government partners to develop a set of tools necessary to spur over \$100 million in new investment along the shoreline of Canandaigua Lake. These projects included:

- Pinnacle North—Phase I: The first phase of this five-phased mixed-use brownfield redevelopment was completed in 2017, and now houses 135 market-rate residential units and a wide range of retail and service uses (including one of New York State's largest microbreweries!). The project is an incredible example of public-private partnership to address an environmentally-challenged site; with City, County, State, private, and non-profit partners all contributing to ensure the project's success. Total construction investment for Phase I was \$38 million.
- Nolan's Redevelopment: In 2017, the wildly popular Nolan's Restaurant experienced a catastrophic fire at its regionally-significant Canandaigua location. The family overcame tremendous financial and organizational challenges to rebuild the site, which re-opened in 2018. The new location represents \$1.7 million dollars in public and private investment.

Impending projects in the lakefront district which are either under construction, permitted, or in development review include:

- Pinnacle North—Phase II: A larger companion phase to the successful Phase I of this project is under development immediately adjacent to the original project site. The project is set to include

a similar mix of residential, retail, dining, and service offerings. Construction work has commenced. Total project investment on this phase is estimated at \$50 million.

- Inn on the Lake Redevelopment: This property was originally developed in 1970, with minor updates throughout its storied evolution. In 2018, project owners commenced demolition of the original property and are under construction on a 122-room hotel, with a new restaurant and meeting space. The project represents \$40 million in public and private investment.
- Canandaigua Finger Lakes Resort: Work has re-started on the mixed-use redevelopment at the Finger Lakes Resort on the shoreline of Canandaigua Lake. The project now includes over 100 hotel rooms branded by Hilton, as well as 44 condominium living spaces and meeting space for over 500 people. The project represents another public-private project, with support from the City of Canandaigua and the Ontario County Industrial Development Agency. Total project investment is estimated at \$53 million.



These three projects will create an unparalleled meeting and convention market that will feed niche retail, dining, and craft beverage offerings envisioned for downtown. When coupled with the initial mixed-use development in the lakefront district, a vibrant economic engine evolves that will ensure sustained success for the surrounding region; and most importantly, downtown Canandaigua.

The City is currently exploring thematic and physical connections between the downtown district and the lakefront to ensure that these investments, coupled with DRI implementation, create a mutually sustaining business environment for both districts.

Other areas outside of the downtown core have also seen tremendous investment from both public and private sector partners. These projects include:

- Veterans Administration Hospital Campus Expansion: Phase I of this \$300 million modernization project commenced in the spring of 2018. The Veterans Administration has enhanced its commitment to current and future veterans with this investment, as well as to the Canandaigua community. Phase I of the project represents a \$144 million redevelopment and enhancement of existing facilities and the development of a new outpatient clinic for our nation's veterans.
- Hurley Building Renovation: The City of Canandaigua recently completed work on this city services project, with over \$5 million in local investment. The building, now features a state-of-the-art local government facility, with public work headquarters, City Council chambers, and public meeting space.

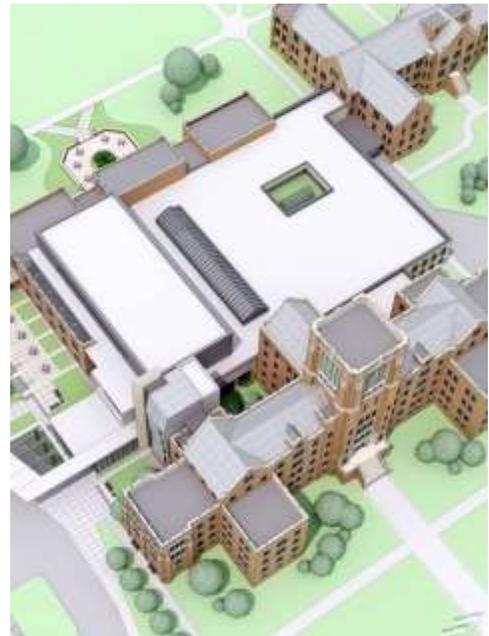
These areas also have impending projects that will serve as additional catalysts to downtown revitalization. Projects under construction, permitted, or in development review include:

- Factory 243: A development group has commenced work on a mixed-use development located at 243 Gorham Street, at the former G.W. Lisk Manufacturing site, which has been vacant for nearly two decades. The project proposes 88 market rate apartment units along with commercial space. The developer will demolish 40,000 s.f. of buildings and renovate 79,950 s.f. Factory 243 represents nearly \$17 million in committed investment.
- University of Rochester—Thompson Hospital Expansion: The University of Rochester has commenced work on a new ICU and Pulmonary Center on the hospital campus, representing \$11 million in construction investment. This project is also in very close proximity to downtown, and will generate new nursing and physician employment, adding over \$1 million in new payroll, sustaining the market for residential and commercial development in downtown.

Each of these projects represents the momentum currently being experienced in Canandaigua. DRI investment will capture the economic energy of these recent and impending projects and spark additional demand for the downtown mixed-use development envisioned in this application, our comprehensive plan, and the vision expressed by the Canandaigua community.

The F.F. Thompson and Veterans Administration projects collectively represent an over \$300 million expansion of the health care sector in the Canandaigua community.

This presents an immense opportunity to attract and retain residents and to generate economic activity from the corresponding workforces.



Building on Job Creation Momentum

Canandaigua's vision for downtown is a vital urban core; a destination not only for visitors, shoppers, and diners, but a "24-hour district," with upper-story living opportunities serving a wide range of the region's workers.

In the last five years, the City of Canandaigua has seen over 600 new jobs created. Our major employers predict retention of existing employees and the addition of a diverse set of entry level, skilled, and professional employees. These employers include:

- University of Rochester Health System: The City of Canandaigua is home to Thompson Health Center, the regional outpost for the University of Rochester. The University currently employs over 1,300 people in the Canandaigua area, and recently announced the impending addition of nearly 400 new professional staff to the center, located immediately adjacent to downtown.
- Veterans Administration Hospital: The Veterans Administration currently employs over 1,800 people in the region over a range of professional, administrative, and skilled positions. The recent announcement of over \$300 million in new and revitalized facilities has the potential to add even more employees to this impressive economic engine situated close to downtown Canandaigua.
- Akoustis Technologies: Akoustis, a telecommunications software and hardware firm, retained all of its 30 high-tech professional jobs located at the site of the former Smart Systems Technology and Commercialization Center when it acquired the facility in 2017. It recently announced the addition of over 100 new jobs, similar in profile to the existing headcount, at the location just outside of downtown Canandaigua.
- Pactiv Packaging: Immediately adjacent to the City, large-scale plastic packaging manufacturer Pactiv, LLC boasts over 800 employees at its facility in the Town of Geneva. The firm recently announced plans to increase its workforce by as many as 35 employees. The Canandaigua location is a nationwide finalist for this expansion.

Due to the significant economic challenges associated with the redevelopment of historic structures, we have been unable to create the living opportunities valued by these new workers. The City seeks to capitalize on the nationwide trend of downsized living opportunities by creating affordable, accessible living opportunities in the upper stories of our historic architectural stock. In accordance with our comprehensive plan, we will leverage DRI investment to create accessibility in upper story units, and to leverage owner investment to ensure that rents are affordable.

The community's economic development strategy suggests a diversified job creation approach, to ensure sustainable long-term growth. Rather than focusing on one or two major employers to support economic success, the City's strategy encourages support of small business development and expansion. These programs will ensure continued diversification of niche retail and restaurant offerings, attractive to the region's workforce. This vision has been supported by both our comprehensive plan steering committee and the extensive public engagement process used to develop this application and the associated revitalization strategies.

With support from New York State and our private sector partners, the City of Canandaigua can accelerate the realization of our shared vision with the Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development Council for a vital urban center in the Finger Lakes Region.

Attractiveness

Downtown Canandaigua is vibrant, attractive central business district; with both a formidable groundwork of existing attributes and assets, as well as opportunities for additional improvements that when realized, will enhance the vibrancy and appeal of the district to residents and visitors ranging in age, ability, ethnicity, and cultural background.

Currently, downtown Canandaigua has an incredibly strong set of assets that culminate to create very high quality of life for residents in the region. These include:

- Pedestrian and Cyclist Amenities: In 2013, the City completed an aggressive streetscape upgrade in downtown, geared toward enhancing pedestrian and cyclist amenities, including wide sidewalks, mid-block crossings, and bicycle lanes. These improvements ensure a safe, accessible environment for pedestrians and cyclists alike, guaranteeing access for those of all ages and abilities to amenities throughout downtown.
- Access to Fresh, Affordable Food: The Canandaigua Farmers Market offers year-round access to fresh, affordable food with ready access to residents of downtown and the surrounding neighborhoods. This market, the only one in Ontario County run by farmers, offers produce from approximately 30 local vendors throughout the year. The market offers a wide variety of quality vegetables, fruits, flowers, meats, eggs, freshly baked goods, and other locally grown and produced products.

In addition to the Farmers Market, the proposed investment district includes a small, neighborhood-scale grocery store, easily walkable for the downtown district and surrounding neighborhoods, and affordable to a broad segment of the community.

- Access to Health Care: Canandaigua offers state-of-the-art healthcare services from a variety of excellent providers contributing immensely to the overall quality of life for City residents. Thompson Health includes a 113-bed hospital with a full scope of medical services, as well as specialized senior communities, and a Continuing Care Center. Thompson Health was named the 2014 recipient of the Pinnacle Award from the Healthcare Association of New York State and recognized for two consecutive years as a Top Performer on Key Quality Measures by the Joint Commission.

In 2012, the organization became an affiliate of the University of Rochester Medical Center, allowing it to broaden the spectrum of services and bring more high-quality specialists to



Canandaigua. Rochester Regional Health and Finger Lakes Health also provide medical services in the greater Canandaigua area.

The Veterans Administration Hospital provides a wide range of inpatient and outpatient medical services to veterans living in Upstate New York, and currently serves more than 6,000 veterans on a monthly basis. With a significant redevelopment of the VA Campus underway, the scope of services available and the number of veterans served monthly are due to increase.

- Access to Educational Opportunities:

The Canandaigua City School District provides high-quality public education and serves as an activity hub for children, parents, and families. The high school graduation rate of 91% is notably higher than the New York State average of 78%, while expenditures per pupil are 24% below average for Ontario County and almost 60% below the New York State average. In 2018, Canandaigua Academy received a Silver Medal from the US News Best High Schools in America and ranked in the top 10% of all High Schools nationwide. In addition to a strong school district, the Canandaigua area also hosts affordable, high-quality post-secondary education. Finger Lakes Community College (FLCC) is located just outside the City and enrolls over 6,500 students, and offers over 50 areas of study



- Access to Recreational Opportunities: The City of Canandaigua offers a wide variety of recreational activities for people of all ages and abilities. Canandaigua Lake, identified by over 80% of respondents in our public engagement effort as the element with which they most closely

associate the City's identity, is located immediately adjacent to downtown Canandaigua. This seventeen-mile lake is a regional draw for boating, fishing and water sports and the picturesque lakefront offers numerous recreation areas and activities.



In addition to the wide variety of public parks and beaches located in close proximity to downtown, Roseland Waterpark, the largest waterpark in the Finger Lakes Region, is less than a five-

minute drive. Bristol Mountain Ski Resort, located approximately twenty minutes from Downtown Canandaigua, offers over 30 trails at varying degrees of difficulty. Complimenting the ski park is Bristol Mountain Aerial Adventure Park – a high ropes course at the top of the mountain

consisting of various climbing and obstacles and zip-lines off the mountain. All the aforementioned amenities not only contribute to the high quality of life our residents enjoy, but also make the area extremely attractive to visitors and potential residents.

City leadership and key stakeholders will build on these assets by leveraging several opportunities for investment and improvement, including:

- Mixed Use-Development Opportunities: The community has taken great care to preserve the architectural assets in its downtown core. While the first-floor commercial spaces have maintained regular and largely continuous occupancy, the upper floors have remained nearly vacant. DRI funds can be leveraged to enhance access to these floors and to support building owners in redevelopment for a range of residential and office uses.



- Workforce Housing: Opening access to upper floors will result in a more diverse housing stock; ensuring opportunities for affordable housing options for the region’s workforce in an attractive, vital, urban environment.



- Community Agriculture: The City and key stakeholders have identified locations for community gardens and other locally-driven fresh food opportunities. DRI investment can be used to bolster these efforts, providing increased access to affordable, fresh fruits and vegetables for all populations.

These forward-looking strategies, combined with existing community assets set the stage for Canandaigua, and particularly downtown, to be an attractive residential, shopping, dining, entertainment, and investment district.

Quality of Life

Virtually every community in the Finger Lakes can boast about an unmatched quality of life. The City of Canandaigua stands out among these not just because of its incredible natural beauty and unparalleled architectural resources, but most importantly because these attributes have been developed as a result of well-executed strategies and sound planning principles. As a result of collaborative, inclusive strategy development, and pinpoint execution, the Canandaigua community is poised to maximize impact of DRI investment. Specific quality of life strategies include:

Sound Planning Principles: All community and economic development efforts in the City of Canandaigua are guided by our comprehensive plan. In 2019, the City's Comprehensive Plan Review Committee unanimously endorsed principles associated with downtown revitalization, including:

- *Supporting a mix of specialty retail and convenience services:* The plan has helped support curation of an amazing collection of niche retail and service options.
- *Encouraging more restaurants and gathering spaces:* Capitalizing on the farm-to-table movement, and our proximity to local agriculture, the plan has supported development of a mix of diverse food and beverage purveyors.
- *Expanding utilization of upper floors and promoting mixed use development:* The district has a remarkably low vacancy rate on first floors, but in most buildings, the upper stories are largely vacant. This represents a significant opportunity for DRI investment, and is supported by the comprehensive plan and recent public engagement efforts.
- *Improving the pedestrian experience:* Over the last decade, the City has re-focused its transportation emphasis on multi-modal strategies, including enhancement of the pedestrian experience. The next phase of investment will focus on patterning all downtown streets after the successful streetscape project on Main Street.
- *Enhancing parking and wayfinding:* The plan supports acquisition and development of additional parking opportunities, and improving signage and connections to existing lots.
- *Expanding streetscape enhancements:* The plan suggests patterning streetscape enhancements, including planters, benches, lighting, etc. onto blocks adjacent to Main Street.
- *Expanding streetlighting and security measures:* The plan encourages lighting and camera improvements throughout the district. The City is in the initial stages of upgrading decorative streetlights along Main Street with energy efficient LED fixtures.
- *Creating a unified branding strategy for the City capitalizing on the vital urban core:* In 2019, the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee recommended that the City embark on a strategic branding exercise to support unified design elements in City signage, streetscape design, and marketing materials.

In addition to, and building upon the principles of the comprehensive plan, the City has adopted a complete streets policy and accompanying active transportation plan. As street projects and capital plans come online, City leadership identifies opportunities to enhance the multi-modal nature of the transportation network.

Joint Economic Development Program: In 2018, the City and Town of Canandaigua embarked on an exercise to identify opportunities for collaboration in the delivery of services to residents. Among the

shared services opportunities was the use of a joint economic development agency to market the region for potential business development. Earlier this year, the Canandaigua Town Board and City Council each passed resolutions establishing a joint authority in partnership with the Canandaigua Area Chamber of Commerce. The Board of Directors for this agency is being seated presently. The top two priorities to be addressed by the agency are protection of Canandaigua Lake and the revitalization of downtown Canandaigua.

Sustainability: The City of Canandaigua has embraced and committed to an organizational and community emphasis on environmental stewardship, resilience, and sustainable practices. The community's commitment to environmental stewardship enabled the City to earn recognition from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation as a Bronze Certified Climate Smart Community in April, 2019. Sustainability initiatives facilitated by the City include:

- *Citizen committee and staff coordinator:* There have been several groups dedicated to sustainability in the City. In 2018, the Mayor asked one group to support the City in pursuit of our Climate Smart Community designation. Additionally, an executive level staff member was assigned as a support element to the committee and the effort.
- *Energy audits, fleet assessment, and benchmarking:* The City assessed nearly 85% of its building inventory and its entire fleet for issues surrounding energy consumption. Additionally, City Council has committed to participating in statewide benchmarking of municipal operations for energy consumption.
- *Solar array development:* In 2017, the City commissioned its first public solar array on a 21-acre brownfield site, formerly a solid waste transfer station and landfill. The array generates enough power to offset nearly 95% of all City energy usage.
- *Composting program:* City leadership built upon the results of a very successful pilot program to launch a full-scale food waste composting program in 2018. Within weeks, demand for composting outstripped the initial forecasts and the City continues to expand.
- *Electric vehicle charging:* In 2017, the City installed a two-port electric vehicle charging station in downtown to support alternative fuel vehicles.
- *LED Streetlighting:* The City has taken advantage of progressive changes to State law in order to acquire streetlights throughout downtown and replace them with energy efficient LED lighting on decorative fixtures.

Downtown Management: The City of Canandaigua is proud to be partners in downtown management and revitalization with the Canandaigua Business Improvement District (BID). The BID was created in 1992 to promote, beautify and improve downtown for residents, property owners, merchants, and visitors. The boundaries of the BID align almost perfectly with the proposed DRI area, and the district includes more than 100 businesses ranging from specialty shops and clothing to ethnic restaurants and service providers.

The BID is managed by a not-for-profit organization, the Downtown Canandaigua Business Management Association. The organization has a nine-member board, a Downtown Manager and is funded by the City of Canandaigua, a special property tax assessment, and fundraising events.

In addition to enhancing the high quality of life for our residents and bringing the community together, the events and services that the BID, and the Downtown Merchants Association, provide to downtown Canandaigua help attract new residents, businesses, and tourists to the area.

Public Support

The City of Canandaigua engaged in a robust public feedback effort to gain insights from partner organizations, key stakeholders, and local leaders on elements of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative application. The outreach focused on issues including a unified vision for downtown, identification of a compact, walkable district, and prioritization of actionable investments.

Based upon our feedback needs, City leadership developed surveys focusing on four areas of interest. These included:



- Insight into the stakeholders' reasons for living, working, visiting, and/or investing in Canandaigua as a whole
- Insight into the stakeholders' vision for a successful downtown Canandaigua into the future
- An understanding of the stakeholders' viewpoint of the geographic concentration for investment
- A prioritization of stakeholder enthusiasm for various investment opportunities for DRI funds

As such, we established four engagement questions:

- *"I love Canandaigua because of its..."* (open-ended question allowing up to five responses)
- *"In ten years, a successful downtown Canandaigua has..."* (open-ended question allowing up to five responses)
- *"Where would you concentrate investment?"* (participants encouraged to draw investment district on a map provided by the team)
- *"How would you invest grant funding?"* (participants to choose up to four selections from eight categories)

Our initial public engagement effort was strategically focused on several key events:

- **Public Forum:** City Council's Planning and Development Committee hosted a public forum, involving all Councilmembers and the general public, whereby stakeholders actively engaged in feedback activities.
- **Winter Farmers' Market:** The Canandaigua Merchants Association hosts a winter market at a City-owned parking lot in downtown. Our team set up a table with investment priority questionnaires at the event. This enabled us to gain insights from regional residents who use downtown to shop for fresh food.
- **Downtown Wine Walk:** The Merchants Association hosts a quarterly wine and shopping event in the BID District. Our team set up a table at the event registration area, with investment priority questionnaires at the event. We were able to gain an understanding from residents and visitors to the City at this very large event.

- YMCA: The YMCA offered our team an opportunity to set up a table in their lobby for several hours on a weekday morning. We did so with investment priority questionnaires. This site enabled us to get insights from stakeholders leveraging downtown for recreation and health enhancement.
- Library: The Wood Library offered our team a space in its lobby on a busy morning to gain insight from its patrons. We were able to tap the general public for insights at this location.

Residents eagerly engaged in these exercises, and demonstrated that their community pride is rooted in a unique urban feel, complemented by small-town scale. Stakeholders have identified both public and private investments that will leverage DRI funding to enhance a compact, walkable district, prominently contributing to the network of vital urban centers around the Finger Lakes Region.



Stakeholders envision a thriving, vibrant district, with unique retail, culinary, and craft beverage offerings, fueled by a robust, diverse housing stock, situated along walkable, attractive streetscapes. To get there, residents and other downtown stakeholders favor investing in incentives to small businesses, enhanced open spaces, arts and cultural opportunities, and improved housing alternatives. Stakeholders seek to preserve their small-town scale, and hope to drive investment close to the current core Business Improvement District.

Support of Local Leaders and Stakeholders

As part of its engagement efforts, City leadership not only worked with individual residents and stakeholders, but also identified critical partners in the business and non-profit communities who will be instrumental in shaping and implementing the Strategic Investment Plan. The City held three engagement sessions, two with the leadership of the Canandaigua Business Improvement District and one with the executive committee of the Canandaigua Area Chamber of Commerce.

- BID Board of Directors: The initial engagement exercise with the Business Improvement District was an overview of the DRI program and a simple brainstorming session to identify potential application themes. Following the larger public engagement effort, our team returned to the BID Board and workshopped specific areas of the application to validate both the results of the public surveys, and the extrapolated insights. In each case, our efforts were successful. The BID Board unanimously endorsed the findings of the engagement effort as well as the proposed vision statement for the application.
- Chamber Executive Committee: Our team also conducted a session with the Chamber of Commerce's executive committee, whereby we provided an overview of survey results and critical

elements of the DRI application. The Committee offered solid insights regarding program elements, and unanimously endorsed the findings of the public engagement and vision.

Commitment by Leaders to Strategic Investment Plan

In 2019, the City's Comprehensive Plan Update Committee unanimously affirmed the comprehensive plan's explicit goal to *"...invigorate downtown's role as a cultural, economic and social center of the community and promote downtown as a safe, inviting and vital area for community activity...."* To advance this goal, City Council has already taken a number of critical steps.

Earlier this year, City Council authorized the formation of a Joint Economic Development Agency with the Town of Canandaigua. This effort was born from a regionwide exercise in 2017, that called together over 500 civic and business leaders from around Canandaigua to identify economic development priorities for the City and Town. The group identified six strategic focus areas for the City and Town as it relates to economic development—two of which focused on downtown as a vital urban center. This effort will serve as the basis for a strategic economic development plan for the City and Town, to be executed by the joint agency.

The Canandaigua City Council unanimously authorized the City Manager to advance the principles of this application, with a clear understanding of the path toward development and implementation of the Strategic Investment Plan. Their commitment has been reinforced by the strong public engagement effort leading to this application, and an intractable belief in the vision outlined herein.

Transformative Opportunities

Canandaigua’s vision for downtown imagines a “cultural, economic, and social center...a vital urban core—thriving and vibrant amidst a backdrop of unmatched natural and architectural beauty...” This vision is wholeheartedly supported by the City’s comprehensive plan and aligns perfectly with recent public engagement efforts. To that end, the City has worked with community stakeholders and private sector investors to identify a series of redevelopment projects that, with DRI support, are implementable in the near term and represent an opportunity to reshape the economic future of downtown and the region.



Mixed-Use Redevelopment

The City’s Comprehensive Plan identifies the provision of a range of housing opportunities, preservation and enhancement of historic and architectural assets, and the fostering of unique retail and dining opportunities as strong priorities for future development. Additionally, the most recent public engagement efforts showcase stakeholder alignment on these issues, with the highest response rates favoring the development of housing and support for small businesses in downtown.

To that end, program stakeholders have identified several mixed-use redevelopment opportunities that have the potential to significantly impact downtown:

- **Labelon Redevelopment:** This prominent vacant structure, in the heart of downtown, represents the opportunity to address a series of community development objectives. The 80,000 s.f. facility was the site of over 100 years of industrial use, resulting in a range of environmental issues. Recently, a new owner has acquired the facility and announced plans for a fifty unit residential development on the upper floors, and retail and restaurant opportunities on the ground floor. DRI funds can be leveraged against significant private funding, as well as RESTORE NY funds to support environmental remediation, building envelope stabilization and modernization, and build-out of the finished product.
- **Niagara Street Rail District:** Niagara Street, at the north end of the investment district, is home to an historic rail terminal, which has been partially renovated for use as a restaurant and brew pub. The City has received a concept proposal for the redevelopment of the remainder of the site, with additional public open space and connectivity to regional bike and walking trails, outdoor seating for restaurants, and additional commercial development opportunities. The project is in its conceptual stage, but is situated in an area ripe for redevelopment.

Adaptive Reuse Opportunities

When given the open-ended opportunity to identify defining characteristics of the Canandaigua community, its robust collection of historic architecture was the second highest submitted attribute in a recent public engagement exercise. Historic preservation and restoration are also identified as priorities in the City's comprehensive plan, and is simply a best practice in any downtown redevelopment strategy.

The City and our key stakeholders have identified several ripe opportunities for revitalizing prominent historic architectural assets in downtown. These include:



- **Post Office Redevelopment:** The Canandaigua Area YMCA acquired the historic U.S. Post Office at the north end of the investment district, and has repurposed several areas of the property for use in delivery of its programs. The facility is extensive and requires additional investment to fully realize its potential as an economic engine. The YMCA has partnered with the University of Rochester to explore the provision of health care services at the site, and is consulting with the State Historic Preservation Office on opportunities for restoration of historic exterior elements on the property. Additionally, the YMCA has received significant financial commitment from regional stakeholders, which can leverage DRI and other private funds to support external preservation efforts and the reprogramming of the interior space to provide for an integrated community health asset.
- **Acme Grocery Store Redevelopment:** Another historic architectural asset that has yet to reach its full economic potential is this former grocery market. Great effort has been invested in restoring the exterior of the structure, but behind the recently restored façade is an empty shell without even the most basic of infrastructure, including utilities. There has been interest expressed by several restaurateurs, but the building requires substantial improvements to make it usable. The property requires a significant investment before any productive use could take place. The property is in a prime location and would be an ideal spot providing plenty of outdoor dining space for a restaurant or small brewing operation. DRI funding could be used to leverage private investment or attract a developer interested in sharing the cost to bring the building up to code.
- **Upper Story Accessibility Projects:** The Acme Market is representative of much of Canandaigua's architectural assets. A sharp exterior gives the impression of economic vitality, while the internal property tells a different story. In many of the best cases, downtown buildings have unique, vibrant uses on the first floor, with very low vacancy at street level. Meanwhile, the vast majority of the upper story inventory remains vacant. The City will leverage DRI funds to address the largest stumbling block to this redevelopment—accessibility. The DeCity will work with property

owners to identify opportunities for shared elevator banks and other measures to ensure ready, affordable access to upper floors.

- **Boutique Hotel Development:** Canandaigua’s eastern periphery is dotted with limited service hotels, and the lakefront district has two significant full-service hotels currently under development. In order to attract a full range of travelers with a diversity of lodging offerings, the City has worked with several developers interested in leveraging historic assets to create a boutique hotel concept. The City has identified the historic Elks Lodge as one such opportunity for a 30-room, boutique hotel offering, which would capitalize on the diverse culinary and craft beverage options in the district, as well as the extensive retail shopping potential—all within steps of its front door.
- **Downtown Brewery District:** The City is currently home to four craft beverage producers within immediate proximity to the downtown district, with additional brewery concepts currently under development, and three more within a 10 minute drive of the City. Leveraging DRI and private sector funds, the City will identify adaptive reuse opportunities to promote the development of additional breweries and engage in cooperative marketing of the downtown as the Canandaigua Brewery District.

Infill Development

Identifying strategic opportunities to capitalize on remaining land assets is essential for diversification of revenue and ensuring a critical mass of economic activity. New development will be held to sound architectural standards to ensure continuity of urban design elements, and will be filled using the same strategic targets as adaptive reuse projects (diverse, accessible housing, unique retail and dining, etc). The community has identified two critical projects for leveraging the economic power of available land, including:

- **Brownfield Redevelopment:** The City’s comprehensive plan cites South Main Street, the corridor immediately south of the proposed investment district, as a critical link between downtown and the lakefront district. At the southern boundary of downtown and South Main is a former Brownfield site, formerly known as Tom’s Mobil. In 2018, the City partnered with the NYSDEC and the Office of the State Comptroller to prepare a clean-up plan for the abandoned service station and negotiate the necessary indemnification and releases against state and local liens. Property clean-up is underway, and the City is already receiving interest from developers for potential infill concepts. DRI funding will leverage locally committed funds to prepare the site for development, and incentivize an appropriate design and use.



Before



After

- Community-Driven Agriculture: The City of Canandaigua has been recognized by the NYSDEC for our investments into both sustainability and the quality of life of its residents. In order to continue advancing those efforts, as well as addressing accessibility of fresh, healthy food for all populations, the City seeks to develop a community garden. The City would like to establish a Community Garden to address some of these gaps. The City has identified a community-owned parcel in the DRI district to support such an effort. DRI funding and support from interested private and non-profit partners would be used to advance the project. Regionally, similar programs have been successful in addressing health concerns of residents, equity issues related to food access, and community engagement. Canandaigua seeks to build on these successful models.

Parking and Wayfinding

In addition to creating a safe, inviting environment for pedestrians and other modes of active transportation, and in order to ensure economically viable development, we must also identify strategic opportunities for parking. A well-developed, cohesive, unified wayfinding system supports all modes of transportation. The City's comprehensive plan identifies opportunities for improvement to parking policy, wayfinding, and facilities. These initial observations resulted in the development of a parking master plan, which the City has spent years incrementally implementing. DRI funds may be used to accelerate the recommendations of the report and to develop a network of cohesive wayfinding tools. Potential projects include:



- Main Street Parking Deck: With the impending redevelopment of the Labelon Building, and momentum enhanced by the DRI award, the City will experience an even more acute parking shortage. Land available immediately adjacent to Labelon can be repurposed for parking and a deck installed to add additional spaces. This, coupled with inventory maximization efforts described below, will ensure that future residents and visitors to downtown, whether local, regional, or even broader, will have access to a convenient, safe walking option, walkable to all that downtown has to offer.
- Unified Branding and Comprehensive Wayfinding: One shortfall identified in the City's parking study was a lack of cohesive wayfinding necessary to maximize parking inventory. The City has available inventory at many valuable time windows, but assets are obscured or difficult to locate. A unified, easy to follow wayfinding system will ensure that visitors are guided to the best solution for their parking needs.

Public Space Activation

Creating a vibrant, thriving downtown means finding unique points of engagement between public and private spaces. The DRI public engagement effort resulted in the highest number of respondents identifying open space as a critical need, and the comprehensive plan identifies the improvement of streetscape elements and fostering gathering spaces as top priorities. Stakeholders have identified two signature projects to support these strategies:

- Phoenix Street Public Plaza: The location and profile of Phoenix Street, in the core of the proposed investment district, makes it a strong candidate for a pedestrian plaza. City Council’s strategic plan endorses the concept, as do the property owners in the area. DRI funds would be used to leverage City resources to implement streetscape updates, and to augment private sector funding for individual properties. This placemaking project would enhance the pedestrian experience, contribute to a strong quality of life for our residents, and attract visitors from around the region for dining, shopping, and entertainment.



- Rear Façade Program: The vast majority of the City’s public, off-street parking is located to the rear of Main Street-facing buildings. Additionally, smaller retail and office spaces and the City’s farmers market (among other amenities) are located a block off of the main thoroughfare. Many existing retail spaces have opportunities to access first floor tenancies the rear of their buildings. Blight is most likely to pervade in these areas, as they are “out of sight” for a majority of the City’s traffic. Addressing blight and improving building and parking lot conditions in these areas will result in higher visibility for retailers, and more functional space in these increasingly visible areas.

These proposed investments align perfectly with the Downtown Revitalization Initiative’s objective of creating vital urban centers; and with our local vision of downtown Canandaigua as an economic, cultural, and social center to the region.

Administrative Capacity

Effective advancement of Downtown Revitalization Initiative objectives requires clarity of vision, collaborative leadership, and disciplined execution. New York State's investment must be carefully cultivated in order to leverage additional capital and facilitate impactful projects that will accelerate progress toward our strategic goals and objectives.

The City of Canandaigua is well-prepared and eager to rise to this challenge. Our team has a proven track record of stewardship of state investment, a strong record of performance in partnering with New York State in economic development, infrastructure, and environmental stewardship.

Since 2017, the City has been awarded and successfully executed nearly \$4.7 million in state grant funding; leveraging over \$12 million in additional public and private sector investment, and generating an additional 60 full-time, permanent jobs. Our collaborations with New York State have been well-managed, delivering on promised objectives within targeted budgets and on prescribed schedules.

The Downtown Revitalization Initiative will be managed by Canandaigua City Manager John D. Goodwin. John has served as the City's chief executive and lead economic developer since 2017, and has been in leadership roles in Canandaigua since 2014. He has over a decade of service to local governments in New York.

John is supported by a well-developed team of internal staff leadership and strategic partners in economic development. Assistant City Manager Rob Richardson, Planning Director Rick Brown, and Director of Public Works Jim Sprague contribute decades of public sector management experience; shepherding major infrastructure projects and guiding strategic planning and development efforts in the City.

In addition to our outstanding internal staff team, the City has a wide range of partners in economic development, all of whom have supported the advancement of this application, and have committed to supporting the City in advancing the development and execution of the Strategic Investment Plan. These partners include, but are not limited to:

- Canandaigua Business Improvement District: The Business Improvement District (BID) has been a steadfast partner to the City in downtown revitalization. Executive Director Denise Chaapel is an experienced economic developer, owner of 2 small businesses, and lifelong City resident.
- Ontario County Economic Development Corporation: The OCEDC and Ontario County IDA maintain the lead role for economic development in Ontario County. Executive Director Mike Manikowski has shepherded a period of unparalleled growth in the County.
- Canandaigua Area Chamber of Commerce: The Chamber of Commerce has been a longstanding collaborator in advancing the community's economic vision, and along with the Town of Canandaigua, has partnered with the City on a new, regional economic development approach.

These partners represent a tight-knit, well-aligned team of experts in the field of economic development, and share in our vision of Canandaigua as a vital urban center. Their vast experience in downtown revitalization, economic advancement, and community development, coupled with their understanding of the administrative and fiduciary responsibilities associated with administering major state and federal investments, will ensure that Downtown Revitalization Initiative funds are invested and managed according to the highest possible financial standard.

In the End...



At the close of the day, for the City of Canandaigua, and our historic downtown to succeed, we must be part of something larger. Our vision, our cadre of committed local investors, and our drive to reinvigorate an historic set of community assets must align with the region’s vision for economic success. To be successful as a region, we must create a network of vital urban centers. Canandaigua is poised to contribute as a part of that network.

Canandaigua’s vision for our downtown is as an economic, cultural, and social engine to the region. Our intent, and our invested effort to date is to align with the region’s strategy to take advantage of the collective impact that occurs when we all are rowing in the same direction.

Canandaigua’s DRI concepts are poised to contribute to the regional strategy via:



- Serving as the region’s showcase for **the food and beverage industry**. Our downtown district, which is evolving as a food destination, boasts a tremendous diversity of craft beverage opportunities and an amazing collection of local and world cuisine. In addition, we are the proud home of NY Kitchen—where the world is exposed to New York’s agricultural bounty.
- Creating an amazing home for **Next Generation Manufacturing** entities like Akoustis---leveraging DRI funds to develop the entertainment district and mixed-use development that world-class employees are expecting, and cementing the Finger Lakes region as home to the cutting edge of manufacturers.
- Creating affordable and attractive housing and entertainment options to ensure a safe, vibrant lifestyle for those regional residents who are moving from **poverty to prosperity**.
- Ensuring a **quality of life** that is rivaled across the nation, attracting the best talent, and proving the vitality of the Finger Lakes as a destination for investment, job creation, and innovation.

Capitalizing on sound assets. Catalyzing engaged, local investors. Realizing a vision for success.

ATTACHMENT A



Key: ★ Adaptive Reuse ★ Infill Development ★ Public Space Activation ★ Upper Story Access