

# We Are Canton. We Are Ready.



New York Downtown Revitalization Initiative Proposal  
Round 4  
2019

**BASIC INFORMATION**

North Country Regional Economic Development Council

Village of Canton

Downtown Canton

St. Lawrence County

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## **VISION FOR DOWNTOWN**

Canton's beautiful downtown center is the economic, social, and cultural magnet of the St. Lawrence Valley. Our thriving local businesses, exciting recreational experiences, diverse housing, outstanding educational opportunities, and unique heritage attract residents and visitors alike. Our Village's strong sense of place encourages connection, innovation, and entrepreneurship.

We are committed to providing residents and visitors a vital, sustainable, and diverse community in which to live, work, learn and play.

## JUSTIFICATION

### **Why Canton?**

Canton is a vibrant North Country community situated in the center of the St. Lawrence Valley, both geographically and economically. All roads leading across the North Country - from Canada and from U.S. points west and south - pass through Canton's lively downtown. The people who choose to live in Canton feel a genuine sense of community and are committed to working together to make it a great place to call home.

The Village's charming, Victorian-era downtown Main Street district is listed on both the national and state historic registries. The mixed-use buildings on Main Street house retail shops, residences, a community arts center, an old-time movie theater, restaurants, a spa, and a health food store. Main Street is bookended by a picturesque downtown park at one end and the pristine Grasse River at the other.

As home to several large companies, two colleges, growing healthcare facilities, and many small businesses, Canton's economic community has continued to invest in growth. St. Lawrence Health System built a new \$23 million medical facility just outside the Village; Corning, Inc. retained 250 jobs with its \$100 million expansion; both St. Lawrence University and SUNY Canton have constructed new residence halls on their campuses, reflecting their strong continued growth; United Helpers spent \$850,000 purchasing and refurbishing a vacant building and creating an outpatient mental healthcare facility just a mile from downtown. Throughout downtown, substantial investments are evident, including updated façades, renewed inventory, new and renovated housing, brand new businesses filling vacant storefronts. This economic activity continues to draw new people seeking job opportunities at every level. The flow of new residents, paired with committed generational families, makes Canton a community where history and tradition are embraced as the next generation seeks to invest in an interesting and exciting community in which to raise their families and make their long-term home.

While Canton is economically strong and culturally vibrant, it is hard to ignore the evidence of hard times that we, like so many rural communities, have faced. Some communities want to recreate the past; they want their downtown to go back to how it used to be. While we respect and cherish the Canton that was, we have a bold plan – backed by substantial private investment – to leverage the \$10 million DRI award and bring our downtown to a new place of commercial, cultural, and entrepreneurial excellence. The anchor project in this plan will turn the derelict plaza at the center of downtown into a \$16 million mixed-use development offering diverse housing options, premium retail space, and – at its core – an entrepreneurship center, which will ignite innovation, spur the creation of new businesses, and ensure enduring economic and community growth.

Our core project is to replace the delapidated Midtown Plaza in the heart of Canton's downtown with a multi-use development that will include new commercial space, mixed-income housing units, and SUNY Canton's Entrepreneurship Center. The Center will offer a co-working space to accommodate small businesses and remote workers; entrepreneurship programming for students and community members; and a makerspace that will bring the latest technology to community members. This development will anchor our planned Downtown revitalization, bringing new housing and businesses and encouraging entrepreneurship and innovation that will spur continued economic growth.

Other projects proposed in this DRI proposal include new additional commercial and residential buildings to replace currently underutilized and dilapidated structures, innovative businesses like a juice/smoothie bar and yoga studio/school, arts and recreation projects that take advantage of our beautiful waterfront, and simple but important efforts such as beautifying our Main Street and ensuring that our downtown is welcoming to all. We also aim to enhance, social and cultural revitalization in Downtown Canton. The renovation of Canton's historic American Theater will create a performing arts center and community space for our community's rich arts tradition to thrive. Two projects seek to transform the underutilized waterfront properties along the Grasse River into commercial and residential centers where people can enjoy the natural beauty of the flowing water in the heart of downtown. A local nonprofit plans to expand on its nature-based development of Heritage Park and Willow Island, currently home to walking trails and interpretive signage and a sculpture park, by creating an outdoor public performance venue and a natural children's playscape in Canton Island Park.

### **Catchment Area**

The Village of Canton is home to more than 6,500 residents. According to the U.S. Census and American Community Survey estimates, Canton is growing: from 2010 to 2016, the Village of Canton saw a 4.7 percent increase in population. During that same time, the Village of Rensselaer Falls and the Town of Canton also grew in numbers. Canton is one of the only communities in the North Country region to see population gains during a time when most upstate New York communities are witnessing population decline.

Home to SUNY Canton and St. Lawrence University, Canton also hosts nearly 6,000 students who spend time and do business in Downtown Canton for ten months of the year. The universities are among the largest employers in our community; many faculty and staff come from out of town to work at those campuses five days a week and enjoy Canton as their business district of choice. These populations are steadily growing as enrollments at both schools are increasing, new programs are being added, and additional faculty and staff are being brought onboard.

The immediate catchment area also includes the Town of Canton (population just over 11,000), which encompasses the Villages of Canton and Rensselaer Falls and the Hamlets of Morley and Pyrites. The Town has also experienced growth over the last two decades.

The hub of the St. Lawrence Valley and a magnet for neighboring communities that do not have central business districts of their own, Canton draws as many as 25,000 people from a 25-mile radius. As the County seat, many government offices and other services are located in Canton. County and state agencies employ hundreds of people who are not Canton residents but who work in Canton, shop and dine in Canton, utilize Canton's recreational amenities, and choose Canton as their primary downtown destination.

Clearly, the reach of Downtown Canton's revitalization district is expansive: the population within 50 miles of Canton is more than 163,000 and 1.2 million people live within 100 miles of the downtown center. People traveling to or through Canton - whether going to work or the next town or driving from Canada or other parts of the U.S. to visit Northern New York - drive right down Main Street, directly through our Downtown Canton revitalization district.

As the seat of St. Lawrence County and the epicenter of the St. Lawrence Valley, the DRI award will not only transform Downtown Canton, but will create ripple effects across the County and beyond. While thousands call Canton home, tens of thousands come to Canton to work, study, and play.

Canton's active volunteer committee structure has created a vibrant grassroots community that is eager to invest its time and talents into our Village. Recognizing Canton's potential, stakeholders from diverse backgrounds and areas of expertise have invested hundreds of hours to create plans to strategically realize economic and community development through the Canton Community Action Plan, revitalize the Grasse River waterfront, improve the Village's walking and biking opportunities, rehabilitate its brownfield areas, and harness its commitment to sustainability and recreation. Most recently, Canton has undertaken a comprehensive planning process, which incorporates all of this work into a comprehensive development strategy for the entire town – with Downtown Canton at its center.

Canton has a unique economic development structure, with an advisory Consortium composed of several of the area's largest employers who contribute their expertise and finances to bolster efforts to grow the Canton economy. An Economic Development Steering Committee made up of representatives of the Consortium meet monthly to roll up their sleeves and help implement identified strategic priorities in cooperation with the Director of Economic Development and the municipal government. Specifically, the Steering Committee is responsible for drafting and implementing the Canton Community Action Plan, which includes input from a wide variety of stakeholders from both the private and public sectors.

The plan presented here reflects thousands of hours of collaborative planning by hundreds of engaged community members and private entities to capitalize on our strengths and continue to make Canton thrive.

## **DOWNTOWN IDENTIFICATION**

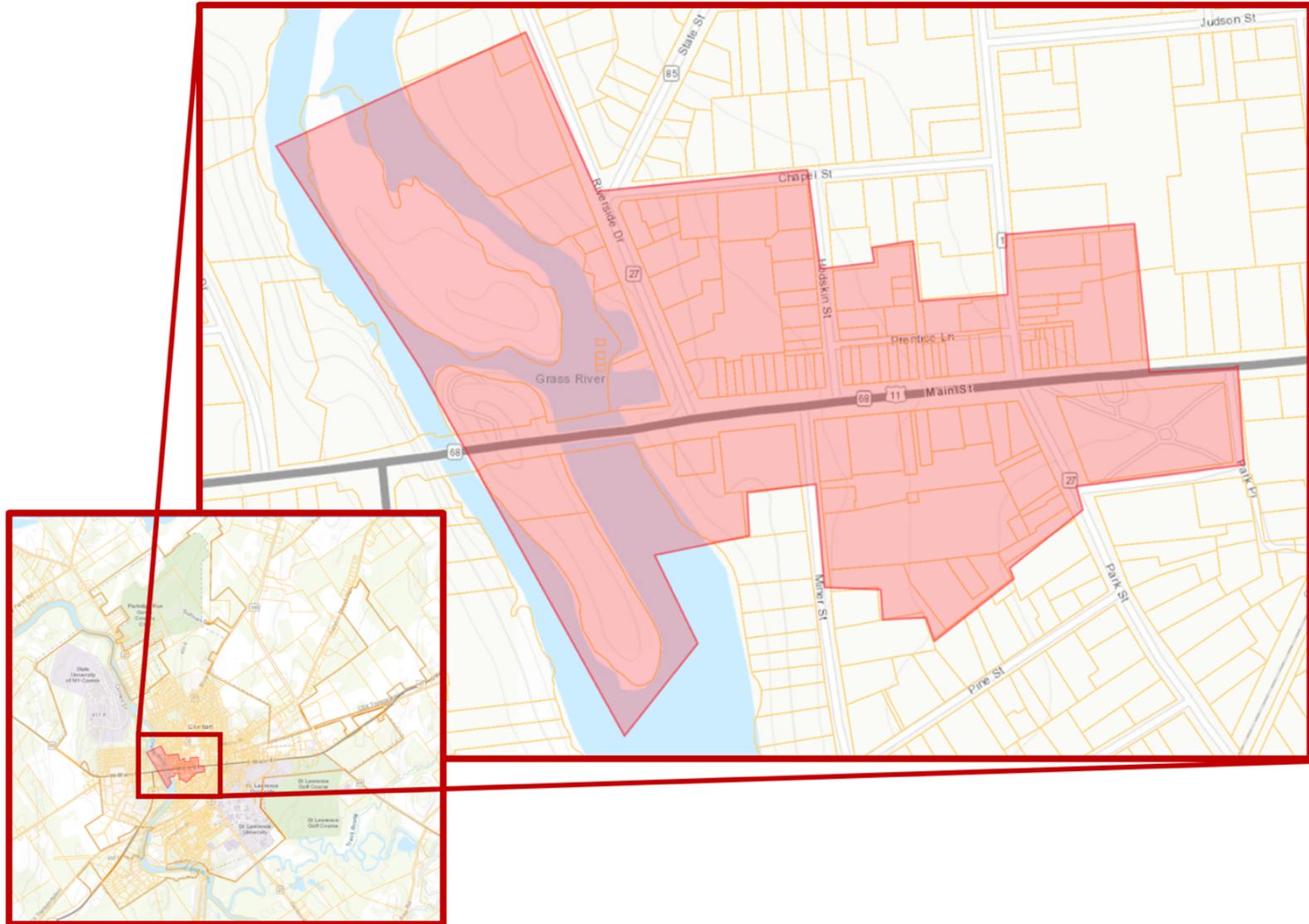
### **1) Boundaries of the Proposed DRI Area.**

Canton's proposed DRI area encompasses 46 acres, comprising 98 parcels of mixed commercial and residential properties. Downtown Canton is well defined by (a) geography; (b) historic commercial buildings and Victorian-era architecture; (c) transportation corridors, including the most heavily trafficked intersection in the County; and (d) zoning codes to encourage economic growth.

- a) Downtown Canton is a compact, cohesive commercial hub in the center of the Village, bordered by the natural beauty of the Village Green to the east and the Grasse River to the west.
- b) The proposed DRI area represents the best of historical Canton with its Victorian-era architecture and areas included on both federal and state historic registries; it also represents the best of what Canton is and could be, with underutilized properties ripe for renewal and revitalization.
- c) Canton's Main Street, including the bridge across the Grasse River, was recently rehabilitated, creating easier pedestrian navigation and clearer traffic patterns.
- d) The Village's zoning regulations support vibrant community and economic development and will facilitate plans outlined in the DRI. Upon adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, anticipated in summer 2019, the code will be audited and necessary zoning and code changes will be made to ensure consistency with recommendations from the Comprehensive Plan, which will further support downtown revitalization plans.

For maximum impact and commitment to increasing economic, cultural, and recreational investment, Downtown Canton's proposed DRI area is defined to include the traditional central business district along with portions of the Grasse River corridor and adjacent commercial areas. The Grasse River Waterfront Revitalization Plan, the Canton Village Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) Pre-Nomination Study, and the in-progress Comprehensive Plan give clear direction for priorities and projects that will enhance, beautify, and develop Canton's lovely downtown and make it not only a pass-through but a sought-after destination.

# Downtown Canton DRI Area Map



## **2) Past Investment, Future Investment Potential.**

The people and businesses of Canton have invested heavily in the Town and Village in recent years, demonstrating this community's belief in our exceptional economic potential.

### **Past Investment**

Consistent with state, regional, and local strategic planning and priority setting, Canton has made significant investments in Downtown Canton in the past decade and has several projects currently underway and in planning.

Critical remediation and redevelopment have taken place on Willow Island, Coakley and Falls Islands (West Main Street), the former Gray Lanes (now Rushton Place, 1 Main Street), and the former Bell's Garage (30 Riverside Drive). Public-private partnerships among the Town, Village, County, Grasse River Heritage Area Development Corporation, and private local developers has been instrumental in the success of these efforts. Public grants, such as Restore NY, Office of Parks and Recreation, and Historic Preservation, helped leverage the private investment to make these projects both economically feasible and overwhelmingly successful.

The Village and Town, along with a significant cadre of local stakeholders and volunteers, have undertaken substantial planning to facilitate local development and growth. With support primarily from the Department of State (DOS), several substantial plans have been completed, including a Grasse River Waterfront Revitalization Plan, a Canton Village Brownfield Opportunity Area Study, and feasibility studies for two pedestrian connector bridges/pathways and a whitewater play park. These planning documents, along with the Canton Community Action Plan, have provided a roadmap for development in our community. Grants from DOS have supported the development of a Grasse River Blueway Trail Plan, a marketing plan for the Grasse River Blueway Trail, the first phase of a waterfront revitalization plan for the Oswegatchie River, and a Master Trail Plan to identify options and plan for expansion and interconnection of existing trails. Canton is nearing the end of its comprehensive planning process, which will provide an overarching blueprint for the strategic development of Canton, with Downtown at its core.

Canton was awarded New York Main Street (NYMS) grants in 2006 and 2015. The results have created additional second-story housing units in several historic structures along Main Street, and led to improvement of façades and interiors of buildings on Main and Park Streets and beautification through streetscape enhancements. These awards require private investment to leverage the public funds, and have been successful in helping transform several downtown buildings.

A Community Development Block Grant micro-enterprise program award injected \$200,000 into Canton's small business economy in 2018. It assisted in the startup of three new enterprises in the Village, and bolstered three existing businesses in our central business district.

In addition to leveraging public investments in Canton, the business community throughout the Town and Village have stepped up their private investments, creating jobs and demonstrating their faith in Canton's growing economy.

Corning Incorporated underwent a \$14 million, 9,900-square-foot addition to their Canton plant in 2018, assisting in the retention of approximately 250 jobs at the Canton facility. Over the past four

years Corning has added nearly 60,000 square feet of manufacturing and warehousing space to the local plant.

Argent Development has constructed six of a planned 24-unit residential development that will be annexed into the Village.

Parker Maple Farm, Inc., created by a young local entrepreneur, manufactures maple products in 9,200 square feet of newly renovated production space in the Canton Industrial Park. The company have invested over \$100,000 in the project.

Rite-Aid has vacated its former location in the midtown plaza and constructed a new \$2.1 million facility on East Main Street. The 11,130-square-foot store, now a Walgreens, is about twice the size of the store that had been in the former Jubilee Plaza since 1980. Approximately six part-time employees and a second pharmacist have been hired to work at the new store.

The Best Western University Inn underwent a multi-million dollar renovation of the hotel, including refurbishment of all guest rooms, entrance, parking, conference and banquet spaces, and restaurant spaces.

Community Bank, N.A., has been in business in Canton for 150 years. In 2010, they showed their continued commitment to Canton by constructing an Operations Center that currently houses roughly 107 employees. The bank plans to expand the Canton location to accommodate growth projected by their strategic acquisition plan. Back office operations have been identified by the region as a strategic industry to target that is suitable to the North Country.

The table below shows a selection of recent investments in Canton’s Downtown and throughout the Village and Town.

Recent Investments	Impact/Space	Investment	Jobs
St. Lawrence Health System purchased 293 acres, constructed a medical office building, and are planning phase 2.	60,000 sf	\$28.5 million	60+ created
Corning has added nearly 60,000 square feet of manufacturing and warehousing space to the Corning Canton plant.	60,000 sf	\$20 million	250 created or retained
JProulx, Inc. (Save A Lot, Canton) invested \$770,000 to renovate a vacant space in the University Plaza creating a new grocery store.	Occupy previously vacant space	\$770,000	20 created
Community Bank, N.A. constructed a 21,000 square foot back office building and is looking to expand on the site, if municipal water becomes available.	21,000 sf	\$3.8 million	88 created or retained
Parker Maple Farm, Inc., started by a young entrepreneur, has transformed 9,200 square feet of vacant space in the Canton Industrial Park into a state of the art production facility.	9,200 sf	\$100,000	6 created
The Village of Canton has collaborated with Tesla to install a 1mw solar array which will provide electricity for all municipal operations.	Estimated @ million in savings over 20 years	\$36 million	n/a

The Canton Main Street Program renovated 7 properties downtown including the addition of 2 new 2 bedroom residential units, and the remodeling of 1 residential, 9 commercial and 1 civic units. Bike racks and recycling bins were added to the streetscape.	7 buildings renovated	\$420,700	n/a
Canton Microenterprise Grant Program (CDBG) supported three existing businesses, and three startup businesses in the Village. All six businesses are owned by Low-moderate income entrepreneurs. There are two new storefront spaces occupied as a result, and one office. One storefront was converted from an office, the other two spaces were vacant.	3 new commercial spaces occupied	\$217,600	3 new businesses, 3 expanded businesses
The Village recently finished upgrades at Bend in the River Park with the assistance of a \$100,000 grant from Senator Patty Ritchie. The project replaced all picnic tables, benches, and repaired the picnic pavilion roof. The pedestrian path was repaved, and a bathroom facility constructed.	Municipal park upgrades	\$135,000	n/a
Grasse River Heritage Area Development Corporation acquired and converted two nearly abandoned islands into Heritage Park. This project converted an eyesore at the edge of downtown Canton into one of its most distinctive and attractive features, drawing thousands of visitors annually within easy walking distance of the Main Street shops and eateries, and thereby exerting a significant positive impact on the downtown economy.	Renovated blighted properties to public park	\$477,500	n/a
Elizabeth Pier purchased an empty Main Street building, renovated entire building, upgraded electric and plumbing, and built a commercial kitchen with private investment. Her two business NOLA's General Store (new), and Fleur de Lis Estate Services now occupy what was vacant second story, and former office space.	Occupied vacant space; new retail space	\$350,000 NOLA \$75,000 FDLES	10 created at NOLA's; 1 created, 1 retained at FDLES
Rushton Place, LLC acquired and renovated a 16,000 square foot dilapidated eyesore at 1 Main Street into five condominiums units and 3 commercial office spaces.	Addition of tax base, 5 new residential and 3 new office units	\$3.1 million	28 people working in building
NYSDOT did extensive repair to two bridge decks on Main Street in 2018, adding bicycle lanes on each side as recommended by Complete Streets Committee.	Addition of bike lanes on bridges	\$3 million	
30 Riverside Drive was acquired by the Village of Canton as part of a collaboration with the Town of Canton, St. Lawrence County, and the New York State Oil Spill Fund. The abandoned former auto repair shop was known to be contaminated so the County negotiated an agreement with the Oil Spill Fund to clean it if the Village would take title and remove the existing structure. This project is now complete, and the site is shovel ready.	Removal of blighted building and remediation of environmental contamination	\$500,000 +	n/a
Vision Hotels is completing the construction of a Fairfield Inn to open this summer, creating 25 new jobs. This "state-of-the-art" facility will feature WiFi connections, a pool,	New tax base, 82 room hotel	\$6.5 million	25 jobs created

and meeting space to accommodate 50-75 people. The building will be three stories and offer 82 rooms.			
The Bagelry/Park Bros. Coffee recently acquired the building at 103 Main Street and have invested in extensive repairs.	Upstairs commercial space converted to residential	\$205,000	3 FT, 5 PT created
Rainbow and Joshua Crabtree recently restored the façade of their 21 Main Street building to historical look while increasing energy efficiency.	Facade improvement	\$33,000	2 retained
Rite-Aid, now Walgreens, constructed a new \$2.1 million building on east Main Street and moved their operation from the Mid-Town plaza.	New tax base	\$2.1	
Pizza Hut invested \$565,000 to construct a new building on east Main Street and moved from their old location across the parking lot.	New tax base	\$565,000	
Argent Development has constructed a six unit housing development in the Village with plan for three more.	New tax base, 6 new residential units	\$450,000	
Cornell Cooperative Extension has constructed the Harvest Kitchen to support local growers and value-added food production.	Commercial kitchen	\$235,000	

### Current and Future Investment

Canton is always looking ahead. Having worked hard to develop plans to strategically envision the community’s future, Canton is focused on the implementation of and building on current plans. An award for Step 2: Nomination for the Brownfield Opportunity Area will allow for environmental testing at five locations, conceptual design and feasibility studies for redevelopment options at key sites in the revitalization district, market analysis, housing analysis, and a revitalization plan, among other things. The selection of consultants to aid in this process is underway.

Recognizing that adequate childcare is crucial to economic and community development, Canton Day Care Center, Inc. (CDCC), a nonprofit, licensed daycare center, has committed to making the investments required to ensure our children are well cared for. Founded in 1977, the center built and moved to its current location in 2008-09. United Helpers provides assisted living, skilled nursing, and rehabilitation services. Intergenerational programming with the children and residents of the co-located senior care facility enhances the experience of both groups; co-location reduced the cost of the original construction, and cooperative operations such as food service reduces the center’s cost of operation. The need for quality childcare is great: employers in the area point to this as an area of concern for prospective employees. To accommodate more full time and after-school children, Canton Day Care will build out the second floor of their facility to include four classrooms, two with restrooms, a gross motor space, and storage space including floor coverings, ceilings, heating and air conditioning, fire protection, and classroom furnishings. The total cost of the build-out project will be \$450,534; to date more than \$100,000 has been raised. Work on the project is proceeding as funds are available. With the expansion of childcare capacity, Downtown Canton will be revitalized by affording additional people the opportunity to work outside their home. In addition, it will provide the environment to help children thrive and develop skills to be confident capable adults.

The Village recently acquired property where a solar array was developed to provide electricity to all municipal operations. Tesla (previously Solar City) installed the array, which went online in March 2019. The solar project represents a \$36 million investment that will result in an estimated \$2 million savings for the Village over the first 20 years.

Municipal water for the Village is an issue. While there is no immediate need for additional water, with development projects in the works, additional demand will be placed on the system. Infrastructure is key to economic growth, and the Village is committed to expanding needed services. Partial grant funds have been secured for the \$9.75 million projects; DRI funding will help fill the gaps.

The Village Green at the eastern end of downtown is and has historically been a central gathering place for community events. Among many other events, the annual St. Lawrence County Dairy Princess Festival ushers the beginning of summer and the Remington Arts Festival, honoring Canton's native son and internationally renowned artist Frederic Remington, is celebrated there every autumn. A volunteer committee has successfully raised \$125,000 for the rehabilitation of the historic fountain in the center of the Green, with work set to begin this summer. Additional work - including the reconstruction of deteriorating walkways and a landscape overhaul - has also been proposed and is described in greater detail in the projects section of this application.

A \$6.5 million, 82-room Marriott Fairfield Inn, located adjacent to the University Plaza on East Main Street, is nearing completion and scheduled to open this summer. The three-story hotel will feature an indoor pool and an eating area, and employ up to 25 full- and part-time employees.

The former Comfort Inn, located just over a mile from Downtown Canton, recently completed major renovations to affiliate with the IHG chain of hotels. Now a Holiday Inn Express, its 69 rooms have been beautifully updated.

The Village also intends to implement a National Main Street America program, which would develop strategy and implementation procedures for revitalization of downtown.

### 3) Recent or Impending Job Growth.

Growth is happening in Canton. Between the healthcare system, banking, institutions of higher learning, government agencies, nonprofits, and the hospitality industry, employment opportunities of all kinds exist in the community.

St. Lawrence Health System (SLHS), the parent corporation of Canton-Potsdam Hospital (CPH), Potsdam and Gouverneur Hospital (GH), has more than doubled its medical staff since 2008. It recently completed construction of a 60,000-square foot medical office building on 293 acres that were annexed into the Village of Canton, creating some 20 new jobs and bringing 68 people to work in that facility. Because the hospital's main campus is located in a land-locked residential neighborhood in Potsdam, Canton represents the greatest opportunity for continued growth - especially because it is geographically central for the majority of the population in St. Lawrence County.

The Community Bank, N.A., Operations Center currently houses roughly 100 employees, and an additional 20 to 25 during times of acquisition. The bank plans to expand the Canton location to accommodate the growth projected by their strategic acquisition plan. Back office operations have been identified by the region as a strategic industry to target that is suitable to the North Country.

The St. Lawrence County Industrial Development Agency (IDA) has developed the Canton Industrial Park within the Village of Canton. The first building was constructed in 2012 and is currently fully occupied. In 2014, municipal water and sewer infrastructure were laid, making five shovel-ready sites available for development. The park is heavily marketed by the IDA, particularly to companies in the northeastern US and Canada.

Higher education brings well-paying jobs and benefits to Canton. As home to St. Lawrence University and the State University of New York at Canton, the Village of Canton must consider how to support these economic engines and ensure their continued success. Both campuses are experiencing growing enrollments and investing in infrastructure and diversifying their program offerings. The institutions of higher learning in the rural North Country region of New York State (which also include Clarkson University, SUNY Potsdam, and SUNY ESF in Wanakena) are some of our greatest assets and economic drivers. As identified in the St. Lawrence County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), the "... five colleges and universities in St. Lawrence County constitute an important competitive attribute that may be effectively leveraged to advance economic development objectives. In addition to being economic engines themselves through their employee and student base, these institutions possess a diverse mix of assets that support the efforts of the County's developers."

The Marriott Fairfield Inn is nearing completion plans to bring at least 25 new jobs to Canton - some of which have already been filled. Anecdotal information from the colleges tells us that the addition of hotel rooms could prompt them to seek opportunities to host larger, national-level sporting events that could not otherwise be accommodated. The infusion of economic activity would support the expansion of current businesses and the creation of new ones.

United Helpers, a nonprofit organization that supplies elder care as well as rehabilitation psychological services, recently purchased and renovated the former Key Bank property in Canton.

Providing psychological care for children and adults, the new center has provided several new jobs and has filled a recognized community need.

An injection of new professionals into the community will drive demand for active and accessible living downtown. More and more people want to be able to walk or bike within the community where they live to meet their needs for entertainment, goods, and services. All of the aforementioned jobs are easily accessible from, or included within, Downtown Canton and can be reached by foot, bike, or public transit.

Redevelopment of key sites should support a walkable, livable community rich with recreation, food, amenities, art, culture, entertainment, and necessities. Canton's core industries of education, government, and healthcare provide a stable stream of professionals into the community. To sustain growth in the long term we must be sure our downtown provides the amenities needed to support this demographic.

#### 4) Attractiveness of Physical Environment.

Canton boasts a diverse population of varying ages, income levels, abilities, gender identities, mobility, and cultural backgrounds thanks to the presence of the universities, healthcare systems, businesses, communities of faith, and generations of families that have chosen to make this community their home. Many are attracted to move to - and stay in - Canton and the North Country because of their physical beauty and extraordinary natural resources.

Canton is a walkable community with amenities and work opportunities easily reachable by foot or bike. “Safe Routes to School” are established, and a network of trails provides connectivity and recreational opportunities to residents and visitors – and between the universities – for walking, running, biking, and skiing. The Town and Village have both adopted [Complete Streets](#) policies and a [Master Trail Plan](#), which further enhances and safely and conveniently connects roads, sidewalks, and trails.

Numerous parks, including Taylor Park and Bend in the River Park, offer opportunities to enjoy outdoor recreation such as swimming, kayaking, canoeing, and fishing. Heritage and Dwight Church parks commemorate Canton’s history through interpretive signage, and a new sculpture park on Willow Island hosts outdoor sculptures by contemporary artists for visitors and passersby to experience and enjoy. These parks serve as outdoor gathering spaces for festivals and events throughout the year. Other spaces such as The TAUNY Center (Traditional Arts in Upstate New York), church community rooms, the recreation pavilion, fire hall, public library, and fraternal organization halls such as the VFW and Knights of Columbus are available for events and gatherings.

Several healthcare facilities, including clinics serving low-income residents, are in or close to Downtown Canton providing accessible healthcare and promoting healthy living. St. Lawrence Health System recently expanded a facility on East Main Street and has completed construction of a new medical office building at the eastern end of the Village. Claxton Hepburn hospital has a medical office building on West Main Street. After-hours clinics operate from each of the two existing facilities. Community Health Center of the North Country operates a facility within easy walking distance of downtown that provides affordable, high-quality healthcare to people of any age, race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, marital status, or national origin, regardless of their health insurance status or ability to pay, and pride themselves in acting as a safety net for those with insufficient or no health insurance. Several private medical offices are located in or near the Canton Grasse River Revitalization District.

Along with the many amenities the community has to offer, Downtown Canton also has a host of developable mixed-use properties within its boundaries.

Canton’s downtown is part of a Brownfield Opportunity Area and a Local Waterfront Revitalization Program Area and, as described in the BOA nomination study, the Riverside Area is “a gateway to the historic downtown” and presents “a key opportunity for waterfront and downtown revitalization.” The Riverside Area directly connects to the SUNY Canton footbridge, which carries pedestrian traffic from campus into downtown; however, this route is unfortunately not pedestrian-friendly and contains some run-down properties: of nine sites in the Riverside Drive corridor, seven are brownfield, vacant, or underutilized. This includes a property where a former service station was

demolished and remediation was undertaken by the DEC, leaving a desirable downtown location that is municipally owned and available for development.

Adjacent to Main Street is a vacant and blighted former grocery store plaza and a shuttered former fast food chain restaurant, all located on prime, underutilized land in the heart of downtown. With abundant parking and easy access to Main Street, the derelict properties have severely impacted downtown appearance and prosperity for nearly two decades and were widely cited by the public as being in urgent need of attention and improvement at several community input sessions.

Easy access to groceries and other sundries by the mixed-income residents of our downtown is also a priority for redevelopment in Downtown Canton. Several of the proposed developments include properties that would be ideally suited for the development of retail offering the amenities desired and demanded by residents in and adjacent to Downtown Canton.

Real estate agents report the serious need for rental units in the downtown area. Several housing roundtables have been convened to gather input about housing needs from residents, employers, developers, and realtors. The investment from a New York Main Street grant award is having a significant impact on increasing accessible, affordable housing opportunities with a host of new residential units coming online this building season. Because all projects could not be funded in the last round, there remains tremendous potential for the development of all categories of residential units.

There has been notable progress downtown through substantial private investment and public funding via Restore NY, NY Main Street, BOA, and other grants. These funds can be leveraged by the influx of much-needed DRI funds to enact our comprehensive vision for a vibrant, beautiful, diverse Downtown Canton.

## 5) Quality of Life Policies.

Canton has made it a priority to focus on policies and plans that ensure this Village remains a place people love to call home.

Canton is completing a comprehensive planning process that will provide a strategic vision and action plan for the Town of Canton – including the Villages of Canton and Rensselaer Falls and the Hamlets of Morley and Pyrites – with downtown Canton as its hub. This process brings together the substantial work done to create plans to develop and revitalize Canton’s waterfront, transportation systems, trail networks, community resources, recreational opportunities, sustainability, and, of course, economic progress. Involving key stakeholders from across constituencies and municipalities, this process will create a holistic strategy for Canton that will drive public and private investment and modernize zoning codes (for which the BOA provides funding), leveraging our strengths and taking advantage of our many opportunities for growth.

One key to a vibrant downtown corridor is multi-modal transportation options that provide for all travelers. Canton has demonstrated a consistent interest in providing for increased transportation means throughout the downtown business district and the Grasse River waterfront. Grants have been sought to create pedestrian bridges to remove both walkers and cyclists from the commercial traffic flow and allow increased access to green space and waterfront areas to promote recreation and tourism. The Village and Town adopted a Complete Streets policy in 2016. A task force has been established to review projects to ensure that Complete Streets principles are incorporated into development plans with particular attention to pedestrian/bicycle paths between key points in Canton along with improved traffic flow and enhanced safety for walkers, riders, and drivers. The Complete Streets Committee has taken the initiative to secure charging stations for electric vehicles in municipal parking lots, a sound economic and environmental move.

The [Canton Sustainability Committee](#) has also been very active, advising the municipality on policies, practices, and projects that improve the Village’s sustainability and resilience. Among its very successful efforts were solar projects throughout the community. Through a NYSERDA grant, Canton launched the Solarize Canton campaign, which led to the installation of more than 30 solar energy systems on residences in Canton – leading state-wide solarize efforts, even in much larger cities. The committee also worked closely with the municipal government to install a solar array that will power municipal operations, drastically reducing Canton’s carbon footprint. Finally, the Sustainability Committee led the successful effort to achieve Climate Smart Community and Clean Energy Community distinctions, making Canton eligible for grants to implement sustainability-related projects.

Canton has also worked to secure funding to improve waterfront access through grants that fund a pedestrian walkway linking the two downtown island parks. Additional plans for revitalizing the waterfront include a whitewater play park with recreational access to the river – for which a feasibility study was completed in 2017 – to bring more visitors to play and shop in downtown Canton and develop the economic infrastructure necessary to house, feed, and provide supplies to these visitors. A river walk is also included to highlight and provide access to the natural beauty of the Grasse River.

## 6. Public Support

The Village and Town of Canton have a unique multi-stakeholder approach to economic development that includes an Economic Development Consortium and Economic Development Steering Committee in addition to two paid staff members. The Consortium is an advisory group that meets at least twice a year, while the Steering Committee is a working group that meets monthly. The Consortium's current members are the principals of the Town, Village, St. Lawrence University, SUNY Canton, Canton Central School, United Helpers, and St. Lawrence Health System, and the Director of Economic Development ex-officio. The Consortium members' commitment to economic and community development efforts in Canton is substantial and unwavering; they provide oversight and contribute financially to economic and community development in Canton. (Members of the Consortium have provided letters of support for this application; those letters are attached, along with others from interested and committed community stakeholders.)

The Steering Committee is in turn made up of designees from each of the Consortium members, including two each from the Town and Village boards, the Director of Economic Development, a representative of the Canton Chamber of Commerce, and two at-large community members. The Steering Committee advances the priorities identified by the Consortium through planning and implementation. This structure allows for ongoing communication and collaboration - and integration of - all community and economic development efforts in Canton.

### Previous Planning Efforts

Community and economic development activities in Canton are guided by several planning documents that have been completed and are underway. They include the Canton Community Action Plan, the Grasse River Waterfront Revitalization Plan, the Master Trail Plan, the Grasse River Blueway Trail Plan, and the Canton Brownfield Opportunity Area Pre-Nomination Study. All of these plans were vetted by the community through a public participation process and later formally adopted. Now being finalized is a Comprehensive Plan and getting underway is a Brownfield Opportunity Area Phase II Nomination Study, both of which have included a similar public participation process.

The [Canton Community Action Plan](#) (CCAP) was first established in 1998 to act as a roadmap for economic and community development in the community. It is updated every five years (most recently in 2015) by the Canton Economic Development Steering Committee through an iterative process of stakeholder input and community participation, and adopted by the Town and Village boards. Five pillars for Canton's development were established in the development of the CCAP:

- Ensure Canton is an Attractive, Safe, Convenient, Healthy Place to Live, Learn, Work, and Play
- Support and Expand Local Business and Increase Available Jobs
- Enhance Local Government Efficiency and Encourage Civic Engagement
- Support and Promote Community Resiliency and Smart Growth Practices
- Support and Promote Tourism
- 

The proposed revitalization district is within the boundaries of [Grasse River Waterfront Revitalization Plan](#), which was a collaborative effort of Canton's Waterfront Advisory Committee. The plan was heavily influenced by two public hearings and was created by a committee made up of two appointed representatives of the Village, the Town, and Grasse River Heritage, and the economic development staff. The committee continues to advise on projects and priorities that affect Canton's waterfront areas including the Grasse River, a focal point of the Canton Grasse River Revitalization District.

As indicated, Canton is finalizing a Comprehensive Plan, a joint project of the Town and Village of Canton and Village of Rensselaer Falls. The 15 members of the Comprehensive Plan Committee are representative of the communities, including members of the Town and Village boards, planning boards, ZBAs, and people who

represent families, schools, and local businesses. The process of developing the plan involved two well-attended public information sessions, including one with a component focused specifically on the Downtown Revitalization Initiative, and a series of focus groups and interviews with key stakeholders. The [plan website](#) includes wide-ranging public information and offers a link for public comment; considerable feedback was received for the committee's consideration.

In recent years Canton has also enjoyed significant public engagement and participation in a wide range of additional areas, with strong volunteer participation on other committees like Sustainability, Complete Streets, Trees, and Trails, all of whose members offer critical input and feedback.

Not only have all of these past planning efforts, and the public engagement that was part of them, helped inform this DRI proposal, they provide our community with a head-start in the initial planning and engagement phases of the DRI program. The visioning and strategic planning that went into recent development plans will fully align with the DRI planning process.

### **DRI Public Support and Engagement**

Canton's inclusive approach to public engagement and support continued in the development of this DRI proposal. Three public forums were held in the Municipal Building to receive public stakeholder input and garner support for a DRI program in Canton.

The forums followed the following format:

- An overview of the DRI by Leigh Rodriguez, Canton's Director of Economic & Community Development and lead on the DRI program.
- A question and answer period and open discussion;
- Identification by participants of Canton's assets and characteristics
- Identification of project opportunities and areas for focus.

The public forums generated numerous stories in local media, which also provided further outreach to Canton stakeholders. A [website](#) and social media were also used in outreach efforts. Canton stakeholders unable to attend the forums were encouraged to submit their input to the Economic Development Office.

Input received through the public forums and individual submissions was invaluable to the final development of the DRI proposal. Input received has been tabulated. Several commonalities of public input include the chart below.

Canton held three public sessions and one focus group with students at Hugh C. Williams Senior High School. Restaurants and shops were considered one of the top assets in Canton. Specifically, people believe that TAUNY (Traditional Arts in Upstate New York), the only organization in New York's North Country dedicated to showcasing the folk culture and living traditions of the region, is one of Canton's greatest assets. The Farmers' Market, open two afternoons a week in the Village Park—featuring veggies, local fruits, honey, eggs, meats, baked goods and entertainment—is also believed to be top asset in Canton.

Additionally, the Canton Free Library, the first known library in Canton that formed in April 1832, is considered another key asset, as well as Canton's beautiful parks. People specifically believe Heritage Park, occupying two beautifully maintained islands in the Grasse River and a short walk from Canton's downtown business district, is an important part of Canton. And, of course, people pointed to Canton's two universities, St. Lawrence University and SUNY Canton, as key assets as well as the ongoing events Canton has to offer. The Dairy Princess Festival and Remington Festival were mentioned several times as important events in the community.



In addition to the assets, members of the public identified the opportunities they feel are most important to revitalize Canton’s Downtown. They match our top projects precisely:

- ❖ Revitalize midtown plaza/former Jubilee store
- ❖ Revitalize former Family Dollar
- ❖ Convert American Theater back to performance theater
- ❖ Public/outdoor arts and performance space
- ❖ Residences and restaurants on the Grasse River
- ❖ Rushton museum

We will continue such engagement in the planning phase of an awarded DRI grant, according to the direction provided in the guidebook.

## 7) Transformative Opportunities.

The projects listed below, leveraging significant private investment, would not just revitalize Downtown Canton, they would be truly transformational. The anchor project - the creation of a huge mixed-use commercial and residential development - would also be home to the SUNY Canton Entrepreneurship Center. Suitably located at the heart of the DRI area - it would attract new residents, spur economic growth, and encourage innovation and entrepreneurship. Replacing a currently derelict and underused set of properties, this project is the core of our vision for a revitalized Canton.

Additional business development presented here includes the expansion of a waterfront property into a full-service restaurant/bar; the establishment of another mixed-use residential and commercial building on the site of a riverside property that is in major disrepair, and the creation of a new juice bar and yoga school/studio in one of Main Street's historic buildings. This plan also includes a municipally controlled fund that will provide grants and revolving loans for Main Street businesses to renovate and create housing in upper-level spaces, upgrade current businesses and create new ones, and make important façade upgrades that will enhance the look of Canton's beautiful downtown for the next generation. Finally, this proposal includes a project that will transform an old tavern into an upscale combination-art gallery, performance venue, and restaurant/bar.

Of course, economic growth is not sustainable in the long term without the strong presence of arts and culture, as well as recreational opportunities. This plan includes an extensive renovation of Canton's historic American theater, restoring it to its original use as a performing arts and community space. In addition, the spacious park on Willow Island would be transformed into an outdoor arts venue for sculptures, performances, and natural playscapes. Capitalizing on Canton's rich tradition of boatmaking and paddling, Traditional Arts in Upstate New York proposes the creation of a Rushton Canoe museum commemorating the world-renowned canoe-maker and Canton native, John Henry Rushton. A proposed whitewater park, the result of extensive planning, would bring the beauty of the Grasse River to life, and bring tens of thousands of visitors each year.

We always aim to make the Village more attractive and walkable. This proposal includes projects that will beautify Main Street with new, native landscaping and overhaul the Village Green - a central community gathering space and home to Canton's Farmer's Market. In addition, we propose the creation of a new pedestrian mall on Hodskin Street, a small, one-way street in the center of Downtown Canton.

Finally, infrastructure is crucial to support Canton's continued growth. Canton proposes a project to expand Village water infrastructure. Our aging system is currently nearly at its limits; updated and expanded water infrastructure will support job creation and enables the development of housing suitable for professionals and incoming faculty and staff, and multi-unit housing to accommodate growing student populations.

## Anchor Project: The Midtown Plaza Redevelopment Project

Canton, NY

A truly transformative redevelopment project in the heart of Canton's downtown is poised to be realized with the support of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

The midtown plaza sits in the very core of Canton's downtown, just behind the first row of buildings on the south side of Main Street. For more than 15 years, the former Jubilee grocery store in the center of the plaza has been closed, and since that time this commercial space has sat vacant and deteriorating. It is a detriment to all of Canton, deterring investors, entrepreneurs, residents and visitors from the area. There is no transformer, the roof leaks, mold permeates the interior, the façade is falling off the structure, and trees are growing through the cracks in the floor. The rest of the plaza has similarly deteriorated to a blighted state and over time the rest of the plaza tenants have disappeared: The former Hackett's store closed. Then the Partridge Café closed its doors. Two years ago, Rite Aid moved to a new facility on East Main Street, away from the downtown. Now Green's Furniture nears closure, as its owner seeks retirement.

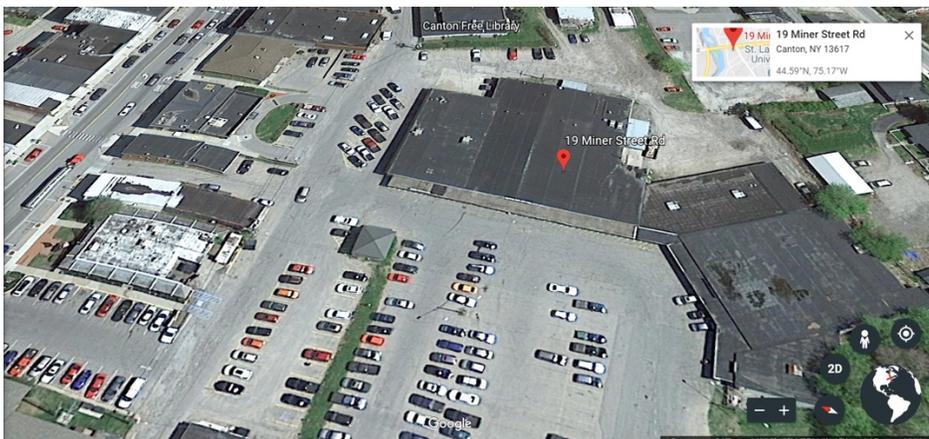
**PROJECT COST:**  
\$16,205,500

**ADDRESS:**  
19 Miner Street, Canton

**PROJECT LEAD:**  
Canton College Foundation &  
Laker Development NY, LLC

**STATUS:**  
Advanced Planning & Design

**CONSISTENT WITH:**  
Canton Community Action Plan  
Brownfield Opportunity Area Plan  
Comprehensive Plan  
Grasse River Waterfront  
Revitalization Plan



However, the midtown plaza is on the verge of a rebirth if (and only if) the Downtown Revitalization Initiative and other public resources can be utilized to leverage private investment in its redevelopment. The redevelopment would bring about a host of beneficial impacts to Canton's downtown, revitalizing the area as a magnet for entrepreneurs and business owners, workers, a diversity of new residents, students, and visitors.

A partnership of the Canton College Foundation, Laker Development NY, LLC, and DEW Ventures, LLC has advanced a plan and its capacity to achieve a new vision for the midtown plaza to a mixed-use property. The assemblage would include a state-of-the art Entrepreneurship Center established and run by SUNY Canton, more than 12,500 square feet of new commercial space, and 45 new residential units. The redevelopment would include the following components:

- ❖ Completed acquisition of the plaza property assemblage;
- ❖ Demolition of existing structures;
- ❖ Construction of new buildings:
  - The SUNY Canton Entrepreneurship Center. This state-of-the-art facility (described in detail as an additional project in this proposal) would be approximately 17,500 square feet and include a makerspace, co-working space, offices, and classrooms.
  - 12,500 square feet of commercial space for retail, professional service, and other businesses.

- 45 new residential units on the upper two floors, totaling 60,000 square feet. The apartments would range in size from 750 sq.ft. for 1-bedroom apartments to 1,300 sq.ft. for 3-bedroom units. (This construction would respond to the high demand for a diversity of higher-quality housing that has been identified by Canton’s leadership as a major priority for the community.)
- ❖ Improvement to the parking lot and grounds in the assemblage to make the 3.76-acre space attractive, accessible, and integrated with the Main Street corridor.

### **Project Partners**

A partnership of *Laker Development NY LLC*, *DEW Ventures LLC*, and the *Canton College Foundation* has formed to bring this project to reality.

The SUNY Canton Foundation – with leadership from SUNY Canton President Zvi Szafran, Executive Director for University Relations Lenore VanderZee and Vice President for Advancement Anne Sibley – is playing two critical roles on the project: it is the purchaser of the midtown plaza properties owned by Garry Cohen, securing control of the redevelopment site. SUNY Canton will also be the anchor tenant in the facility with the establishment of the Entrepreneurship Center.

Devin A. Dal Pos, Principal of *Laker Development NY LLC*, and Bill Teator of *DEW Ventures, LLC*, are the developers on the larger Midtown Plaza Redevelopment Project. They are working together on all aspects of the redevelopment including, but not limited to, identification and consolidation of resources, securing of additional tenants, and design and construction of the new properties. Together, they have deep knowledge, expertise, and capacity in real estate development and a remarkable portfolio of successful commercial and residential development projects across the State of New York. *Dal Pos Architects, LLC* of Syracuse is lined up to be the architecture and design firm for the assemblage while *Trinity Building & Construction Services* will act as general contractor. Materials showcasing the work of the development team and its partners are included in the attachments to this proposal, as is a letter of intent from Devin Dal Pos.

### **Project Benefits**

The redevelopment of the midtown plaza will have a generational transformative impact on Canton’s downtown core, yielding numerous benefits and impacts, and achieving many of the goals of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative:

- ❖ Leverage of \$11,205,500 in private investment.
- ❖ Demolition of a vacant and blighted assemblage of properties totaling 39,066 square feet of building space on 3.76 acres of building footprint and parking area.
- ❖ Construction of mixed-use properties to include 30,000 square feet of new retail, office, and entrepreneur development space, and 60,000 square feet of multi-unit residential space.
- ❖ Establishment of new businesses and attraction of 45 families as a shortage of both commercial and residential desirable properties intensely constrains growth in these areas.
- ❖ The new businesses in the commercial space will provide a mix of retail and professional services to attract residents and visitors into the downtown. The businesses and the Entrepreneurship Center will also present a variety of new career opportunities for residents and graduates.
- ❖ Dramatic increase in tax base. Current assessed values of the property assemblage total less than \$500,000. The total tax assessment for the property after redevelopment will exceed \$15 Million.
- ❖ Growth of businesses and resident population, coupled with the dramatically-increased tax base, will drive demand and capacity for increased services and amenities in the community.
- ❖ Job creation resulting from the establishment of retail and professional service businesses in the constructed commercial space. Job creation will also be a product of new businesses established and developed through the SUNY Canton Entrepreneurship Center.
- ❖ Enhanced attractiveness and vibrancy of the downtown core.

## Project Financials

<b>Real Estate Acquisition</b>	<b>\$1,130,000</b>
<b>Construction</b>	
Commercial <sup>1</sup>	\$3,150,000
Residential <sup>2</sup>	\$9,675,000
Parking	\$880,000
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$13,705,000</b>
<b>Contingency</b>	<b>\$1,370,500</b>
<b>Project Total</b>	<b>\$16,205,500</b>
<b>DRI Request</b>	<b>\$5,000,000</b>
<b>Private Investment</b>	<b>\$11,205,500</b>

<sup>1</sup> 30,000 square feet of ground floor commercial space, including residential common areas at \$105/sq.ft.

<sup>2</sup> Two upper floors of multi-family residential units totaling 60,000 square feet (with 48,000 sq.ft. being leasable residential area). Units will range in size from 750 sq.ft. for 1-bedroom apartments, 1100 sq.ft. for 2-bedroom, and 1300 sq.ft. for 3-bedroom. Buildout will entail 45 units at a construction cost of \$215,000 per unit.

As calculated and shown, the support of \$5 Million in DRI and other public sources will leverage \$11,205,500 in private investment.



### Need for DRI Support

This project will need \$5 Million in support from the DRI and other public sources in order to achieve its scale and scope. A real gap exists in the commercial and residential real estate development market in the North Country. An evaluation of underwritable current rental rates shows that they do not measure up to the costs of construction. Thus, public support is necessary to leverage the private investment and make a project feasible, such that the developer is able to turn a modest profit on any development project of this scale and scope.

Furthermore, the DRI funding is critical for this project in Canton since the community does not have any Opportunity Zone incentive areas that other municipalities in the region do. Yet the economic demographics are consistent with those areas, thus putting Canton at a distinct disadvantage for leveraging private investment in large-scale development projects.

A pro forma analysis of this project shows that an infusion of \$5 Million from public sources including the DRI will be needed to address the real financial feasibility gap.

## SUNY Canton Entrepreneurship Center

Canton, New York

SUNY Canton proposes to develop, nurture, and capture the North Country’s entrepreneurial spirit by establishing an Entrepreneurship Center in the new development in the midtown plaza in Downtown Canton. The Center will fill a gap in the regional economy, as recognized by the St. Lawrence County Economic Development Plan sponsored by NYPA and drafted by the McKinsey Group.



The Entrepreneurship Center will capitalize on SUNY Canton’s academic programs - rooted in STEM and applied learning - and technological resources. By partnering with SUNY Canton’s Small Business Development Center, the College’s Start-Up NY Program, and the Small Business Solutions Center, along with area development agencies, private-sector firms, experienced mentors, and accomplished alumni, the Center will create unprecedented opportunities for Canton innovators and entrepreneurs to explore, refine, and market their ideas — and make them a reality. The Center will be integrated into the community by offering free and low-cost programs in business planning, entrepreneurship, marketing, and other related topics, providing the practical training and mentorship necessary to create successful start-up businesses, as well as to support scale-ups of existing businesses and provide for succession planning.

The Center will help entrepreneurs focus on finding the “next big thing” while encouraging them to take practical steps based on sound entrepreneurial practices to plan, get advice, secure funding, and start their own businesses, filling holes in the North Country economy and fostering a diversified entrepreneurial ecosystem to support economic growth.

The downtown Center will also house a co-working space for community members, offering open-concept desk space closed offices as well as state-of-the-art conference facilities. The facility will attract remote-working professionals as well as new entrepreneurs and small businesses, and foster interactions that lead to productive idea-sharing and collaboration. Maker spaces will provide access to equipment like 3D printers, high-tech tools, sewing machines, and computers that will allow clients to innovate and develop prototypes to encourage invention and hands-on experience.

Another core part of the Center’s mission is to deepen SUNY Canton’s interaction with local schools via outreach activities, business plan competitions, and on-campus experiences. This outreach will promote innovation and entrepreneurship to all ages. The result will be a pipeline of entrepreneurial graduates who are fully prepared to start their own companies, diversifying the North Country economy and creating economic opportunities for its residents.

Support from the DRI would provide funding to outfit the new space in the new downtown development, built to suit the Entrepreneurship Center as an anchor tenant. It would also provide operating expenses for two years, allowing the Center to raise additional funds and strengthen revenue streams for long-term viability.

### PROJECT COST:

\$756,500

### INVESTMENT MADE:

\$111,000

### PROJECT LEAD:

SUNY Canton

### ADDRESS:

Miner Street, Canton

### STATUS:

- Shovel-ready

### CONSISTENT WITH:

Canton Community Action Plan  
Brownfield Opportunity Area Plan  
Comprehensive Plan  
Grasse River Waterfront  
Revitalization Plan

## American Performing Arts Theater

Canton, New York

The American Theater is a landmark of cultural and historical importance. Built in 1921 by Canton builder Byron Rogers for the love of his community, the theater it is an example of classic 1920s style architecture. It has a full three-sided marquee on the front on Main Street and is on the National Register of Historic Places.

In its original state, the American Theater's walls were high and tastefully decorated with satin curtains; there was beautiful wall and ceiling décor and decorative lighting. Theater seats were finely upholstered and set to the raked concrete floor, with a seating capacity of 850. The stage was designed for vaudeville performances, musical acts, and community events. The American Theater has had great music performers on its stage such as Muddy Waters, Bob Dylan, and BB King. In later years, the theater was converted to a movie theater with five small screens and a total seating capacity of 436.

### PROJECT COST:

\$5,680,000

### PROJECT LEAD:

Jeff Szot

Michael Scrimmenger

### ADDRESS:

98 Main Street, Canton

### STATUS:

Planning Stages

### CONSISTENT WITH:

Canton Community Action Plan  
Brownfield Opportunity Area Plan  
Comprehensive Plan  
Grasse River Waterfront  
Revitalization Plan



This project will relocate the movie theater to another part of Canton and transform the building back into a performing arts theater. It would be renovated to provide the modern conveniences and technology needed to host quality performances by local and national touring musical artists, theater performances, independent films and film festivals. It would be a showcase for the arts in the community; there is no other venue like this in the area.

Canton is in need of more arts and cultural opportunities. Residents have expressed their desire for my entertainment opportunities and access to activities in the evening hours. The addition of a performing arts theatre would create a more desirable downtown. It would become a destination for entertainment and the streets would come alive again on weekends and in the evening hours. People from outside communities would be drawn to the area, often taking advantage of local restaurants, hotels, and retail shops. Both the owner of the American Theater and potential investors interested in the project have written letters of support for this project.

## Riverside Revolution

Riverside Revolution is meant to be a catalyst for improvements and development along the Grasse River in Canton. Currently dilapidated and home to businesses that need a facelift, the area is poised for development and local businesswoman Hailey Hodge has a plan.



Ms. Hodge, who was named Syracuse District 2018 Young Entrepreneur of the Year by the U.S. Small Business Administration, would like to harness the potential of the prime waterfront area by purchasing derelict property and building a mixed-use, residential and commercial building, capitalizing on the view of Coakley and Falls

Islands, filling the demand for non-student housing, and providing updated commercial spaces for rent.

The planned development will incorporate three stories of rental property, which will include three commercial/retail spaces on the bottom floor, and two floors above with nine residential units.

Two of the three planned commercial properties already have interested tenants: a men's clothing store and Ms. Hodge's boutique, Luna, which she has successfully operated for three years. There is also potential for a restaurant with water-side seating, water sport rentals, and other businesses that benefit from being on the water. The residential units will target young professionals, visiting hospital staff and university



faculty or newly retired people. Canton has a need for more rentals, as most are targeted to students; these quality apartments will attract a segment of the market that has not been well catered to in Canton.

*“Riverside Revolution will spark action and a sense of place on Riverside Drive by creating a vibrant and modern building with multiple types of businesses and significant housing.”*

~ Hailey Hodge  
Owner, Luna Boutique

## Canton, New York

### PROJECT COST:

\$3,110,000

### PROJECT LEAD:

Hailey Hodge

### ADDRESS:

25,27,29 Riverside Drive, Canton

### STATUS:

Conceptual

### CONSISTENT WITH:

Canton Community Action Plan  
Brownfield Opportunity Area Plan  
Comprehensive Plan  
Grasse River Waterfront  
Revitalization Plan

# Municipal Water and Economic Growth

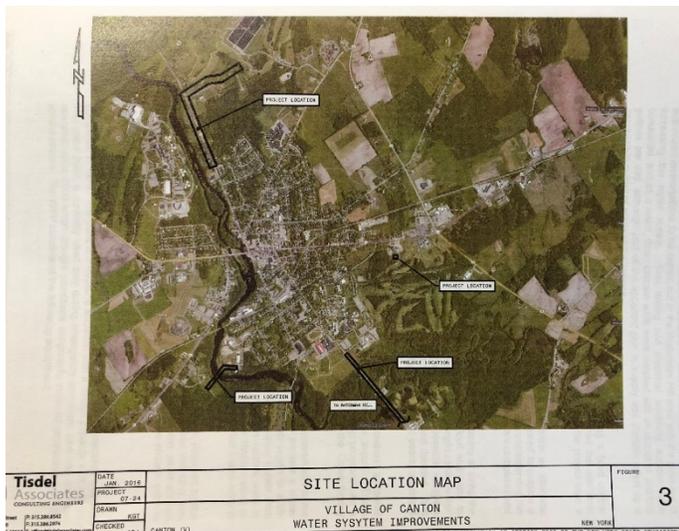
As described in the Regional Economic Development Council’s strategic plan, a critical infrastructure issue is “the need for improvement of water and wastewater systems throughout the region, both to protect the region’s clean water resources and to support community development.”

Municipal water for the Village is an issue. While there is no immediate need for additional water, with development projects in the works, new demand will be placed on the system. Infrastructure is key to economic growth, and the Village is committed to expanding needed services.

The Village has identified several municipal water infrastructure-related projects. A preliminary engineering report has been completed that recommends:

- a new supplemental water source and control building
- replacement of six miles of 100-year-old transmission lines
- looping dead ends
- replacement of 600 water meters
- replacement of aging water storage tanks
- expansion of services to Maple Hill subdivision

Several grants have been secured for expansion of municipal water and sewer to the nearby Maple Hill subdivision. They include \$250,000 from Northern Border Regional Commission, \$235,000 from Empire State Development, and \$25,000 from St. Lawrence River Valley Redevelopment Agency toward the \$9,763,000 in anticipated water related upgrades. This expansion will provide needed services to support Community Bank’s back office operation that currently employs approximately 100 people, and with municipal water access, intends to grow at that location. In addition to Community Bank, there are 34 commercial and residential building lots in Maple Hill. It is believed that the lack of utility services to this area has deterred construction and is impeding economic growth in that part of the Village. DRI funding will help fill the gaps.



Creating shovel ready commercial and residential lots in the Village will encourage much needed new tax base. This neighborhood is a prime location for new construction in an ideal setting on the Grasse River. In a municipality where only 33 percent of the properties are taxable, it is critical

that any obstacles to expanding the tax base be addressed.

The Village is prepared to move forward as soon as financing is secured.

# Canton, New York

## PROJECT COST:

\$9,763,000

## PROJECT LEAD:

Village of Canton

## ADDRESS:

Main Street, Canton

## STATUS:

- Design
- Some grants secured, seeking additional financing

## CONSISTENT WITH:

Canton Community Action Plan  
Brownfield Opportunity Area Plan  
Comprehensive Plan  
Grasse River Waterfront  
Revitalization Plan  
Canton Asset Management Plan

## Bridgewater Restaurant & Apartments

Canton, New York

The former Family Dollar, located on a beautiful parcel on the Grasse River overlooking Willow Island, has been vacant for several months. At one time, this site was home to the historic Harrington Hotel, a focal point of the community, where local artist Frederic Remington and canoe-maker J. Henry Rushton were entertained. The vision is to bring this property back to the community and provide an opportunity for waterfront dining and a recreational connection to the river that does not currently exist. This phase will begin by Fall 2019, pending purchase, and will be completed using private investment and bank financing, which has been secured. Upon completion of a commercial appraisal, currently underway, an offer will be made and construction will begin immediately upon closing. As soon as feasible, 1,000 of the 8,000 square feet of the existing building will become a small eatery for people to enjoy.

Simultaneously, the rest of first floor will be re-developed to turn the entire space into a full-service restaurant/tavern. The building is currently fully cinderblocked with three sides surrounded by river; the renovation will include opening up the walls with grand windows, and eventually adding a deck.



Phase 2 - for which DRI funding is requested - is to build apartments above the restaurant to increase the availability of high-quality, market-rate housing for the growing professional market in Canton. The project will create a new business employing 10 to 30

individuals, plus construction jobs for the renovation and build-up. It will revitalize a vacant property and serve as a showcase for Canton's entrance to downtown. It will also create new residential units and increase and encourage waterfront and downtown activity.

### PROJECT COST:

\$1,120,000

### OWNER:

Charles & Brooke Rouse

### ADDRESS:

2 Main Street, Canton

### STATUS:

Shovel-ready

### CONSISTENT WITH:

Canton Community Action Plan  
Brownfield Opportunity Area Plan  
Comprehensive Plan  
Grasse River Waterfront  
Revitalization Plan

# Whitewater Play Park

# Canton, New York

The beautiful Grasse River flows through Downtown Canton; to capitalize on this natural attraction, a St. Lawrence County Whitewater Park feasibility study, market assessment, and economic impact study was completed in 2017. To gain the most economic impact, the study recommends that sites in the three communities – Canton, Potsdam, and Colton – be developed to create a regional attraction. Both anecdotal and documented evidence included in the report suggest such a park would be a significant attractor for visitors across the region and beyond. The Canton piece of the project will create a river-centered park designed to provide in-stream recreation, including kayaking, tubing, and rafting in the heart of Downtown Canton.

The vision is for a run-of-the-river type water park at the Falls Island. These parks are typically built on a section of steep and continuously flowing riverbed; the Falls Island site is well suited for a national-level whitewater park.

## PROJECT COST:

\$1,000,000

## OWNER:

Village of Canton

## ADDRESS:

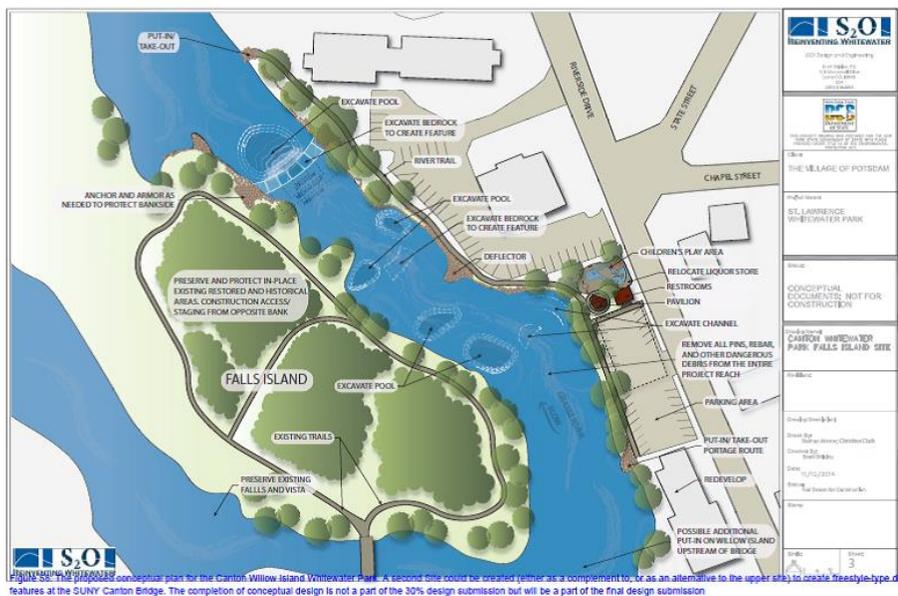
Grasse River,  
Riverside Drive and Main Street

## STATUS:

Feasibility study complete

## CONSISTENT WITH:

St. Lawrence County Whitewater Park; Feasibility Analysis, Market Assessment, and Economic Impact of Whitewater Parks in Colton, Canton, and Potsdam, New York  
Canton Community Action Plan  
Brownfield Opportunity Area Plan  
Comprehensive Plan  
Grasse River Waterfront Revitalization Plan  
Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan



With DRI funds, the construction of the play park would be feasible. As the second of a proposed three parks in St. Lawrence County, Canton would be an integral part of a regional attraction for recreational tourism. The proposed Canton park has the potential to host larger, professional events and bring significant economic activity to the community.

*“Canton could benefit from the direct impacts of the Whitewater Park by gaining new businesses and augmenting the sales and viability of existing businesses. A destination quality whitewater park would also add to the menu of amenities that build the overall appeal of the community to prospective businesses and residents, contributing to development in other sectors.”*

~ S2O St. Lawrence County  
Whitewater Park feasibility study

Over the past four years, Canton has secured several grants to further develop Downtown businesses, including a \$300,000 New York Main Street grant and \$200,000 CDBG Microenterprise grant offered through the Office of Homes and Community Renewal. These grant programs have helped three downtown businesses to expand, three businesses open their doors, one business to relocate downtown, and seven owners make necessary building improvements.



As Downtown Canton continues to grow, owners are looking for new ways to improve their businesses and have expressed the need for additional incentive and grant programs. This project will create incentives that will encourage businesses to fill empty downtown storefronts, assist existing businesses, renovate potential second floor apartment and basement space, and improve the beauty of Canton’s historic Downtown. This project includes two interrelated components: a Downtown Improvement Program, with both small business grants and façade improvement grants, and a Retail Incentive Program.

## **Downtown Improvement Program - \$650,000**

### Small Business Grant - \$500,000

Up to \$50,000 (each) will be available for upgrades/improvements to commercial/residential spaces on Main Street as part of a matching funds initiative. Business owners will be required to provide a 25% match. Funds will be used for projects that transform vacant or underutilized second floor space to residential or business use, transform vacant or underutilized basement space to commercial space, enhance secondary access to businesses from municipal parking areas, and preserve historic buildings.

### Façade Improvement - \$150,000

Grants of up to \$10,000 (each) will be available to businesses for façade improvements as part of a matching funds initiative. New businesses will be required to provide a 25% match and existing businesses will be required to provide a 50% match. Façade improvements may include masonry repair, façade cleaning and painting, new/refurbished awnings, landscape beautification, and improved lighting.

## **Retail Incentive Program - \$75,000**

As part of the retail incentive program, start-up businesses that fill an empty storefront location in downtown Canton will receive the following benefits:

- Rent Assistance – Half the cost of rent, up to \$500 per month, for one year (up to \$6,000)
- Free membership with the St. Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce (up to \$225)
- Free membership with the Canton Chamber of Commerce (up to \$170)
- Free Quickbooks software, plus training (up to \$500)

### **PROJECT COST:**

\$725,000

### **OWNER:**

Village of Canton

### **ADDRESS:**

Main Street, Canton

### **STATUS:**

Ready to be implemented

### **INVESTMENT MADE:**

\$500,000

### **PROJECT CONSISTENT WITH:**

Canton Community Action Plan  
Canton Grasse River Waterfront  
Revitalization Plan  
Complete Streets Policy  
Brownfield Area Opportunity Plan

In 2018, Canton received an \$11,500 grant through the NYS Local Waterfront Revitalization Program to develop the Canton Master Trail Plan. As Canton has an impressive array of roads, paths, trails, and waterways, the plan aims to reconfigure routes and improve and increase the connectivity among them all. This project will create a network that safely link users to downtown, residential neighborhoods, schools and universities, commercial areas and business districts, and parks and recreation—aligning with strategies in the Canton Master Trail Plan.

### Riverside Drive & State Street Intersection

State Street, Riverside Drive, and Chapel Street come together at a three-way intersection that is known to be confusing and hazardous for travelers. Turning from Riverside Drive onto State or Chapel Streets requires attention to traffic coming toward Riverside Drive from both streets and turning from Chapel Street onto Riverside Drive requires crossing two or three lanes of traffic to get into the correct turning lane. Additionally, from Riverside Drive, there are only sidewalks along both sides of State Street until just past the school campus, where they end—leaving only the paved shoulders that are used often by pedestrians and cyclists.



This project will reorient Chapel Street and State Street where State meets Riverside Drive. Road enhancements will be made to better connect Downtown Canton to the existing SUNY Canton pedestrian bridge. Four-foot on-street bicycle lanes are proposed on each side of the road to Fairlane Drive, leading bicyclists to an eight-foot multi-purpose path that begins at Fairlane Drive and heads north toward the Remington Trail. Four-foot on-street bicycle lanes will also be added to State Street, making a vital connection to the school. Upon completion, there will be safer and shorter connections within the neighborhoods and businesses on Main Street, as well as additional recreational paths for pedestrians.

### Pedestrian Mall

As Canton is the seat of St. Lawrence County and home to a large population of college students, thousands of people pass through the area on a regular basis.



This project will encourage people to stop and enjoy the shops and restaurants Canton has to offer. The pedestrian mall would be designed on a portion of Hodskin Street, an under-utilized road right off Canton’s Main Street. The road would be turned into an attractive, vehicle-free area where people could walk, sit and chat with friends, dine, and enjoy their surroundings.

### PROJECT COST:

\$600,000

### OWNER:

Village of Canton

### ADDRESS:

- Riverside Drive & State Street Intersection
- Hodskin Street

### STATUS:

Planning stage

### INVESTMENT MADE:

\$11,500

### PROJECT CONSISTENT WITH:

- Canton Master Trail Plan
- Canton Community Action Plan
- Canton Grasse River Waterfront Revitalization Plan
- Brownfield Opportunity Area Plan
- Complete Streets Policy

# The TAUNY Center Expansion Project

## Canton, New York

TAUNY is a nonprofit organization dedicated to researching and showcasing the folk culture and living traditions of New York’s North Country. The North Country’s only nonprofit organization dedicated to a focus on North Country folklife and heritage, TAUNY has been pursuing this mission for over 30 years. While “folklife” includes elements of cultural heritage and regional history, TAUNY is an organization focused very much on what’s happening in the present, everyday life of the region, and how living traditions are carrying forward into the future.

With a central location on Main Street in Downtown Canton, TAUNY has a Folkstore that sells work by over 200 local and regional artisans, a large gallery space that features large-scale, multi-month exhibits based on original research, a smaller rotating gallery space, a demonstration kitchen, a conference room, and a classroom/additional gallery. Two to four public programs are held each month, mainly at The TAUNY Center and



occasionally off site; programs range from small workshops and talks to open house-style events and larger presentations that may draw 100+ visitors. TAUNY also conducts substantial research projects documenting regional folklife, engage interns from area colleges, and regularly work on additional, varied grant-based projects of their own and in collaboration with local and regional community organizations and individuals.

At major TAUNY programs, approximately 25 percent of the audience has traveled more than 60 miles to attend, drawing from the Thousand Islands, the Adirondacks, Tug Hill, Watertown, and Plattsburgh.

### Expansion Project

The TAUNY Center serves as the community center on Canton’s Main Street and has reached full capacity in terms of activity that can be accommodated. To increase their capacity to provide opportunities for people to experience, participate in, and learn more about the rich cultural life of our region, TAUNY will expand beyond its current gallery space in downtown Canton to offer new programming that has been identified in both their latest organizational strategic plan and in Canton’s recent visioning processes as responsive to the interests and needs of local residents and visitors.

Two possibilities have been identified: (1) develop a visitor space on the riverfront devoted to the boat-building history in Canton, where year-round interactive programs on the water and in the center would be offered or (2) create a year-round indoor venue for live music downtown, modeled on Caffé Lena in Saratoga Springs.

**PROJECT COST:**  
\$1,000,000

**OWNER:**  
TAUNY, Inc.

**ADDRESS:**  
53 Main Street, Canton

**STATUS:**  
Conceptual

**CONSISTENT WITH:**  
TAUNY strategic plan  
TAUNY visioning and focus group feedback  
Canton Community Action Plan  
Comprehensive Plan

*“Few indoor spaces exist in downtown Canton where people can congregate to socialize but also have exposure to the arts and culture of the region, and the space is limited. Expanding operations will allow TAUNY to offer additional experiences that the public is asking for, and will bring greater traffic to the downtown, and greater engagement in Canton’s cultural life.”*

~ Jill Breit  
Executive Director,  
TAUNY

# The Arc Jefferson-St. Lawrence

## Main Street Enhancements

## Canton, New York

The Arc Jefferson-St. Lawrence is a recently merged nonprofit membership association dedicated to full inclusion and integration for persons with intellectual and other developmental disabilities in St. Lawrence and Jefferson counties. The Arc Jefferson-St. Lawrence serves more than 2,000 people with disabilities, with the support of over 1,300 staff and an annual budget of close to \$70 million.

Between the counties, there are 51 residential sites, two work centers, seven-day habilitation site-based programs, federal contracts at the border stations and Fort Drum, two UPS stores, and many community-based programs.

The Arc's primary funding is through Medicaid; significant reductions in reimbursement rates challenge the agency's ability to pay for capital improvements.

The Arc Jefferson-St. Lawrence owns two buildings on Downtown Canton's Main Street from which they offer programs and services. Both buildings – 95 and 101 Main Street – require repairs and upgrades.

All of the windows in both buildings will be replaced, including interior work on the panes and walls where the windows are installed. The windows in these building are not energy efficient and cause drafts in the buildings. Replacement windows will conserve energy and save overall heating costs. Signage will be purchased for the front and side of the building.



In addition, an improved ramp will be built at 95 Main Street to allow accessibility from the front, and four new tempered glass windows will be installed at the front entry with an awning to maintain the historical appearance. This will benefit individuals who regularly use the building and enhance the overall appearance.

This project will revitalize Canton by offering new opportunities for the agency in either rental properties, new businesses, and better accessibility for people with disabilities. Increased traffic on Main Street will allow businesses to remain open longer with the additional walking traffic. The enhanced appearance will make the area more appealing to buyers looking to buy or lease space on Main Street.

DRI funds will allow the organization to make necessary upgrades while maintaining the quality services needed by hundreds of families supported through The Arc Jefferson - St. Lawrence.

### PROJECT COST:

\$200,645

### OWNER:

The Arc Jefferson-St. Lawrence

### ADDRESS:

95 & 101 Main Street, Canton

### STATUS:

Project was developed in 2016, but put on hold during merger. Now that unification is complete, this project is a priority.

### CONSISTENT WITH:

Canton Community Action Plan  
Brownfield Opportunity Area  
Grasse River Waterfront  
Revitalization Plan  
Comprehensive Plan



Downtown Canton’s Main Street is the vibrant, pedestrian-friendly, commercial center of the Village; it is also heavily trafficked State Route 11. In 2011-2012, the State undertook major road work through Downtown, which resulted in substantial infrastructure improvements but only modest streetscape enhancements. In fact, beautiful mature trees had to be removed and while they were replaced, it will take years for them to match the former grandeur.

Opportunities for enhancement and beautification include new plantings (replacing or supplementing current grates around new trees), benches, wayfinding signage, and banners on our new, energy-efficient lighting polls.

Additionally, there is an underutilized alleyway separating two Main Street buildings that could be substantially beautified. We envision the alleyway transformed into an “Arts Alley,” serving as a temporary outdoor gallery space



for visual arts and a casual, outdoor performing arts venue. In addition to events, it will offer a quieter gathering space with benches and tables for people to enjoy al fresco lunches and fun meet-ups. Most of the downtown restaurants offer take-out, so having a quiet, beautiful outdoor

eating space will encourage people living and working downtown to eat local and enjoy it in a beautiful, downtown setting.

Each of these projects will be undertaken in coordination with the Village’s Complete Streets policies.

An attractive Main Street is essential to establishing and communicating Canton’s sense of place. As a main thoroughfare not only through Canton, but through St. Lawrence County, Main Street should encourage visitors to stop and experience all that Downtown Canton has to offer. Enhanced streetscapes will beautify our downtown, making it more welcoming, and encouraging people to spend more time in our community.

**PROJECT COST:**

\$110,000

**OWNER:**

Village of Canton

**ADDRESS:**

Main Street

**STATUS:**

Conceptual

**CONSISTENT WITH:**

- Complete Streets
- Canton Community Action Plan
- Comprehensive Plan
- Brownfield Opportunity Area Plan

## Canton Village Green

## Canton, New York



Throughout its history, the Canton Village Green has been widely utilized by organizations, community members, and visitors as a place to gather and to host events and celebrations. The Village Green is used twice a week from May to October by the Canton Farmer's Market, and hosts several other annual activities and events including – this year – the 55<sup>th</sup> annual Dairy Princess Festival. Other yearly events that draw visitors from all over the St. Lawrence Valley include the Remington Arts Festival, held in honor of Canton's native son and world-renowned artist, Frederic Remington, the Canton Chamber of Commerce's Peter Rabbit in the Park, and Phantoms in the Park.



A dedicated committee of community members and elected officials formed a committee in 2016 to raise funds to make essential repairs to the historic fountain at the center of Canton's beautiful Village Green. As of this summer, the committee has raised \$125,000, mostly from private donations, to bring the historic fountain back to working order and make improvements that will ensure it remains at the heart of the Green for the next generation. Work on the fountain is set to begin this summer.

However, the walkways in the Village Green are seriously deteriorating with age, and the landscaping is in dire need of upgrading. These improvements are low in cost, but invaluable to the community that loves the Village Green. Landscaping is estimated to cost \$35,000, and the replacement of walkways with high-quality paving stones is estimated at \$95,000.

This project will be enjoyed and appreciated by all who live in and visit Canton!

### PROJECT COST:

\$255,000

### INVESTMENT MADE:

\$125,000

### OWNER:

First Presbyterian Church

### ADDRESS:

Main Street, Canton

### STATUS:

- Shovel-ready

### CONSISTENT WITH:

Canton Community Action Plan  
Comprehensive Plan

## Flying Lotus Juice Bar & Yoga School

Canton, New York

Flying Lotus will bring healthy eating and lifestyle options to the Canton community, offering vegan and vegetarian food options and yoga classes for all.

Downtown Canton needs more eateries. Flying Lotus will be a multi-faceted business, offering a juice and smoothie bar with vegan and vegetarian juices, smoothies, and smoothie bowls made with local and organic produce whenever possible. Healthy raw protein bites will also be made onsite. Offering an eat-in or carry-out food service that incorporates vegan/vegetarian options will fill a void in our area. This addition to Main Street will enhance the lives of the entire community, but specifically will offer early morning, lunch, and afternoon/evening dining options.



### PROJECT COST:

\$39,500

### OWNER:

Kelly Burnham

### ADDRESS:

81 Main Street, Canton

### STATUS:

- Property available for rent
- Funds secured for start up and minimal renovations

### CONSISTENT WITH:

Community Action Plan  
Brownfield Opportunity Area  
Waterfront Revitalization Plans

*“Flying Lotus will be a new type of ‘Main Street’ business for Canton, as we have never had a juice bar or a yoga school in our village.”*

~ Kelly Burnham  
Owner, Flying Lotus



Flying Lotus will introduce aerial yoga to the North Country. This yoga practice is a cutting-edge yoga pursuit that is open to all abilities and age groups, offering physical exercise and mental calm. Training and workshops for yoga teachers will be included, as well as guest teachers and lecturers from around the country. Treatment rooms for one-on-one services such as massage, Reiki, Ayurvedic counseling, and yoga will be available for practitioners to rent on a weekly or

monthly basis. A small retail shop for purchasing yoga props, gear, clothing, etc. will be on-site.

Flying Lotus will also host community events, welcoming in the area students and artists for art exhibits and open mic nights. The business will create a number of jobs at the juice bar and for local yoga teachers or holistic practitioners looking for space to rent on an hourly basis. The energy and traffic moving in and out of the Flying Lotus space will be regular as classes will be offered throughout the day and the juice bar will hold extensive hours.

This project will incorporate shopping, dining, and entertainment in one location, and will be interesting to a wide range of people from the practicing yogi to the family looking to enhance their health with a juice cleanse. Aerial yoga will draw people from all over the county as it is not offered anywhere else in St. Lawrence County.

## The Bagelry

Since 1982, the Bagelry in Potsdam, NY, has been a very popular destination. Building on that success, the current owners wanted to build a central community café in downtown Canton to support the town and the local colleges



in Canton.

The Bagelry opened its doors in Canton in 2014, offering freshly baked bagels and locally roasted coffee. The beautifully renovated interior, which maintained the gorgeous original hardwood floors intact, infuses the final look with a comfortable, urban vibe. It is a highly visible historic building in Canton's downtown and has become a premier hangout and favorite breakfast and lunch spot for local college students and professionals.



Along with interior renovations, a costly masonry project was undertaken to keep the building – and passersby – safe and work was done on the roof.

Project cost to the owners was \$205,000, which they financed themselves. This solved the immediate issues but did not complete the necessary, long-term repairs: the roof badly needs to be replaced, and the exterior brick (portions not previously repaired) is in need of restoration.

This project will replace the roof, repoint the building, and replace brick where weather has penetrated and created instability.

## Canton, New York

### PROJECT COST:

\$355,000

### INVESTMENT MADE:

\$205,000

### OWNER:

The Bagelry, Canton

### ADDRESS:

103 Main Street, Canton

### STATUS:

Shovel-ready

### CONSISTENT WITH:

Canton Community Action Plan  
Comprehensive Plan  
Brownfield Opportunity Area Plan

*The grand and historic nature of the building, its central and visible location downtown, and the vast amount of visitors that come to its commercial tenant make this location both attractive to downtown and a special place where community members and visitors connect.*

~ Ryan Dumphey  
Co-Owner, The Bagelry

## **8) Administrative Capacity.**

Canton's Office of Economic Development stands ready to administer the DRI initiative. The office currently staffs a full-time Director of Economic Development and a part-time assistant; they are supported by administrative staff in the clerks' offices, other Village and Town staff, a joint Village-Town Economic Development Committee, and the Economic Development Steering Committee.

The Director of Economic Development, Leigh Rodriguez, will be the primary staff member responsible for the administration of the DRI. Ms. Rodriguez has a BS in Business Administration with a concentration in accounting, and a Certificate of Paralegal Studies. She has more than a decade of experience in the administration and delivery of community/ economic/business development programs gained through previous employment with the St. Lawrence County Industrial Development Agency (CDBG Microenterprise, USDA RBEG, Empire State Development, IDA Workforce Development Programs) and in the past four years in Canton (USDA RBEG, New York Main Street, Northern Border Regional Commission, Empire State Development, Department of State, DASNY, CDBG Microenterprise, DEC, etc.). Ms. Rodriguez also has 10 years of experience as a real estate paralegal and VP of a Certified Development Corporation doing documentation, closing, and funding of U.S. Small Business Administration 504 loans. (Hiring additional staff would be considered if workload from oversight of existing and concurrent projects in addition to the DRI creates the need.)

As noted throughout this proposal, there a deep well of engaged stakeholders and community members ready and eager to actively engage in the DRI process.

## **9) Other.**

Canton's greatest strengths also present some of its most significant challenges: as the County seat with two universities, an impressive public-school complex, and an expanding health system, only 33 percent of the properties are taxable. If the Village is to lessen this tax burden, we need to encourage new development and private investment. DRI funds would help increase the tax base for the Village and reduce the burden on property owners, increasing their standard of living. With 20 percent of the population in the Village living in poverty, economic development, job creation, and an increase in the standard of living provides crucial opportunities for Canton residents of all income levels. In addition, Canton does not have any Opportunity Zone incentive areas like other communities in the region have, even though the economic demographics are consistent with those areas. This leaves Canton at a distinct disadvantage making the DRI award imperative to facilitate significant private investment in the community and jump start the resurgence.

The community continues to express deep frustration and impatience with the derelict condition of prime downtown properties, midtown plaza and the riverfront among them, for which they see tremendous potential. The state of delinquent properties was raised repeatedly in public sessions related to the DRI and Comprehensive Plan. Decades of disinvestment in Canton, as in many upstate communities, have made some owners reluctant to make substantial investments in those properties. A DRI award would help overcome these hurdles.

Canton has been positioning itself for an opportunity like the one presented by the Downtown Revitalization Initiative for many years. As demonstrated in the responses above, planning and legwork have been ongoing for a number of major projects in key downtown areas through Brownfield, Local Waterfront Revitalization, New York Main Street, Restore New York, Empire State Development, Northern Border Regional Commission, St. Lawrence River Valley Redevelopment Agency, CDBG, and other local, state, and federal programs. We have indeed been committed to ensuring that Canton is a vibrant community where the next generation of New Yorkers will want to live, work, and raise a family and visitors and tourists from nearby and around the world will want to come and stay.

We are organized, committed, engaged, and have support from our leadership and community to carry out a DRI award. It would indeed be transformative, not only for Canton, but for the entire region, which looks to the community as the center of commercial and cultural activity. We have a history of investing in our community and stand beside our commitment to continue to do so. This is the moment we have been waiting for.

**We are Canton.**  
**We are ready.**

**Laker Development NY, LLC**  
125 High Rock Ave.  
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866  
(518) 306-3747  
Fax (518) 934-8813

May 31, 2019

Ms. Leah Rodriguez  
Economic Development Director  
Town of Canton, New York

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL DELIVERY

Re: DRI Supported Transformative Mixed-Use Redevelopment in the Village of Canton, NY

Dear Leah:

Thank you for the opportunity to engage over the years evaluating options to attract investment and new development to the Canton community. We were grateful for the opportunities to support prior retail development in the town and have long been interested in re-positioning the distressed parcels comprising the "Jubilee Plaza." The aggregation of these parcels at the heart of a prime corner nexus should be repurposed as a dynamic mixed-use environment revitalizing the Village of Canton.

In combination with my project partner, Bill Teator of *DEW Ventures, LLC*, we look forward to working with the community and the Canton College Foundation currently controlling these sites. Bill and I are lifelong, dedicated upstate professionals committed to empowering communities with access to new investment and development. Building on my career in all facets of real estate siting and development, we are prepared to collaborate with the critical community stakeholders at the municipal, university and commercial business levels to reposition these properties. We will deliver the attractive *Entrepreneurship Center* to support the attraction and retention of talent that will stabilize and innovate next generation job creating enterprises in the community and region. Additionally, our connection to support services that help manage incubators and foster collaboration, as well as first-class coworking operation to support new entrepreneurs, will be leveraged in concert with SUNY Canton's programming

Drawing on my career in siting and securing long-term leases for commercial retail, we will attract other service and retail businesses to line a new urbanist mixed-use community. This approximately \$15 million, 90,000 square foot project will anchor the establishment of a prime, live, work and play corridor combining the innovation hub with modern, maintenance free multifamily rentals. The on-site and nearby downtown amenities, as well as proximity to the

waterfront and parks, will draw young professionals, empty nesters and professional education, health and similar sector households. We anticipate delivering approximately 25,000 net commercial leased space anchored by the *Entrepreneurship Center*, with two floors totaling approximately 45 residential rental units above. This will establish a new standard for downtown Canton living featuring modern amenities and quality materials.

Our project team has deep design and delivery experience of similar first-class spaces across upstate New York. *Dal Pos Architects, LLC* of Syracuse (materials attached) have created like quality mixed-use product and “new urbanist” formatted projects featuring pedestrian friendly environments. Likewise, *Trinity Building & Construction Services* (attached) through its growing Capital Region office has delivered on-time and on-budget projects across upstate encompassing thousands of units of multifamily, as well as prime commercial service and retail spaces regionally and nationwide.

We thank you for the leadership and collaboration. The stakeholder engagement, participation and support evident across the community leadership is impressive. It is key to attracting teams like ours to do business in Canton. We look forward to supporting the efforts to win the fourth round of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative in the North Country region. Without its grant resources to close the needed gap financing, the transformation of this downtown corridor will not be commercially viable.

With the highest regards, I remain...

Sincerely,



Devin A. Dal Pos

#### Attachments

Dal Pos Architects, LLC background  
Trinity Building & Construction Services background



**CANTON COLLEGE FOUNDATION, INC.**

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[foundation@canton.edu](mailto:foundation@canton.edu)

May 29, 2019

Ty Stone & James McKenna, Co-Chairs  
North Country Regional Economic Development Council  
Empire State Development  
Dulles State Office Building  
Watertown, New York 13601

Dear Dr. Stone and Mr. McKenna:

On behalf of the Canton College Foundation (CCF), I would like to express our enthusiastic support for Canton's DRI application. Canton College Foundation is the fundraising arm of SUNY Canton, and just as we are linked with the college, we are also deeply entwined with the village of Canton, New York. Many of our college's alumni and employees live in Canton; our students live, shop and recreate in the village; and we enjoy tremendous support from local residents and businesses who understand that having a thriving college is mutually beneficial.

Canton College Foundation is also involved with one of the proposed projects in the DRI application, the redevelopment of a long-vacant downtown shopping plaza into housing, retail and office space. The project plans include an Entrepreneurship Accelerator, a facility that would build upon SUNY Canton's existing expertise and resources, and which would bring students and community together in a way that will lead to additional business development and growth for the region.

Many parties are working together towards this common goal of turning an eyesore into a centerpiece of downtown: CCF, a developer, SUNY Canton, St. Lawrence University, and the Village and Town are all aligned in wanting to see this to come to fruition. CCF has also identified donors who would like to support the Entrepreneurship Accelerator.

Extensive planning and involvement from many groups and community members have led to the development of a vision for a revitalized downtown. A DRI award would enable us to transform property and infrastructure in a way that will spur business growth and job creation and create a vibrant and welcoming environment for residents to live, work and raise families.

Canton College Foundation remains committed to being a partner with Canton in its revitalization efforts, and we enthusiastically endorse the community's Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anne M. Sibley'.

Anne M. Sibley  
Vice President for Advancement  
Executive Director, Canton College Foundation

May 31, 2019

Ty Stone & James McKenna, Co-Chairs  
North Country Regional Economic Development Council  
Empire State Development  
Dulles State Office Building  
Watertown, New York 13601

Dear Dr. Stone and Mr. McKenna:

The community of Canton, New York, is poised to dramatically transform its downtown. If selected for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI), shovel-ready opportunities exist to redevelop long-time defunct properties into diverse and high-quality housing, retail and office space, as well as an Entrepreneurship Center that will catalyze the creation of new businesses and serve as a hub for workforce development initiatives. The holistic vision of our revitalized downtown is supported by a number of projects that will provide beautification while enhancing our recreational, cultural, artistic, and historical assets. This combination will spur business growth and job creation and create a vibrant and welcoming environment for residents to live, work and raise families. Funding from the DRI is *the* catalyst needed to make this revitalization happen.

As the current owner of the Midtown Plaza, I have entered into an option to purchase agreement with Roo Riverwoods, an LLC of the Canton College Foundation. I fully support the use of this property for a new development that will transform Canton's downtown.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Garry Cohen".

Garry Cohen



## VILLAGE of CANTON

60 Main Street, Canton, New York  
13617

(315) 386-2871 [www.cantonny.gov](http://www.cantonny.gov)

May 31, 2019

Dr. Ty Stone and Mr. James McKenna, Co-Chairs  
North Country Regional Economic Development Council  
Empire State Development  
Dulles State Office Building  
Watertown, New York 13601

Dear Dr. Stone and Mr. McKenna:

As the Mayor of Canton, on behalf of the Board of Trustees and Village residents, I am writing to endorse Canton's application for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) \$10 million award. Canton is poised to transform our downtown – we are ready!

Following years of dreaming and planning, shovel-ready opportunities exist to redevelop derelict properties into diverse and high-quality housing, retail and office space, and business and workforce development facilities. A comprehensive vision of our revitalized downtown is supported by a number of projects that will enhance our recreational, cultural, artistic, and historical assets while providing beautification. This combination will spur business growth and job creation and create a vibrant and welcoming environment for residents to live, work and raise families.

Projects realized with support from the DRI will be the culmination of several years of extensive State-supported planning efforts. Through a Brownfield Opportunity Area program, a new Comprehensive Plan, Local Waterfront Revitalization Plans, a Master Trail Plan, Grasse River Blueway Trail Plan, and a Canton Community Action Plan, the community has defined strategies and identified specific projects that will help to achieve our vision. Canton has successfully executed numerous State-supported investments in its downtown, such as the Heritage Islands on the Grasse River, Rushton Place, New York Main Street building improvements, CDBG Microenterprise grant program, Route 11 road and bridge improvements, and expansion of parks, trails and other recreational resources. The injection of capital through a DRI award will provide the resources needed to bring together recent improvements with several larger projects that we have not yet been able to attain. This will be the push Canton needs to truly transform and bring our vision to fruition.

Canton is a community recognized for its superior quality of life, beautiful historic downtown, and robust offering of public services and activities. However, the transformational change that would be catalyzed by a DRI award would enable the property and infrastructural revitalization that will enable us to start and grow businesses, attract new residents, and grow our workforce.

Dalton/page 2

The Village of Canton and the Village Board of Trustees remain committed to Canton's revitalization efforts, and we enthusiastically support this Downtown Revitalization Initiative application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Dalton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Michael Dalton  
Mayor

**OFFICE OF THE SUPERVISOR  
TOWN OF CANTON  
60 MAIN STREET  
CANTON, NEW YORK 13617**

5/29/19

Ty Stone & James McKenna, Co-Chairs  
North Country Regional Economic Development Council  
Empire State Development  
Dulles State Office  
Watertown, New York 13601

Dear Dr. Stone and Mr. McKenna:

The community of Canton, New York, is poised to dramatically transform its downtown. If sufficient funding can be secured, shovel ready opportunities exist to redevelop defunct properties into diverse and high-quality housing, retail and office space, and business and workforce development facilities. A holistic vision of our revitalized downtown is supported by a number of projects to enhance our recreational, cultural, artistic, and historical assets while providing beautification. This combination will spur business growth and job creation and create a vibrant and welcoming environment for residents to live, work and raise families. Funding from the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) is the catalyst that is needed to make this happen. I express enthusiastic support for Canton's DRI application.

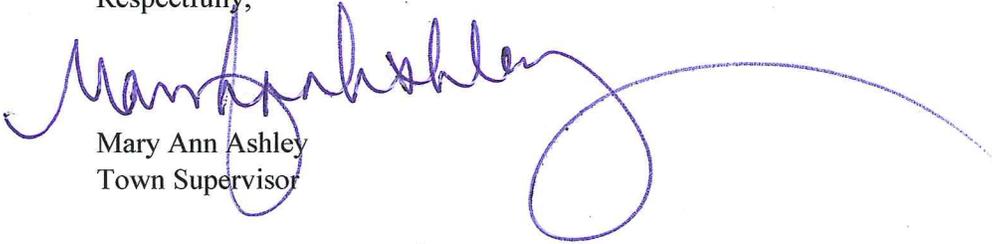
The Town of Canton shares a critical symbiotic relationship with our host community of Canton. We share the same municipal building and shared services including Community/Economic Development, Recreation, Code Enforcement and Assessor. Our municipal building is in the heart of the Village. We also share many volunteer committee initiatives including a Sustainability Committee, Waterfront Advisory Committee, Tree Committee, Trails Committee, and Complete Streets Committee. We are committed to the continued positive working relationship with Canton to build on its vitality, particularly in the downtown. The Town and Village are also Climate Smart Communities that are forging ahead addressing environmental issues. We are home to the county seat, SUNY Canton and St. Lawrence University.

Projects realized with support from the DRI would be the culmination of several years of extensive State supported planning efforts. Through a Brownfield Opportunity Area program, a new Comprehensive Plan, Local Waterfront Revitalization Plans, a Master Trail Plan, Grasse River Blueway Trail Plan, and a Canton Community Action Plan, the community has defined strategies and identified specific projects that will help to achieve our vision. Canton has successfully executed numerous State-supported investments in its downtown, such as the Heritage Islands on the Grasse River, Rushton Place, NY Main Street building improvements, CDBG Microenterprise grant program, Route 11 road and bridge improvements, and expansion of parks, trails and other recreational resources. The injection of capital through a DRI award would provide the resources needed to bring together recent improvements with several larger, projects that we have not yet been able to attain. This would be the push Canton needs to truly transform and bring our realistic vision to fruition.

Canton, New York, is a community recognized for its quality of life, beautiful historic downtown, and robust offering of public services and activities. However, the transformational change that would be catalyzed by a DRI award would enable the property and infrastructural revitalization that will enable us to start and grow businesses, attract new residents, and grow our workforce.

The Town of Canton remains committed to being a partner with the Village of Canton in its revitalization efforts.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mary Ann Ashley", with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Mary Ann Ashley  
Town Supervisor

SECRETARY OF THE SENATE MINORITY

RANKING MINORITY MEMBER  
ENERGY AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS  
LOCAL GOVERNMENT

THE SENATE  
STATE OF NEW YORK



SENATOR PATTY RITCHIE  
48TH DISTRICT  
OSWEGO, JEFFERSON, ST. LAWRENCE COUNTIES

COMMITTEES  
HEALTH  
VETERANS, HOMELAND SECURITY AND  
MILITARY AFFAIRS

May 30, 2019

Dr. Ty Stone & Mr. James McKenna, Co-Chairs  
North Country Regional Economic Development Council  
Empire State Development  
Dulles State Office Building  
Watertown, New York 13601

Dear Dr. Stone and Mr. McKenna:

I write to you regarding my strong support for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) application submitted by the community of Canton, NY.

As you are aware, it is critically important to foster opportunities for growth and job creation throughout our region. Currently, Canton is positioned to transform its downtown with assistance from the DRI. This forward thinking community is poised to launch projects that will help revitalize Canton, including:

- High-quality housing, office and retail spaces that will attract new residents and businesses;
- The creation of a new business accelerator that will encourage entrepreneurship and boost job creation efforts; and
- A number of initiatives that will enhance recreational, cultural, artistic, and historical assets, making the community more attractive to new individuals and families.

REPLY TO: □ ALBANY OFFICE: ROOM 302, LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING, ALBANY, NEW YORK 12247 (518) 455-3438  
□ JEFFERSON COUNTY OFFICE: 317 WASHINGTON STREET, ROOM 418, WATERTOWN, NEW YORK 13601 (315) 782-3418  
□ OSWEGO COUNTY OFFICE: 46 EAST BRIDGE STREET, FIRST FLOOR, OSWEGO, NEW YORK 13126 (315) 342-2057  
□ ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY OFFICE: 330 FORD STREET, OGDENSBURG, NEW YORK 13669 (315) 393-3024

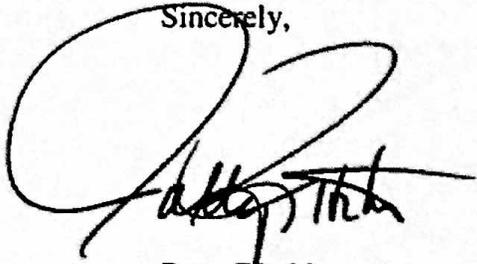
E-MAIL: RITCHIE@NYSenate.GOV  
WEBSITE: RITCHIE.NYSenate.GOV



Through a DRI award, Canton would be provided with the resources needed to build on other recent improvements and make possible additional projects that will add to the vitality of the community.

Across our state, downtowns are the hub of strong communities. I am hopeful that you will support Canton's efforts to revitalize its downtown, and in turn, the region as a whole. Thank you in advance for your consideration. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to my office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Patty Ritchie", written over a large, loopy initial "P".

Patty Ritchie  
State Senator

PAR:svc



MARK C. WALCZYK  
Assemblyman 116<sup>th</sup> District

THE ASSEMBLY  
STATE OF NEW YORK  
ALBANY

□ ALBANY OFFICE  
Room 940  
Legislative Office Building  
Albany, New York 12248  
518-455-5545

□ DISTRICT OFFICE  
Dulles State Office Building  
317 Washington Street, Suite 210  
Watertown, New York 13601  
315-786-0284

□ SATELLITE OFFICE  
3 Remington Avenue, Suite 1  
Canton, New York 13617  
315-386-2037

EMAIL:  
walczyk@nyassembly.gov

May 29, 2019

Dr. Ty Stone & Jason McKenna, Co-Chairs  
North Country Regional Economic Development Council  
Empire State Development  
Dulles State Office Building  
Watertown, New York 13601

Dear Dr. Stone and Mr. McKenna:

I write to endorse the application being submitted by the Village of Canton for funding through the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI).

If secured, this funding would allow the Village to transform their downtown by helping to redevelop the MidTown Plaza and waterfront. It would help create new office and retail space, along with high quality housing, which would help attract new residents and businesses. This would significantly strengthen the local economy by creating new jobs. In addition, more recreational, cultural and artistic opportunities will also keep the Village of Canton an attractive place for growth and future development.

DRI funds would also help culminate years of state-supported planning that have occurred within the Village of Canton, including Brownfield Opportunity Area program, local Waterfront Revitalization and the Grasse River Blueway Trail Plan, among numerous others, which will allow the Village to remain in a position for growth that helps keeps the area a great place to live, work and raise a family for years to come.

Again, I fully support the application being submitted by the Village of Canton. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at any time.

Sincerely,

Mark C. Walczyk  
Assemblyman  
Front Yard of America

ELISE M. STEFANIK  
21ST DISTRICT, NEW YORK

318 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515  
(202) 225-4611  
stefanik.house.gov

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-3221**

**HOUSE ARMED SERVICES  
COMMITTEE**  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE, EMERGING  
THREATS AND CAPABILITIES, RANKING MEMBER  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON STRATEGIC FORCES  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON READINESS

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION  
AND LABOR**  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HIGHER  
EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE INVESTMENT  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON CIVIL RIGHTS  
AND HUMAN SERVICES

**HOUSE PERMANENT SELECT  
COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE**

May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2019

Dear Dr. Stone and Mr. Mckenna,

I am writing to express my strong support for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) application submitted by the community of Canton, New York located in my Congressional District (NY-21). It is my understanding that DRI funding, supported by numerous state and local planning efforts, will allow Canton to proceed with their community led redevelopment plans which seek to make the region one that residents and business owners are drawn to work, learn, play, and raise families.

Since entering office, I have been proud to work alongside our local elected officials and economic development professionals to help them achieve their goal of creating stronger local economies and vibrant communities. Canton is poised to dramatically transform their downtown with funding assistance through the DRI. It is my understanding that shovel-ready redevelopment opportunities exist in downtown Canton at both MidTown Plaza and along the waterfront. The redevelopment of these underutilized properties would yield significant benefits to the community including diverse and high-quality housing and new office, retail, and hospitality spaces. This redevelopment would undoubtedly attract new residents and businesses, which would provide job creation, increased amenities and services, and an increased tax base. In addition, the community has proposed establishing a business accelerator to support local entrepreneurs and workforce development, as well as projects to enhance currently existing recreational, cultural, artistic, and historical assets.

Canton has a proven track record of having the administrative capability and knowledge to implement grant programs similar to the DRI. This may be best illustrated by their past successful projects: the Heritage Islands park on the Grasse River, the Rushton Place, the former Bell's Towing site, NY Main Street building improvements, a Community Development Block Grant Microenterprise grant program, and multiple trail and road improvements. As in other communities, the DRI Grant will leverage millions of dollars of private investment, and this greater injection of capital would provide the resources necessary to capitalize on these past projects and tie them into a larger, cohesive downtown redevelopment.

While I understand that there may be significant competition for this funding opportunity, it is

GLENS FALLS  
5 WARREN STREET  
SUITE 4  
GLENS FALLS, NY 12801  
(518) 743-0964

PLATTSBURGH  
137 MARGARET STREET  
SUITE 100  
PLATTSBURGH, NY 12901  
(518) 561-2324

WATERTOWN  
88 PUBLIC SQUARE  
SUITE A  
WATERTOWN, NY 13601  
(315) 782-3150



Always Caring

May 23, 2019

Ty Stone & James McKenna, Co-Chairs  
North Country Regional Economic Development Council  
Empire State Development  
Dulles State Office Building  
Watertown, New York 13601

Dear Dr. Stone and Mr. McKenna:

The community of Canton, New York, is poised to dramatically transform its downtown. If sufficient funding can be secured, shovel ready opportunities exist to redevelop defunct properties into diverse and high-quality housing, retail and office space, and business and workforce development facilities. A holistic vision of our revitalized downtown is supported by a number of projects to enhance our recreational, cultural, artistic, and historical assets while providing beautification. This combination will spur business growth and job creation and create a vibrant and welcoming environment for residents to live, work and raise families. Funding from the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) is the catalyst that is needed to make this happen. On behalf of [YOUR ORGANIZATION], I would like to express our most enthusiastic support for Canton's DRI application.

The United Helpers Organization shares a critical symbiotic relationship with our host community of Canton. United Helpers has seen firsthand what downtown investment can do. In 2012, we purchased an renovated a vacated downtown building. Fifty people now fill the building and we receive calls regularly to rent space. In turn, we depend on Canton to be a vibrant and welcoming community. We are therefore committed to working with Canton to enhance its vitality, particularly in the downtown.

Projects realized with support from the DRI would be the culmination of several years of extensive State-supported planning efforts. Through a Brownfield Opportunity Area program, a new Comprehensive Plan, Local Waterfront Revitalization Plans, a Master Trail Plan, Grasse River Blueway Trail Plan, and a Canton Community Action Plan, the community has defined strategies and identified specific projects that will help to achieve our vision. Canton has successfully executed numerous State-supported investments in its downtown, such as the Heritage Islands on the Grasse River, Rushton Place, NY Main Street building improvements, CDBG Microenterprise grant

United Helpers Management Company

732 Ford Street, Ogdensburg, NY 13669 • Phone 315-393-3074 • Fax 315-393-3083 • Toll Free 800-838-8558

[www.unitedhelpers.org](http://www.unitedhelpers.org)

program, Route 11 road and bridge improvements, and expansion of parks, trails and other recreational resources. The injection of capital through a DRI award would provide the resources needed to bring together recent improvements with several larger, projects that we have not yet been able to attain. This would be the push Canton needs to truly transform and bring our realistic vision to fruition.

Canton, New York, is a community recognized for its superior quality of life, beautiful historic downtown, and robust offering of public services and activities. However, the transformational change that would be catalyzed by a DRI award would enable the property and infrastructural revitalization that will enable us to start and grow businesses, attract new residents, and grow our workforce.

United Helpers remains committed to being a partner to Canton in its revitalization efforts, and we enthusiastically endorse the community's Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Stephen E. Knight". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Stephen E. Knight  
Chief Executive Officer



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

State University of New York • 34 Cornell Dr. • Canton, NY 13617-1096 • [www.canton.edu](http://www.canton.edu)

DR. ZVI SZAFRAN, *President*

OFFICE: 315-386-7204

Fax: 315-386-7934

[president@canton.edu](mailto:president@canton.edu)

May 28, 2019

Ty Stone & James McKenna, Co-Chairs  
North Country Regional Economic Development Council  
Empire State Development  
Dulles State Office Building  
Watertown, New York 13601

Dear Dr. Stone and Mr. McKenna:

The community of Canton, New York, is poised to dramatically transform its downtown. If selected for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI), shovel-ready opportunities exist to redevelop long-time defunct properties into diverse and high-quality housing, retail and office space, as well as an Entrepreneurship Center that will catalyze the creation of new businesses and serve as a hub for workforce development initiatives. The holistic vision of our revitalized downtown is supported by a number of projects that will provide beautification while enhancing our recreational, cultural, artistic, and historical assets. This combination will spur business growth and job creation and create a vibrant and welcoming environment for residents to live, work and raise families. Funding from the DRI is *the* catalyst needed to make this revitalization happen. On behalf of SUNY Canton, I would like to express our most enthusiastic support for Canton's DRI application.

SUNY Canton shares a critical symbiotic relationship with our host community of Canton. As a College of Technology, entrepreneurship and supporting economic development are core parts of our mission. Our students, faculty, and staff form a significant fraction of the Canton community, its employment picture, and its economic base; shopping in its stores, attending its churches, and participating in its civic and cultural events. In *turn*, we depend on Canton to be a vibrant and welcoming community. We are totally committed to working with Canton in every way possible to enhance its vitality, particularly in the downtown area.

Projects realized with support from the DRI would be the culmination of several years of extensive State-supported planning efforts. Through a Brownfield Opportunity Area program, a new Comprehensive Plan, Local Waterfront Revitalization Plans, a Master Trail Plan, Grasse River Blueway Trail Plan, and a Canton Community Action Plan, the community has defined strategies and identified specific projects that will help to achieve our vision. Canton has successfully executed numerous State-supported investments in its downtown, such as the Heritage Islands on the Grasse River, Rushton Place, NY Main Street building improvements, CDBG Microenterprise grant program, Route 11 road and bridge improvements, and expansion of parks, trails and other recreational resources. The injection of capital through a DRI award would provide the resources needed to bring together recent improvements with several larger, projects that we have not yet been able to attain. This would be the push Canton needs to truly transform and bring our realistic vision to fruition.



**OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT**

State University of New York • 34 Cornell Dr. • Canton, NY 13617-1096 • [www.canton.edu](http://www.canton.edu)

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DR. ZVI SZAFRAN, *President*

OFFICE: 315-386-7204

Fax: 315-386-7934

[president@canton.edu](mailto:president@canton.edu)

Ty Stone and James McKenna

May 28, 2019

Page 2

Canton, New York, is a community recognized for its superior quality of life, beautiful historic downtown, and robust offering of public services and activities. The transformational change that would be catalyzed by a DRI award would enable the property and infrastructural revitalization that will enable us to start and grow businesses, attract new residents, and grow our workforce. As the county seat at the center of New York's largest subdivision, the benefits of the DRI will be felt across an unusually wide area, significantly helping to reverse a regional downward economic trend.

SUNY Canton remains committed to being a partner to Canton in its revitalization efforts, and we enthusiastically endorse the community's Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Zvi Szafran', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Zvi Szafran



May 30, 2019

Ty Stone & James McKenna, Co-Chairs  
North Country Regional Economic Development Council  
Empire State Development  
Dulles State Office Building  
Watertown, New York 13601

Dear Dr. Stone and Mr. McKenna:

On behalf of St. Lawrence University, I would like to express our enthusiastic support for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) application being submitted for the community of Canton, New York.

Canton is ready, with support from a DRI program, to transform its downtown by acting upon several recently established development plans and by implementing projects that will turn vacant and blighted properties into new office, retail, entrepreneurship, and residential spaces. Additional projects will create pedestrian spaces, enhance arts, recreational, and cultural facilities, and provide for beautification of the downtown core. Together, these downtown revitalization projects will establish Canton as a magnet to new residents, entrepreneurs, visitors, workers, and students.

As the vitality of Canton grows with the DRI program, so will St. Lawrence University gain strength, for the university has shared a symbiotic relationship with our host community since its founding in 1856. Now with more than 800 employees, approximately 2,500 students, and thousands of visitors every year, the university is a primary economic engine in Canton. In turn, we depend on Canton to be a vibrant and welcoming community to our faculty, staff, students, graduates, and visitors to live, work, study, and play. The projects executed with DRI support will create such an environment; an increased diversity of quality housing options will help us attract and retain faculty and staff. A range of retail and service businesses that would be established in the new commercial properties will help to attract and retain students and employees alike. Such businesses and the entrepreneurship center present career opportunities for graduates and family members of our employees. A robust quality of life that results from investment in beautification and the expansion of arts, recreational and cultural facilities will attract the university's visitors, alumni, students and employees to our community.

Recognizing this symbiosis, St. Lawrence University has been a partner in many prior investments in downtown redevelopment and intense strategic planning endeavors. Such endeavors include the Canton Community Action Plan, the Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan, the Grasse River Blueway, the Sustainability Action Plan, a Brownfield Opportunity Area study, and the Comprehensive Plan – all of which have culminated in a clear vision for downtown revitalization and identified the actions for realizing that vision.

Numerous projects identified through such plans have been completed to make downtown Canton a desirable place to live, work, study, and play. The Heritage Islands on the Grasse River were redeveloped from a state of blighted buildings to now heavily used parks. The large and vacant Gray Lanes building is now fully occupied with businesses and condominiums as the Rushton Place. Storefronts and building facades have gotten facelifts through the NY Main Street program. The community worked with the Department of Transportation on Main Street improvements. Parks, trails and other recreational resources have been expanded. These are but a few examples of the many improvements that have been made in Canton. They are the result of the relentless collaborative work of many dedicated stakeholders and prior investments by New York State. St. Lawrence University has been a partner in many of these efforts, through co-investment or the collaborative efforts of our faculty, staff, and students. Combined, they illustrate that Canton has a track record of successful delivery on State-supported development projects.

Numerous other identified projects – greater still in scope and impact – would be realized with the resources of the DRI. These include pedestrian walkways, arts and cultural destination facilities, recreational assets such as a whitewater park, refurbishment of the American Theater, and restoration of the Village Park and Fountain. All of these projects would further enhance the attractiveness and quality of life in Canton. The redevelopment of several vacant, blighted, or underutilized properties in the downtown, such as the MidTown Plaza and properties along our riverfront, would not only have a transformational effect on the downtown's attractiveness, but would provide unparalleled spaces for commercial, retail, hospitality, entrepreneurship, and residential uses. As a lack of appropriate properties has been repeatedly found to be a barrier to development in Canton, these redevelopment projects would fuel business growth, job creation, population increase, tax base growth, and entrepreneurship development.

We recognize a critical need to further enhance Canton's vibrancy. This is particularly true in downtown, which is the heart of our community and an area dramatically poised for transformation. In an environment of financial feasibility gaps and constrained capital, it is the DRI support that would catalyze private investment in growth opportunities. In doing so, it will help Canton achieve its vision as a community that tomorrow's workforce, business starters, and community leaders are drawn to because of a thriving downtown and vibrant community core.

St. Lawrence University remains committed to being a partner to our home community in its revitalization efforts, and we enthusiastically endorse a Downtown Revitalization Initiative in Canton.

Sincerely,



Lisa M. Cania

Vice President for Community and Employee Relations

**Fourth Coast** <fourthcoast@twcny.rr.com>  
To: Leigh Rodriguez <lrodriguez@cantonny.gov>

Fri, May 31, 2019 at 7:31 AM

**From:** Jeff [mailto:[jsc@jscinemas.com](mailto:jsc@jscinemas.com)]

**Sent:** Thursday, May 30, 2019 10:42 PM

**To:** Fourth Coast

**Subject:** Re: Canton is submitting the plan this week to DRI Project NYS, I have been asked if you would be willing to put something in writing that you are open to the concept and would consider it?

Michael:

We are willing to entertain a proposal to go ahead and sell the American Theater, Main St., Canton to a group that would restore the theater for use as a performing arts venue. We would be willing to consider moving to another location to help facilitate this project.

Jeffrey Szot  
President  
J.S.Cinemas, Inc.



P.O. Box 722  
Canton, New York 13617

May 29, 2019

Ty Stone & James McKenna, Co-Chairs  
North Country Regional Economic Development Council  
Empire State Development  
Dulles State Office Building  
Watertown, New York 13601

Dear Dr. Stone and Mr. McKenna,

As President of the Grasse River Heritage Area Development Corporation, I write in strong support of Canton's application for a Downtown Revitalization Initiative grant.

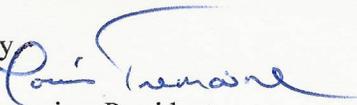
Grasse River Heritage is a non-profit organization that has been marshalling local energies and resources since 1999 to develop and improve the Grasse River corridor for the benefit of the Canton community. In the process, we built and now manage a heritage park on an island adjacent to downtown Canton, built another park nearby at the entry into the village, and initiated the conversion of an abandoned bowling alley at the foot of Main Street into attractive and well-used office and condominium space. Most recently we've developed an outdoor sculpture garden on another island near the central business district.

This last project has given rise to active planning, in collaboration with the Village of Canton, for a still more ambitious arts park. A recent design charrette was attended by stakeholders including artists, performers, educators, landscapers, architects, and other community members. That meeting produced a concept that embraces additional artworks, performance space, gardens, play space, and other amenities. A separately completed feasibility study supports a planned pedestrian pathway along the shoreline beneath Main Street to connect this facility and Heritage Park. Together these linked public spaces will draw maximum benefit from one of Canton's most distinctive features, the Grasse River and its islands, which are visible from any point in the CBD, and will provide a unique recreational and cultural resource that will attract both visitors and potential new residents to our community.

The work of Grasse River Heritage helps to illustrate the qualities that make Canton such a strong candidate for a DRI grant. We have been successful in our initiatives because hundreds of our neighbors have rolled up their sleeves as volunteers and opened their pockets as donors to ensure plans were implemented. This is a community that actively supports good ideas. Our success has also been the product of a culture of collaboration in which we have worked together not only with individuals but with institutions like the Village and Town of Canton, the two local universities, and other organizations such as Traditional Arts in Upstate New York and the St. Lawrence Land Trust. Partnerships like these are typical of how progress is made in Canton and are responsible for accomplishments that tie the community more closely together and make it a more desirable place to live in and to visit.

I am confident that the projects undertaken with support from the Downtown Revitalization Initiative will meet with the same success, and I urge your most serious attention to this proposal.

Sincerely,

  
Louis Tremaine, President  
Grasse River Heritage

# The Arc

Jefferson – St. Lawrence  
New York

*Achieve with us.®*

May 31, 2019

Ty Stone & James McKenna, Co-Chairs  
North Country Regional Economic Development Council  
Empire State Development  
Dulles State Office Building  
Watertown, New York 13601

Dear Dr. Stone and Mr. McKenna:

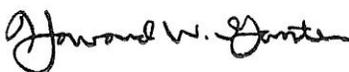
On behalf of The Arc Jefferson – St. Lawrence, I would like to express our support for Canton's Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) application. Canton, New York, is poised to dramatically transform its downtown. If sufficient funding is secured, opportunities exist to redevelop defunct properties into diverse and high-quality housing, retail and office space, as well as business and workforce development facilities. A holistic vision of a revitalized downtown is supported by a number of projects to enhance our assets while providing beautification. This combination will spur business growth and job formation while creating a quality environment for residents to live, work and raise families. Funding from the DRI is the catalyst that is needed to make this happen.

The Arc Jefferson – St. Lawrence shares a critical symbiotic relationship with our host community of Canton. Our main offices are located in Canton and we support services for about 200 people with developmental disabilities in the area. In turn, we depend on Canton to be a vibrant and welcoming community. We are therefore committed to working with Canton to enhance its vitality, particularly in the downtown.

Projects realized with support from the DRI would be the culmination of several years of extensive State-supported planning efforts. Canton has successfully executed numerous State-supported investments, such as the Heritage Islands on the Grasse River, Rushton Place, NY Main Street building improvements, CDBG Microenterprise grant program, Route 11 road and bridge improvements, and expansion of parks, trails and other recreational resources. The injection of capital through a DRI award would provide the resources needed to bring together improvements with several larger, projects that we have not yet been able to attain. This would be the push Canton needs to truly transform and bring our realistic vision to fruition.

Canton, New York, is a community recognized for its superior quality of life, beautiful historic downtown, and robust offering of public services and activities. However, the transformational change that would be catalyzed by a DRI award would enable the property and infrastructural revitalization that will enable us to start and grow businesses, attract new residents, and grow our workforce. The Arc Jefferson – St. Lawrence remains committed to being a partner to Canton in its revitalization efforts, and we enthusiastically endorse the community's Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

Sincerely,



Howard Ganter  
Chief Executive Officer



[www.thearcjslc.org](http://www.thearcjslc.org)

Brian Marcolini, President, Board of Directors  
Howard W. Ganter, Chief Executive Officer

6 Commerce Lane, Canton, New York 13617 315-379-9531 Fax 315-379-0834



Ty Stone & James McKenna, Co-Chairs  
North Country Regional Economic Development Council  
Empire State Development  
Dulles State Office Building  
Watertown, New York 13601

May 28, 2019

Dear Dr. Stone and Mr. McKenna:

The congregation of the First Presbyterian Church and I would express our enthusiastic support for the application being made to the Downtown Revitalization Initiative program by the community of Canton, New York. With many investments in downtown redevelopment and strategic planning endeavors in recent years, Canton is perfectly poised to execute transformative projects with the support from the Downtown Revitalization Initiative to make Canton's downtown a draw for a diversity of people with business opportunities, job growth, a range of quality housing, recreation, and the highest quality of life.

The Canton First Presbyterian Church shares a critical symbiotic relationship with our host community. As owners of the Village Park in the center of town, we have worked cooperatively with the village government and its officials for many generations to maintain and administer the Park. We are also an active member of the Canton Village Chamber of Commerce and serve as a host site for many community events and spirited supporter of local merchants and business owners. Currently, the church and local leaders have raised over \$125,000 from local supporters to refurbish the fountain in the Park. In *turn*, we depend on Canton to be a vibrant and welcoming community. We are therefore committed to working with Canton to enhance its vitality, particularly in the downtown.

Much has already been done to make downtown Canton a desirable place to live, work, study, and play: The Heritage Islands on the Grasse River were redeveloped from a state of blighted buildings to heavily-used parks. The large and vacant Gray Lanes building is now fully occupied with businesses and condominiums as the Rushton Place. Storefronts and building facades have gotten facelifts through the NY Main Street program. The community worked with the Department of Transportation on Main Street improvements. Parks, trails and other recreational resources have been expanded.

These are but examples of the many improvements that have been made in Canton. They are the result of the relentless collaborative work of many dedicated stakeholders and prior investments by New York State. As a result of these efforts we are seeing growth in our community. Unlike much of the region, Canton has had a growth in its overall population.

Yet the potential for additional growth and the transformation of our downtown as a Downtown Revitalization Initiative community is enormous. With the resources available through the initiative, Canton's recent and current strategic planning endeavors - including the Canton Community Action Plan, the Brownfield Opportunity Area, a new Comprehensive Plan, and the Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan - can be realized: the redevelopment of vacant and under-utilized properties and investment in infrastructure will lead to desirable new space for businesses and housing. The enhancement of recreational amenities will grow the quality of life and attractiveness in the heart of the community, fueling further population growth. As a result, Canton will achieve its vision as a community that tomorrow's workforce, business starters, and community leaders are drawn to because of a thriving downtown and vibrant community core.

The Canton First Presbyterian Church remains committed to being a partner to our home community in its Revitalization efforts, and we enthusiastically endorse a Downtown Revitalization Initiative in Canton.

Sincerely,



Rev. Michael P. Catanzaro, Pastor  
First Presbyterian Church  
17 Park Street  
Canton, NY 13617  
315.386.2570  
RevMike@ChurchOnThePark.org  
www.ChurchOnThePark.org



5/30/19

Ty Stone & James McKenna, Co-Chairs  
North Country Regional Economic Development Council  
Empire State Development  
Dulles State Office Building  
Watertown, New York 13601

Dear Dr. Stone and Mr. McKenna:

The community of Canton, New York, is poised to dramatically transform its downtown. If sufficient funding can be secured, shovel ready opportunities exist to redevelop defunct properties into diverse and high-quality housing, retail and office space, and business and workforce development facilities. A holistic vision of our revitalized downtown is supported by a number of projects to enhance our recreational, cultural, artistic, and historical assets while providing beautification. This combination will spur business growth and job creation and create a vibrant and welcoming environment for residents to live, work and raise families. Funding from the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) is *the* catalyst that is needed to make this happen. On behalf of Hodge LLC, I would like to express our most enthusiastic support for Canton's DRI application.

Hodge LLC shares a critical symbiotic relationship with our host community. Luna, which is the current company operating under Hodge LLC, provides local women with clothing, undergarments, shoes, gifts, etc. which they would not normally have access to in Canton. Luna also has a subscription box service, online sales on two websites, and personal shopping services helping to expand our reach and survive in the changing business climate. May 2019 I purchased a building on Main Street in Canton with plans to mentor a new business opening in the space and work closely with the owner to have a healthy landlord and tenant relationship. It is important to create a strong working relationship with the tenant because it encourages growth as a new business and the possibility to make adjustments in the first few years being open. In May 2018, I was awarded the Young Entrepreneur of the Year for District 21 in NY State by the SBA. The community has been hugely supportive of my current business and my future ideas for development. I am personally dedicated to making my hometown of Canton a vibrant and attractive place for people to stay and aspire to take up residency. I have many plans for future businesses, not limited to my proposed Restore NY project from 2018 which fit perfectly into the comprehensive plan for the town and would revitalize a brownfield site in the village. I would love to provide the local men with the same services I provide to women as well as a unique dining experience for Canton. The plan also included housing for young professionals as well as newly retired locals above the commercial spaces. Countless other ideas have been thought through on my part and I am prepared to carry out the ideas with the help of the DRI. In turn, we depend on Canton to be a vibrant and welcoming community. I am therefore committed to working with Canton to enhance its vitality, particularly in the downtown. I will feel committed to keeping my ideas and energy in the area if we can continue to actively revitalize Canton and make it worth my time and personal investment.

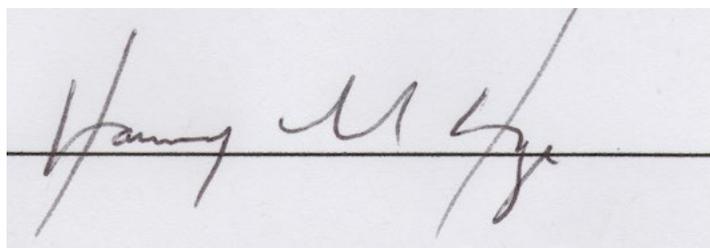
Projects realized with support from the DRI would be the culmination of several years of extensive State-supported planning efforts. Through a Brownfield Opportunity Area program, a new Comprehensive Plan, Local Waterfront Revitalization Plans, a Master Trail Plan, Grasse River Blueway Trail Plan, and a Canton Community Action Plan, the community has defined strategies and identified specific projects that will help to achieve our vision. Canton has successfully executed numerous State-supported investments in its downtown, such as the Heritage Islands on the Grasse River, Rushton Place, NY Main Street building improvements, CDBG Microenterprise grant program, Route

11 road and bridge improvements, and expansion of parks, trails and other recreational resources. The injection of capital through a DRI award would provide the resources needed to bring together recent improvements with several larger, projects that we have not yet been able to attain. This would be the push Canton needs to truly transform and bring our realistic vision to fruition.

Canton, New York, is a community recognized for its superior quality of life, beautiful historic downtown, and robust offering of public services and activities. However, the transformational change that would be catalyzed by a DRI award would enable the property and infrastructural revitalization that will enable us to start and grow businesses, attract new residents, and grow our workforce.

Hodge LLC remains committed to being a partner to Canton in its revitalization efforts, and we enthusiastically endorse the community's Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Harry M. Gye", is written over a horizontal line. The signature is cursive and appears to be on a light-colored background.

# THE ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY PLANNING OFFICE

Public Safety Complex – 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, 48 Court Street  
Canton, New York 13617-1169

VOICE (315) 379-2292  
FAX (315) 379-2252

E-MAIL [Planning@stlawco.org](mailto:Planning@stlawco.org)  
WEB SITE <http://www.stlawco.org/Planning/SLCPI.htm>

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May 23, 2019

Ty Stone & James McKenna, Co-Chairs  
North Country Regional Economic Development Council  
Empire State Development  
Dulles State Office Building  
Watertown, New York 13601

Dear Dr. Stone and Mr. McKenna:

The staff and the Board of Canton Village have been quietly, consistently and competently positioning the community for a transformative investment opportunity for a number of years. That time has now come.

The Village has been aggressively and comprehensively planning its future and charting pathways to achieve it for a number of years. These planning efforts included: Brownfield Opportunity Area program activities, a new Comprehensive Plan, Local Waterfront Revitalization Plans, a Master Trail Plan, Grasse River Blueway Trail Plan, and a Canton Community Action Plan and the culmination of all of those planning efforts would begin with a strategic investment centered on the Main Street area of the Village – as proposed.

The Village has strategically partnered and co-leveraged other investments in the community (including by the County) to help position it for renewed and long-term vibrancy and relevance. It has a long history of success in implementing public projects and improvements and in incentivizing private investment in and around its community core. The Village also had the foresight to improve its subsurface infrastructures at the time of the DOT Route 11 road and bridge improvements a few years back so it can easily accommodate the planned new growth. The injection of capital through a DRI award would provide the resources needed to bring together recent improvements with several cornerstone and truly transformative initiatives that have yet to be obtained.

Being as the County seat is located in Canton, our County Planning Office has a keen interest in the efforts to revitalize this community and we are partnering, assisting and supporting Canton in whatever ways we can.

Sincerely,



Keith Zimmerman  
Director



Always Caring

May 29, 2019

Ty Stone & James McKenna, Co-Chairs  
North Country Regional Economic Development Council  
Empire State Development  
Dulles State Office Building  
Watertown, New York 13601

Dear Dr. Stone and Mr. McKenna:

The community of Canton, New York, is poised to dramatically transform its downtown. If sufficient funding can be secured, shovel ready opportunities exist to redevelop defunct properties into diverse and high-quality housing, retail and office space, and business and workforce development facilities. A holistic vision of our revitalized downtown is supported by a number of projects to enhance our recreational, cultural, artistic, and historical assets while providing beautification. This combination will spur business growth and job creation and create a vibrant and welcoming environment for residents to live, work and raise families. Funding from the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) is *the* catalyst that is needed to make this happen. On behalf of United Helpers, I would like to express our most enthusiastic support for Canton's DRI application.

United Helpers shares a critical symbiotic relationship with our host community of Canton. One of the United Helpers' office buildings is located in downtown Canton. We operate multiple service lines from this location. United Helpers employs more than 1000 people and reaches more than 2200 individuals each day. In *turn*, we depend on Canton to be a vibrant and welcoming community. We are therefore committed to working with Canton to enhance its vitality, particularly in the downtown.

Projects realized with support from the DRI would be the culmination of several years of extensive State-supported planning efforts. Through a Brownfield Opportunity Area program, a new Comprehensive Plan, Local Waterfront Revitalization Plans, a Master Trail Plan, Grasse River Blueway Trail Plan, and a Canton Community Action Plan, the community has defined strategies and identified specific projects that will help to achieve our vision. Canton has successfully executed numerous State-supported investments in its downtown, such as the Heritage Islands on the Grasse River, Rushton Place, NY Main Street building improvements, CDBG Microenterprise grant program, Route 11 road and bridge improvements, and expansion of parks, trails and other recreational resources. The injection of capital through a DRI award would provide the resources needed to bring together recent improvements with several larger, projects that we have not yet been able to attain. This would be the push Canton needs to truly transform and bring our realistic vision to fruition.

Canton, New York, is a community recognized for its superior quality of life, beautiful historic downtown, and robust offering of public services and activities. However, the transformational change that would be catalyzed by a DRI award would enable the property and infrastructural revitalization that will enable us to start and grow businesses, attract new residents, and grow our workforce.

United Helpers remains committed to being a partner to Canton in its revitalization efforts, and we enthusiastically endorse the community's Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

Sincerely,

Todd R. Amo  
Executive Vice President



# ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

Ernest J. LaBaff Industrial Building ~ 19 Commerce Lane, Suite 1 ~ Canton, New York 13617  
Phone: (315) 379-9806 / TDD: 711 ~ Fax: (315) 386-2573 ~ www.SLCIDA.com

## MEMBERSHIP

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**Brian W. Staples**  
Brian Staples, CPA

\*

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Blevins Brothers, Inc.

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### James Reagen

St. Lawrence County  
Board of Legislators

\*

### Mark C. Hall

Town of Fine, New York

\*

### Andrew McMahon

Massena Electric Department

\*

### Steven Morrill

Gebarten Acres

\*

### CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

**Patrick J. Kelly**  
St. Lawrence County  
Industrial Development Agency

\*

### CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

**Kimberly A. Gilbert**  
St. Lawrence County  
Industrial Development Agency

May 30, 2019

Dr. Ty A. Stone & James McKenna, Co-Chairs  
North Country Regional Economic Development Council  
Empire State Development  
Dulles State Office Building  
Watertown, New York 13601

Dear Dr. Stone and Mr. McKenna:

Please accept this letter of support for the Village of Canton's request for funding assistance available through the 2019 New York State Downtown Revitalization Initiative ("DRI").

The community of Canton is poised to dramatically transform its downtown. If sufficient funding can be secured, shovel ready opportunities exist to redevelop defunct properties into diverse and high-quality housing, retail and office space, and business and workforce development facilities. This combination will spur business growth and job creation and create a vibrant and welcoming environment for residents to live, work and raise families. Funding from the DRI is *the* catalyst that is needed to make this happen.

Projects realized with support from the DRI would be the culmination of several years of extensive State-supported planning efforts. Through a Brownfield Opportunity Area program, a new Comprehensive Plan, Local Waterfront Revitalization Plans, a Master Trail Plan, Grasse River Blueway Trail Plan, and a Canton Community Action Plan, the community has defined strategies and identified specific projects that will help to achieve its vision.

Canton has successfully executed numerous State-supported investments in its downtown, such as the Heritage Islands on the Grasse River, Rushton Place, NY Main Street building improvements, CDBG Microenterprise grant program, Route 11 road and bridge improvements, and expansion of parks, trails and other recreational resources.

The injection of capital through a DRI award would provide the resources needed to bring together recent improvements with several larger projects that have not yet been attainable to truly transform and bring this realistic vision to fruition. The transformational change that would be catalyzed by a DRI award would enable the property and infrastructural revitalization that will enable business growth, attract new residents, and grow the workforce.

The St. Lawrence County Industrial Development Agency supports the efforts of the Village of Canton to initiate this transformational change and encourages you to look favorably on their request as part of the State's Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

Sincerely,

Patrick Kelly  
Chief Executive Officer

May 30, 2019

Ty Stone & James McKenna, Co-Chairs  
North Country Regional Economic Development Council  
Empire State Development  
Dulles State Office Building  
Watertown, New York 13601

Dear Dr. Stone and Mr. McKenna:

The community of Canton, New York, is poised to dramatically transform its downtown. When sufficient funding is secured, shovel ready opportunities exist to redevelop defunct properties into diverse and high-quality housing, retail and office space, and business and workforce development facilities. A holistic vision of our revitalized downtown is supported by a number of projects to enhance our recreational, cultural, artistic, and historical assets while providing beautification. This combination will spur business growth and job creation, while creating a vibrant and welcoming environment for residents to live, work and raise families. Funding from the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) is *the* catalyst that is needed to make this happen. On behalf of GardenShare, I would like to express our most enthusiastic support for Canton's DRI application.

As GardenShare is dedicated to strengthening the local food system and works closely with the Canton Farmers Market to that end, a vibrant and economically robust downtown is of vital interest to us all. Our specialty crop producers may live outside the village limits, but their economic opportunities are dependent on the health of this anchor community. In other words, if it is good for Canton, it is good for our farmers and ultimately, helps ensure food security and resilience for the entire county.

Projects realized with support from the DRI would be the culmination of several years of extensive State-supported planning efforts. Through a Brownfield Opportunity Area program, a new Comprehensive Plan, Local Waterfront Revitalization Plans, a Master Trail Plan, Grasse River Blueway Trail Plan, and a Canton Community Action Plan, the community has defined strategies and identified specific projects that will help to achieve our vision. Canton has successfully executed numerous State-supported investments in its downtown, such as the Heritage Islands on the Grasse River, Rushton Place, NY Main Street building improvements, CDBG Microenterprise grant program, Route 11 road and bridge improvements, and expansion of parks, trails and other recreational resources. The injection of capital through a DRI award would provide the resources needed to bring together recent improvements with several larger projects that we have not yet been able to attain. This would be the push Canton needs to truly transform and bring our realistic vision to fruition.

Canton, New York, is a community recognized for its superior quality of life, beautiful historic downtown, and robust offering of public services and activities. However, the transformational change, catalyzed by a DRI award would enable the property and infrastructure revitalization necessary to start and grow businesses, attract new residents, and grow our workforce.

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**Board of Directors**

Patrick Ames, Canton ~ Sarah Bentley-Garfinkel, Canton ~ Jan DeWaters, Potsdam ~ April Grant, Potsdam ~  
Valerie Ingram, Canton ~ Anneke Larrance, Canton ~ Carol Pynchon, Canton ~ Sanford Stauffer, North Lawrence

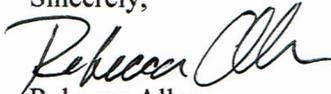
**Staff**

Becky Allen, Executive Director ~ Carlene Doane, Associate Director

---

GardenShare remains committed to being a partner to Canton in its revitalization efforts, and we enthusiastically endorse the community's Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rebecca Allen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and "A".

Rebecca Allen,  
Executive Director



May 29, 2019

Ty Stone & James McKenna, Co-Chairs  
North Country Regional Economic Development Council  
Empire State Development  
Dulles State Office Building  
Watertown, New York 13601

Dear Dr. Stone and Mr. McKenna:

As President of the Canton Chamber of Commerce, I would like to express our enthusiastic support for Canton's Downtown Revitalization Initiative proposal.

Canton is ready to capitalize on a Downtown Revitalization Initiative program, with recent development plans established and a number of projects ready to be advanced. These projects will redevelop a number of vacant and blighted properties to new retail, office, and residential spaces. Other projects will create new spaces and structures for the arts and cultural resources, enhance infrastructure, and provide for beautification of our downtown. In combination, these projects would enhance the business environment in downtown – creating and attracting new businesses and growing existing ones, developing the workforce and entrepreneurs, attracting new residents and increasing the demand for services and amenities.

This transformative nature of a Downtown Revitalization Initiative program in Canton, and the projects to be supported by it, are in complete alignment with the mission and work of the Chamber. The Canton Chamber of Commerce provides support and leadership to the business community in an effort to preserve the quality of life in Canton through responsible growth. We host numerous community events to promote our businesses and to encourage residents and visitors to enjoy the many resources in our town. We also support our business community through marketing opportunities and networking, and by creating a business-friendly environment through enhancement of the community's welcoming and vibrant character.

The Canton Chamber of Commerce will accordingly be an important resource to the businesses that start or grow, the residents that move here, and the visitors that come to enjoy our vibrant community as a result of the downtown revitalization activity.

The Canton Chamber of Commerce is therefore committed to working with the community of Canton, New York, in its downtown revitalization efforts and support its Downtown Revitalization Initiative proposal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Carol Spadaccini'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Carol Spadaccini  
President  
Canton Chamber of Commerce

**"Working Together For A Better Community"**

**P.O. Box 369 • Canton • New York 13617 • Phone & Fax: (315) 386-8255 • email: [cantoncc@northnet.org](mailto:cantoncc@northnet.org)**



205 State Street Road  
Canton, NY 13617  
(315) 379-1829  
cantondaycare@twcny.rr.com  
www.cantondaycarecenter.org

May 30, 2019

Ty Stone & James McKenna, Co-Chairs  
North Country Regional Economic Development Council  
Empire State Development  
Dulles State Office Building  
Watertown, New York 13601

Dear Dr. Stone and Mr. McKenna:

The community of Canton, New York, is poised to dramatically transform its downtown. If sufficient funding can be secured, shovel ready opportunities exist to redevelop defunct properties into diverse and high-quality housing, retail and office space, and business and workforce development facilities. A holistic vision of our revitalized downtown is supported by a number of projects to enhance our recreational, cultural, artistic, and historical assets while providing beautification. This combination will spur business growth and job creation and create a vibrant and welcoming environment for residents to live, work and raise families. Funding from the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) is the catalyst that is needed to make this happen. On behalf of Canton Day Care Center, Inc., I would like to express our most enthusiastic support for Canton's DRI application.

The Canton Child Care, Inc. shares a critical symbiotic relationship with our host community of Canton. The CDCC provides care for 63 families from Canton and surrounding communities. We provide the wherewithal for those families to work outside their homes with the confidence their children are being cared for in a safe, reliable center. We use the recourses and attractions in the Village and Town of Canton to provide educational and interesting activities. A short list includes field trips to the Canton free Library, the village square, and Heritage Islands. In turn, we depend on Canton to be a vibrant and welcoming community. We are therefore committed to working with Canton to enhance its vitality, particularly in the downtown.

Projects realized with support from the DRI would be the culmination of several years of extensive State-supported planning efforts. Through a Brownfield Opportunity Area program, a new Comprehensive Plan, Local Waterfront Revitalization Plans, a Master Trail Plan, Grasse River Blueway Trail Plan, and a Canton Community Action Plan, the community has defined strategies and identified specific projects that will help to achieve our vision. Canton has successfully executed numerous State-supported investments in its downtown, such as the Heritage Islands on the Grasse River, Rushton Place, NY Main Street building improvements, CDBG Microenterprise grant program, Route 11 road and bridge improvements, and expansion of parks, trails and other recreational resources. The injection of capital through a DRI award would provide the resources needed to bring together recent improvements with several larger, projects that we have not yet been able to attain. This would be the push Canton needs to truly transform and bring our realistic vision to fruition.

Canton, New York, is a community recognized for its superior quality of life, beautiful historic downtown, and robust offering of public services and activities. However, the transformational change that would be catalyzed by a DRI award would enable the property and infrastructural revitalization that will enable us to start and grow businesses, attract new residents, and grow our workforce.

The Canton Day Care Center, Inc. remains committed to being a partner to Canton in its revitalization efforts, and we enthusiastically endorse the community's Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

Sincerely,

Kathryn L. Mullaney, Treasurer  
Canton Day Care Center, Inc.

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**Canton Day Care Center is a 501(c)(3) non-profit child care center providing a safe environment that delivers all of the love, encouragement, and nurturing children deserve.**



205 State Street Road  
Canton, NY 13617  
(315) 379-1829  
[cantondaycare@twcny.rr.com](mailto:cantondaycare@twcny.rr.com)  
[www.cantondaycarecenter.org](http://www.cantondaycarecenter.org)

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Canton Day Care Center is a 501(c)(3) non-profit child care center providing a safe environment that delivers all of the love, encouragement, and nurturing children deserve.



# ATLANTIC TESTING LABORATORIES

**WBE certified company**

Canton  
6431 U.S. Highway 11  
Canton, NY 13617  
315-386-4578 (T)  
atlantictesting.com

May 29, 2019

Ty Stone & James McKenna, Co-Chairs  
North Country Regional Economic Development Council  
Empire State Development  
Dulles State Office Building  
Watertown, New York 13601

Dear Dr. Stone and Mr. McKenna:

On behalf of Atlantic Testing Laboratories, Limited (ATL), I would like to express our enthusiastic support for Canton's DRI application. The community of Canton, New York is poised to transform and revitalize its downtown. If adequate funding is secured, defunct properties can be transformed into diverse and high-quality housing, retail and office space, and business and workforce development facilities. We envision a revitalized downtown, growing local business, creating jobs, and providing residents with a vibrant and welcoming environment to live, work, and raise families. Funding from the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) is a key component needed to positively impact Canton, New York.

ATL shares a critical symbiotic relationship with our host community of Canton. ATL has been a part of the Canton area for over 50 years we have been in business. In 2010, ATL purchased the property and building at 80 Lincoln St. in the downtown Canton district. ATL saw this as an opportunity to eventually employ approximately 65 employees in the downtown area to support the growth and longevity of downtown Canton. In turn, we depend on Canton to be a vibrant and welcoming community. We are therefore committed to working with Canton to enhance its vitality, particularly in the downtown.

Projects realized with support from the DRI would be the culmination of several years of extensive State-supported planning efforts. Through a Brownfield Opportunity Area program, a new Comprehensive Plan, Local Waterfront Revitalization Plans, a Master Trail Plan, Grasse River Blueway Trail Plan, and a Canton Community Action Plan, the community has defined strategies and identified specific projects that will help to achieve our vision. Canton has successfully executed numerous State-supported investments in its downtown, such as the Heritage Islands on the Grasse River, Rushton Place, NY Main Street building improvements, CDBG Microenterprise grant program, Route 11 road and bridge improvements, and expansion of parks, trails and other recreational resources. The injection of capital through a DRI award would provide the resources needed to bring together recent improvements with several larger, projects that we have not yet been able to attain. This would be the push Canton needs to truly transform and bring our realistic vision to fruition.

ATL remains committed to being a partner to Canton in its revitalization efforts, and we enthusiastically endorse the community's Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

Sincerely,

Marijean B. Remington  
Chief Executive Officer

MBR/mr

**Village of Canton**  
**TREE COMMITTEE**  
60 Main Street  
Canton, NY 13617

May 31, 2019

Ty Stone & James McKenna, Co-Chairs  
North Country Regional Economic Development Council  
Empire State Development  
Dulles State Office Building  
Watertown, New York 13601

Dear Dr. Stone and Mr. McKenna:

The Tree Committee is an advisory branch of Village government. Our mission, policies and practices, as per our 5-yr Plan, is community-based and addresses both functional and aesthetic responsibilities related to maintaining and enhancing the local tree canopy. In addition to the close working relationship we have with the Village Superintendent and Department of Public Works, we routinely engage in cooperative activities with other public entities including the NYSDOT, NYSDEC, the County Environmental Management Council, the County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), and Cornell Cooperative Extension. Additionally, we work cooperatively with quasi-public groups such as Grass River Heritage Development Corporation, and private entities such as National Grid. Our past work has qualified the Village to be certified as a Tree City USA by the Arbor Day Foundation for five years and counting.

At present we are in the process of developing a work program for an Urban and Community Forest Management Plan, with technical assistance from the SWCD and policy guidance from NYSDEC. As envisioned, the Plan will continue and expand our on-going efforts to complement the outstanding historic and cultural environment of downtown Canton, which includes two bridges over the Grasse River, two downtown river parks, a sculpture garden, walking and bicycling trails, and a Village Green in the heart of the downtown area. Our design concept is based on providing a diverse street tree and public space landscape comprised of shade and flowering trees appropriate to this area. Conservation of old growth and other heritage trees is an integral part of our program as is integrating aesthetically attractive public information and education signage on the benefits of trees and their role in, among other things, watershed protection and mitigating the effects of climate change.

The Tree Committee enthusiastically endorses Canton's Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

Sincerely,

Richard W. Grover  
Chairperson

# Cornell Cooperative Extension St. Lawrence County

2043B State Highway 68  
Canton, NY 13617  
t. 315-379-9192  
f. 315-379-0926  
stlawrence@cornell.edu  
stlawrence.cce.cornell.edu

May 29, 2019

Ty Stone & James McKenna, Co-Chairs  
North Country Regional Economic Development Council  
Empire State Development  
Dulles State Office Building  
Watertown, New York 13601

Dear Dr. Stone and Mr. McKenna:

The community of Canton, New York, is poised to dramatically transform its downtown. If sufficient funding can be secured, shovel ready opportunities exist to redevelop defunct properties into diverse and high-quality housing, retail and office space, and business and workforce development facilities. A holistic vision of our revitalized downtown is supported by a number of projects to enhance our recreational, cultural, artistic, and historical assets while providing beautification. This combination will spur business growth and job creation and create a vibrant and welcoming environment for residents to live, work and raise families. Funding from the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) is *the* catalyst that is needed to make this happen. On behalf of Cornell Cooperative Extension of St. Lawrence County, I would like to express our most enthusiastic support for Canton's DRI application.

Cornell Cooperative Extension shares a critical symbiotic relationship with our host community of Canton. Extension operates the Extension Learning Farm, a progressive platform for agricultural education and community partnerships, just outside the village of Canton. As a result, Extension has many formal working partnerships with businesses, schools, universities and community-based organizations within the downtown area. Thus, we depend on Canton to be a vibrant and welcoming community. We are therefore committed to working with Canton to enhance its vitality, particularly in the downtown.

Projects realized with support from the DRI would be the culmination of several years of extensive State-supported planning efforts. Through a Brownfield Opportunity Area program, a new Comprehensive Plan, Local Waterfront Revitalization Plans, a Master Trail Plan, Grasse River Blueway Trail Plan, and a Canton Community Action Plan, the community has defined strategies and identified specific projects that will help to achieve our vision. Canton has successfully executed numerous State-supported investments in its downtown, such as the Heritage Islands on the Grasse River, Rushton Place, NY Main Street building improvements, CDBG Microenterprise grant program, Route 11 road and bridge improvements, and expansion of parks, trails and other recreational resources. The injection of capital through a DRI award would provide the resources needed to bring together recent improvements with several larger, projects that we have not yet been able to attain. This would be the push Canton needs to truly transform and bring our realistic vision to fruition.

Canton, New York, is a community recognized for its superior quality of life, beautiful historic downtown, and robust offering of public services and activities. However, the transformational change that would be catalyzed by a DRI award would enable the property and infrastructural revitalization that will enable us to start and grow businesses, attract new residents, and grow our workforce.



## *Building Strong and Vibrant New York Communities*

Cornell Cooperative Extension is an employer and educator recognized for valuing AA/EEO, Protected Veterans, and Individuals with Disabilities and provides equal program and employment opportunities.

Cornell Cooperative Extension remains committed to being a partner to Canton in its revitalization efforts, and we enthusiastically endorse the community's Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "P. Ames". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Patrick Ames  
Executive Director

**Canton Community Fund**  
**Post Office Box 142, Canton, NY 13617**

May 30, 2019

Ty Stone & James McKenna, Co-Chairs  
North Country Regional Economic Development Council  
Empire State Development  
Dulles State Office Building  
Watertown, New York 13601

Dear Dr. Stone and Mr. McKenna:

The Canton Community Fund (CCF) Board of Directors expresses its enthusiastic support for the application being made to the Downtown Revitalization Initiative program by the community of Canton, New York.

The CCF is not like a typical business or agency or service. Although we do not actually *do* anything with regard to community development, we are firmly part of it. We are a community-oriented philanthropic organization that raises money and then gives it away, in the form of grants to eligible non-profits whose mission is to improve the quality of life in Canton in numerous ways.

We are currently operating with a principal of nearly a quarter million dollars, almost exclusively in the form of small donations from citizens who care about their community. From a population of only about 6,300, I believe that's a remarkable commitment, one that shows genuine and broad-based engagement in Canton's future.

And to whom do we give grants? Following is a sample from the past couple of years:

- >The Remington Arts Festival
- >Canton Free Library
- >Canton Day Care Center
- >Canton Park & Fountain Fund, for repairs to the fountain
- >Churches of Canton, for a new freezer for their food bank
- >Canton Central School
- >GardenShare
- >Grasse River Heritage

>Grasse River Players

>Traditional Arts in Upstate New York (TAUNY)

>The St. Lawrence County Historical Association, to showcase barn quilts at its headquarters on Canton's Main Street

That's just some of them. The diversity of community organizations that we have helped over our 19 years of existence demonstrates the citizenry's wide-ranging interest in helping Canton be a vibrant and welcoming community.

The CCF Board of Directors consists of nine residents from all walks of life who believe strongly enough in their community to volunteer their time to raise funds and then distribute those funds to organizations that are equally committed to the best quality of life possible for their fellow Cantonians. We stand ready to assist with the funding for qualifying projects ranging from news arts venues to whitewater parks to play spaces for children to new museums. We heartily endorse Canton as a worthy recipient of a Downtown Revitalization Initiative; it will be a show of faith repaid many times over.

Sincerely,

*Neal Burdick*

Neal Burdick  
President, Canton Community Fund Board of Directors



7 Main Street, P.O. Box 55 • Canton, NY 13617 • Phone/Fax: 315-386-3534 • Email: ccp74@centralny.twcbc.com

May 25, 2019

Ty Stone & James McKenna, Co-Chairs  
North Country Regional Economic Development Council  
Empire State Development  
Dulles State Office Building  
Watertown, NY 13601

Dear Dr. Stone and Mr. McKenna:

I write to provide a statement of how The Church and Community Program, a not-for-profit organization serving low-income people in Canton, can contribute to economic development and the revitalization of our downtown in Canton. We were established in 1974 as an interfaith initiative from seven founding churches. We now rely on considerable support from the wider community, including many non-religious, philanthropic organizations. We are a food pantry connected with the Food Bank of Central New York, maintain our Second Chance Thrift Shop as both a source of revenue and a means of providing clothing to the needy, and administer an "Emergency Fund" to help our clients with unanticipated crises.

Our Strategic Plan of 2018 sets as a goal the acquisition of at least twice our current space on Main Street. Ideally, we would like to rent currently unoccupied space in the Canton midtown mall. We have a building fund of over \$60,000 and investments totalling an additional \$60,000 which we can tap to support such a move and the renovations that will be needed. Our fundraising will be directed toward a "capital campaign" for new space, and we will apply for additional grants.

This larger space will allow us to expand our current thrift shop to include home furnishings, house and kitchenware, and some furniture (items needed by many in our area). We also need to provide a private office for the director, where confidential conversations with our clients can take place; a more inviting registration space for our pantry; and an expanded pantry to include additional items for hygiene and health. We also need space for volunteers, and a paid program assistant, to work on new programs, including: senior citizen outreach (already well begun but needing expansion); educational programs on health, nutrition, and financial management; and initiation of a "Bridges Out of Poverty" program for our clients. A multipurpose room for such programs would also allow us to offer a social space/coffee bar which would be a gathering point for a cross-section of residents in our town. Such a gathering place would be unique in Canton as a way of building community. Anticipated proximity to the SUNY Canton Entrepreneur Accelerator Program would strengthen both enterprises and contribute to the vitality of downtown.

Canton, New York, is a community recognized for its superior quality of life, beautiful historic downtown, and robust offering of public services and activities. Church and Community Program hopes to play a role in transforming our downtown, one which specifically will keep the needs and talents of low-income people in the forefront of this envisioned transformation.

Sincerely,



Patricia Alden, Board President



Connie Jenkins, Director

## Canton Complete Streets Task Force

Ty Stone and James McKenna, Co-chairs  
North Country Regional Economic Development Council  
Empire State Development  
Dulles State Office Building  
Watertown, NY 13601

Dear Dr. Stone and Mr. McKenna:

The Canton Complete Streets Task Force is pleased to endorse the Village of Canton's proposal for funding from New York's Downtown Revitalization Initiative. Receiving the DRI designation would propel into reality many improvement plans developed by several community work groups over the past few years.

The Canton Complete Streets Task Force is one of those groups. Both the Village and Town of Canton have adopted Complete Streets resolutions. The task force has been instrumental in creating a *Master Trail Plan*, also adopted by the town and village, that lays out the culmination of years of study on how to improve downtown pedestrian and bicycle safety, and also develop connectors to provide safe passage throughout the village. Complete Streets has followed up the plan with several initiatives, including:

- Installation of a pedestrian-controlled crosswalk near Canton Free Library, and the acquisition of another system to be installed on Judson Street;
- Contracting with Clarkson University to have engineering students conduct a study to enhance non-vehicular safety on Judson Street;
- Convening meetings of key parties, including Canton Central School and United Helpers, to plan a safe pedestrian and cycling route from the school to the ball fields and the Remington Trail;
- An RFQ issued by the Town of Canton for an engineering study to improve the safety of Miner Street and Miner Street Road, a much-used commuter route connecting the village to Taylor Park and beyond.

These initiatives have been supported with a combination of grant and municipal funding, as well as donations from individuals. Their success is indicative of the commitment of the Canton community to enhance the vitality and inclusiveness of our village. As part of a multi-faceted revitalization program, funding from the DRI grant could bring the mission of our task force to the next level, assuring pedestrian and bicycle safety in downtown Canton.

The members of the Canton Complete Streets Task Force therefore strongly support the Village of Canton's request to be chosen as this year's recipient of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

Sincerely,

  
Brian Gardam

  
Toby Irven

  
Klaus Proemm

  
Valerie White



May 29, 2019

North Country Regional Economic Development Council

Dear Ty Stone and James McKenna,

I am writing in support of Canton's Downtown Revitalization Initiative grant application.

As a small business owner in Canton for 41 years, I understand the need for development funds for economic growth and progress. Real, lasting business growth needs development monies and administrative support for success.

Please consider this application carefully and award it to Canton.

Sincerely,

Evan W Poole



May 30, 2019

Ty Stone & James McKenna, Co-Chairs  
North Country Regional Economic Development Council  
Empire State Development  
Dulles State Office Building  
Watertown, New York 13601

Dear Dr. Stone and Mr. McKenna:

The community of Canton, New York, is poised to dramatically transform its downtown. If sufficient funding can be secured, shovel ready opportunities exist to redevelop defunct properties into diverse and high-quality housing, retail and office space, and business and workforce development facilities. A holistic vision of our revitalized downtown is supported by several projects to enhance our recreational, cultural, artistic, and historical assets while providing beautification. This combination will spur business growth and job creation and create a vibrant and welcoming environment for residents to live, work and raise families. Funding from the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) is *the* catalyst that is needed to make this happen. On behalf of The Fairfield Inn & Suites Canton I would like to express our most enthusiastic support for Canton's DRI application.

The Fairfield Inn & Suites Canton shares a critical symbiotic relationship with our host community of Canton. We are located within village limits and look to bring the local flare of Canton to our business. We are thrilled to be one of the first stops that guests encounter during their visit and we want to make a memorable impression. We strive to build a lasting relationship with our customers, but we want them to build a relationship with Canton as well. We are therefore committed to working with Canton to enhance its vitality, particularly in the downtown.

Projects realized with support from the DRI would be the culmination of several years of extensive State-supported planning efforts. Through a Brownfield Opportunity Area program, a new Comprehensive Plan, Local Waterfront Revitalization Plans, a Master Trail Plan, Grasse River Blueway Trail Plan, and a Canton Community Action Plan, the community has defined strategies and identified specific projects that will help to achieve our vision. Canton has successfully executed numerous State-supported investments in its downtown, such as the Heritage Islands on the Grasse River, Rushton Place, NY Main Street building improvements, CDBG Microenterprise grant program, Route 11 road and bridge improvements, and expansion of parks, trails and other recreational resources. The injection of capital through a DRI award would provide the resources needed to bring together recent improvements with several larger, projects that we have not yet been able to attain.

Canton, New York, is a community recognized for its superior quality of life, beautiful historic downtown, and robust offering of public services and activities. However, the transformational change that would be catalyzed by a DRI award would enable the property and infrastructural revitalization that will enable us to start and grow businesses, attract new residents, and grow our workforce.

The Fairfield Inn & Suites Canton remains committed to being a partner to Canton in its revitalization efforts, and we enthusiastically endorse the community's Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

Sincerely,

*Allison Bauer*

Allison Bauer  
General Manager  
Fairfield Inn & Suites Canton



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21 Main Street, Canton, N.Y. 13617 • (315) 386-3740 • [www.natures-storehouse.com](http://www.natures-storehouse.com) • [naturesstorehouse@gmail.com](mailto:naturesstorehouse@gmail.com)

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Tuesday, May 28, 2019

Ty Stone & James McKenna, Co-Chairs  
North Country Regional Economic Development Council  
Empire State Development  
Dulles State Office Building  
Watertown, New York 13601

Dear Dr. Stone and Mr. McKenna:

As small business owners of Nature's Storehouse for the past 17 years, we would like to express our most enthusiastic support for Canton's DRI application. During our tenure as owners of Nature's Storehouse on Main Street in Canton, we have been committed to the upkeep of our building, recognizing that our business and building are an integral part of the community. In 2015 we invested \$33,000 of our own capital to repair the front of the building, restoring the façade to its historical likeness.

As a successful small business, we are able to give back to the community by participating in community events, such as the Dairy Princess Festival and Canton Canoe Weekend, and by donating to various non-profit organizations such as GardenShare and Grasse River Heritage.

In *turn*, we depend on Canton to be a vibrant and welcoming community. It is clear that the foot-traffic along Main Street increases when there are more shops and restaurants. Enhancement of the downtown creates an obvious increase in pride expressed by the patrons of Nature's Storehouse and the citizens of our village. Just last Christmas a young father returned to visit with his family and remarked to us that Canton seemed to be turning in a positive direction with several new retail stores on Main Street. He expressed excitement that his hometown was looking "better than ever".

Running a small business requires courage and fortitude. After 17 years, we remain committed to continue our work within the village of Canton to enhance its vitality, particularly in the downtown. We invite you to invest in Canton so that it may bloom with focused intensity toward a vibrant future...one in which entrepreneurs and local citizens will continue to be brave, take chances, and work hard to build community.

As owners of Nature's Storehouse, and engaged citizens, we remain committed to our partnership with Canton in its revitalization efforts, and we enthusiastically endorse the community's Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

Sincerely,



Rainbow and Joshua Crabtree

Daniel G. Fay  
St. Lawrence County Legislator  
30 Clark Street, Canton, NY 13617  
[amafay@gmail.com](mailto:amafay@gmail.com) 315-386-5228

May 26, 2019

Ty Stone & James McKenna, Co-Chairs  
North Country Regional Economic Development Council  
Empire State Development  
Dulles State Office Building  
Watertown, New York 13601

Dear Dr. Stone and Mr. McKenna:

It is a pleasure to support the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) application being submitted by the community of Canton, NY.

One of my priorities as a County Legislator is to support Canton, which I represent at the County level, and the North Country in achieving viable economies and communities in which residents and business owners are drawn to work, learn, play, raise families, and retire. Canton's redevelopment plans, when backed with support from the DRI, will most certainly create such an environment in the seat of St. Lawrence County.

Our village is ready to transform its downtown through the DRI. Redevelopment opportunities exist downtown, at the plaza, and along the river. Redeveloping these underutilized properties will yield numerous benefits to the community: jobs, entrepreneurship, additional housing and tax base, and new office, retail, and hospitality spaces. A number of projects aimed to enhance recreational, cultural, artistic, and historical arenas will improve the attractiveness of the community for both visitors and residents.

Canton has a track record of delivering on governmental support to enhance its vitality and attractiveness. This is demonstrated by successful projects such as the Heritage Islands parks on the Grasse River, the Rushton Place, the former Bell's Towing site, NY Main Street building improvements, a CDBG Microenterprise grant program, Route 11 road and bridge improvements, and the expansion of parks, trails and other recreational resources. The acquisition of a DRI award would provide the resources needed to further improve our community through the funding of projects that have not yet been attainable.

The DRI would also provide for the culmination of several years of extensive State-supported planning efforts in Canton. Through a Brownfield Opportunity Area program, a new Comprehensive Plan, Local Waterfront Revitalization Plans, a Master Trail Plan, Grasse River Blueway Trail Plan, and a Canton Community Action Plan, the community has defined strategies and identified specific projects that will help to achieve our vision. Such strategies and projects can be achieved with DRI support.

For these reasons, it is my pleasure to support Canton's application for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative. I support this grant application highly and without reservation. Thank you for the opportunity to provide input.

Sincerely,  
*Daniel G. Fay*

Daniel G. Fay, County Legislator

May 30, 2019

Ty Stone & James McKenna, Co-Chairs  
North Country Regional Economic Development Council  
Empire State Development  
Dulles State Office Building  
Watertown, New York 13601

Dear Dr. Stone and Mr. McKenna:

The community of Canton, New York, is poised to dramatically transform its downtown. If sufficient funding can be secured, shovel ready opportunities exist to redevelop defunct properties into diverse and high-quality housing, retail and office space, and business and workforce development facilities. A holistic vision of our revitalized downtown is supported by a number of projects to enhance our recreational, cultural, artistic, and historical assets while providing beautification. This combination will spur business growth and job creation and create a vibrant and welcoming environment for residents to live, work and raise families. Funding from the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) is *the* catalyst that is needed to make this happen. On behalf of the *North Country Housing Council*, I would like to express our most enthusiastic support for Canton's DRI application.

The North Country Housing Council shares a critical symbiotic relationship with our host community of Canton. The Housing Council has been in existence since 1981 providing assistance to local home owners in keeping housing affordable and in safe decent conditions for families, through a variety of state and federal funding and impacting the quality of life for homeowners and home buyers in the Canton community as well as St. Lawrence County wide. In *turn*, we depend on Canton to be a vibrant and welcoming community. We are therefore committed to working with Canton to enhance its vitality, particularly in the downtown.

Projects realized with support from the DRI would be the culmination of several years of extensive State-supported planning efforts. Through a Brownfield Opportunity Area program, a new Comprehensive Plan, Local Waterfront Revitalization Plans, a Master Trail Plan, Grasse River Blueway Trail Plan, and a Canton Community Action Plan, the community has defined strategies and identified specific projects that will help to achieve our vision. Canton has successfully executed numerous State-supported investments in its downtown, such as the Heritage Islands on the Grasse River, Rushton Place, NY Main Street building improvements, CDBG Microenterprise grant program, Route 11 road and bridge improvements, and expansion of parks, trails and other recreational resources. The injection of capital through a DRI award would provide the resources needed to bring together recent improvements with several larger, projects that we have not yet been able to attain. This would be the push Canton needs to truly transform and bring our realistic vision to fruition.

Canton, New York, is a community recognized for its superior quality of life, beautiful historic downtown, and robust offering of public services and activities. However, the transformational change that would be catalyzed by a DRI award would enable the property and infrastructural revitalization that will enable us to start and grow businesses, attract new residents, and grow our workforce.

The North Country Housing Council remains committed to being a partner to Canton in its revitalization efforts, and we enthusiastically endorse the community's Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

Sincerely,

Annette Bowman  
Executive Director



Canton Capital Resource Corporation  
101 Main St., Suite 1  
Canton NY 13617

May 25, 2019

Leigh Rodriguez,  
Director of Economic Development  
Village and Town of Canton  
60 Main St.  
Canton NY 13617

Dear Ms. Rodriguez,

I am writing to suggest that the Canton Capital Resource Corporation (CCRC) be included as a stakeholder/participant in the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) application. The Mission of the CCRC, as stated immediately below, fits appropriately into the overall strategy of securing approval of the DRI funding and activities.

MISSION STATEMENT:

The Mission of the Canton Capital Resource Corporation is to facilitate, with the help of public and private partnerships, those development projects that will sustain the key economic forces in the community of Canton, as part of a community-wide economic development strategy for the immediate future.

Adopted in 2012, this Mission Statement succinctly describes the Corporation, as it is a public non-profit agency, fully registered in NYS. The currently re-invigorated Corporation, and new Board of Directors, is poised to play a vigorous role in the on-going redevelopment of the Canton community, especially the downtown area as defined by the DRI. If a revolving loan/grant fund can be created from a portion of the DRI funds, the Corporation will work to implement projects that extend well into the future for Canton. That is, projects will extend the life of the initial infusion of DRI funds as new opportunities arise! The CCRC envisions working closely with other groups in the area, such as the St. Lawrence County Industrial Development Agency.

Thanks for the opportunity to consider the CCRC as a partner in the DRI. The CCRC enthusiastically supports the DRI application for the good of the greater Canton community.

Sincerely,  
*William E. Iruen*  
William E. Iruen  
President, Board of Directors



**GRAY & GRAY**  
— AND ASSOCIATES —  
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS, P. C.

May 19, 2019

Ty Stone & James McKenna, Co-Chairs  
North Country Regional Economic Development Council  
Empire State Development  
Dulles State Office Building  
Watertown, New York 13601

Dear Dr. Stone and Mr. McKenna:

The community of Canton, New York, is poised to dramatically transform its downtown. If sufficient funding can be secured, shovel ready opportunities exist to redevelop defunct properties into diverse and high-quality housing, retail and office space, and business and workforce development facilities. A holistic vision of our revitalized downtown is supported by a number of projects to enhance our recreational, cultural, artistic, and historical assets while providing beautification. This combination will spur business growth and job creation and create a vibrant and welcoming environment for residents to live, work and raise families. Funding from the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) is *the* catalyst that is needed to make this happen. On behalf of Gray & Gray and Associates, CPAs, I would like to express our most enthusiastic support for Canton's DRI application.

Gray and Gray and Associates shares a critical symbiotic relationship with our host community. Our main office has been located in the heart of downtown Canton since November 1, 2001. Our CPA firm employs twelve employees and provides services to nearly 1,500 clients in Canton and the surrounding area. *In turn*, we depend on Canton to be a vibrant and welcoming community. We are therefore committed to working with Canton to enhance its vitality, particularly in the downtown.

Projects realized with support from the DRI would be the culmination of several years of extensive State-supported planning efforts. Through a Brownfield Opportunity Area program, a new Comprehensive Plan, Local Waterfront Revitalization Plans, a Master Trail Plan, Grasse River Blueway Trail Plan, and a Canton Community Action Plan, the community has defined strategies and identified specific projects that will help to achieve our vision. Canton has successfully executed numerous State-supported investments in its downtown, such as the Heritage Islands on the Grasse River, Rushton Place, NY Main Street building improvements, CDBG Microenterprise grant program, Route 11 road and bridge improvements, and expansion of parks, trails and other recreational resources. The injection of capital through a DRI award would provide the resources needed to bring together recent improvements with several larger, projects that we have not yet been able to attain. This would be the push Canton needs to truly transform and bring our realistic vision to fruition.

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John J. Gray, Jr., CPA\*, CGMA, MBA ♦ Angela M. Gray, CPA, MSIS ♦ Erin M. Mike-Mayer, CPA\*\*  
Members of American Institute of CPAs and New York State Society of CPAs

\*Also licensed in Florida \*\*Also licensed in North Carolina and Florida

833.472.9272

[info@graycpas.com](mailto:info@graycpas.com)

[www.fb.com/graycpas](http://www.fb.com/graycpas)

[www.graycpas.com](http://www.graycpas.com)

**CANTON**  
100 Main Street  
Suite 101  
Canton, NY 13617  
Phone: 315.386.2925  
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**MASSENA**  
30 Main Street  
Massena, NY 13662  
Phone: 315.764.1781  
Fax: 315.764.1782

**ROOKSVILLE, FL.**  
588 Aviation Loop Drive  
Rooksville, FL 34604  
Phone: 315.379.8005  
Fax: 315.379.9859

Canton, New York, is a community recognized for its superior quality of life, beautiful historic downtown, and robust offering of public services and activities. However, the transformational change that would be catalyzed by a DRI award would enable the property and infrastructural revitalization that will enable us to start and grow businesses, attract new residents, and grow our workforce.

Gray & Gray and Associates remains committed to being a partner to Canton in its revitalization efforts, and we enthusiastically endorse the community's Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John J. Gray, Jr." in a cursive style.

John J. Gray, Jr., CPA

May 31, 2019

Ty Stone & James McKenna, Co-Chairs  
North Country Regional Economic Development Council  
Empire State Development  
Dulles State Office Building  
Watertown, New York 13601

Dear Dr. Stone and Mr. McKenna:

RE: Letter of support for Canton's submission to the \$10 Million Downtown Revitalization Initiative: Round Four

As Chair of the Canton Sustainability Committee (CSC) and a stakeholder in community and economic development in Canton, I am writing to support Canton's submission for this award. The CSC was formed following adoption of the Canton Community Action Plan in 2014 to support and assist in the goal of strengthening Canton's future through sustainable development.

The CSC contributes information and expertise on issues of sustainability; identifies gaps and opportunities for sustainability projects and programming and seeks resources to fill those gaps; offers assistance in project planning, implementation and priority setting; helps build partnerships and make connections; and provides education and awareness about issues related to sustainable development and environmental responsibility.

The CSC has initiated and/or contributed significantly to a number of projects, including Solarize Canton; Municipal Solar Array; Local Food, Local Places; Municipal Food and Yard Waste Composting; Clean Energy Community; Climate Smart Canton; Waste Water Treatment Plant upgrades; Complete Streets; and the 2019 Green Living Fair. Thanks to these and other initiatives, Canton is viewed as a leader in community development among North Country communities.

All this is to say that Canton has a group of engaged, representative, forward-looking citizens who are eager to participate in and contribute to Canton's future. CSC members share a holistic vision of Canton as a culturally and economically vibrant, beautiful and environmentally sustainable community.

Canton is already a good place live. It has the natural, cultural, historical, and educational resources needed to become a great place to live. This revitalization award will go along way to help Canton achieve its development goals.

The CSC remains committed to being a partner to Canton in its revitalization efforts and we enthusiastically endorse Canton's Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

Sincerely,

Ann Heidenreich  
Chair, Canton Sustainability Committee

Letter of support for \$10 million to revitalize Canton's downtown.

Currently our main street supports excellent stores and services. Foremost is TAUNY, Traditional Arts of Upstate New York. It is the only such facility in the North Country, showcasing and selling local crafts and artwork based on north country culture and environment. As well, it organizes, sponsors, creates programs and events both within the store and in outlying towns.

We have a fine natural food store which also prepares and sells high-quality take-out food and outdoor seating, weather permitting; a long-established gift shop which sells locally made jewelry, glassware, etc; a high-end dress shop; a newly refurbished yoga studio offering classes every week day and yoga in the park in the summer; a working movie theater with its original ornate facade intact. We have several restaurants, some of them new

Our main street was recently repaved and replanted. The local garden club provides hanging garden baskets. Our main street is attractive. Still we have too many empty store fronts and insurance companies and lawyers' offices. We need inviting stores to attract shoppers, and students from the two local colleges; establishments for them to meet over coffee and goodies.

Behind main street is a large concrete lot with one remaining store. It is a blight. Part of it is owned by an absentee individual who has refused to sell his portion to the village. This lot has the potential to provide a mix of housing, shops, green space. Everyone in Canton would like to see it sustainably, beautifully and profitably developed.

We need the funding. Thank you.

Judith DeGraaff  
56 Judson Street  
Canton, NY 13617



Administered by The State University of New York • Funded in part by the U.S. Small Business Administration

May 22, 2019

Ty Stone & James McKenna, Co-Chairs  
North Country Regional Economic Development Council  
Empire State Development  
Dulles State Office Building  
Watertown, New York 13601

Dear Dr. Stone and Mr. McKenna:

**RE: Letter of Support for Canton, New York – Downtown Revitalization Initiative Application**

The community of Canton, New York, is poised to dramatically transform its downtown. If sufficient funding can be secured, shovel ready opportunities exist to redevelop defunct properties into diverse and high-quality housing, retail and office space, and business and workforce development facilities. A holistic vision of our revitalized downtown is supported by a number of projects to enhance our recreational, cultural, artistic, and historical assets while providing beautification. This combination will spur business growth and job creation and create a vibrant and welcoming environment for residents to live, work and raise families. Funding from the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) is *the* catalyst that is needed to make this happen. On behalf of the SUNY Canton Small Business Development Center (SBDC), I would like to express our most enthusiastic support for Canton's DRI application.

The SUNY Canton SBDC shares a critical symbiotic relationship with our host community of Canton. Canton has worked tirelessly with the SBDC, area businesses, colleges, community officials, general public, and chambers to grow and support their local communities. Supporting and building strong downtown communities are an extremely important part to local, state, and national economic development efforts. The Village of Canton's vision and plan to build a strong downtown to support the community, its businesses, the educational institutes, the arts and recreations to create tourist destinations; are smart goals and visions that can be catalyst for other public and private investments in downtowns across New York State. In *turn*, we depend on Canton to be a vibrant and welcoming community. We are therefore committed to working with Canton to enhance its vitality, particularly in the downtown.

Projects realized with support from the DRI would be the culmination of several years of extensive State-supported planning efforts. Through a Brownfield Opportunity Area program, a new Comprehensive Plan, Local Waterfront Revitalization Plans, a Master Trail Plan, Grasse River Blueway Trail Plan, and a Canton Community Action Plan, the community has defined strategies and identified specific projects that will help to achieve our vision. Canton has successfully executed numerous State-supported investments in its downtown, such as the Heritage Islands on the Grasse River, Rushton Place, NY Main Street building improvements, CDBG Microenterprise grant program, Route 11 road and bridge improvements, and expansion of parks, trails and other recreational resources. The injection of capital through a DRI award would provide the resources needed to bring together recent improvements with several larger, projects that we have not yet been able to attain. This would be the push Canton needs to truly transform and bring our realistic vision to fruition.

PAGE – 2

**RE: Letter of Support for Canton, New York – Downtown Revitalization Initiative Application**

**Dated: May 22, 2019**

Canton, New York, is a community recognized for its superior quality of life, beautiful historic downtown, and robust offering of public services and activities. However, the transformational change that would be catalyzed by a DRI award would enable the property and infrastructural revitalization that will enable us to start and grow businesses, attract new residents, and grow our workforce.

The SUNY Canton SBDC remains committed to being a partner to Canton in its revitalization efforts, and we enthusiastically endorse the community's Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

Sincerely,



Dale A. Rice

**Director NY-SBDC at SUNY Canton**



*Local Living Venture*  
Sharing Knowledge from the Past \* Building Skills for the Future

Ty Stone & James McKenna, Co-Chairs  
North Country Regional Economic Development Council  
Empire State Development  
Dulles State Office Building  
Watertown, New York 13601

May 25, 2019

Dear Dr. Stone and Mr. McKenna:

The community of Canton, New York, is poised to dramatically transform its downtown. If sufficient funding can be secured, shovel ready opportunities exist to redevelop defunct properties into diverse and high-quality housing, retail and office space, and business and workforce development facilities. A holistic vision of our revitalized downtown is supported by a number of projects to enhance our recreational, cultural, artistic, and historical assets while providing beautification. This combination will spur business growth and job creation and create a vibrant and welcoming environment for residents to live, work and raise families. Funding from the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) is the catalyst that is needed to make this happen. On behalf of the Local Living Venture, I would like to express our most enthusiastic support for Canton's DRI application.

The Local Living Venture shares a critical symbiotic relationship with our host community of Canton, where we hold many educational events. In turn, we depend on Canton to be a vibrant and welcoming community. We are therefore committed to working with Canton to enhance its vitality, particularly in the downtown.

Projects realized with support from the DRI would be the culmination of several years of extensive State-supported planning efforts. Through a Brownfield Opportunity Area program, a new Comprehensive Plan, Local Waterfront Revitalization Plans, a Master Trail Plan, Grasse River Blueway Trail Plan, and a Canton Community Action Plan, the community has defined strategies and identified specific projects that will help to achieve our vision. Canton has successfully executed numerous State-supported investments in its downtown, such as the Heritage Islands on the Grasse River, Rushton Place, NY Main Street building improvements, CDBG Microenterprise grant program, Route 11 road and bridge improvements, and expansion of parks, trails and other recreational resources. The injection of capital through a DRI award would provide the resources needed to bring together recent improvements with several larger, projects that we have not yet been able to attain. This would be the push Canton needs to truly transform and bring our realistic vision to fruition.

Canton, New York, is a community recognized for its superior quality of life, beautiful historic downtown, and robust offering of public services and activities. However, the transformational change that would be catalyzed by a DRI award would enable the property and infrastructural revitalization that will enable us to start and grow businesses, attract new residents, and grow our workforce.

The Local Living Venture remains committed to being a partner to Canton in its revitalization efforts, and we enthusiastically endorse the community's Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

Sincerely,

Chelle Lindahl  
Chairperson, *Local Living Venture*  
A 501(c)(3) educational non-profit

P.O. Box 736, Canton, NY 13617 \* (315) 347-4223  
LocalLivingVenture@gmail.com \* LocalLivingVenture.org

with the above in mind that I respectfully request that Canton's Downtown Revitalization Initiative application be afforded your most serious consideration. If you were to have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact Joel Wood in my Plattsburgh office at (518) 561-2324.

Sincerely,

M  
ELISE M. STEFANIK  
Member of Congress

ES/jw

## **RUSHTON PLACE, LLC**

One Main Street  
Canton, NY 13617

May 19, 2019

Ty Stone & James McKenna, Co-Chairs  
North Country Regional Economic Development Council  
Empire State Development  
Dulles State Office Building  
Watertown, New York 13601

Dear Dr. Stone and Mr. McKenna:

The community of Canton, New York, is poised to dramatically transform its downtown. If sufficient funding can be secured, shovel ready opportunities exist to redevelop defunct properties into diverse and high-quality housing, retail and office space, and business and workforce development facilities. A holistic vision of our revitalized downtown is supported by a number of projects to enhance our recreational, cultural, artistic, and historical assets while providing beautification. This combination will spur business growth and job creation and create a vibrant and welcoming environment for residents to live, work and raise families. Funding from the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) is *the* catalyst that is needed to make this happen. On behalf of Rushton Place, LLC, I would like to express our most enthusiastic support for Canton's DRI application.

Rushton Place shares a critical symbiotic relationship with our host community. Along with my partner Dick Maginn, we transformed an old two story bowling alley, which was a vacant eyesore in the middle of downtown Canton, into a modern state of the art building with commercial offices on the first floor and five condominiums on the second floor. As of December 31, 2018, the commercial tenants in Rushton Place have twenty-eight full-time employees employed at this location. Many of these jobs would not be present in Canton today without the transformation of this property. In *turn*, we depend on Canton to be a vibrant and welcoming community. We are therefore committed to working with Canton to enhance its vitality, particularly in the downtown.

Projects realized with support from the DRI would be the culmination of several years of extensive State-supported planning efforts. Through a Brownfield Opportunity Area program, a new Comprehensive Plan, Local Waterfront Revitalization Plans, a Master Trail Plan, Grasse River Blueway Trail Plan, and a Canton Community Action Plan, the community has defined strategies and identified specific projects that will help to achieve our vision. Canton has successfully executed numerous State-supported investments in its downtown, such as the Heritage Islands on the Grasse River, Rushton Place, NY Main Street building improvements, CDBG Microenterprise grant program, Route 11 road and bridge improvements, and expansion of parks, trails and other recreational resources. The injection of capital through a DRI award would provide the resources needed to bring together recent improvements with several larger, projects that we have not yet been able to attain. This would be the push Canton needs to truly transform and bring our realistic vision to fruition.

Canton, New York, is a community recognized for its superior quality of life, beautiful historic downtown, and robust offering of public services and activities. However, the transformational change that would be catalyzed by a DRI award would enable the property and infrastructural revitalization that will enable us to start and grow businesses, attract new residents, and grow our workforce.

Rushton Place, LLC remains committed to being a partner to Canton in its revitalization efforts, and we enthusiastically endorse the community's Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John J. Gray, Jr." in a cursive script.

John J. Gray, Jr., Partner



101 Main Street, Canton NY 13617 • 315-386-4000 • [www.VisitSTLC.com](http://www.VisitSTLC.com)

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May 21, 2019

Ty Stone & James McKenna, Co-Chairs  
North Country Regional Economic Development Council  
Empire State Development  
Dulles State Office Building  
Watertown, New York 13601

Dear Dr. Stone and Mr. McKenna:

I enthusiastically support Canton's efforts to secure a Downtown Revitalization Initiative Grant. The St. Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce is a 450 business membership network and serves as the Tourism Promotion Agent in the County in partnership with Empire State Development's I LOVE NY tourism department. In that role, we recognize the importance of investment in our core communities, for residents and visitors.

Canton is strategically located as a cross-roads for business and pleasure in St. Lawrence County; the community has substantial traffic through the downtown from the international markets of Ottawa and Kingston from the north and from the Adirondacks in the South. People travel *through* Canton – there is tremendous potential for more people to *STOP* in Canton to enjoy, spend and engage. The plan presented by Canton will do just that.

Projects such as the whitewater park and redevelopment of the commercial corridor (currently a brownfield) along the proposed park location on Riverside Drive would not only spur small business development, increased visitation in the downtown, and provide a destination attraction for surrounding paddling enthusiasts, but it would create an outdoor community space attractive to millennials, helping to retain the existing workforce and new families. The Grasse River runs through the downtown and can be a catalyst for very unique development.

As the County seat, with a number of large employers headquartered in town, and home to two colleges, the population provides a dynamic culture ripe for entrepreneurship and diverse experiences. Canton has been proactive in planning and development, but struggles with several underdeveloped sites that hinder the image and opportunities for growth. This grant could be a turning point, not only for the Canton community, but for residents across the County who work, shop and recreate in Canton and for the greater region who can directly access its cultural and natural assets for their enjoyment.

Please support this application, and see how a small town can have a huge impact on a rural and impoverished County.

Sincerely,

Brooke Rouse  
Executive Director



*A donor-supported nonprofit organization dedicated to showcasing the folk culture and living traditions of the North Country*

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#### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Jill Breit

TAUNY is an equal opportunity provider and employer

53 Main St., Canton, NY 13617  
315-386-4289  
tauny.org

May 29, 2019

Ty Stone & James McKenna, Co-Chairs  
North Country Regional Economic Development Council  
Empire State Development  
Dulles State Office Building  
Watertown, New York 13601

Dear Mr. Stone and Mr. McKenna:

On behalf of TAUNY, I am writing in support of Canton's application for a Downtown Revitalization Initiative Grant. The many stakeholders of Canton have done a lot of work in recent years to prepare for the future and are poised to make the shared vision a reality.

When looking for a community in which to establish TAUNY's base of operations and public gallery, we chose Canton for its many strengths and assets, natural and historic, and the obvious civic pride of its residents. This is a place where people volunteer, participate, and cooperate with local government to bring projects to fruition. When projects are held back, it is not for lack of spirit, or ability to manage. It is for lack of capital in a region where private investment is sparse. A \$10,000,000 investment in Canton will make truly great transformative projects possible and have a lasting positive impact on the whole town.

We are proud to be a major partner in making downtown Canton a vibrant destination for socializing, recreation, entertainment, and learning. Our commitment to this place is strong and we welcome the opportunity to work with others to increase our investment in this lovely historic village.

Sincerely,

Jill Breit  
Executive Director



Leigh Rodriguez <lrodriguez@cantonny.us>

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## Revitalization

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**Sally Kirby** <skirby461@gmail.com>  
To: lrodriguez@cantonny.gov

Thu, May 30, 2019 at 4:35 PM

Please forward this letter in support of the village to receive this years grant.

The village of Canton would benefit greatly if it received this year's revitalization grant. Recently many businesses have struggled and closed. There are not enough businesses to bring people down town to shop. The Cohen property which was a mall in the center of town has a few occupants. The major building is an eyesore. If the village had the money to buy the property it could be developed into a cultural center with retail space and restaurants. The college student population doubles the size of the village but the is very little incentive for students to come into town.

This part of St Lawrence County could become a destination for cultural events. But Canton needs financial help to be a part of it.

Thank you.  
Sally Kirby  
172 Miner St Rd  
Canton, N Y  
Sent from my iPad



Leigh Rodriguez <lrodriguez@cantonny.us>

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## Support letter 2019

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**Denis Walsh** <notnacdenwal@yahoo.com>  
To: Leigh Rodriguez <lrodriguez@cantonny.us>

Wed, May 22, 2019 at 9:13 PM

DENIS WALSH  
8 CHAPEL ST  
CANTON NY 13617

Dear Leigh,

After the meeting tonight I just wanted to refresh you on what I have been doing for the previous year. A recap of what I have done to my building located at 33 Riverside Drive in downtown Canton is as follows. A new roof, and siding on the non stone portion of the building was installed in 2017. Insulation on the foundation was added also. The summer of 2018 we tore apart the interior west wall and insulated it and then recovered it with plywood and paneling. In January of 2019 we did the same thing to the east wall and part of the south wall. This helped to reduce our consumption of natural gas through out the winter.

My future plans for this summer are to insulate under the new roof on the western side of the building and to sandblast and repoint the stone section of the original part of the building. This building is one of the oldest structures in Canton being built in 1846, and it has been a liquor store sense sometime in the early 1950's.

Plans for the extended future include refitting the glass windows with more energy efficient panels. Along the energy efficiency aspect I am going to see if it is possible to construct a vestibule so there is a double door entryway to cut down on heat and air conditioning when the entryway is used. Central air conditioning is something that I have looked into.

It was good to see the removal of the Bells gas station and from what I understand the structure located due south of my store will soon be razed. Hopefully this will help to stimulate some activity in this part of Canton's downtown commercial area. If there is still an interest in the white water kayak park and the powers to be wanting my building for their use then I could be persuaded to sell or have a building erected across the street on the lot that is currently owned by the village of Canton. Then a property swap could be considered. This project could be expanded by acquiring the former Bell residence and the vacant lot south of the Village property and maybe a retail building could be a part of the Riverside Drive revitalization.

Truly

Denis Walsh



## VILLAGE of CANTON

60 Main Street, Canton, New York 13617

(315) 386-2871 [www.cantonny.gov](http://www.cantonny.gov)

May 31, 2019

Dr. Ty Stone and Mr. James McKenna, Co-Chairs  
North Country Regional Economic Development Council  
Empire State Development  
Dulles State Office Building  
Watertown, New York 13601

Dear Dr. Stone and Mr. McKenna:

With great enthusiasm, I introduce Canton's application for the North Country region's Downtown Revitalization Initiative award. Welcome!

Canton has been preparing and planning for this opportunity for years. With broad participation from the community and strong support from area businesses and committed stakeholders, we have assembled an ambitious set of projects that will truly transform Canton and our region.

After two decades, with recently acquired control of the long-derelict property at the center of Downtown Canton, we are ready to put our plans and dreams into motion. With DRI funding, it will be a new day for Canton and for the North Country.

The Village of Canton and the Village Board of Trustees remain committed to Canton's revitalization efforts, and we enthusiastically support this Downtown Revitalization Initiative application.

Sincerely,

Michael E. Dalton  
Mayor