

# **MID-HUDSON DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE TEMPLATE**

## **BASIC INFORMATION**

**Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) Region:** Mid-Hudson

**Municipality Name:** Town of Cortlandt

**Downtown Name:** Medical Oriented District (MOD)

**County:** Westchester

Downtown Description - Provide an overview of the downtown and summarize the rationale behind nominating this downtown for a Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) award):

The Town of Cortlandt is proposing to continue the economic development of the area surrounding the existing New York Presbyterian/Hudson Valley Hospital Center (NYPH) campus by creating a mixed-use Medical Oriented District (MOD) centered on the Hospital Center, one of Cortlandt's largest employers. This proposed downtown area or MOD includes the existing hospital and surrounding developed and un-developed parcels, as well as a portion of the Route 202 Corridor which extends from the Hospital to the intersection of Route 202 and the Bear Mountain Parkway.

The concept of the MOD was one of four (4) economic development and job creation strategies advanced by the Town and the Master Plan Committee (MPC) in the recently adopted 2016 Sustainable Comprehensive Plan entitled *Envision Cortlandt*. *Envision Cortlandt* includes numerous goals, policies, and metrics that align with the Mid-Hudson Regional Sustainability Plan. The plan is the culmination of a 2-1/2 year effort funded in part by a New York State Energy Research Development Authority (NYSERDA) grant under Governor Cuomo's Cleaner, Greener Communities Program. The Cleaner, Greener Communities program is a major statewide initiative that encourages communities to incorporate sustainability goals and principles into local decision-making and then form partnerships to transform markets to reduce emissions and generate economic development. This plan is one of the first Sustainable Comprehensive Master Plans completed under this grant program.

*Envision Cortlandt* identified the lack of a traditional downtown center in Cortlandt as a challenge as well as an opportunity for economic development within the Town. Cortlandt is largely a suburban community with areas of rural character and some higher density hamlets. The lack of a single, centralized commercial center within the Town has made it difficult to provide sufficient density of employees, residents and recreational users to support infrastructure investment and transit. *Envision Cortlandt* has identified strategies and policies that support a proactive approach to economic development that thoughtfully considers and encourages growth of downtown centers including expansion of public services and infrastructure.

Cortlandt has embarked on the implementation stage of this plan and established a Master Plan Implementation Committee (MPIC). Since the Fall of 2015, the MPIC has been working with Town Staff and stakeholders in the MOD planning area to move the vision of the MOD Downtown forward. The MOD would leverage and build on the economic investment anticipated with the recent partnership between NYPH and the Hudson Valley Hospital Center. The goal of the MOD is to centralize and increase connectivity to medical services and jobs, and provide

walkable, neighborhood-scale ancillary medical and commercial uses around the hospital campus to better service patients, visitors and residents of the district as well as the surrounding neighborhoods. It is intended to create a sense of place as well as an attractive gateway to the Town by developing a downtown center that provides a pedestrian, bicycle, and a transit supported environment, configured in a compact pattern with a complementary mix of land uses all within a short distance from the Hospital Center and the surrounding residential neighborhoods. The MOD would also utilize connective streetscapes to promote an environment conducive to human activity through the provision of landscaping, street/shade trees, street furniture and sidewalks to unify and interconnect varying uses. It is anticipated that the MOD would function as a commercial center and create jobs both locally and regionally. In addition, the MOD would help to link disadvantaged populations to health services and job centers through its anticipated shuttle connection with the Peekskill Train Station and other major land uses such as the Jacobs Hill Senior Living Development.

## **DOWNTOWN IDENTIFICATION**

This section should be filled out with reference to the criteria set forth in the DRI Guidelines. **Answers to each question are limited to one page each.**

- 1) Boundaries of the Downtown Neighborhood.** Detail the boundaries of the targeted neighborhood, keeping in mind that there is no minimum or maximum size, but that the neighborhood should be compact and well-defined. Core neighborhoods beyond a traditional downtown or central business district are eligible, if they can meet other criteria making them ripe for investment.

The boundaries of the proposed MOD extend from the City of Peekskill municipal boundary on the west and north, to parcels fronting on NYS Route 202 surrounding the NYPH Campus on the south and the intersection of Route 202 and the Bear Mountain Parkway on the east. These boundaries incorporate both the MOD Campus Zone (approximately 92 acres encompassing 25 parcels surrounding the existing hospital from the City of Peekskill border to Conklin Avenue on the north side of Route 202 and Tamarack Drive on the south side of Route 202) and the MOD Corridor Zone which encompasses approximately 50 acres including 53 parcels fronting on NYS Route 202 from the intersection of Conklin Avenue and Route 202 to the intersection of Route 202 and the Bear Mountain Parkway. The properties within the MOD Campus Zone will form the core downtown center.

The existing land uses within the Campus Zone include the NYPH Campus, Cortlandt Medical Center, Church of the Holy Spirit, several small medical office buildings, single-family residential development, and vacant parcels. The proposed MOD zoning would also establish a MOD Corridor Zone. The MOD Corridor Zone would support the MOD Campus (downtown center) and create a transitional neighborhood-scale zone between the denser MOD Campus uses and the surrounding residential neighborhoods. This area is currently comprised of commercial centers with scattered medical uses and no consistent design. The MOD Campus and MOD Corridor Zones would both be subject to design guidelines including signage and landscaping that would create a consistent aesthetic and a greater sense of community to the area. As mentioned above, the MOD Campus boundary to the west is the City of Peekskill municipal boundary. Land uses in the City of Peekskill and adjacent to the proposed MOD include several multi-family housing developments and a

commercial shopping center (Beach Shopping Center) located immediately north of the Hospital Campus.

- 2) **Size.** Outline why the downtown, or its catchment area, is of a size sufficient to support a vibrant, year-round downtown, with consideration of whether there is a sizeable existing, or increasing, population within easy reach for whom this would be the primary downtown.

The proposed MOD downtown is in easy walking/biking distance of numerous multi-family developments and single family residential neighborhoods both within the Town of Cortlandt and along the outskirts of the City of Peekskill. The area is anchored by NYPH which currently employs approximately 1,300 personnel. The Hospital Center is looking to expand operations and provide additional medical offices on the existing campus as well as to construct a specialty pharmacy. The Town has been working with NYPH and other major stakeholders in the proposed MOD district on a concept plan for the MOD Campus Zone that includes millennial housing, an assisted living facility, a hotel, additional medical office space and complementary restaurant and retail uses. In addition, the City of Peekskill is currently reviewing an application for a 4 to 5 story 52-unit affordable multi-family senior housing or assisted living project located within 0.3 miles of the Hospital Campus. This development would be closer to the MOD Campus downtown area than to downtown Peekskill and could be connected to the MOD by way of a shuttle.

- 3) **Past Investments & Future Investment Potential.** Describe how this downtown will be able to capitalize on prior, and catalyze future, private and public investment in the neighborhood and its surrounding areas.

The proposed MOD Campus (downtown area) would capitalize on prior, and catalyze future public and private investment by:

- Supporting and leveraging the Town's major economic institutions and job centers for continued economic growth and resiliency;
- Providing better housing options that provide for all life stages as well as a continuum of care (aging in place);
- Providing sufficient density of employees, residents and recreational users to support infrastructure investment and transit;
- Allowing for a mix of uses to create an environment that engages people at the pedestrian scale;
- Achieving a compact pattern of development with a high level of amenities that encourages people to walk, ride a bike or use transit.
- Maintaining an adequate level of parking and access for automobiles;
- Creating fine-grained detail in architectural and urban form that provides interest and complexity at the level of the pedestrian and bicyclist;
- Creating a sense of place and a greater sense of community;
- Providing a positive fiscal impact on residential property values;
- Providing more attractive non-residential development;
- Generating a relatively high percentage of trips serviceable by transit.

With regard to catalyzing future investment, the MOD has already created significant interest in the development/redevelopment within the area. Since September 2015, the Town has been actively meeting with major stakeholders within the proposed MOD District and has

developed a concept plan for the MOD. Three of the stakeholders have proposed development concepts to the Town. These three stakeholders include:

- 1) New York Presbyterian Hospital (NYPH)—current owner of the existing Hospital Campus and two smaller parcels adjacent to the campus as well as the former Toddville School located within the MOD Corridor. NYPH has immediate need of 36,000 square feet of additional medical office space including a specialty pharmacy. Additional medical office (approx. 72,000 sf and a 38,000 sf expansion of the existing hospital building has been identified for future build-out phases.)
- 2) Gyrodyne Company of America Inc.— current owner of the Cortlandt Medical Center located at 1985 Crompond Road, directly across the street from NYPH as well as a number of smaller parcels contiguous to the Cortlandt Medical Center site. Gyrodyne became a publicly traded REIT in 2006 and is focused on the healthcare related real estate sector. Gyrodyne is proposing to redevelop the Cortlandt Medical Center site and associated parcels with 176 millennial housing units, 28,000 sf of Class A medical office space, and 16,000 square feet of retail. Gyrodyne is also proposing a green courtyard/ public space as part of their development concept.
- 3) VS Construction—currently owns or has development rights to two contiguous parcels totaling approximately 26 acres of largely undeveloped land on Route 202 across from the Pataki Center on the NYPH Campus and less than 1,000 feet from the Gyrodyne properties. Former site of the Evergreen Hotel. VS Construction is proposing a 140 bed assisted living facility, 100-room hotel, 15,000 square feet of ground floor retail.

The Town of Cortlandt has actively engaged the major stakeholders in the MOD planning area as part of a collaborative public-private partnership. The Town recently complete a due diligence traffic study of the MOD Campus area funded by the three stakeholder and the Town. On April 6, 2016, Town staff and representatives of the stakeholders met with the NYSDOT to introduce the MOD and share results of the initial due diligence traffic study. Town staff have also met with and discussed the MOD with the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council (NYMTC). Since the proposed MOD planning area borders the City of Peekskill and the Hospital Center services city residents, the Town has initiated discussions with the City about the MOD and is proposing to create transit and pedestrian linkages between the MOD planning area, the Peekskill Train Station, and other surrounding residential and commercial areas in Peekskill such as the Beach Shopping Center. The MOD District is currently served by municipal sewer and water.

In addition, the Town is currently drafting a new form-based zoning code for the MOD District. It is anticipated that the SEQR review for the proposed new zoning will begin in Summer 2016.

- 4) **Job Growth.** Describe how recent or impending job growth within, or in close proximity to, the downtown will attract professionals to an active life in the downtown, support redevelopment, and make growth sustainable in the long-term.

NYPH recently acquired the Hudson Valley Hospital Campus and is seeking to construct additional Class A medical office space on the Hospital Campus to attract new doctors, nurses and both medical and non-medical support staff to provide additional services at the Hospital.

For several months, the Town of Cortlandt has actively engaged the major stakeholders in the MOD planning area including NYPH as part of a collaborative public-private partnership to leverage the anticipated investment in the Hospital and create a downtown around the NYPH Center. The stakeholders have been working cooperatively to propose uses for the proposed MOD Campus area that are compatible with, and supportive of, the existing Hospital Center while also providing services for existing residents in the surrounding areas.

Three concepts have been proposed by stakeholders that include a mix of uses and a diverse range of job opportunities. The proposed uses include additional medical office, specialty pharmacy, retail, millennial housing, assisted living and a hotel. NYPH estimates that Phase 1 (36,000 sf medical office building and specialty pharmacy) would generate approximately 65 new jobs. Gyrodyne estimates that for the proposed Phase 1 build-out (28,000 sf medical office space, 176 millennial housing units and 16,000 sf of retail) would generate 150 permanent jobs. In terms of construction, Gyrodyne has also estimated approximately 270 person-years (assuming construction takes 2 years) or about 135 jobs a year for two years not including any off-site improvements or the proposed shared infrastructure between the stakeholders (such as a proposed pedestrian overpass to connect the Gyrodyne property and NYPH). VS Construction is conservatively estimating approximately 155 new jobs for the 100 room hotel, 140 bed assisted living facility and 15,000 sf of retail.

Currently, there is a lack of walkable restaurant and complementary retail (such as pharmacies) to service the employees and visitors of the Hospital Center as well as the existing surrounding residential neighborhoods. It is anticipated that proposed hospital expansion would result in additional demand for restaurants, walkable housing, and other services in close proximity to the hospital. Opportunities for shared parking, and other infrastructure have also been discussed among the stakeholders. Since the proposed MOD planning area borders the City of Peekskill and the hospital services City residents, the Town is hoping to work together with the City to create transit and pedestrian linkages between the MOD planning area, the Peekskill Train Station, and other surrounding residential and commercial areas in Peekskill such as the Beach Shopping Center. The Town is also actively pursuing the creation of a shuttle service to link the MOD with the Peekskill Train Station and potentially other major land uses in the immediate vicinity.

**5) Attractiveness of the Downtown.** Identify the properties or characteristics the downtown possesses that contribute or could contribute, if enhanced, to the attractiveness and livability of the downtown. Consider, for example, the presence of developable mixed-use spaces, housing at different levels of affordability and type, healthy and affordable food markets, walkability and bikeability, and public parks and gathering spaces.

The existing MOD planning area is surrounded by numerous residential neighborhoods and housing developments within walking and/or biking distance of the Hospital and the MOD. These diverse residential neighborhoods include a range of housing types and affordability and are not currently served by a walkable/bikeable downtown. The goal of the MOD is to create a compact, walkable/bikeable attractive commercial downtown center around the Hospital that will service employees, visitors, and residents of the MOD as well as the surrounding neighborhoods. The proposed new form-based code will allow for a mix of uses with ground-

floor retail and restaurants fronting Route 202 and will include amenities such as public courtyards and pocket parks to engage people at the pedestrian scale.

The MOD planning area also contains a number of underutilized or vacant parcels within the MOD Campus Zone (across the street and within 1,000 feet of the Hospital) that are proposed to be redeveloped with a mix of uses along the Route 202 corridor to create a compact commercial center. These parcels include the former Evergreen Hotel parcel currently owned by VS Construction. In addition, Route 202 in the vicinity of the hospital has an extra wide right-of-way that can be utilized to incorporate Complete Streets and sidewalks and other pedestrian amenities. The Town has also been working with the stakeholders to incorporate a pedestrian bridge between NYPH and the Gyrodyne property across Route 202, which is currently used as medical office and is proposing new medical, retail, and residential uses. The stakeholders have also been discussing the potential for shared parking arrangements and infrastructure such as a new parking structure on the Gyrodyne property that would also service NYPH.

For the past five years, the Hospital Center has hosted a bi-monthly Farmers' Market. New this year, the Hospital will provide free taxi service to residents within a five-mile radius of the facility who are in need of transportation, allowing many easy access to fresh, wholesome food.

- 6) Policies to Enhance Quality of Life.** Articulate the policies in place that increase the livability and quality of life of the downtown. Examples include the use of local land banks, modern zoning codes, complete streets plans, or transit-oriented development. If policies achieving this goal are not currently in place, describe the ability of the municipality to create and implement such policies.

The MOD concept was first advanced in May 2014 at a monthly Master Plan Committee meeting. The recommendation from the committee was to create a mixed-use district that would allow for a continuum in care near the hospital center, centralize medical uses, support and attract new medical uses, and allow for complementary uses around the hospital center. The concept evolved to include residential, retail, and office uses. On March 15, 2106, the Town Board adopted *Envision Cortlandt*, the Town's 2016 Sustainable Comprehensive Plan which includes 29 goals, 205 policies, and 61 metrics. The proposed MOD is one of the four key planning strategies of *Envision Cortlandt* which were developed to proactively address sustainability, climate resiliency, energy efficiency, and economic development through innovative community planning efforts. The Town has been actively working with stakeholders in the MOD Planning Area since September 2015 to implement this sustainable economic development and job creation strategy. In the Fall of 2015, the Town hired planning consultants to develop a concept plan for the MOD and began outlining a new form-based code for the MOD which includes plans for Complete Streets, compact and transit oriented development as well as design guidelines for the area. The Town is currently working on a draft form-based code for the MOD. It is anticipated that the Town Board will initiate SEQR for the proposed new zoning and Phase 1 MOD projects in June 2016.

- 7) Local Support.** Set forth the local and community support that exists for the revitalization of this downtown and the commitment among local leaders and stakeholders to building and implementing a strategic investment plan. Identify an initial local lead for the program that will work with outside experts to convene a local DRI Planning Committee to oversee the plan.

The MOD has generated a large amount of local and community support. The lead for the program is Linda Puglisi, the Town Supervisor. Other local support and community support includes the Town Board, the Master Plan Committee (MPC), the Master Plan Implementation Committee (MPIC), and the Planning Board. In addition, as described above, the Town has been actively meeting with major stakeholders within the proposed MOD District. The Town and three of the stakeholders funded the initial due diligence traffic study and a follow-up traffic study to evaluate potential traffic improvements. The three stakeholders include:

- 4) New York Presbyterian Hospital (NYPH)—current owner of the existing Hospital Campus and two smaller parcels adjacent to the campus as well as the former Toddville School located within the MOD Corridor.
- 5) Gyrodyne Company of America Inc.— current owner of the Cortlandt Medical Center located at 1985 Crompond Road, directly across the street from NYPH as well as a number of smaller parcels contiguous to the Cortlandt Medical Center site. Gyrodyne became a publicly traded REIT in 2006 and is focused on the healthcare related real estate sector.
- 6) VS Construction—a local developer, well known in Cortlandt that has completed a number of project within the Town. VS Construction currently owns or has development rights to two contiguous parcels totaling approximately 26 acres of largely undeveloped land on Route 202 across from the Pataki Center on the NYPH Campus and less than 1,000 feet from the Gyrodyne properties.

The Town of Cortlandt has engaged the major stakeholders in the MOD planning area as part of a collaborative public-private partnership. The Town has also initiated discussions with the City of Peekskill and is proposing to create transit and pedestrian linkages between the MOD planning area, the Peekskill Train Station, and other surrounding residential and commercial areas in Peekskill such as the Beach Shopping Center.

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

The Town is actively pursuing a shuttle to link the MOD with the Peekskill Train Station and potentially other major land uses such as Jacob's Hill Senior Housing.

The Town of Cortlandt is a certified Climate Smart Community and one of the first six Climate Smart Communities to achieve certification in New York State. *Envision Cortlandt* and its planning strategies including the MOD represent Cortlandt's continued commitment to Smart Growth, sustainability, climate resiliency, and energy efficiency.